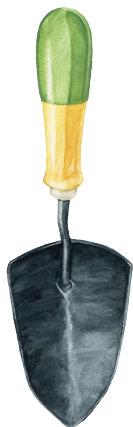


Loughborough in Bloom 2021



Contents...

Chairman's welcome Bloom throughout the pandemic	3
Loughborough Markets and Fair 800th Anniversary	4
Name that Bin Wagon competition	5
Two Loughborough beauty spots awarded Green Flag	6
Volunteers praised for helping to reduce litter in the borough, tenant garden competition	7
The Outwoods	8
Loughborough in Bloom calendar	9
Business areas and premises	10
Horticulture	11
Green Spaces	12
Mental Health Awareness Week	13
Environmental responsibility	14
Resource management	15
Loughborough University	16
Community	17
Community Participation	18
Contributors	19



Chairman's welcome...

Well, here we are...

Although Bloom has often felt out of reach during these troubled months, the Covid-19 Pandemic couldn't bring a halt to Loughborough in Bloom's spirit. Some folk still managed to attend their own patches when and where they could and others quietly laid plans for when we were all let loose again.

Sadly of course some have been unable to carry on.

It's been an honour to be asked to chair the Loughborough in Bloom Board once again, but the circumstances of my re-appointment, with the passing of the wonderful, irrepressible Marion Smith, were not welcome.

Marion was constantly on hand to offer help to others, welcoming and encouraging new members, spreading Bloom good-will to all. Her warmth, self-deprecating humour and just downright niceness are truly missed but yet, such was her impact, she is still around, a symbol of the spirit of Loughborough in Bloom in these difficult times.

In loving memory of Marion Smith.



In loving memory of Marion Smith

Andy Rush
Chairman, Loughborough in Bloom



Andy Rush, Chairman of
Loughborough in Bloom

Bloom throughout the pandemic

Nature lovers were spoilt for choice when it comes to exploring the great outdoors in Charnwood, and residents have become more appreciative of the stunning open spaces in the borough during the past 18 months, when the coronavirus pandemic emerged and had a catastrophic impact on the world.

When you are visiting our beautiful parks and open spaces, whether it's the peaceful Queen's Park or the ancient woodland of the Outwoods, please take a moment to reflect on the people who have lost their lives during the pandemic, the businesses who have struggled and the people who have continued to work hard throughout such difficult times.

Loughborough Markets and Loughborough Fair 800th Anniversary

This year is the 800th anniversary of the Royal Charters which granted permission for the market and fair to be held in Loughborough.

They were awarded by King Henry III to Hugh Despenser who was the Lord of the Manor. King Henry was just nine at the time and he later confirmed the charters in 1227.

The weekly market is still being held in Loughborough and the fair takes place every November with both events having few breaks in eight centuries of history. The cancellation of the fair in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic is thought to be one of the few occasions the fair has not been held.

Planned events and activities to celebrate the 800th anniversary include:

- The Our Market, Our Fair exhibition will feature at Charnwood Museum and Loughborough Library from July
- Commemorative lights will be installed in the town centre
- A plaque in the town centre will mark the 800-year-milestone
- A series of features, photos and videos will capture the past, present and future of the market and fair and be shared on social media and other channels
- A Loughborough Fair exhibition will be hosted at Loughborough Town Hall in the Autumn
- Working closely with our current traders and showpeople to provide them with an opportunity to tell their own stories about the market and fair
- Welcoming new traders to the market through our Try a Trade Scheme.





Gary Bineker!

Name that bin wagon competition

This year, Charnwood Borough Council invested in a new fleet of refuse and recycling vehicles and young residents from Loughborough and the borough were asked to name them. Name That Wagon gave young people a chance to tell us what they would name one of the new bin wagons.

The borough council received over 150 name suggestions and the final 24 winning names were selected by a panel and have now been revealed. They will join Florence, who was named last year as a dedication to the NHS heroes and key workers who are on the front line supporting the public during the coronavirus pandemic. The vehicle also features a large rainbow on the side along with a thank you message.

The winning names for the Name That Wagon competition included: Lorries: Binderella, Bindiana Jones, Binny, Chitty Chitty Bin Bin, Crushington, Florence, Garbage Goblin, Gary Bineker, Grass Gobbler, Greta Garbage, Hope, Mr Bull's Bin Lorry, Rainbow Runner, Rosie Recycler and Rubbish Buster.

Road Sweepers: Clean Machine, Dusty, Lightning McClean, Sooty, Sweep and Sue.

Thank you to everyone who entered.



Some of our Loughborough winners!

Two Loughborough beauty spots awarded Green Flag

Two beauty spots in Loughborough have retained the prestigious Green Flag.

Loughborough's Queen's Park, which is managed by Charnwood Borough Council and its open spaces partner idverde, has achieved the national standard of excellence for the twelfth year running.

The Forest Road Green Belt in Loughborough, which is maintained by volunteers with the support of idverde and Charnwood Borough Council, has also retained its community green flag.

Pat Cook, who formed the Forest Road Green Belt gardeners with her late husband Harry, said: "I feel very proud to once again retain the community Green Flag for the Forest Road Green Belt. It is the fifth time in a row that we have received it.

"Harry would be very proud."

Cllr Jenny Bokor, lead member Loughborough said: "It's fantastic that both Queen's Park and the Forest Road Greenbelt have once again been awarded a Green Flag.

"We're immensely proud of our open spaces and the Green Flag scheme celebrates the hard work of maintaining our parks to a high standard.

"I would like to say thank you to our partner Idverde, volunteers at Friends of Queen's Park and to everyone involved in the Green Belt Gardeners who have helped keep these two open spaces looking fantastic for the local community to enjoy."



Pat Cook with Forest Road Greenbelt Green Flag

Volunteers praised for helping to reduce litter in the borough

Groups and individuals who help clear litter across Charnwood are being praised for their efforts.

Loughborough in Bloom is proud to have already supported many volunteers across the borough who strive to keep their local communities clean and free of litter. The borough council recently handed out 100 additional litter picking equipment packs to willing volunteers and community groups.



Dishley Residents Association litter pick

It comes as part of this year's Great British Spring Clean campaign.

The campaign is organised by Keep Britain Tidy and ran from May 28 until Sunday June 13, 2021.

The Council supports groups and individuals by providing rubbish bags and working with its waste partner Serco to agree a date and location to pick up the litter.

The Council supports the Great British Spring Clean alongside its partners Idverde which manages the Council's parks and green spaces, and Serco, which runs the refuse, recycling, and street cleansing service.

Tenant garden competition

With life slowly but surely coming back to some normality, Charnwood Borough Council brought back its tenant garden competition this summer, after postponing it in 2020 due to Covid.

Tenants were asked to submit their fruit or vegetable gardens, hanging baskets, communal gardens and more into the categories.

The deadline for applications was set for Friday June 11, with judging planned for between July 27-29.

Best of luck to everyone who entered!



The winners from 2019's tenant garden competition

The Outwoods

The Outwoods is 110 acres of ancient woodland to the north of Loughborough and is one of the oldest surviving woodland sites in Charnwood. It is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is a much loved and well used site not only by locals but also by visitors from further afield.

In order to enhance the visitor experience whilst still protecting this important public site the former Outwoods keeper's cottage and surrounding area is currently undergoing a transformation. An injection of £140,000 from the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) and £200,000 from the Council. This funding has enabled us to create a new play area and the cottage itself is being redeveloped into a visitor interpretation centre and café.

The woods consist of a variety of different routes and walks, including an easy access path with a bird hide and feeding station. Walkers with mobility issues can also use the trampers which are provided free of charge. Towards the end of April and the beginning of May the wood is carpeted with bluebells,

The woodland is carefully managed by idverde on behalf of CBC in line with the Forestry Commission and Natural England Management Plan. The autumn prior to the onset of the Covid pandemic saw one compartment of the woodland which was planted with non-native tree species being clear felled. Volunteers from all over Charnwood including the green Gym replanted this area during the winter months with 2,000 oak saplings as part of the ongoing regeneration of the woodland back to its ancient roots.

As we emerge from the pandemic we are gradually recommencing with our corporate and local volunteering sessions which are run by idverde, along with the forest school activities that usually take place.



Bluebells at the Outwoods in April



Outwoods play area



Building the new cafe and visitor centre

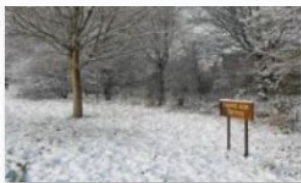
Loughborough in Bloom calendar 2021

Loughborough in Bloom's 2021 calendar was printed at local company, Quickprint, and contains photos taken at various Bloom sites throughout the town.

Each photograph used reflects both the correct time of the year and our all-year-round working.

Individual community groups were invited to submit entries to be considered for the calendar, and those in the calendar were chosen out of 42 submissions by a small panel of representatives.

All of the calendars were sold and made a small profit for Bloom.



January.
Thorpe Acre Green



February.
Stonebow Washlands



March.
Garendon Green



April.
Forest Road Green Belt



May.
Stonebow Washlands



June .
University Floral Butterfly



July.
Three Close Tenants Baskets



August.
Holt Green Centre



September.
Emmanuel Church



October.
John Storer Charnwood Pumpkins



November.
Thorpe Acre Heart Sign



December.
Forest Road Green Belt Santa

Loughborough in Bloom
calendar 2021

Loughborough in
BLOOM

Business areas & premises

Businesses are represented on the Loughborough in Bloom Board by the Love Loughborough Business Improvement District (BID), and the Loughborough Chamber of Trade and commerce. Together they represent more than 700 businesses within the town and play a key part in Bloom.

Charnwood Borough Council launched its Shop Safe Shop Local campaign to raise awareness of and support local businesses hit by the pandemic, and to ensure that local residents of Loughborough made use of the local market and independent shops and stores once they were able to open again.

To keep people safe, the campaign focuses on creating maps, signage and posters for businesses and the local area so that residents were aware of social distancing guidance. High Street Helpers were on hand in the town centre to give advice and guidance when required.

An online ecommerce site was also launched to encourage residents who wanted to shop online to do so from local businesses.

The Shop Safe, Shop Local campaign is funded thanks to the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund and Welcome Back Fund which is supported by the European Regional Development Fund.

The campaign is also being supported by Love Loughborough.



We're proud and pleased to be supporting the multi-award-winning Bloom in making our town look so colourful, so inviting and so pleasurable to visit, shop and work in.

We, the businesses and our partners will continue to make sure our town centre is not only fit for purpose but a vibrant and fun place to shop and socialise in."

Lez Cope-Newman, Chair
Love Loughborough



High Street Helpers in the town centre



Ladybird book benches in Loughborough town centre



SHOP SAFE
shop local



Wooden troughs made by the
Glebe House Volunteers



Horticulture

The colourful hanging basket trees at the entrance to the town each hold 21 baskets and are all sustainable self-watering systems. There are five large gateway hanging basket trees in the town centre. In addition to the 200 baskets supplied by Plantscape that the Council use to dress the town, a further 235 hanging baskets and 11 troughs are funded by local businesses and the Loughborough Business Improvement district. Their hanging basket and trough displays are coordinated by the BID, in consultation with Charnwood Borough Council and Idverde. This is done through the monthly Bloom Board meetings which has Loughborough and Chamber in Commerce and BiD representatives.

Continuing with the development of the Loughborough inner relief road, 30 barrier boxes are planted at key locations to add colour along the new inner relief road. The boxes are sponsored by our waste partners Serco. Charnwood Borough Council have been able to secure the additional barrier boxes by working in partnership and consultation with Leicestershire County Council.

Communication between Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council continues to improve and grow stronger. A representative from LCC now sits on the Board and this has enabled the Board, CBC and LCC to work closely together and adopt a more cohesive and progressive working relationship within the confines of the County's budget restraints. LCC weed spraying throughout the borough and Loughborough town centre has been delayed this year following consultation regarding alternative methods to using glyphosate. The review has currently not succeeded in identifying a suitable alternative.

For Council-owned areas, herbicides are used as little as possible, and pesticides are only used on sports fields to ensure areas continue to be suitable for play. These are used sparingly so there is no long-lasting impact or danger to wildlife. We are currently looking into other options to see if the use of glyphosate can be eliminated completely.

Idverde continue to introduce more sustainable planting along the ring roads, including mechanical bulb planting on Epinal Way. The planters on Ashby Road roundabout now have a more sustainable planting scheme and are topped up with more plants during the summer.

Green Spaces

Despite being the largest town in the north of Leicestershire, there are many areas of green spaces within Loughborough. Some of the largest parks in the town are Queen's Park, Southfields Park and Sidings Park. All three parks have recently benefited from over £300k of additional funding to ensure they continue to be vibrant green spaces.

Southfields Park features a well-used skate-park and facilities for free running and parkour. The skate park has recently been extended following consultation with local users and an outdoor gym installed to increase options for physical exercise in the park. The park embraces the urban sports alongside its more traditional use as a community open space.

Several smaller parks and open spaces throughout Loughborough have also been revamped by Charnwood Borough Council. Kirkstone Park has received a £50,000 upgrade to include new paths, play structures, seating, and additional landscaping. The Bell Foundry estate received £67,000 improvements to create a new pocket park, raised beds and natural play to provide a much-needed community focal point.

Sidings Park and Great Central Park have recently undergone improvements to provide improved play offer to families with small children. Included for Sidings park is the refurbishment of two brick planters which have been established with sustainable planting.



Queen's Park in full bloom



Swans at Stonebow washlands



Dishley Pool





Entrance to Southfields Park



Children enjoying the Outwoods play area

Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

It was Mental Health Awareness Week from May 10-16 and the theme this year was 'nature'.

Charnwood residents were urged to take some time that week to enjoy the beautiful nature that is around us every day.

Throughout the pandemic our parks and open spaces have helped residents feel more relaxed, improve moods and reduce stress. Furthermore it has highlighted just how important these sites are for mental health and wellbeing.



Residents enjoying a walk around Queen's Park

Environmental responsibility

Conservation & biodiversity

Grange Park, Stonebow Washlands and The Outwoods regularly benefit from the work of volunteers to ensure Loughborough continues to protect and enhance local wildlife.

Activities including the management of wildflower meadows, coppicing, scrub management, hedge laying and the creation and maintenance of paths are organised throughout the year.

In addition to Stonebow, the Borough Council are designating three more new Local Nature Reserves in Loughborough. Gorse Covert is an important community woodland site in Thorpe Acre, primarily composed of oak and ash high forest. The site will be designated as a Local Nature Reserve this year. A new management plan for the site has been developed and volunteers have already started improving access for the local community.

Bird boxes have also sprung up across the town, with instant habitats installed in the Outwoods and Queen's Park. Members of the Thorpe Acre Scout Group have provided bird boxes for Thorpe Acre Residents' Group and Glebe House have provided bat boxes for use on the Forest Road Green Belt, adding to the small collection introduced in 2014.

Idverde launched a Borough wide swift project in partnership with the RSPB designed to encourage the local community and churches to provide nesting sites for this bird of conservation concern. During lockdown clients and volunteers from Glebe House constructed 10 swift boxes for Emmanuel Church and their



Poster of the Swift project in partnership with the RSPB



Blossom at Stonebow washlands

volunteers. These boxes were put up at the end of April by Glebe House and idverde/RSPB partnership together with a solar powered swift caller designed to attract potential nesting birds. Further sites in Loughborough are currently being evaluated to become part of this project.

Conservation volunteers

Idverde runs a successful Conservation Volunteer Programme once a week on a Wednesday, this started up again in April with the relaxing of Covid rules. The programme encourages projects at some of Loughborough's most important wildlife sites.

The volunteers learn new skills, make new friends and enjoy access to some wonderful wildlife, under the supervision of idverde's ranger service. Tasks range from renewing pathways at Stonebow Washlands to removing

Resource management

Conservation of and appropriate use of water resources is key to the management of our open spaces. During the dry seasons, idverde has access to a 600-gallon water storage tank at Charnwood Water. Water from the man-made lake is used to water nearby beds if they are threatened by drought.

Water butts are used by a number of community groups to gather water in an environmentally friendly way and ensure natural resources are used as much as possible before the need for hose pipes.

idverde uses mulch wherever possible to retain water on beds, alongside gel beads to hold some of the water and keep it in the soil, reducing the need to water the areas.

The Plantscape hanging baskets help reduce our carbon footprint as they all have a water reservoir to enable self-watering, reduce wasted water during watering visits and are fully recyclable.

Loughborough University continues to use a mechanical bulb planting programme alongside their traditional annual programme; this has led to more than 30,000 bulbs being planted across various vast campuses that will continue to bloom in the future.

Mechanical bulb planting has also been undertaken by idverde on Alan Moss Road to plant daffodils. They are looking at plans to continue this elsewhere.

Serco provides a mixed recycling service which makes it much easier for residents to use, and in turn reduces the amount of rubbish going to landfill.

No green waste leaves the University campus, everything is shredded and left to compost, turned over the years and then either reintroduced to the campus shrub beds as a soil enhancer or sieved and used as topsoil for reinstating grass areas.

Composting skills are also shared by a network of Master Composter volunteers. Individuals are encouraged, by Leicestershire County Council, to use their experience of composting to help those who have never given it a go.

The Council's annual Student Clean Up, held before the summer holidays, encourages students to have a tidy-up of their homes and gardens, while also encouraging donations to charity. In just one year the initiative resulted in 23 tonnes of rubbish being collected during the day, 16 tonnes of which recyclable.



Serco crews on the student clean up



Hanging basket in the town centre

Loughborough University

Swimming Pool Bank

This year we said goodbye to the themed bedding display on the swimming pool bank on Epinal Way. The University's sustainability programme continues to be a focal part of the management of green spaces and the display was not in line with this agenda. Couple that with the Covid constraints and it was no longer an option to continue with the display. The area was levelled with the help of some very enthusiastic Student Action volunteers and grass seeded.

Sustainability

Continuing the University's sustainability agenda, more areas are being managed to encourage insects, birds, wildflowers and wildlife of all guises. There are no seasonal bedding displays at all on campus now, which reduces our costs, strain on resources and water consumption. Many grass areas are designated as 'managed mowing' with rides cut around the edges or as paths and the rest left natural for grasses and wildflowers to flourish. Special signs are in place to indicate these areas have a vital part to play in the natural environment.

Purple4Polio

In October 2020 the University supported one of the Purple4Polio activities organised by Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland. These activities raise funds and awareness for End Polio Now. Every autumn since 2016 The Rotary Club has been supporting communities in planting purple crocus corms across the country. The corms were planted behind the balancing pond at the Epinal Way entrance to campus.

Heritage Woodlands

The University owns two heritage woodlands, (once part of an 11th century deer park). The publicly accessible Burleigh Wood and the private Nature Reserve Holywell Wood. There are over 7500 trees on campus and a large number of these are in the woodlands. The trees are managed by the University's full time-arborist. Each year there is a bluebell walk – usually held to coincide with Mental Health Awareness week – which is open to everybody.



Heritage woodlands are managed by the university



Flowers at the university campus

Community

Help with our community groups

Supporting our local community groups during the pandemic has been challenging and the past 18 months have felt different. Although they have not been able to work and socialise together the groups have been determined to develop new IT skills. This enabled them meet virtually monthly when everyone was in lockdown. Regular meetings continued through various platforms such as Zoom and Teams. Although not able to meet face to face this has helped boost their spirits and keep networking and communication going.

Idverde continue to support the reuse of bedding plants used in horticultural displays throughout the town. Materials which are no longer required are donated to local community groups to reuse in their own displays. This year these included Wallflowers, Tulips, Hyacinths and Polyanthus.



Community groups at Thorpe Acre and Fearon Hall

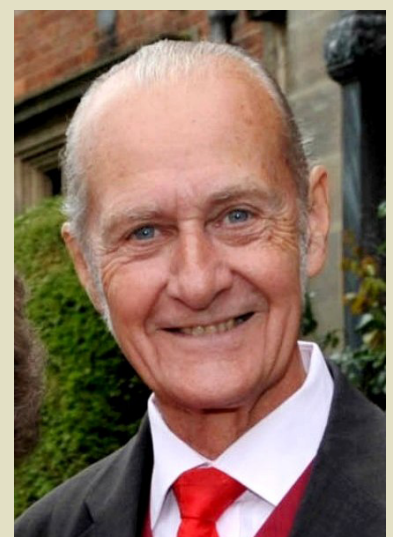
A word from Community Participation Group Chair Mike Jones



Our Community Groups are the lifeblood of Loughborough in Bloom. All over the town, and throughout the year, hundreds of volunteers can be seen making Loughborough a great place to live, work and visit.

These groups are co-ordinated via regular, well attended, meetings of our Bloom Community Participation Group, which circulates information through a structured distribution network, including EMIB and RHS Newsletters and Bulletins.

This year, despite the pressures of the Coronavirus lockdown, we have 32 entries into It's Your Neighbourhood, with at least five other groups saying that they will re-enter next Year. My thanks, and that of our excellent statutory and business partners, are therefore recorded hereby to the many unsung heroes that make Loughborough in Bloom such an enduring and valuable initiative. Long may it continue!"



Community participation Group Chair Mike Jones

Community participation

Community participation in Loughborough continues to drive the Bloom campaign. A total of 32 It's Your Neighbourhood Groups have signed up this year with only five that are unable to enter due to the pandemic. Among the IYN entries that are not on the judging route are:

Wolsey Way Gardeners - This is a group of like minded residents who brighten up the fronts of their houses, with planting and hanging baskets, giving a boost to everyone in the street.

Peter le Marchant Trust - This non-profit organisation, situated at the side of the Grand Union Canal, operates three specially adapted narrow boats to provide trips for people of any Disability or Health Condition. Volunteer Gardeners ensure that their site is well tended, so as to provide pleasure for all visitors.

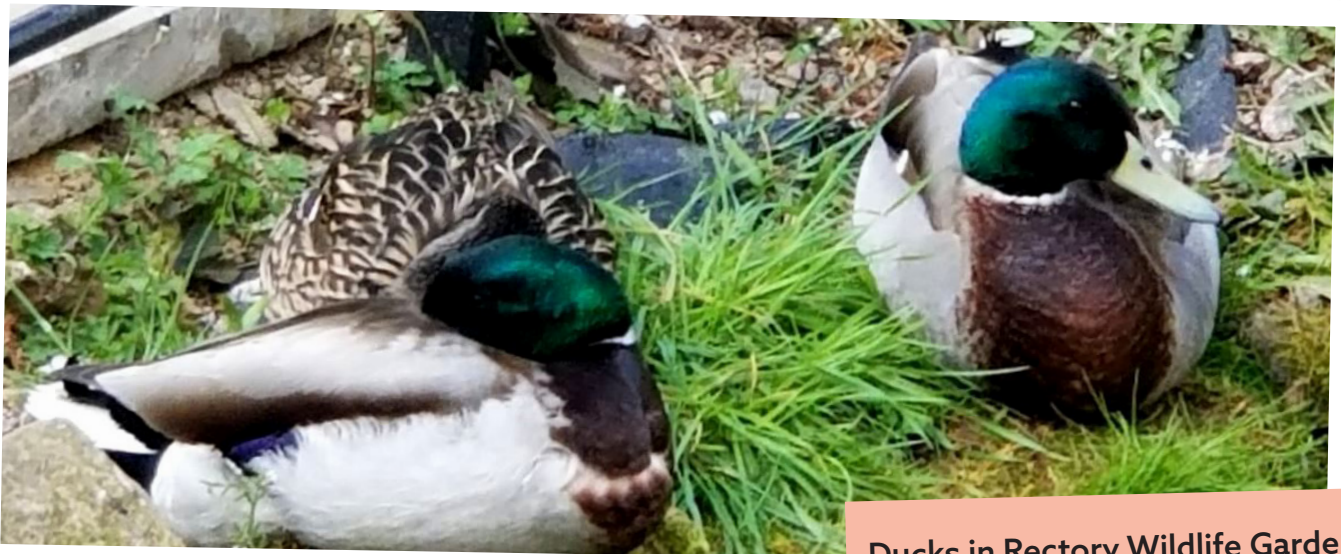
Transition Loughborough Allotment - Transition Towns address the issues of Peak Oil Supply, Climate change and Economic Instability. The Transition Allotment group addresses these matters by demonstrating the need for self-sufficiency in terms of growing its own produce, involving the local community and running seed swaps and environmental workshops.

Holt Green Gardeners have taken over a previously poorly maintained square, in the middle of Holt Drive, and have transformed it into a pleasant and well cared for amenity, now used regularly by local residents and their families.

Ronald West Court is a retirement scheme run by leading not-for-profit housing provider, housing 21. Inspired by the principles of "It's Your Neighbourhood" tenants and residents have taken over the areas in front of their homes and transformed them into a veritable oasis of flowers and vegetables enjoyed by all. On open days and other events, visitors are amazed when they see what can be achieved by gardening!



Top-left: Ronald West Court. Top-right: Peter Le Marchant Trust. Bottom: Transition Loughborough Allotment



Ducks in Rectory Wildlife Garden

Contributors

- The Abbeyfield Loughborough Society Gardens
- Age UK Men in Sheds
- Ashby Road Estate Green Fingers
- Beacon Road Flats Gardeners
- Chapman Street Gardeners
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Clear Cut Conservation
- Emmanuel Church
- Fearon Community Association
- The Flower Pot People
- Forest Road Green Belt Gardeners
- Freehold Street Bloomers
- Friends of Queen's Park
- Friends of Loughborough Cemetery
- Garden Buddies
- Garendon Green Gardeners
- Glebe House Work Skills Project
- Great Central Railway
- Green Gym
- Grow Loughborough
- Holt Green Gardeners
- idverde
- John Taylor Bell Foundry
- John Storer Charnwood Allotment
- John Storer House Cottage Garden
- King Edward Road Gardeners
- Knightthorpe Methodist Gardeners
- Loughborough Baptist Church
- Loughborough Lions Club
- Loughborough Student Union Landscape and Gardening Society
- Leicestershire County Council
- Leicestershire & Rutland Fire Service
- Loughborough Business Improvement District
- Loughborough Chamber of Trade and Commerce
- Loughborough District Scouts
- Loughborough Echo
- Loughborough University
- Loughborough United Reformed Church
- Marios Tinenti Centre
- Peter Le Marchant Trust
- Plantscape
- Primary Schools of Loughborough
- Rainbow Children's Hospice
- Rectory Wildlife Garden and Hospice
- Rockingham Road Gardeners
- Ronald West Court
- Rosebery Community Centre
- Sacred Heart Church
- Serco
- Shelthorpe Community Garden Project
- Siding's Park Area Residents' Association
- Stonebow Washlands Group
- Student Action Volunteers
- Thorpe Acre Residents Association
- Three Close Tenants' Association
- Transition Loughborough – Community Allotment
- Wolsey Way Gardeners

With thanks to Mike Jones, Pat Cook, GROW Loughborough, idverde, Glebe House, Loughborough University, Leicestershire County Council and Charnwood Borough Council for providing the images used within the portfolio.

