

WOLLATON AND LENTON ABBEY AREA COMMITTEE – NOVEMBER 5TH
2009

Title of paper:	Britain in Bloom Neighbourhood Awards	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Hugh White Director of Sport, Leisure and Parks	Wards affected: Wollaton West
Contact Officer(s) and contact details:	Eddie Curry Head of Parks and Open Spaces 0115 915 2733 eddie.curry@nottinghamcity.gov.uk Julie Walker Nottingham in Bloom Partnership Manager 0115 915 2745 julie.walker@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Other officers who have provided input:		
Relevant Council Plan theme(s):		
World Class Nottingham		
Work in Nottingham		
Safer Nottingham		
Neighbourhood Nottingham		x
Family Nottingham		
Healthy Nottingham		
Serving Nottingham Better		
Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):		
This report informs the Area Committee of the success of local groups in the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom Neighbourhood Awards 2009.		
Recommendation(s):		
1	The report is noted	
2	The Area Committee is asked to commend the efforts of local people to improve their neighbourhoods.	

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Britain in Bloom Neighbourhood Awards is an initiative for small, resident-led communities aiming to achieve long-term improvements to their local area through horticultural, environmental and cleanliness initiatives.
- 1.2 The Awards are non-competitive, welcoming groups that are taking their first steps towards community cohesion and regeneration. Whilst entries are not judged against each other, they are visited in the summer by environmental and horticultural experts who provide feedback and advice on how to develop current activities and encourage ongoing improvements. The assessors look for teamwork and community effort, floral displays, good maintenance, environmental quality (i.e. absence of litter, dog fouling, graffiti, fly-posting and weeds) and overall impression.
- 1.3 Communities that participate have reported an increased sense of pride in the area in question, greater community spirit, and cleaner and greener surroundings for a healthier community. Each community receives an Award of Improvement, Merit, or Outstanding Achievement.
- 1.4 In 2009, 80 groups from Nottingham were assessed (up from four last year). Amongst them were three groups from Area 7 that achieved the following Awards:

The Friends of Wollaton Local Nature Reserves – Merit
Wollaton Village Centre – Merit
Wollaton Park Community Centre Garden – Outstanding Achievement

Comments of the judges are included in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 Several Nottingham projects are featured on a ten-minute DVD created by Nottingham in Bloom in partnership with East Midlands in Bloom and the Royal Horticultural Society. This will be used regionally and nationally to inspire and encourage other communities to get involved.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 To acknowledge the efforts of local people in improving their neighbourhoods, taking a pride in the area, building community spirit and enhancing the reputation of the area. Members are asked to acknowledge the role played by community Bloom initiatives in improving local pride and community spirit as well as enhancing the environment.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 None

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY)

- 4.1 There is no cost involved in entering the awards. Groups aiming to expand their activities may approach the Area Committee for a contribution towards their efforts.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS)

5.1 None

6 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

6.1 None

7 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

7.1 None

APPENDIX 1

Comments of the East Midlands in Bloom judges

Wollaton Park Community Centre – Outstanding Achievement

This is a community led entry, which was born out of the desire to commemorate the life of Marjorie, a hard working volunteer.

The work for the memorial garden began 2008, which grew into a complete garden project, transforming the disused bowling green into a delightful garden, comprising lawns, and low maintenance borders, raised beds for easy wheelchair access and shrubbery. Birdfeeders, bird table, butterfly and ladybird houses encourage wildlife.

The garden is in the ownership of the centre, which plays host to many clubs whose membership ranged from 2-90 years. It is open to all members of the community and has in fact served as a peacemaker between the new Medical Centre and local residents. Through the development, the centre received support from Nottingham City Council, Nottingham in Bloom and companies including Experian and Capital One who provide regular working parties.

There was evidence of quality planting which received high quality maintenance and this year the garden has been entered for the national Green Pennant Award. The area suffers little vandalism, and it was exceptionally clean and tidy. The centre is now planning for the future to further improve the area.

Wollaton Village Centre – Merit

This was a community-led entry where a small group of enthusiasts have encouraged a number of community groups to pool their resources into a communal effort in order to enhance the village centre. The groups involved range from toddlers to seniors and they have provided the village centre with a rich and varied environment of hanging baskets, planters and permanent planting. The day nursery has introduced the very young children (3 and 4-year-olds) to gardening through the use of container planting.

This has been further developed at the Library, where Brownies and Beavers amongst others have designed, planted and maintained their own gardens. The Library also hold regular Holiday Clubs where children have been introduced to gardening in the small courtyard garden.

Hanging baskets and planters were in evidence on the local public house, the Royal British Legion and the Scout Hut.

Perhaps the most interesting section of the entry is St Leonard's Churchyard, for this is a good example of conservation. Through the support of Eco-Congregation, a national interdenominational initiative, members of the congregation have introduced log hotels, a wildflower garden, bird boxes, recycling and the planting of indigenous trees. All this is augmented by the work local primary and secondary pupils undertake in the churchyard. The WI have also been involved in planting in the churchyard.

A low maintenance shrubbery has been planted by the Bowls Club, and a memorial garden to commemorate the life and work of a member of the church is reaching maturity on land adjoining St Leonard's Community Centre.

The area was free of litter and graffiti, and was very clean and tidy. Future consideration might be given to the possibility of featuring a number of front gardens that are close to the village centre within the entry.

The Friends of Wollaton Local Nature Reserves – Merit

This entry is quite different from the usual residential neighbourhood submission. However, it has components that illustrate quite clearly the benefits of people working together to maintain and enhance a recreational facility for the benefit of local people. The Friends have a Group that is active in practical ways at the three Reserves about which they are concerned. There is a Management Plan and Green Flag Awards have been made. The Friends have a well-attended Open Day and hold programmes of Open Meetings and practical Conservation Sessions. The Friends are in contact with the local school and there is a good working relationship with the local authority and other statutory bodies. It is good to see that these Reserves are well used and appreciated by local people.