



RHS South West in Bloom Autumn Newsletter 2025

SOUTH WEST



2025 Britain in Bloom Awards at Brighton



**Congratulations to Bath BID in Bloom!
Gold Award & BID'S Category Winner!
Roland Russell, Allison Herbert & Miriam Zaccarelli**

**Closing date for all 2026 SWiB Entries (excluding Parks) is:
Sunday 1st March 2026**

Entry Forms available to download at
www.southwestinbloom.org.uk or hardcopies can be requested
by emailing: southwestinbloom1@outlook.com

2025 Mayor's SWiB Civic Reception, Torquay.

Our Presentation celebrations at Torquay started off with a Civic Reception at The Livermead House Hotel, hosted by Torbay's Mayor Councillor Barbara Lewis. The SWiB Team arrived in style, courtesy of Torquay's very own Land Train! The Judges were treated to a tour of the highlights of the town centre, together with a very interesting commentary on local history. It was by sure an original and fun way for the team to arrive by! The Mayor



warmly welcomed the South West in Bloom Judges and dignitaries representing the villages, towns and cities across the South West, who had entered the competition this year. Our Chairman Jon Wheatley responded, thanking the Mayor for her kind words and generous hospitality.

The Civic Reception was then followed by a Judges Dinner, by way of a thank you to the Judging Team for their support and contribution throughout the year to South West in Bloom.



Prior to the Civic Reception, a team of local volunteers helped SWiB set up the Riviera Centre, ready for the Awards. A special thank you to all involved, to include Torquay Partnerships in Bloom, Babbacombe in Bloom and our Awards main sponsor SWISCo. Your invaluable support and contributions, no doubt helped make the event blooming fantastic!

2025 SWiB Awards Presentation.



Our Awards Presentation was held in the Riviera Centre, an excellent venue, with grateful thanks to the sponsorship support of SWISCo.

The event started with a talk by Mark Wasilewski LVO, who gave a very interesting account of his very varied roles and responsibilities during his career, to include Park Manager of both St James's Park and The Green

Park, London and his involvement in the many recent royal events that have taken place around Buckingham Palace.

Our second presenter was Chris Collins, a much requested return guest speaker, who previously has given a talk at one of our Spring Seminars. Chris gave a very lively talk on community gardening, with tips and ideas on how to help encourage and involve more children and young people into this area, sharing a host of great ideas for our guests to take away with them to try.

After an excellent hot buffet lunch, the Awards Presentation was undertaken by Lady Emma Fellowes and Torbay's Mayor, Cllr Barbara Lewis. This year we were fortunate to have some excellent visual equipment to enhance the presentation and with nearly 300 guests, there was much enthusiastic support for all our Bloomers when receiving their Awards!



“Devolution is happening. Get on the front foot “

Why Glendale is the Ideal Partner for Council Devolution

As local authorities navigate the complexities of council devolution, selecting a trusted and experienced contractor is paramount. Glendale offers a proven model for effective, long-term, and community-focused partnerships, making us the clear choice for managing your outsourced and devolved services. Here is why Glendale is the optimal contractor to support your council's devolution strategy:

Proven Public Sector Expertise and Longevity

Glendale has been delivering essential green services for over 35 years and maintains an extensive track record of developing effective partnerships within the public sector.

We have long-standing relationships with councils and housing associations, including Nuneaton & Bedworth BC (since 1997) and Lewisham LBC (since 2000).

Our current and past work includes significant contracts with local authorities like North Somerset Council, Plymouth City Council, Exeter Council, and Westbury Council.

Expertise in Service Devolution

Glendale has a successful history of working with councils to adapt service provision, having delivered **£100,000 in savings** for a council partner through service amendments and the devolution of services in 2025.

We currently have active partnerships with Town and Parish Councils, demonstrating our ability to manage services at a hyper-local, devolved level.

Rapid and Risk-Free Mobilisation

We offer proven capability for rapid contract mobilisation, able to establish new services within **4–6 weeks**.

This is evidenced by our successful mobilisation of the £2m Mid Sussex District Council contract in 2024, which was awarded with just five weeks' notice.

Sustainable and Transparent Operations

Glendale has been a **certified Carbon Neutral business** since January 2021, achieving PAS2060 certification in 2022, and is committed to reducing environmental impact through a phased introduction of an Electric Vehicle (EV) fleet and electric equipment.

Our operations ensure complete financial and service transparency, with all performance data and Key Performance Indicators (KPI) tracking accessible 24/7 via our **Glendale Live (GLive) digital dashboard**.

Commitment to Local Communities

We prioritise local employment and staffing, ensuring that the teams delivering your services care deeply about their local environment. For one council contract, 93% of the workforce lived within the district.

As a full-service provider, we offer Total Landscape Management Services, including Grounds Management, Arboriculture, and Horticulture, offering a single, stable contractor for a complete range of green solutions.

Find out how Glendale can simplify your devolution strategy and deliver exceptional local services.



Glendale, our main sponsors have been collecting Major Awards of their own in 2025. They won the **BALI's 2025 Employer Excellence award**.



Regional Results 2025

Town & City Centre

Chippenham Town Council SILVER GILT

Winner CHIPPENHAM TOWN COUNCIL

BIDS

Bath BID in Bloom GOLD

Plymouth Waterfront Partnership GOLD

Winner BATH BID IN BLOOM

Pennant Village Devon

Newton St Cyres in Bloom GOLD

Woolwell in Bloom GOLD

Winner NEWTON ST CYRES IN BLOOM

Pennant Village Cornwall

Bloomin Marvelleous Menheniot GOLD

Illogan in Bloom SILVER GILT

Mitchell Village GOLD

Winner MITCHELL VILLAGE

Pennant Town (Dorset)

Winfrith Newburgh & East Knighton SILVER

Winner WINFRITH NEWBURGH & EAST KNIGHTON

Mary Mortimer Trophy

Barrington in Bloom GOLD

Charmouth Parish Council GOLD

Poltimore in Bloom GOLD

Chew Stoke in Bloom GOLD

Chew Magna in Bloom GOLD

Plympton St Maurice SILVER GILT

St Buryan Village in Bloom SILVER GILT

Winner POLTIMORE IN BLOOM

Cox Cup

Cannington in Bloom GOLD

Henstridge Parish Council SILVER

Winner CANNINGTON IN BLOOM

Ayre Cup

Cary in Bloom GOLD

Winner CARY IN BLOOM

SWTA Cup

Crediton in Bloom GOLD

Winner CREDITON IN BLOOM

Preece Cup

Bovey Tracey in Bloom GOLD

Bradford on Avon Town Council GOLD

Glastonbury in Bloom GOLD

Winner GLASTONBURY IN BLOOM

Sargent Cup

Keynsham in Bloom GOLD

Thornbury in Bloom GOLD

Minehead in Bloom GOLD

Winner THORNBURY IN BLOOM

Portman Cup

Brixham in Bloom GOLD

Bloom in Melksham GOLD

Wellington Town Council GOLD

Babbacombe Bay in Bloom GOLD

Tiverton in Bloom GOLD

Winner BABBACOMBE BAY IN BLOOM

St Brigid Cup

Newquay in Bloom GOLD

Portishead in Bloom GOLD

Yeovil in Bloom GOLD

Winner PORTISHEAD IN BLOOM

Tesco Cup

Paignton in Bloom GOLD

South Swindon in Bloom GOLD

Winner SOUTH SWINDON IN BLOOM

SW Tourism Cup

Bath in Bloom GOLD

Exeter City in Bloom GOLD

Winner BATH IN BLOOM

Regional Results 2025

Champion of Champions Under 10k

Chew Magna in Bloom	GOLD
Bere Alston in Bloom	GOLD
Hayle in Bloom	GOLD
Kingsbridge in Bloom	GOLD

Winner KINGSBRIDGE IN BLOOM



Portman Cup
Babbacombe Bay in Bloom



Mary Mortimer Trophy
Poltimore in Bloom



SWTA Cup
Crediton in Bloom



Preece Cup
Glastonbury in Bloom



Sargent Cup
Thornbury in Bloom

Congratulations to Sandown Green Town – Winners of Amberol's Spring/Summer 2025 Photo Competition!

We are delighted to announce that **Sandown Green Town** has been crowned the winner of Amberol's **Spring/Summer 2025 photo competition**, which ran from **1 May to 30 September 2025**.

Their winning entry received **over 500 public votes**, securing first place with a beautiful photograph featuring one of their **Amberol tiered planters** in full summer bloom.

Their caption read:

“Amberol tower planter looking stunning in its hot colour scheme earlier in the summer.”

The vibrant floral display caught the eye of the public, a wonderful showcase of what can be achieved with creative planting and a well-loved Amberol self-watering planter.

As the competition winner, Sandown Green Town will receive **£300 towards an Amberol self-watering planter of their choice**. We look forward to seeing how they continue to enhance and brighten their community spaces with colour and planting.

Thank you to everyone who submitted a photo

We had a fantastic response to this season's competition, with entries capturing **tiered planters, hanging baskets, barrel planters and barrier planters** in community spaces across the UK.



Get ready for the next competition

Our Autumn/Winter 2025 photo competition opened for entries on **1st of November 2025** and runs until **31st of March 2026**. <https://amberol.co.uk/gallery>

Entering is easy:

1. Take a photo of your Amberol self-watering planters in full display.
2. Submit your image using the entry form on the Amberol website.

Your photo will be included in the public vote when voting opens.

Winners will be announced in **April 2026**.

How can we help?

If you feel inspired to create stunning floral features like the ones seen in our customer gallery, our friendly team is here to help.

You can:

- **Browse our full range of self-watering planters** – including tiered planters, floor-standing planters, hanging baskets and window boxes
- Request **product advice** tailored to your space

Arrange a **no-obligation virtual demo** to see our planters up close

Call us on **01773 830 930**

Email sales@amberol.co.uk

Visit amberol.co.uk

We look forward to seeing your blooming displays next season!



Closing Date for receipt of all 2026 Entry Forms (excluding Parks) Sunday 1st March 2026

Presentation of 2025 Awards at Torquay



**Sponsors Trophy, Best Entry:
Portishead in Bloom**



**Abbiss Cup, Best Horticultural
Display Municipal: Bath In Bloom**



**Viv Verrier Trophy, Best New
Entry: Newton St Cyres in Bloom**



**Sargent Trophy, Outstanding Effort
& Contribution: Truro in Bloom**

Champion of Champions 2025



**Winner Under 10K Population:
Kingsbridge in Bloom**



**Winner Over 10K Population:
Truro in Bloom**

Discretionary Special Awards 2025

Vic Verrier Trophy,	Newton St Cyres in Bloom
Abbiss Cup	Bath Carpet Display, Bath in Bloom
City of Bath Trophy	Torre Abbey Gardens, Torquay
Michael McGahey Trophy	Thornbury in Bloom
Bruford Cup	Lychgate Cottages, Babbacombe Bay in Bloom
Viridor School Composting Trophy	Castle Cary Community Primary School
London & Manchester Trophy	Transition Town, Wellington
Sutton Seeds Cup	The Basins, Transition Town Wellington
Clem Preece Memorial Cup	Wilcombe Primary School, Tiverton
SW Tourism Salver, Best Portfolio	Cary in Bloom
Sargent Trophy	Truro in Bloom
SW in Bloom Youth Award	Hayle Academy, Hayle
Barry Cruse Trophy	Brixham in Bloom
Budge Social Media Trophy	Newquay in Bloom
West Country TV Cup	The Chocolate Quarter, Keynsham
The Monk Trophy	Newton St Cyres Arboretum
The Health & Wellbeing Trophy	Ardagh Community Trust, Bristol
Amberol Trophy	Tregolls Manor Care Home, Truro
Serco Cup	Exmouth Yarm Bombers, Exmouth
Inclusive Gardening Award	Turning Heads, Torquay
Inclusive Gardening Award	The Chocolate Quarter, Keynsham
Inclusive Gardening Award	Able2Achieve, Yeovil
Inclusive Gardening Award	Bath City Farm, Bath
Inclusive Gardening Award	Horticultural Therapy Trust, Plymouth
Inclusive Gardening Award	Stanley's Garden, W-s-M
Denise James Art in the Landscape	3rd Glastonbury Murals
In The Landscape Trophy	2nd Brixham Murals
Shaun Cregan Trophy , Best Pub	Winner: Lion, Witch & Wardrobe, Sidmouth
	3rd Bear & Swan, Chew Magna
	2nd Bear Inn, Melksham
Gordon Ford Trophy, Best IYN	Winner: Market Tavern, Melksham
	3rd Kingsbridge Community Garden
	2nd Bath City Farm
Urban Communities Trophy	Winner: Castle Hill Gardens, Great Torrington
Plantscape Coastal Trophy	South Swindon in Bloom
Alf Crouch Memorial Award	Exmouth in Bloom
Sponsors Trophy	Steve Brook, Bath in Bloom
	Portishead in Bloom

Transition Town Wellington

Transition Town Wellington were over the moon to get the unexpected news that we had been awarded the first-ever RHS award for sustainable gardening this year. It was an incredible morale booster for this team of dedicated volunteers who have spent the last decade or more working steadily to transform 11 green spaces in and around this small town on the Somerset/Devon border.

Britain in Bloom's southwest judge, Terry Porter said, "I was amazed at how much Wellington had moved on since I last visited. [There's been] a vast improvement and the strength of the community groups was impressive."

Sarah Galvin, RHS Head of National Community Programmes, says the recently launched RHS community awards highlight "groups that put environmental stewardship, climate awareness and wildlife-friendly practices at the heart of their work."

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening/rhs-community-awards-about>

Wellington's five Britain in Bloom certificates, the CPRE plaque, the RHS trophy and the handsome London & Manchester cup will be showcased in the council's offices, because this year's wins shine a light not only on TTW but a host of others: the council's own dedicated open spaces team and fantastic community groups, like



Diana Fox, Steward Hill, Philip Knowman, Stephen Gregory
Anita Corbin, Helen Gillingham, Anita Roy.

the Basins Volunteers and the Swains Lane Nature Reserve group. TTW dovetails with their activities, and the whole town has benefitted as a result—with an incredible 65.5-acre green corridor established in 2023, including an organic community farm, over 3000 trees planted, and TTW's own 'jewel in the crown': Fox's Field forest garden.

Five years ago, this site was just a rough grassy field, situated next to the historic woollen mill at Tonedale on the edge of Wellington. Now families and kids walk around it, harvesting fruit, veg and herbs from the beautiful 2-acre forest garden.

Helen Gillingham leads the community gardening team, a group with food at its heart and fire in its belly – or is that the other way round? “Everyone needs to eat, and we all love sharing food, but so many people these days have no idea how to grow their own, or even where the food that we buy in the shops comes from.” The forest garden is a superb example of how growing food for humans can simultaneously feed wildlife, boost biodiversity, improve soil health, mitigate for floods. “And it’s also just so beautiful,” she says: and the judges agree.

Good for the soul, good for soil. The team have followed principles of permaculture wherever possible – reusing and recycling materials, composting on site, and using clearance mulches to suppress grass and weeds which helps preserve the soil structure and enhance the microbiome.

In June 2025, the team hosted 12 local ecologists and conservationists who led a bioblitz on the field. The results showed an incredible surge in species since the forest garden was planted, with nearly 200 species recorded in the course of 24 hours, compared with just 54 species in 2023.

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/transition-town-wellington-fox-s-field-bioblitz-june-2025>

The key to success, TTW firmly believes, is in diversity: diversity in species, diversity in people, a diversity of skills, ages, interests and abilities. TTW is part of a global network of small community groups working at a local level to reduce carbon emissions and tackle the climate and ecological crises. This year’s award has set us on a course for even bigger and better things in the future, with the group aiming to become a formally registered charity in 2026.

By Anita Roy, Chair, Transition Town Wellington, Somerset



Scything at Post Close Community Orchard



The Watering team

Britain In Bloom Awards 2025

Many congratulations to our Bloom Groups representing the South West at this year's Nationals, all were awarded Gold! Bath BID in Bloom also won their category!



Thornbury in Bloom - Tony Sansum - Community Champion Award & Olivia - Young Champion Award.

Torquay Partnerships in Bloom - Gold - Small City & City Category - Tim Ely



Thornbury in Bloom - Gold - Large Town Category



Torquay Partnerships in Bloom - Tim & Laura with Arit



**Kingsbridge in Bloom - Gold - Small Town Category
Adrienne Benton & Gill Matthews**



**Large Town: Thornbury
GOLD**

**BID: Bath BID
GOLD & Category Winner**



**Small City & City: Torquay
GOLD**

**Small Town: Kingsbridge
GOLD**

Business, Leisure, Tourism & Commercial Awards 2025

NORTH SOMERSET

Portishead	Sarah Tynan Flowers	GOLD
Portishead	The Ship	GOLD
Portishead	Phoenix Bar	GOLD
Weston-super-Mare	Crematorium, Glendale Countryside	SILVER GILT

BANES

Bath	Milsom Place	GOLD
Bath	The Old Crown Inn	GOLD
Bath	SouthGate Bath Shopping Centre	GOLD
Chew Magna	The Pony, Chew Valley	GOLD
Chew Magna	Salt & Malt, Chew Valley	SILVER GILT
Chew Magna	The Pelican, Chew Valley	SILVER GILT
Chew Magna	The Queens, Chew Magna	GOLD
Chew Magna	The Bear & Swan	GOLD
Keynsham	The Chocolate Quarter	GOLD

SOUTH GLOUCS

Thornbury	Thornbury Castle Hotel	GOLD
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DEVON

Babbacombe	Babbacombe Model Village	GOLD
Babbacombe	The Babbacombe Inn	GOLD
Babbacombe	Cary Arms & Spa	GOLD
Plymouth	Royal William Yard	GOLD
Barnstaple	Brend Hotel Group, The Imperial Hotel	GOLD
Barnstaple	Brend Hotel Group, The Park Hotel	GOLD
Barnstaple	Tarka Leisure Centre	GOLD
Bovey Tracey	Brookside Restaurant	GOLD
Bovey Tracey	Cromwell Arms	GOLD
Torquay	Torre Abbey Gardens, Torbay Council	GOLD
Exeter	University of Exeter Grounds Dept	GOLD
Brixham	Flour Flower	GOLD
Poltimore	Lathys Farmshop	GOLD
Poltimore	Poltimore House - Branches Café	GOLD
Paignton	Paignton Zoo	GOLD
Bere Alston	Harlings	SILVER GILT
Torrington	Kitch 'n' Cupboard	GOLD
Torrington	Fine Floral Design	GOLD
Plympton St Maurice	London Inn	SILVER GILT
Exmouth	Great Western Railway Club & Murals	SILVER GILT
Exmouth	The Bicton Inn & Surrounding Areas	SILVER GILT

SOMERSET

Glastonbury	The Mitre Inn	GOLD
Glastonbury	Glastonbury Tribunal	SILVER GILT
Glastonbury	White Rabbit	GOLD
Glastonbury	Glastonbury Abbey	GOLD
Glastonbury	Knight's Fish & Chips Shop & Restaurant	GOLD
Glastonbury	Abbey Tea Rooms	GOLD
Glastonbury	Heart of the Tribe Gallery	GOLD

Business, Leisure, Tourism & Commercial Awards 2025

SOMERSET (Continued)

Glastonbury	Assembly Rooms & Glastonbury Galleries	GOLD
Glastonbury	St Margaret's Chapel	GOLD
Glastonbury	Rainbow End Cafe	SILVER GILT
Glastonbury	Goddess House	SILVER
Glastonbury	The Crown Hotel	GOLD
Glastonbury	Becketts Inn	GOLD
Glastonbury	Cavendish Lodge	SILVER GILT
Cannington	Blackmore Farm	GOLD
Chard	Warne Hotels - Cricket St Thomas	SILVER GILT

CORNWALL

Hayle	Paradise Park	GOLD
Liskeard	The Flowers of Fore Street	GOLD
Mitchell	Mitchell Fruit Garden	GOLD
Newquay	Newquay Zoo	GOLD
Penzance	The North Inn, Pendeen	GOLD
Truro	Tregolls Manor Care Home	GOLD
St Buryan	St Buryan Inn	GOLD
St Buryan	Jackson's Stores	GOLD

New for 2026! Business, Leisure, Tourism & Commercial, Railway Stations, Health & Social Care Settings & Uni/Post 16 Education Sites & It's Your School Categories 2026

Due to the continued increasing interest of our Business: Commercial, Leisure, and Tourism category, along with feedback received suggesting new areas, we are expanding our 'Other Categories' selection for 2026. New categories include Railway Stations, Health & Social Care Settings, and Education Sites. Existing categories have also been refined and all categories are divided into Small: up to 1 hour judging, £35 entry fee, and Large: up to 2 hours judging, £50 entry fee.

By broadening our categories, we hope to showcase even more horticultural excellence, environmental responsibility and community participation and diversity across our South West region. Further information, including the judging criteria and the 2026 entry form can be downloaded at www.southwestinbloom.org or a hardcopy can be requested by emailing: southwestinbloom1@outlook.com

We welcome any feedback and suggestions for continued improvement in this area and look forward to receiving your 2026 entries!

Any queries: please email: southwestinbloom1@outlook.com

**Closing Date for Receipt of all 2026 Entries (excluding Parks):
Sunday 1st March.**

Indigos Play and Ecology Centre, Brixham

This is a site that has been running as a free woodland play area supported by the charity, Play Torbay for over 17 years. Some of the buildings and planting that has happened, has certainly helped to make it a very magical place!

There is a large level playing field with goal posts, a trim trail and wooden play structures. There is a play area with a sand pit, slide, craft tables and a bath swing.



Over the past few years there has been some major clearance and the building of the Ryder Cabin, which is warm and very well-made, with tables, chairs, and mains services.

Also installed is the Appleton polytunnel to provide a large adaptable sheltered space for different community events, like birthday parties.



There are regular play opportunities for children after school and in the holidays. There is also a weekly Forest School session for children who are home educated.

For some of these families, especially those with children with additional needs, Forest School is a lifeline. Children of all ages up to 15 years attend and enjoy a whole range of bushcraft skills, including lighting individual fires using fire steels, whittling wooden mushrooms, bug hunting, leaf painting and playing games with friends.



This is currently a free opportunity for the children, and the parents and carers attending are dedicated to ensuring its longevity. This in turn has led to the introduction of the peer home- education research project with Exeter and Plymouth universities looking at the issues with families and examining whether there could be more appropriate learning approaches for some children.

Forest School families also actively support fund-raising initiatives. As part of the commitment to sustainable change there is a collaborative partnership with the local Heritage project, 'Life on the Edge' which is helping to restore endangered insects. ASRUS is another weekly club at Indigos. It is for families with children with autism who this year successfully planted and grew special peas for rare bees which they transplanted on an 'edge in Brixham' where they continue to thrive.



Transition Town Wellington WINS top Sustainability Award in the country!

At the RHS Britain in Bloom national finals on Friday 31 October, we were thrilled, delighted and stunned to hear that TTW has won the 2025 RHS Community Award for Sustainable Gardening.

There were five finalists for this new award: St Ives in Bloom (Cambridgeshire), Flourishing Forth (Scotland), Friends of Upminster Windmill Gardening Group (London), Holt Community Gardeners (Wales) and Transition Town Wellington (South West).

Wellington's Mayor, Janet Lloyd, and Darren Hill, Wellington Town Council's Open Spaces Manager accepted the Sustainable Gardening Award on behalf of TTW at the award ceremony in Brighton. Jon Wheatley, the chair of South West Britain in Bloom, said, *“You are fantastic! This is the top sustainability award in the country – Wellington can be really proud.”*

“This is such a wonderful achievement – the result of years of dedicated hard work, love and enthusiasm, from our amazing team of volunteers,” said Anita Roy (TTW chair). “A special shout-out to our community gardening lead Helen Gillingham, who is a constant inspiration and without whom none of this would have been possible. And to Anita Corbin for being such a wonderful champion of our work and for liaising with the RHS throughout. A brilliant team effort!”



Wellington, Fox's Field.



Darren Hill & Janet Lloyd

<https://www.instagram.com/wellingtontransition/> and
<https://www.facebook.com/wellingtontransition>

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100% recyclable



Long life



Bespoke sizes



Sustainable timber



Low maintenance



Speakers at the Spring Seminar 2026

Bernard Pendleton, Chairman North West in Bloom



Bernard is the Chairman of North West in Bloom, which is probably the most successful, creative and inspirational of all regions. They have introduced many successful initiatives.

Bernard formerly of Myerscough College will join us for the day as a keynote speaker and workshop facilitator. He has had a career in horticulture and is Director of Student Support. He has also been a Bloom Judge for 25 years.



Ali Marshall, Head Gardener Torre Abbey Gardens, Torquay

Ali has been the Head Gardener at Torre Abbey for over 15 years. At 4 years old she believed that there were tigers living in the Palm House Jungle, so how could she resist coming to work in a place, where she'd spend so many magical, happy hours as a child!

Torre Abbey is an Ancient Scheduled Monument and dates back to 1196. Now a multi-award-winning attraction with an art gallery and museum, Torre Abbey is also known for its 18 acres of spectacular gardens. Abundant with exotic plants, tropical glasshouses and even the Potent Plant Gardens, there's plenty of outdoor areas to enjoy at Torre Abbey!

Torre Abbey Gardens has been awarded Gold in the SWiB Business Category for a number of consecutive years, and in 2025, was also awarded The City of Bath Trophy for Landscaping. Ali was also honoured at this year's awards, with a very well deserved Community Champion Award.

Ali's talk will be a gentle, light hearted wander around the science and mystery of time spent in nature and the effects of gardening on mind and body. A synthesis of scientific knowledge and personal experiences, helping to give listeners tools to promote community volunteering.

Spring Seminar 2026

Thursday 26th March

RHS ROSEMOOR

10.00 am to 4.30 pm

Provisional Programme

10:00 Coffee, Welcome & Introductions

10:15 **Bernard Pendleton, Chairman NW in Bloom**
How we do it in the North West

11.15 Comfort Break

11.30 **Ali Marshall, Head Gardener Torre Abbey, Torquay**
The Immortal Gardener

12.00 2025 Pride in Parks Awards

12:30 Opportunity to explore RHS Rosemoor Gardens

13.00 Buffet Lunch

14.00 * Specialist Workshops

Breakout Group Facilitators:

Breakout Group Facilitators to include:

Jon Wheatley, Bernard Pendleton & Richard Budge

16.00 Workshop Feedback with Q&A

16.30 Closing Remarks

Cost £30.00 per delegate

Closing date for receipt of booking form & payment: Sunday 1st March

Booking Forms can be downloaded from www.southwestinbloom.org.uk

Hardcopies of booking forms can be requested by email to:

southwestinbloom1@outlook.com

*** We welcome any suggestions for subject and topic areas for our workshop sessions and will endeavour to incorporate the most popular and commonly requested themes we receive. Please let us know any suggestions by 5th January 2026 to: southwestinbloom1@outlook.com or if an In Bloom Group Lead, via the Chairman's Questionnaire.**

2026 SWIB Children's Painting Competition

In 2026, CPRE, The Countryside Charity, are celebrating their centenary and so to mark it's 100th year, and celebrate the occasion, our theme for the Children's Painting Competition 2026 is:



'Our Beautiful Countryside'



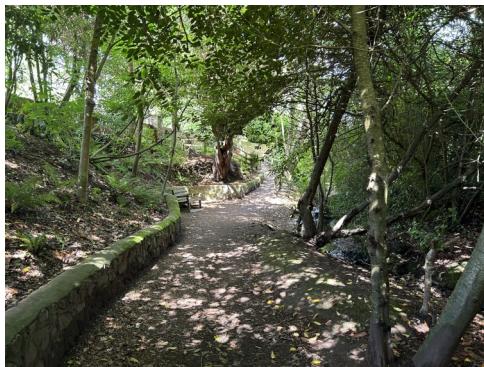
The age group categories are: Up to 6 years, 7–11 years, and 12–16 years old. Art should be a maximum of A3 in size, and only one entry per age group, per School/Bloom Group can enter, and they should be the winners of your own local competition. **Entry forms and further details will be available in our Spring 2026 Newsletter. Closing date for entries: 1st July 2026.**

South West in Bloom Pride in Park Awards

We are again pleased with the response for the 2025 Pride in Parks Awards. The parks judging is from June and finishes at the end of the year. This allows the parks to decide on the best time of year they prefer to be judged. As in previous years, the Presentation for the 2025 Parks Awards will be held during the Spring Seminar, next year to be held at Rosemoor on the 26th March. Pride in Parks 2026 entry forms will go live in the spring, with the closing date set for receipt of entries: **8th June 2026.**



Rack Park, Great Torrington



Glen Goyle, Sidmouth

Glendale Supporting Communities

Glendale support a local community group in Haywards Heath called the Yews. Glendale were asked if they could help with providing a few hand tools for their voluntary gardeners. Glendale are delighted wherever possible to support anything gardening. If a small donation can get people outside in the fresh air, then it's all worthwhile. Contract Manager Wayne and Sam are pictured in the cold winter sunshine, to hand over the tools. They were over the moon and very thankful. Happy gardening to the Yews Community Group. Let's hope this helps them enter for an in bloom award in 2026



Torquay Palms were kindly grown by Shekinah Grow, an IYN Community Group based in Paignton, and gifted to our Awards Presentation Guests, as a reminder of a special celebratory day shared in Torquay. They grew 3 varieties, 100 of each.

1. Torbay Dazzler
2. Southern Splendour
3. Red Star

Thank you so much Shekinah Grow!

Torquay Palms





The
countryside
charity

2025 CPRE Environmental Awards

CPRE in the South West is proud to have partnered with RHS SW In Bloom again this year to sponsor the Environmental Award.

Through our award, we hope to celebrate new projects with sustainability and community involvement at their heart.

The entries this year were very varied, but they all demonstrated just how much people treasure their local green spaces. Most importantly, they showed just how people are prepared to get stuck in to keep them special! Chairs of each local CPRE charity in our SW group voted on the shortlist provided by RHS judges and our first second and third choices were as follows:



Winner: Newton St Cyres Arboretum, Devon

Over 135 volunteers donate £10 a year and get directly involved in looking after this special place. The arboretum is used for all kinds of events from picnics to yoga to outdoor theatre. New habitats are being created, and nest boxes are regularly installed.

Second place: Writhlington Community Allotments, Radstock, BANES

We were impressed by an ingenious project to collect rainwater from a neighbour's pigeon loft and pump it to tanks around the allotment site, using solar power. Previously the allotments had no mains water, which is clearly very challenging with our increasingly dry summers. The system is totally off grid and sustainable. There is even a communal polytunnel allowing allotment holders to grow tender vegetables



CPRE Environmental Award

Third place: Transition Town Wellington, Foxes Field, Wellington, Somerset



Foxes field is a large site, maintained by up to 50 volunteers, with some trees, areas for planting and growing produce, opportunities for foraging and a picnic area. There are information boards welcoming people to the field, and they have even produced a recipe book!

2026: CPRE's centenary

CPRE, the Campaign to Protect Rural England, has been speaking up for our countryside for almost one hundred years. Our charity will be 100 years old in 2026, and we are proud of our history and achievements. Did you know

- i that it was CPRE that campaigned for the establishment of a national planning system to curtail urban sprawl?
- ii that it was CPRE that demanded better access to our countryside after two world wars, and we fought for the establishment of our national parks and national landscapes?
- iii that we have a locally based charity in each county as well as the national CPRE charity? This means we can influence government as well as being in touch with our local communities. Please consider becoming a member of your Local CPRE.

CPRE's centenary year will involve lots of celebrations, lots of forward-looking projects all over the country, plus a little bit of nostalgia, of course!

We hope our Environmental Awards with RHS SW in Bloom will be bigger and better than ever in 2026 so do make sure your community group gets their entry in. Look out also for exciting news about a new CPRE garden at the 2026 Chelsea Flower Show.

Reclaiming Our Lanes: Our Community Transformation

Take a walk around the **lanes surrounding Enfield Road in Babbacombe, Torquay** and you will notice a huge change. Once unloved, overgrown and strewn with litter, they have been completely transformed into valued community spaces, abundant with plants and wildlife.

We are a group of local residents, known as the **Laners**, who have worked together over the last year to **Reclaim Our Lanes (ROL)**. The idea was simple: to clean up our lanes, sow wildflower seeds and plants, encourage more pollinating insects and wildlife, and create tranquil

community spaces and walkways for us all to enjoy.



A Year of Hard Work

In **August 2024**, we began the tough job of breathing new life into the four lanes, by clearing countless bags of rubbish, builders' rubble and green waste. **SWISCo** were instrumental in assisting us with waste removal and getting the project off the ground and our local Community Partnership kindly donated funding for some t-shirts and equipment.

Our transformation involved several key steps:

- 1 Access:** Muddy paths were transformed into usable, fragrant walkways 'thanks to the donation and delivery of wood chippings by **Coombeshead Tree Care**'.
- 2 Planting:** Neighbours and friends donated over **200 plants**, allowing us to plant dozens of bulbs, perennials, and wildflower seeds.
- 3 Wildlife:** We built 'bug hotels', created a small pond, and set up wildlife watering points.



Our motto is simple: **Recycle, reuse, repurpose!** Flower bed borders have been created using salvaged bricks and roof tiles. Redundant garage doors and gates have been decorated with murals, and discarded items upcycled and put to good use.

By **August 2025**, the fruits of our labour were clear for all to see - accessible, clean, green lanes, flowers in full bloom buzzing with bees and insects, hand-made signs providing educational information and points of interest to stop, look and wonder.

Local residents and dog walkers cannot believe the changes we've made in such a short space of time, and we were surprised and proud to be awarded a '**Level 3 – Advancing**' certificate for the '**It's Your Neighbourhood**' category in this year's **SWIB!**

More Than Just Gardening

For us, **ROL** is about building a stronger local community, where people and nature can connect and thrive. We come together for just a couple of hours on a Saturday morning (though some go over and above - no names!). In that time, we've formed wonderful friendships and achieved remarkable things ... and all done with love and laughter. It's a joy to be part of!

Get Involved!

Please visit our Facebook page - www.facebook.com/Reclaim.our.lanes - for more information on how you can get involved. Or if you need some inspiration to transform a lane near you, come and visit us. We would love to show you around and share our knowledge and experience to help you get started!



Garden Organic brings together thousands of people who share a common belief – that organic growing is essential for a healthy and sustainable world. Through 65 years of campaigning, advice, community work and research, its aim is to get everyone growing ‘the organic way’.

It's an exciting year for the sustainable gardening charity, based in Ryton, Coventry. Known for its organic research and ground-breaking citizen science experiments, this November its revolutionising horti' citizen science by allowing the public to access surveys and projects via a mobile app called Fryd. This will enable thousands of people to take part and help track trends, evaluate crop resilience and highlight how the UK's changing climate is affecting home-grown food production.



Backwell's walking Carnival
Picture Courtesy of The Mendip Times

From October 2025 to 2026, the charity is also celebrating 50 years of heritage seed conservation at its Heritage Seed Library with a unique seed relay across the UK. Precious heritage seeds will be shared, sown, and saved by communities and projects to highlight the vital role the library plays in supporting food security and biodiversity.

Kate Eastment, Project Coordinator at Garden Organic, says:

“People volunteer with us for many reasons. Some are passionate about organic growing, while others want to give back to their community and develop new skills.”

The next Master Composter training session will take place at Yeo Valley Organic Gardens in Spring 2026. If you'd like to learn more or join the programme, visit gardenorganic.org.uk or email keastment@gardenorganic.org.uk.

North Somerset Master Composters

In North Somerset, a team of local volunteers are helping people discover how simple and rewarding composting can be. Composting is one of the easiest ways we can all make a difference — restoring health to our soils, cutting waste and energy use, and saving money at home. Through the **North Somerset Master Composter programme**, volunteers receive training and ongoing support from **Garden Organic**, working in partnership with **North Somerset Council**.

Once trained, they share their knowledge across the community — at schools, allotments, gardening clubs, markets, and local events such as the Nailsea Eco Fair, Eat Weston Festival, and Sustainable Backwell's Walking Carnival. This year alone, Master Composters have delivered hands-on workshops to hundreds of children and young people, helping them turn kitchen scraps and garden clippings into nutrient-rich compost. Volunteers tailor their talks and demonstrations to suit any audience — from beginners curious about getting started to experienced gardeners keen to learn new techniques. Workshops and advice sessions cover all the essentials, from balancing “green” and “brown” materials to preventing pests, showing that composting is practical, simple, and accessible for everyone.



Sallie, a North Somerset Master Composter, adds:

“One of my favourite moments was when my son realised composting was as easy as making a heap. He was amazed to think he was creating his own earth!”

Together, these compost champions are helping North Somerset grow a more sustainable future — one heap at a time.

Community Champion Awards 2025



Joe Knights, Yeovil



Angela Berry, Hayle



Salvatore Correnti, Hayle



Ali Marshall, Torquay

**Closing Date for receipt of all 2026 Entry Forms (excluding Parks)
Sunday 1st March 2026**



Lifetime Achievement Awards

This year at the Presentation, South West in Bloom were delighted to honour two very special couples, to celebrate their tremendous effort, support, hard work, dedication and sheer enthusiasm they have contributed significantly towards 'Bloom' over the years at both Regional and National levels.

Godfrey and Peggy Mortimore



Godfrey, Chairman of Truro in Bloom and Peggy have for many years tirelessly contributed to all things 'Bloom' in Truro. Godfrey has also been instrumental in promoting the RHS' It's Your Neighbourhood initiative, with Truro currently having one of the highest number of IYN entries taking part in the South West.

Lynette Talbot and Peter Endersby



Peter & Lynette have too gone above and beyond for many years supporting all things 'Bloom' in Sidmouth. They were also brilliant contributors in building their excellent carpet bedding displays for Bloom Exhibits at both RHS Chelsea and Hampton Court Flower Shows. Blooming Congratulations to both couples!

2025 It's Your Neighbourhood Awards



Gordon Ford Trophy, Best IYN
Winner: Castle Hill Gardens,
Great Torrington



Gordon Ford Trophy, Runner Up
Bath City Farm



Gordon Ford Trophy, Third Place
.Kingsbridge Community Garden



St Illogan Churchyard
Outstanding

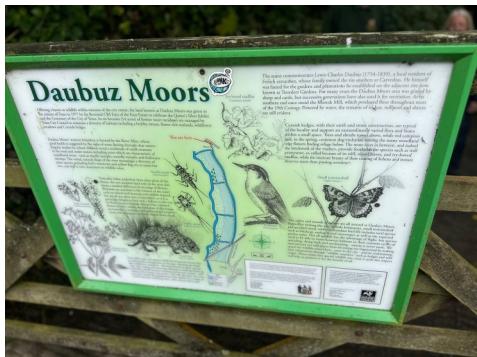


Eat Cary, Castle Cary
Outstanding



Sunny Corner Restoration, Truro
Outstanding

2025 It's Your Neighbourhood Awards



Daubuz Moors, Truro
Outstanding



The Sensory Garden, Sidmouth
Outstanding



Friends of Lynchcombe Hill, Bath
Outstanding



Cannington Volunteer Border,
Outstanding



Glebelands, Yatton
Outstanding



Crediton Station Tea Rooms
Outstanding

Chairman's Report 2025

Congratulations and thank you to everyone who has participated in 2025 RHS South West in Bloom.

Collectively, you have all brought something very special to the South West of England, to your Cities, Towns, Villages, Neighbourhoods, Parks and Businesses.

Above all, you have, through Horticulture and Gardening been creative, innovative and joyful in approach across the region.

Volunteering is such a special thing and we can all celebrate change and making a difference to the environment and above all community involvement and development.

There have been, and are, a number of challenges ahead, largely presented by the RHS, which I would like to enlist SWiB's help with, by asking all In Bloom Group Leads to complete my 'Chairman's Questionnaire', which we will email out soon. The questionnaire has been designed to help us in framing the future development of blooming communities in the South West. It will also help us identify common areas you are seeking support and further guidance on, which will help give us a basis to work from, as we start to plan our 2026 Spring Seminar Workshops. Bloom Leads, please do feel free to share the questionnaire with your committee and local IYN community gardening groups, to include and incorporate their valuable input into your responses too.

My congratulations also, to our National Entries, who, at the recent Britian in Bloom Awards, all achieved National Gold Standard, with Bath BID in Bloom winning their category. Excellence was too achieved in Wellington, with their new Transition Town Initiative being awarded the RHS Community Award for Sustainable Gardening.

My thanks to all our Judges and Assessors and the regional team, Terry Porter, Melissa Poole and our wonderful Patron Lady Emma Fellowes. Our Presentation at Torquay was in my view one of the most positive and successful ventures we have undertaken. My thanks to Torbay Council, Torbay Contractors SWISCo and the Torbay Bloom Groups.. The audiovisual was "OSCAR" standard, as were the presentations by our Guest Speakers, Mark Wasilewski and Chris Collins.

Closing Date for receipt of all 2026 Entry Forms (excluding Parks)
Sunday 1st March 2026

South West in Bloom
Winners of the Children's Painting Competition 2025

This year's entries were fantastic, excellent drawings all round.

The theme for 2025 was

“Blooming Biodiversity In My Community”

Our thanks go to Lady Emma Fellowes for judging this year's competition.

Children's Picture Competition
Up to 6 years Old

Liam, Age 5
Shoscombe Primary School
Bath in Bloom
Winner



Lowenna, Age 6
Menheniot Primary School
Bloomin Marvellous Menheniot
Bloom

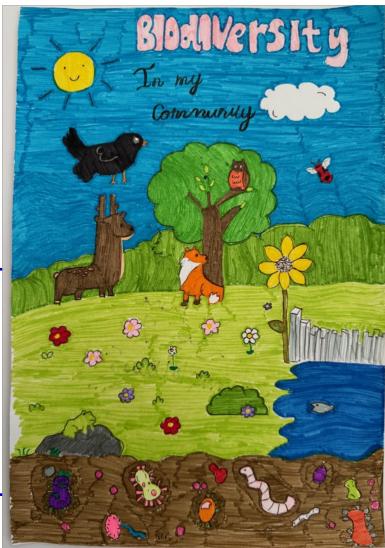


Amelie, Age 6
High Down School
Portishead in Bloom
3rd Place

Children's Picture Competition 7 to 11 years Old



Lily, Age 11
Play Torbay,
Brixham in Bloom
WINNER



Chantelle, Age 11
St Joseph's Catholic
Primary School
Portishead in Bloom
Joint Second Place



Oscar, Age 11
Menheniot Primary School
Bloomin Marvellous Menheniot
Joint Second Place

Children's Picture Competition 7 to 11 years Old



Robin, Age 9
Badbury Park Primary
Garden Club
South Swindon in Bloom
Joint Third Place

Tommi, Age 8
Portishead Primary
School
Portishead in Bloom
Joint Third Place



A total of £150 was donated to Rocroft Hospice in Torquay from the proceeds raised for the Presentation Table Decorations, with special thanks to Jo Sharrott, Sandra Jackson and all involved at Babbacombe Bay Bloomers who created & donated the beautiful decorations.



SOUTH WEST



@southwestinbloom
#southwestinbloom
southwestinbloom.org.uk



ASRUS Planting peas for bees

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2026

Regional Main Judging

1st July to 31st July 2026

IYN & IYS Assessments

1st July to 31st July 2026

Pride In Park Judging

June to December 2026

Business/Other Categories Judging **June to August 2026**

Spring Seminar **Thursday 26th March 2026** at RHS Rosemoor

Awards Presentation **Date & Venue TBC** in Spring Newsletter

Closing Date for Receipt of 2026 Entries (excluding Parks) and Spring Seminar Booking Form: Sunday 1st March

In 2026 we have taken the decision to move away from enclosing hardcopies of the entry forms as standard with the newsletter, encouraging entrants with sustainability in mind, to download entry forms from our website. If however a hardcopy of any entry forms is required, please do let us know.

Please also note to apply for **It's Your School 2026**, this category is no longer included on the IYN entry form, but will instead be found on the new for 2026: **Business & Other Categories Entry Form 2026**.

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