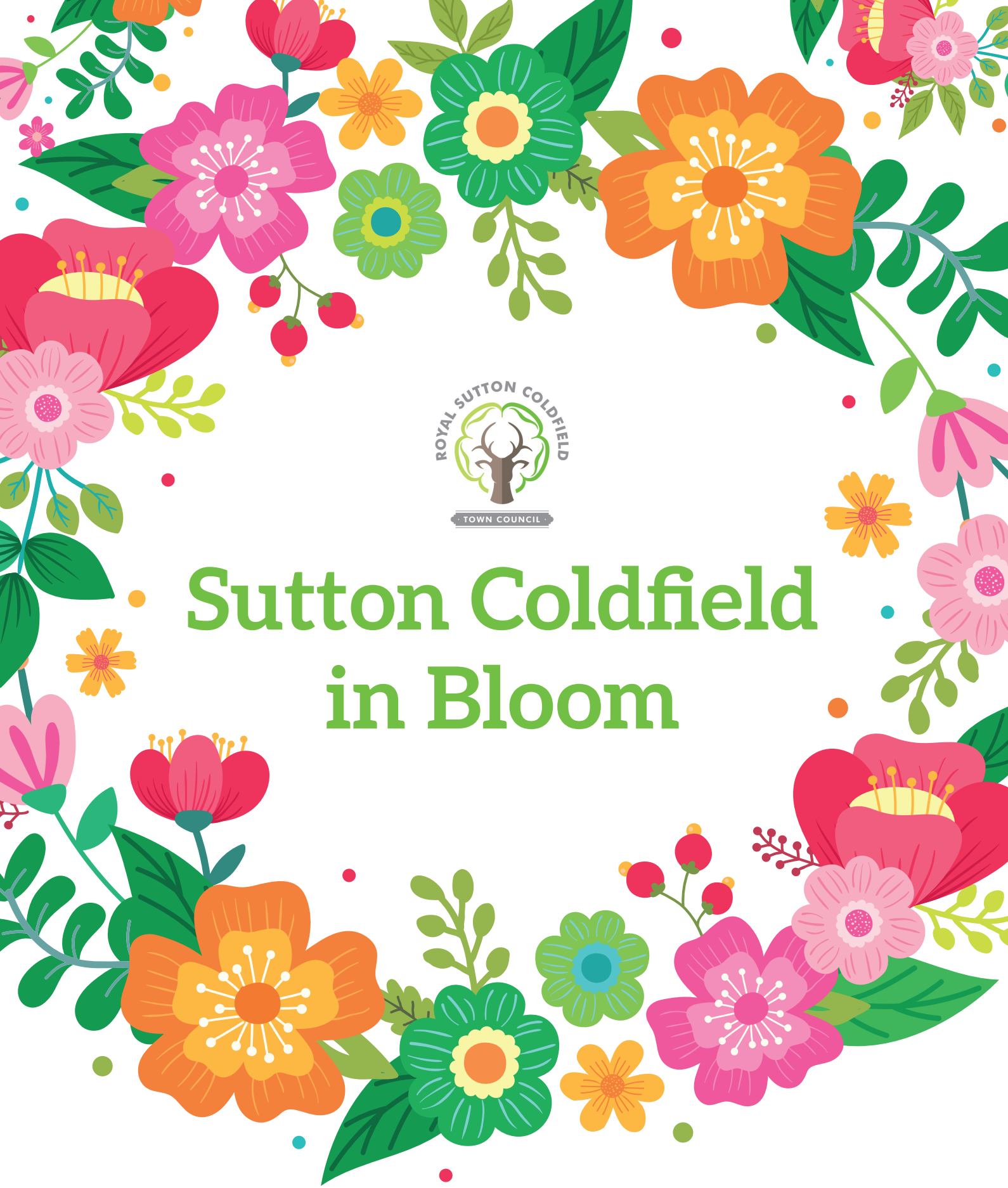


# Sutton Coldfield in Bloom

## JUDGING PORTFOLIO 2018/2019

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# 3 WELCOME

**Welcome to Sutton Coldfield in Bloom 2019. We would like to extend a warm welcome to our Royal Horticultural Society Judges: Nicola Clarke and Gareth Manning.**

The Royal Town of Sutton Coldfield is situated just over 6 miles to the northeast of Birmingham City Centre and shares an administrative border with Lichfield, North Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Walsall. Whilst Birmingham City Council continues to provide most local authority services such as waste management and highways, we are fortunate to have many dedicated groups of volunteers who turn out for voluntary activities to maintain and improve the visual and environmental aspects for all residents and visitors to our Royal Town.

The Sutton Coldfield in Bloom campaign was introduced for the first time in 2018. Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council facilitated the town's entry into the 'In Bloom' competition with the town entering in the Small City category and being awarded a Silver Gilt. The campaign was overseen by a working party consisting of Town Councillors, Town Council Officers, representation from community groups alongside professional support from Birmingham City Council. The working party meet on a regular basis to discuss our entry into the Heart of England in Bloom 2019 competition.

The main objectives of the In Bloom Working Party are:

- To grow civic pride throughout the Royal town;
- To support residents and local businesses to value and improve their local environments;
- To support the delivery of the Town Council's Cleaner and Greener priorities;
- To liaise and work with all interested people and parties to improve the natural environment of Sutton Coldfield;
- To help the town become an even more vibrant, better served, more prosperous, cleaner and green place in which to live, work and enjoy life.

**"We were very impressed with this first entry into the Bloom competition. A great deal of attention had been paid to demonstrating the Town's environmental credentials and its natural, historic resources. There was good evidence of the whole community being involved."**

*Nicola Clarke & Gareth Manning, Heart of England in Bloom judges 2018*

The judges last year provided valuable feedback and their practical comments helped us to focus and improve our efforts. Key successes and improvements over the last 12 months include:

- Improved choice of colour and plants to maximize floral impact and create a 'wow' factor;
- Continued support from 'friends of' groups, allotment holders and environmental community organisations;
- Increased engagement with environment groups throughout the town by hosting a spring seminar with key speakers from The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham & Black Country;
- Increased our engagement and communication efforts with informative and regular posts on social media.

In our Royal Town environmental issues have always been at the top of our agenda, which is one of the reasons why our Town is so proud of the Sutton Coldfield in Bloom initiative. We care about the environment locally and internationally. The Britain in Bloom competition goes beyond being a floral competition; it promotes civic pride, regeneration and addresses issues such as improvements to the environment and sustainability.
***The Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP***

On behalf of the Sutton Coldfield in Bloom Working Party, I would like to thank everyone involved in the 2019 campaign. This portfolio will show you the diversity of work undertaken across the town throughout the year, by both local authority, residents, businesses and the community.
***Councillor Terry Wood, Chairman: In Bloom Working Party***

# 4 AUGUST 2018

The warm weather in August was perfect for our clean and green group's annual shows which started to take place throughout the month. The Fuchsia Society's annual show was held on the 18th of August, each year a couple of hundred people come through the door!

Displays ranged from plants grown by beginners, who have their own classes, to the open section where anyone can enter. Classes range from bush plants, to standards, wall baskets, hanging pots, and bonsai. There are also classes that people who maybe have not a garden, but also want to be involved can enter. These involve a display of fuchsias in a wine glass, blooms displayed in a bowl and blooms on a board!

Hill Allotments also held their annual show this month which allowed members to enter a range of competitions. All members are encouraged to take part as well as partners, family members and friends all being welcome. The show provides the ideal time to show them what members do when "up on the plot". Hill allotments practices the ethos "we show what we grow not grow to show".

Friends of Jones Wood were working hard in the woods this month constructing and installing more bird boxes for the end of the bird nesting season in Jones Wood.



New Hall Mill had an amazing open day this month with over 22 displays and demonstrations for the public to enjoy!





B1 C1 C2

5

FEATURED GROUP

# SUTTON COLDFIELD FUCHSIA SOCIETY

The Fuchsia Society is a friendly society which aims to promote the cultivation of the fuchsia. The society has grown and developed in the last few years and focuses on a wide range of gardening activities as well as fuchsias, looking at hedgehogs to hostas, compost to chrysanthemums!

Members are given a free cutting in March and are asked to grow it over the year. They are then encouraged to enter it in to competitions throughout the year which have a variety of different categories.

The Fuchsia Society are an active club and hold monthly meetings where they have speakers from all over the UK come and give talks on a variety of gardening techniques, activities, flora and fauna. Talks are free to anyone who wants to join in as well as members.

The Society also holds monthly competitions, encouraging members to bring in plants or flowers from their gardens. The competitions are different each month and cover a wide range of themes, species and gardening techniques.

New members are always very welcome. The group meet at The Royal Sutton Club on Jockey Rd on the second Thursday of each month, except January. Doors open at 7.30 and the meeting kicks off at 8.00, till around 9.45.

**For more information please see their Facebook page, or visit www.suttonfuchsias.co.uk**



# 6 SEPTEMBER 2018

September saw Eco Sutton joining forces with Boldmere Infant School, for an acorn planting day.

New Hall Mill ran a guided walk of the Mill where guests leaned about the history and heritage of the Mill and the surrounding area.

Our Town is home to 10 allotments including Boulevard Allotments, Donegal Road Allotments, Falcon Lodge Allotments, Forge Farm Allotments, Four Oaks Common, Hill Allotments, Newhall Allotments, Sunnybank Road Allotments, Walmley Ash Allotments and White Farm Road Allotments

The towns gardening competition came to an end this month where the entries and winners were invited to an awards reception and presented with their awards.






The Town was proudly awarded a silver gilt for the 2018 Heart of England in Bloom Competition.

A1 B1 B2 C1 C2 C3

7

FEATURED GROUP

# NEW HALL ALLOTMENTS

Sutton Coldfield in Bloom

Newhall Allotments is much more than just an allotment; the space serves as a community hub for its members who all take pride in not only their own allotments, but the space as a whole.

A key feature is their community orchard and once the apples are ripe, they are picked and the members will hold an annual apple pressing day for anyone to come along to.

The site also features a sandpit for children to enjoy and a nature path which goes through to newhall valley.

The wildlife visiting the allotments includes a variety of birds for which many bird boxes have been created and scattered around the allotments in trees. These are at the back of the allotments which are looked after by one of the plot holders who is also a bee keeper. We have also been told they have had visits from foxes, and even once, a deer. Members will often report birds they have seen, and there is a section on the website to wildlife sightings.



A few of the plots feature chickens, the eggs of which are sometimes shared with other plot holders and one of the chicken coops is currently housing an injured pigeon until it is well.

There is a small community building which is cared for by the members, and features a kitchenette, seating and an outdoor wood burner. Members will often be found here enjoying a hot beverage and conversation. There is also an onsite shop and community noticeboard.

You don't have to spend much time with the allotment members to see the pride they take in the allotments. The members have regular events including plant swaps, socials, work parties and annual shows, most of which take place under a marquee on their communal grassed areas which features a brick BBQ. The members are always willing to help each other with advice and guidance on growing.

The members are big on sustainability with many water saving techniques around the allotments, recycling, composting and the members themselves hope to soon source some funding for a compostable toilet. Accessibility is another feature of these allotments and they've had a local school group visit the allotments to learn about flora and fauna and caring for the environment.



THE COMMUNITY HUB

Sutton Coldfield in Bloom

Friends of Rectory Park hard at work maintaining Nectar Bank





Hill allotments held a pot luck dinner where members were encouraged to use produce grown in their allotments to cook a meal and share it with the group.

The In Bloom Working Party agreed that the 2019 floral scheme will consist of colours scarlet, cherry, white, silver, blue, lime, salmon and apple blossom.

Halloween was upon us this month and the rainbow garden took the theme on board with a spooky decoration!





A1 A2 A3 A4 C2

# 9 SCHOOLS

We want to say a massive thank you to all of the Sutton Coldfield Schools which have taken part in environmental and gardening activities this year.



# 10 NOVEMBER 2018

With November upon us, the community was beginning to focus on Remembrance Sunday which had many events taking place throughout the town to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.










Smilestones members were out in full force this month, placing painted rocks around the town and local war memorials in memory of the special day.



The Town Council funded a Silent Solider Silhouette in the walled garden area on Harvest Fields Park. This commemorates 100 years following the end of WW1 and was unveiled at the Harvest Fields Centre's second Remembrance Day service. The event was attended by over 100 local residents who came to support, participate and serve in a variety of ways.

A WW1 bench was also installed later in the month. Both items critically now give the park a more unique identity as places of memory and reflection based on our nation's heritage, history education for local schools, positive moral values and cultural dialogue.

Friends of Jones Wood were given 5 whips to plant through the Queens Commonwealth Canopy Project. Two Rohan, two Silver Birch and one Hazel were planted in the Woods for this project.

In preparation for the upcoming season, the Town Council funded a deep clean of the high street in Boldmere before its community festival and big Christmas Lights switch on event which took place later in the month.

B1 B3 C1 C2

FEATURED GROUP

# SMILESTONES

Sutton Coldfield in Bloom

Smilestones is an activity which has grown hugely in the local area in recent years. The group itself has a facebook page with almost 5,000 members and  is made up of local residents who paint and hide rocks in open spaces in the town.

The group's Facebook page states: "The aim of our group is to pass on smiles. Making a stranger's day a bit brighter, by finding a piece of treasure, is why we do this. It's a random act of kindness, sent out with love, in the hope of making someone happy."

It is becoming difficult to go in at to any local green space in the town without finding a smilestone hidden somewhere, which demonstrates just how many people in the town have become involved in this activity.



# 12 DECEMBER 2018







This month saw a huge drop in temperature and the festive season was present amongst the town. Festive lights and decorations could be seen across all local centres within the town.

Banners Gate Neighbourhood Forum planted 4000 bulbs, 1000 each of Crocuses, Daffodils Narcissus and Alliums. It's all down to a grant of £2000 from TESCO's support of local charities.

This was for their **Blooming Marvellous Bee Road** to feed the bees and welcome visitors, as they come over the hill, to Sutton Coldfield and, not withstanding the activities of squirrels, they will flower every year for some time.

Thanks to all who dropped their plastic coins into our box and special many, many thanks to **TESCO**.

# JANUARY 2019

The new year brought in a new project for Friends of Jones Wood who acquired "Fox Hollies Copse". The Copse was overgrown and littered and the Friends of Jones Wood spent their January in Fox Hollies Copse litter picking, clearing the path, cutting down Laurel and Ash and preparing the Copse for the planting of a community orchard.

Boldmere Library started a crisp packet recycling scheme, inviting resident to bring in their used crisp packets to the library to be recycled rather than thrown in general waste.






A1 A2 B1 B3 C3

FEATURED GROUP

# ECO SUTTON

Established several years ago, Eco Sutton promotes a more sustainable way of life in Sutton Coldfield and strives to implement locally, the agreement reached at the UN Paris Conference in December 2015. Eco Sutton believes that local community initiatives are needed to complement national and international action to save the planet from global mean temperature rises caused by greenhouse gases.

Eco Sutton seeks the following:

- to encourage an exchange of information on methods of raising the standards of energy conservation in homes;
- to encourage more local fruit and vegetable growing and to promote the supply and purchase of locally grown produce;
- to promote walking, cycling, use of public transport and car-sharing in order to reduce emissions and to encourage healthier lifestyles;
- to arrange events that publicise sustainable living and devise viable local initiatives, for example the use of renewable energy and increased recycling;
- to make and maintain contacts with other environmental organisations.

# BEEKEEPERS



The Sutton Coldfield branch of Warwickshire Beekeepers Association was established in 1931. The Association aims to promote and further craft Beekeeping and also to advance the education of the public in the importance of Bees in the Environment.

Sutton Coldfield and North Birmingham Beekeepers Association is a friendly forward thinking branch with a full and varied program of events that run throughout the year.

**The Association is always looking for new members. Please visit their website http://suttoncoldfield-beekeepers.co.uk/ for further information**





# 14 FEBRUARY 2019

Reddicap Futures were given a plot at their local allotments to turn in to a community garden. The group has come together this month to begin planning and collating ideas and sourcing funding for their community garden which they hope to include a sensory garden, pizza oven, nature garden, raised beds and to be fully accessible.

The 12th Sutton Coldfield East District Beavers joined volunteers in Walmley to plant a variety of flowers in the area. This month also saw us preparing for Keep Britain Tidy. The Town Council purchased over 100 litter picking kits for anyone in the town who wants to use them and we saw many groups and individuals going out and picking up litter around the town. Groups included schools, residents, voluntary green groups, a theatre group and businesses.




A1 A2 C1 C2

# 15 LITTER PICKING

Sutton Coldfield in Bloom

## Thank you to everyone who took part in the Great British Spring Clean

















# 16 MARCH 2019

March saw the community continue to take park in litter picks with local groups picking litter in Sutton Park and local areas of the town.

Snuffles Hedgehog Rescue teamed up with the Fuchsia Society this month to deliver a session to their members on hedgehogs.

Friends of Jones Woods planted the first fruit trees in their community orchard in Fox Hollies Copse. The trees were donated by Sutton Coldfield and Erdington Lions and local residents in memory of family members.

Volunteers were out in force around New Hall Valley this month taking part in path enhancements, litter picking and scrub clearance. The Friends of the Mill continued their improvements and were joined by the spring flowers which blossomed around the mill this month.







A3 B1 B2 B3

# 17 SPRING SEMINAR

Around 100 Sutton Coldfield residents came together to discuss a joined-up approach to achieving a greener, cleaner environment across the town.

The inaugural Spring Seminar in March brought together representatives from a wide variety of groups based in the town, to celebrate achievements, share their expertise and enthusiasm and create an opportunity for networking amongst the groups. Present were:

- Six allotment groups: Boulevard, Falcon Lodge, Forge Farm, Hill, Newhall, White Farm Road;
- Members of seven "friends of" groups; volunteers who proudly look after, maintain and improve green spaces around Sutton Coldfield including New Hall Mill, Hill Hook Local Nature Reserve, Rectory Park, New Hall Valley Country Park, Jones Wood, Sutton Park and King George V Playing Fields;
- Residents who took part in last year's gardening competition;
- Community groups and clubs involved with clean and green projects including Eco Sutton, FOLIO (Friends Of Libraries In Our Sutton Coldfield), Fuchsia Society, Reddicap Futures and Sutton Coldfield Youth Council;
- Representatives from neighbourhood forums including Banners Gate and Wylde Green Neighbourhood Forums;
- Local businesses and business organisations

Guests heard from expert speakers from the horticultural and ecological sector including Mike Hinton, District Parks Manager, Birmingham City Council and Simon Atkinson, Head of Conservation at The Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country.



# 18 APRIL 2019

The warmer weather encouraged our residents to get out and about this month and the town was lively and abuzz with activity in our green spaces.

Parks and local green spaces were greeted with an abundance of smilestones which were placed all over the Town for walkers, runners, joggers and visitors to discover.

With Easter upon us, many groups took part in themed activities. The Fuchsia Society had an Easter bonnet and flower competition as well as an information session about Fuchsias, Newhall allotments had an Easter plant sale and swap with hot cross buns, FOLIO held an Easter themed event with Fat Fluffs rabbit rescue charity where attendees could meet rescue rabbits and learn about keeping rabbits as pets.

Preparation took place this month for wildflower meadows with many groups planting wildflowers in the towns nature reserves. Hydroseeding for wildflower planting was completed in the town.

Community litter picks continued to take place, happening in Dugdale Crescent, Mere Green, Wylde Green and four primary schools this month.

Reddicap Futures were hard at work, continuing to clear their allotment and prepare it for ground works.

Walmley became a hub of activity with joint litter picks and working days with New Hall Mill volunteers, Jones Wood and Walmley Infant School's Eco Council. Mercia Grange care home took their residents in to Walmley for a tour of the local woods in the area which was guided by the Friends of Jones wood.



Seasonal bedding at Coleshill Nursery was underway





Hydroseeding for wildflower meadows

A1 A2 A3 A4 B1 B3 C2

# SUTTON COLDFIELD IN BLOOM

## The In Bloom Working Party confirmed the Judging Route for 10th July 2019



# 20 MAY 2019

Refill Sutton Coldfield took off this month, with many businesses and groups in the town signing up to the Refill scheme.

The 6th Sutton Coldfield East Scouts did a huge amount of work at New Hall Mill, clearing the garden dump and painting tables and benches. The Mill also began holding its open days for the summer.

The Gracechurch centre held a bank holiday in bloom event where free workshops took place inside the centre. Workshops included the following crafty classes: Create your own jam jar terrarium, bouquet arranging, make a macramé plant hanger and perfect your posies.

Local art and craft group, the Creation Station also got on board with the Bloom crafting theme this month by running a rose making workshop.




## Refill Sutton Coldfield

Refill is a national program by the CIC City To Sea. There are nearly 200 'Refill Schemes' across the UK, they take responsibility for putting new Refill stations on the map and working to promote Refill and reducing plastic use in our local area.

A Refill scheme involves businesses and local groups signing up to join the scheme. Once joined, a sticker goes in the window and the business is plotted on the Refill app, this will allow passers by to refill their water bottles at the business, free of charge thus reducing the plastic waste caused by single use water bottles.

Before launching in Sutton Coldfield, Refill Birmingham did some work signing up some new businesses in the Gracechurch centre and Boldmere high street. Refill Sutton Coldfield have now taken over the running of our local area meaning they can offer a consistent local and friendly approach. They're now working to get more Refill stations signed up in Sutton Coldfield, Boldmere, Mere Green, Four Oaks and soon further afield too! They will be holding awareness events in our Town to spread the word.

B1 B2 C1 C2 C3

# 21 FLOWER GIVEAWAY

The bedding plants around the town were lifted to prepare them for summer bedding this month. The Town Council invited residents and community groups to come to the flower beds and take flowers which have been lifted where people could continue to enjoy them themselves. The event was a success with over 100 people collecting the flowers to ensure that the majority of the flowers lifted were reused rather than recycled.

The flowers went to groups including churches, care homes, schools, community groups and residents gardens. The giveaway attracted huge interest on social media, with over 28,000 people viewing the post on the Town Council's Facebook page and it got 180 shares!



# 22 JUNE 2019

This month we discovered Plogging! Jogging and picking up litter combined. Two residents have set up the Sutton Coldfield group and are looking for more members which we are sharing on our social media.




Residents coming together to work on Fox Hollies Copse Community Orchard










**FOLIO** hosted a workshop about living waste free, encouraging residents to cut down on their waste and use of single use plastics.



Hanging baskets and floral displays were distributed around the town featuring bright colours







The Town is proud is see the arrival of four new Heritage Gateway Signs

B1 C2 C3

# 23 CONCERTS IN THE PARK

World class classical music could be heard in the beautiful surroundings of Sutton Park when Concerts in the Park returned for a third year over one weekend in June. The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra headlined the Saturday event with the Sunday being a family fun day themed around Alice in Wonderland.



# ENVIRONMENT & RECYCLING

## RECYCLING

Waste and Recycling in Royal Sutton Coldfield is managed by Birmingham City Council (BCC). BCC collects residual household waste weekly and recycling fortnightly and also operate a paid-for garden waste collection service.

BIRMINGHAM AS A WHOLE GENERATES 500,000 TONNES OF WASTE EACH YEAR

SUTTON COLDFIELD RESIDENTS HAVE THE HIGHEST RECYCLING FIGURES OUT OF THE WHOLE OF BIRMINGHAM

39% OF MUNICIPAL WASTE WAS RECYCLED IN 2018/19

AROUND 325,000 TONNES OF WASTE WERE SENT ENERGY RECOVERY IN 2018/19

10% OF BIRMINGHAM'S WASTE WAS SENT TO LANDFILL IN 2018/19

1 RECYCLING CENTRE IN SUTTON COLDFIELD

ACROSS ALL 5 BIRMINGHAM RECYCLING CENTRES 13,500 TONNES IS USED AS BIO-FUEL

## GREEN WASTE

Birmingham City Council operates two green waste composting sites. Green waste from the management of the town's parks and open spaces, e.g. grass clippings, shrub pruning etc, is taken to the BCC-owned composting depot.
Over an 18-week period the green waste is processed to produce a soil improver which is used in flowerbeds in parks..

# JERICHO REUSERS

Jericho ReUsers rescue, restore and recycle second-hand items at their retail store in Sutton Coldfield.

The store is promoted as "a place to find all those things that others don't want but are too good to throw away". The store in Sutton Coldfield is open seven days a week, offering a huge range of reused items from furniture, garden tools to bric-a-brac and salvaged items.

Their ethos is "junk is for life and not for landfill" and that "second-hand can be first choice". Located adjacent to the recycling centre at Norris Way, Sutton Coldfield, they encourage residents to divert and donate their reusables to Jericho ReUsers, so that they can get the goods back into circulation.

In addition, Jericho ReUsers work with on-site partners Trikes and Bikes who offer a specialised service in selling reconditioned bikes that are inspected and made fully roadworthy.

# 25 ONGOING PROJECTS

## Rainbow Garden

This garden was a piece of waste ground where people were fly-tipping. Local resident, Patsi Whelan-Archer took it upon herself to do something about it and decided to turn it into a garden that everyone could enjoy. Patsi continues to add to the garden and themes it for events including Remembrance Sunday and an Easter Egg hunt that children can enjoy.







## Reddicap Futures Allotment

Members of the Reddicap community formed a group to make a positive change for families in their area. The group was recently given a piece of land which they plan on transforming into an excellent community garden. The group have faced barriers in getting the project up and running but it definitely one to watch!

## Green Flag

Following feedback from judges last year, Friends of Jones Wood are preparing an application to submit to gain Green Flag Status for this historic woodland .



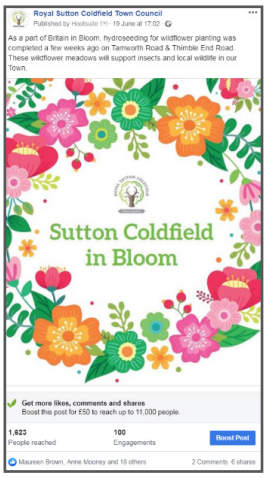
# SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

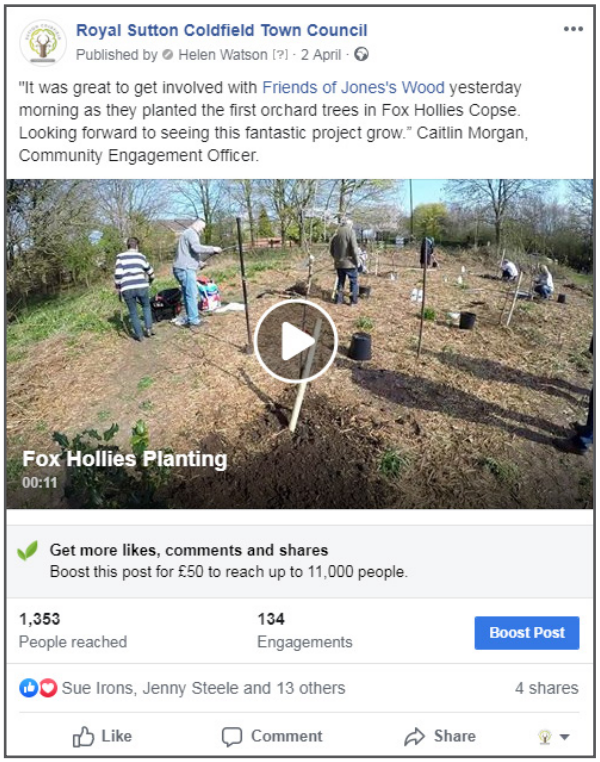
To date, the Town Council has supported clean and green projects and groups through our community grants scheme.

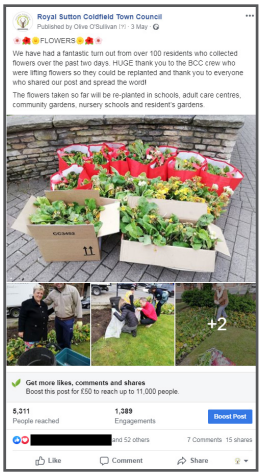
| ORGANISATION | PROJECT |
|---|---|
| Birmingham Trees for Life | Tree planting at Jones Wood and New Hall Valley Country Park |
| ECO Sutton | Purchase of air pollution monitors |
| Four Oaks Ladies Bowling Club | Bulb planting along the bowling green area |
| Friends of Hill Hook Local Nature Reserve | Sustaining conservation and nature education activities |
| Friends of Jones Wood | Install nesting and bat boxes. Purchase equipment for public events such as Winter Wonderland |
| Friends of Mossy Bank | Newly formed group who are keen to clear up and enhance the Mossy Bank area for the whole community to use. Funding allocated for start up equipment such as anti-graffiti paint and litterpicks |
| Friends of Rectory Park | Improving WW1 memorial garden in Rectory Park |
| Friends of our Libraries Sutton Coldfield | Bloom related festival and activities |
| Fuchsia Society Sutton Coldfield | Annual Fuchsia Society Show |
| New Hall Valley Country Park | Replace welcome sign and information board |
| St Peter's Church | Purchase planters for floral displays to support the Church's 'Maney in Bloom' project |

# 27 MARKETING

We have had some great engagement on our social media throughout the year!

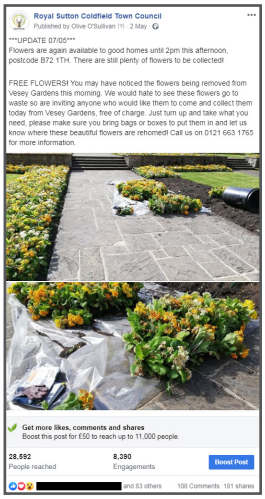


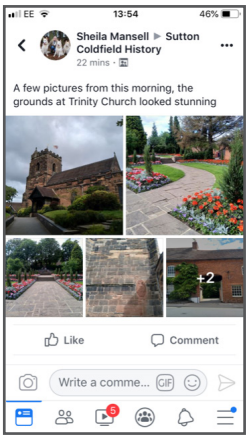












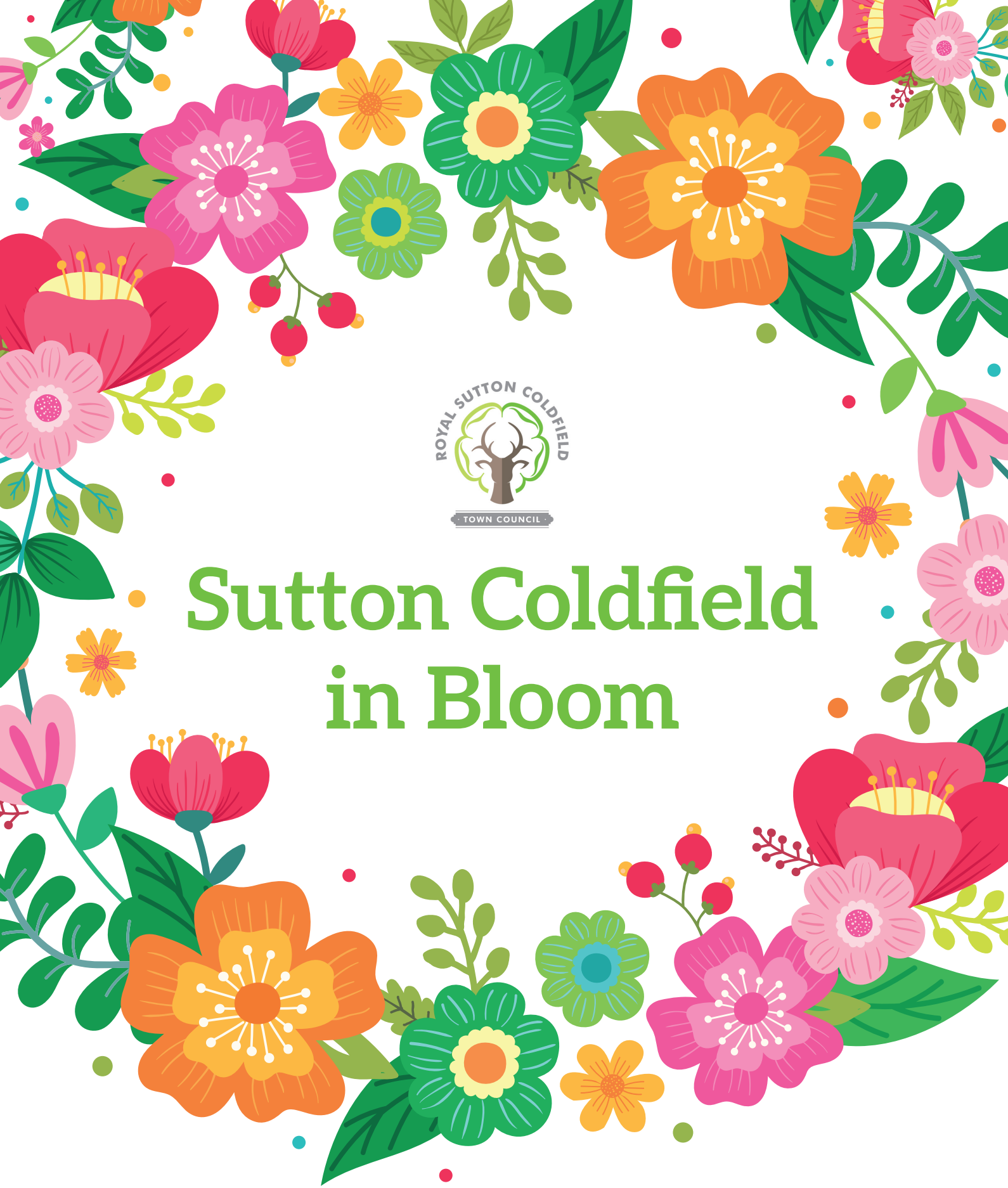

# THANK YOU

The Working Party wishes to record its thanks for the support it receives from all its partners. In particular, we are grateful to the many hard working volunteers who are out in all weathers making our town a better place to live. We could not manage without your help. If you are involved in the sort of project described in this portfolio, or you know somebody who is, we would love to welcome you to be a part of Sutton Coldfield in Bloom and perhaps feature your project in next year's portfolio.

PORSCHE

We are grateful to the sponsors and local businesses who have supported Bloom this year, in particular Porsche Sutton Coldfield for kindly donating a Porsche Panamera E-Hybrid, which will act as the lead car on the day of the judging.

We are always looking more involvement from this sector so please get in touch if you think you might be interested.



# Sutton Coldfield in Bloom

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