

# Gin Festival tickets go on sale

Tickets are now on sale for the 2019 Farnham Gin Festival on Friday 13 and Saturday 14 September.

This popular event sold out in record time in 2018 and this year is expected to be no exception.

Gin connoisseurs will be able to sample new and interesting blends from some of the country's leading gin distillers. Organiser Farnham Town Council is expecting 15 gin distillers to attend the Festival with an eagerness to share the story behind their distillery and tips on how best to enjoy their spirit.

Iain Lynch, Town Clerk says: "Tickets are limited for this two-night Festival, so I do urge anybody who wants to come to book early.

"We are grateful to The Castle Inn for partnering with us on this event. Their expertise and contacts guarantee the event appeals as much to confirmed gin lovers as it does to those who are simply curious to discover the national fascination for this revived spirit."

The Festival is being held at the Farnham Maltings so there will be plenty of room for people to discover up to 150 different types of gin. As well as sampling new, local and lesser known brands, enthusiasts can book to take part in optional masterclasses.

There will be live music, food and a free goody bag for all who attend. [Taylorcocks](#) is sponsoring the event which has enabled ticket prices to be frozen and offered at the 2018 price of £12. This includes admission to the Festival, a complimentary Fever Tree tonic and a souvenir Gin Festival glass. Tickets for the gin masterclasses cost £10. To book, visit the [Farnham Maltings' Box Office](#) or call 01252 745444.

---

## Launch of In Bloom 2019

Organisers of Farnham in Bloom discussed fresh ideas and new challenges at the recent launch of the 2019 campaign at Forest Lodge Garden Centre.

Former councillor Stephen Hill, the outgoing lead member for Community Enhancement at Farnham Town Council reflected on the hard work he has witnessed

in his 12 years as a town councillor. He paid tribute to the many supporters who make Farnham in Bloom, which began 29 years ago, such a success.

Speaking at the launch, he said: "It has been such a joy to be part of Farnham in Bloom. Its success is down to a huge army of volunteers, council staff and local businesses who work tirelessly to improve In Bloom year on year – it's just incredible. I would also like to say a big thank you to our new principal sponsor for the next two years, the Farnham Institute Charity."

Andrew Lodge, Chairman of the Farnham Institute Charity says: "The trustees of the Farnham Institute Charity are pleased to be supporting Farnham in Bloom as there is no doubt that this is a superb project that benefits the people and visitors of Farnham.

"2019 is a very exciting year for us to be coming on board as principal sponsor. To be invited to enter the national Britain in Bloom awards for the fourth time is a fantastic achievement. I'm sure Farnham will do extremely well in rising to the challenge of competing in the new Urban Community category."

New for this year, Farnham Town Council is encouraging supporters to look out for the Bloomin' Friends and Bloomin' Pix projects. The new volunteers' group, Bloomin' Friends, already has 23 hands-on volunteers doing planting-out and other hands-on tasks at the Farnham Town Council greenhouses.

As the arts continues to be an important part of Farnham in Bloom, a new photography competition, Bloomin' Pix will take place this summer. Both these initiatives will run alongside the existing portfolio of Bloomin' events, including Bloomin' Arts, Bloomin' Kids and Bloomin' Litter.

Spokesperson for the Farnham in Bloom Community Group, Martin Billet, illustrated the output of Farnham in Bloom in numbers. Among other astounding statistics, he noted that this year's efforts would amount to 15,000 volunteer hours and that 27,000 plug plants would be planted, tended and watered. Fifty-five Bloomin' Litter volunteers regularly litter pick the streets of Farnham, 265 hanging baskets, troughs and planters will be tended and displayed, and it is anticipated that children from 19 schools and nurseries will be actively involved this year.

Invited guests at the launch included representatives from the dozens of local sponsors providing finance, people power and resources to make Farnham in Bloom happen. As well as the Farnham Institute Charity, the launch hosts Forest Lodge Garden Centre, The Patio Black Spot Removal Company, Squire's Garden Centre and Graduate Landscapes are among the leading sponsors for 2019. They are joined by Net Tech Solutions, Bournemouth Manor Care Home, Wildflower Turf, Glendale and around another 70 local businesses, organisations and individuals sponsoring the project.

Guests enjoyed refreshments and speeches as well as the opportunity to discuss their plans and ideas for Farnham's entries to Britain in Bloom and South and South East in Bloom.

---

## Free family fun at Spring Festival

Make the most of your bank holiday weekend by joining in the fun at the annual Spring Festival, say organisers Farnham Town Council. The festival, which is free to attend and held at Gostrey Meadow, kicks off at 12 noon on Sunday 26 May and runs until early evening, closing at 6pm.

"You will find everything you need at the festival for a fun day out. We have live music and dance performances, a selection of excellent food and drink stands, entertainment and family activities. There's plenty of space to enjoy a picnic and an opportunity to pick up some tasty locally produced food and drink from the Farmers' Market which is on from 10am to 1.30pm in Central car park," says Councillor David Attfield, Mayor of Farnham.

He adds: "There's free parking in Waverley Borough Council's pay and display car parks – so do bring along your deck chairs too if you would like. Our summer events programme is sponsored by Kidd Rapinet and the Spring Festival is supported by Gold sponsor Durham House Chiropractic Clinic and Silver sponsor Hyped Marketing. Stalls from voluntary organisations such as Creative Response and Farnham Ramblers will really add to the community feel of the afternoon."

This year's live acts include The Dolomites, Peter Crutchfield, Eden Blacklist, Ye-Ye and the A31s. Also on the line up are Farnham Taiko Drumming who will perform an energetic set of Japanese-inspired drumming pieces and a workshop for anybody who would like to have a go.

As well as listening to an eclectic range of music, festival-goers can enjoy activities such as sporting activities, a circus skills training area and a small family funfair.

---

# Secret Gardens competition opens

The call is out to local gardening enthusiasts to enter the Secret Gardens of Farnham competition run by Farnham Town Council as part of the Farnham in Bloom initiative. Entries to all categories in the competition are now open.

Iain Lynch, Town Clerk at Farnham Town Council says: “We are looking for the best gardens – large and small – as well as container gardens, veg’ patches, courtyards and wildlife gardens. We would also like to see how businesses are using gardening to brighten their premises, and examples of community gardens too. Entries are now open for this extremely popular local competition which is always an absolute joy to judge.”

The competition categories are:

- Best Courtyard sponsored by The Patio Black Spot Removal Company
- Best Hanging Basket or Container
- Best Front, Back or Small Garden
- Best Large Garden
- Best Public House or Hotel
- Best Vegetable Garden
- Best Shop Front
- Best Wildlife Garden
- Best Business Premises
- The 2019 Madge Green Community Gardening Project.

The competition is open to all gardeners living in Farnham and surrounding communities. A full list of villages and localities is on the [council’s website](#). Entrants can enter as many categories as they wish.

“We always discover fantastic gardens in the Secret Gardens of Farnham and the standard is very high but we are also looking to encourage and nurture a love of gardening and environmental responsibility as well as wanting to reward excellence in horticultural talent,” says Iain Lynch.

The judges will assess factors such as planting choices, care of lawns and hedges, vegetables, compost areas, places for wildlife and environmental responsibility such as rainwater harvesting and using peat-free compost.

There will be prizes for winners and runners-up, including a trophy to be held by the winner in each category for one year. The judges will also present a Gardener of the Year Award. The Secret Gardens competition is part of Farnham in Bloom which is sponsored by the Farnham Institute Charity. All entrants will be

invited to the Farnham in Bloom Awards ceremony to be hosted at Squire's Garden Centre in October.

Each entry will receive a certificate and winners will receive a prize. Full information about how to enter and competition rules are on the [Secret Gardens page](#) or pick up an entry form from Farnham Town Council.

Entries are open until 28 June date. Judging takes place w/c 15 July.

---

## Walks for nature lovers of all ages

Nature lovers wanting to know more about woodland wildlife are encouraged to book on one or more of the free woodland walks taking place as part of the Farnham Walking Festival.

Limited spaces are available on three guided walks specifically taking in woodland and each focusing on a different aspect of wildlife. The festival, which is organised by Farnham Town Council and a team of volunteer walking enthusiasts, includes around 40 walks in total and so far, more than 700 people have booked to take part.

"We have three excellent woodland nature walks to choose from which will suit different people depending on your interests and how keen a walker you are," says Iain Lynch, Town Clerk at Farnham Town Council. "All the walks are organised and led by our knowledgeable and helpful volunteers who have very generously given up their time. The walks are free to join but it's essential to book your places in advance as numbers are limited. You can book on the Walking Festival website at [www.farnhamwalkingfestival.org](http://www.farnhamwalkingfestival.org)."

The Exploring the Countryside for Families on 24 May is aimed at families with children of all ages and takes place at Farnham Heath RSPB. To keep younger minds stimulated and make the walk as engaging as possible, family groups can explore and investigate the countryside and use the activity boxes provided. The schedule also includes time for a picnic lunch, making this a fun and relaxed atmosphere that parents and children will enjoy.

On 29 May, a wander in the Bourne Woods will take walkers on a scenic circular route down the Bourne Valley then into and around the Bourne Woods. Walkers will hear about local history, the wildlife found in the valley and woods as well as some fascinating anecdotes about filming in the woods.

Finally, a walk at Alice Holt Lodge on 31 May will encompass a trail of 30 specimen trees in the grounds of Alice Holt Lodge. Walkers will learn about several of the specimens that have survived from Victorian times when the lodge was a private residence. In more recent times, the Forestry Commission has planted further rare and interesting species, making this walk a must for tree enthusiasts.

As well as these three walks, there are plenty more to choose from during the Farnham Walking Festival which takes place from Sunday 19 May to Sunday 2 June. Walks are of varying lengths and challenge, with something for everyone. The programme includes routes suitable for wheelchair users, people with prams and children. The festival covers themes such as local history, arts, wildlife and other aspects of Farnham's heritage. Experienced walking enthusiasts and those wanting a more generous stroll will all find something to appeal to them.

Free festival guides with full details of routes and guidance are available to pick up from the library and the Town Council office in South Street.

---

## Friends plant 6,000 plants

A magnificent floral display awaits Farnham's plant lovers thanks to the tremendous achievement of a new Farnham in Bloom volunteer group that planted 6,000 plug plants in just two days over Easter.

New for 2019, the Bloomin' Friends group, which completed the mammoth task, is providing Farnham Town Council with hands-on practical help for this year's Farnham in Bloom competition. Farnham Town Council took delivery of the 6,000 plug plants on the Wednesday before Easter. Volunteers, supported by Town Council staff, potted on 4,000 plants on Thursday and finished the remaining 2,000 on Good Friday. The display will be ready to see at a greenhouse open day on 22 May.

Iain Lynch, Town Clerk at Farnham Town Council says: "The group worked tirelessly to make sure these plug plants were planted on as soon as possible. Farnham in Bloom relies heavily on volunteer support and many hands make light work so if this is the sort of task you would like to help with, please get in touch."

Volunteers carry out a substantial number of the practical tasks involved in making Farnham in Bloom the success that it is each year and the organisers are always looking for more helpers. While many are keen gardeners, others are simply enthusiastic hard workers or eager to learn. Volunteers should contact

Farnham Town Council to find out more about how they can help.

The plant display will be on show at Farnham in Bloom's annual Greenhouse Open Day on Wednesday 22 May from 10am to 12pm and then again from 6-7pm. The open day gives people the chance to see a sneak preview of Farnham in Bloom before plants are distributed around the town and surrounding villages. Entrance is free but visitors are asked to register by emailing [lara.miller@farnham.gov.uk](mailto:lara.miller@farnham.gov.uk).

Refreshments will be available and visitors arriving by car will receive information about parking arrangements when they register.

---

## Farewell to former Gurkha

A well-deserved retirement awaits a Farnham Town Council employee who will be a familiar face to many local people. Thapa Jhupa is a former Gurkha who had over 20 years' service for the British Army. Thapa joined the more peaceful surroundings of Farnham after a military and security career that took him to Malaysia, Hong Kong, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Iain Lynch, Town Clerk at Farnham Town Council thanked Mr Jhupa for his hard work in Farnham: "Thapa has been an integral part of our outside workforce for over a decade and has applied the diligence and discipline of his professional background to his various roles with us. As a member of our outside housekeeping team he was responsible for cleaning and maintaining the town's bus shelters, public conveniences and other facilities as well as helping at events. More recently Thapa has worked as part of the grounds maintenance team. I know many local residents and businesses will miss seeing Thapa around the town and we wish him well for the future."

Thapa is looking forward to beginning some new adventures and spending some time with his family in Hong Kong who he last saw in the 1980s, and meeting his grandchildren.

Thapa grew up in Nepal before completing his military training in Malaysia and Hong Kong. As a Gurkha he was a quartermaster, combat engineer and physical training instructor.