

# Farnham in Bloom

*Gostrey  
Meadow*

South and South East  
in Bloom submission

2020



**Farnham**  
Town Council



**Farnham**  
In Bloom

# Welcome to Farnham

In February when we welcomed our Farnham in Bloom community to our Bloomin' Big Meet, little did we know what 2020, our 30<sup>th</sup> year, had in store for us!



Mayor of Farnham and her consort

I am delighted that South and South East in Bloom continues and that Farnham can once again enter albeit in a virtual way, this prestigious competition.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic we had to cancel many of our events including our launch, Bloomin' Kids workshops, and Greenhouse Open day and many more. To keep residents busy during the lockdown period we have run virtual competitions such as creating a Lego Garden, making a scarecrow, VE day arts and crafts competition and encouraging people to enter our Secret Gardens competition.

We are thankful to our sponsors during this difficult time for businesses. Their support has made it possible for us to provide flowers and plants around the town which have brought joy to everyone. As Farnham emerges from lockdown, shoppers and residents can enjoy the splashes of colour from the 200 hanging baskets and planters displayed around Farnham and the surrounding villages.

Farnham Town Council has also provided much needed support and help to residents during this time, setting up a helpline, introducing a support fund for families who are in financial difficulties, opening a Share community shop where residents can take home donated items such as puzzles and games and enhancing the pavement widening scheme in Farnham to support local shops and businesses with social distancing by planting up 40 new planters.

We are sorry we cannot welcome you in person this year but we hope you enjoy our submission and get a sense of what we have been doing to make Farnham bloom.

**Councillor Pat Evans**  
Mayor of Farnham

## About Farnham In Bloom



Badshot Lea village infant school

Farnham in Bloom is about making Farnham an attractive place to live and work in or to visit: filling it with flowers and keeping the town and surrounding villages looking their best and encouraging people to work together. Farnham in Bloom is part of the wider Community Enhancement work for the Town with a particular focus in the summer months on:

- A range of floral displays throughout the town and local villages including hanging baskets, troughs and planters with village flowers being watered and maintained by residents, community organisations and local businesses.
- A school hanging basket competition as well as fun, engaging competitions to find the tallest sunflower, anti-litter poster, largest pumpkin, best flower grown in a boot and the most impressive scarecrow.
- A **Secret Garden** competition for businesses, residents and schools which includes categories for the best:

- Courtyard
- Hanging basket or container
- Front, back or small garden
- Large garden
- Public house, hotel or business premises
- Shop front
- Wildlife garden
- School garden
- Vegetable plot
- and The Madge Green Community Gardening Project Award

## Farnham in Bloom at a glance

Since its early beginnings 30 years ago, Farnham in Bloom has relied on voluntary commitment, local sponsorship (financial and in-kind) and support of local authorities and local businesses.

Being part of this competition has given a focus to the contribution made by all of Farnham's distinct communities in both the Town Centre and Large Town categories.

The charts below set out how this contribution has grown over the years, to deliver high standards and ultimately bring pleasure to Farnham's residents, businesses and visitors.

Farnham in Bloom activity for 2020 includes:

- An amended calendar of activities so the community could still participate in Farnham in Bloom despite Coronavirus restrictions.
- All hanging baskets have been planted by Farnham Town Council and local schools in peat free compost.
- A new sponsorship brochure offering specific sponsorship packages and more options has seen sponsorship increasing in the last few years.
- An increased social media presence in 2020 documenting all aspects of Farnham in Bloom.

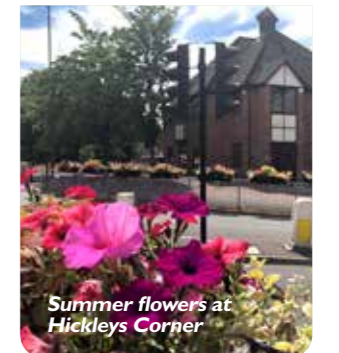


RHS Britain in Bloom National Winners 2019

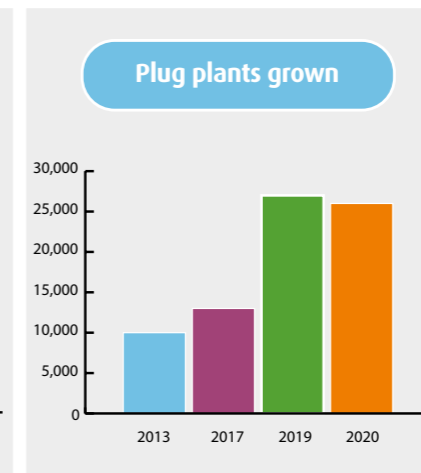
- Providing hanging baskets and troughs for a neighbouring Parish Council.
- Extension of the Council's wildflower area improving West Street, Badshot Lea and Green Lane Cemeteries and Gostrey Meadow.
- Continuing our 'Bee Friendly' project as part of 'Help Our Pollinators' and 'Wild About Gardens' campaigns.



Plug plants ready to be grown on



Summer flowers at Hickleys Corner





30 year carpet bed



## 30 Years of Farnham in Bloom



From its inception, Farnham in Bloom was managed by a local volunteer group for 15 years. In 2005, the group retired and the Farnham in Bloom baton was passed to Farnham Town Council.

2020 marks the 15th year that Farnham in Bloom has been led by Farnham Town Council, the Farnham in Bloom Community Group and a team of volunteers. Farnham Town Council entered Farnham town centre into South and South East in Bloom for the first time in 2008 and since then has won the following awards for the Town centre and Large Town centre categories:

- Gold in the S&SEiB Town Centre category nine times
- Gold in the S&SEiB Large Town category eight times
- The S&SEiB Large Town regional category five years in a row

- The S&SEiB Chairman's Award for Post 19 and Bishop's Meadow
- Gold in the RHS Britain in Bloom Awards and Joint Category Winner in 2017, Gold in the RHS Britain in Bloom Awards and Category winner in 2019.

Farnham in Bloom grows year on year and involves so many dedicated local people and community organisations that help make the initiative what it is today.

We continue the great work of the original volunteers, bringing people together to make Farnham and its surrounding villages even better places to live, work and visit.

*"After we stood down, I was delighted that the enthusiasm for Farnham in Bloom not only lives on, but grows, year on year, with so many local individuals and businesses showing their support."*

**Madge Green** – Co-founder of Farnham in Bloom who sadly passed away in 2017.



Madge Green and her volunteers



## Horticulture

Farnham Town Council took over the management of Gostrey Meadow from Waverley Borough Council in autumn 2019.

The focus for this year has been clearing some of the older shrubs including Carex, Humulus and Euphorbia. Himalayan balsam has previously been removed and successfully treated. Problem grass areas have been addressed. There has been extensive work on the rose beds which has included pruning, planting of new rose plants and improving the soil. The soil is improved by using compost from the nursery which has been recycled from hanging baskets and the use of soil conditioner from our sponsor Continental. This soil improver is recycled green waste. This year, the theme for the carpet bed was VE Day to mark the 75th Anniversary in May. Before this bed was planted the framework was rebuilt.



Clearing near the riverside

A local community group has planted courgette plants in a bed. The courgette flowers create interest and users of the space will be encouraged to pick the courgettes when they are ready. Lavender plants have been added to the area and provide a splash of colour and fragrance and create an ideal habitat for bees and other insects.

Large sections of the riverside have been cleared of many overgrown plants and shrubs to allow better sightlines and to open up access for families and children to enjoy the water on a summer's day.



Weeding rose beds

Normal grass cutting and maintenance continued during the lockdown period. Outside work force teams were placed in 'bubbles' of two workers so that social distancing measures could be observed. PPE and increased hygiene procedures have been strictly followed.



Laying the wildflower seed

# Environment

Plans have been drawn up to develop the old bowling green site to create a community café and hub and potentially re-site the play area. These plans have had to be put on hold due to the Coronavirus situation.



Old bowling green site

There has been a continued programme of refurbishment of waste bins in the park. There are plans to replace gates on the main entrance on the Union Road side and a local charity, The Farnham Lions, have offered to contribute to the cost of these. This project has been put on hold until 2021.



Gates to be replaced



VE Day carpet bed

Litter and graffiti problems have been acted on quickly and resolved.

Peat free compost has been used in the beds, garden waste is composted and river water is used to water the flower beds and planters. Alongside the VE Day carpet bed, VE day themed bunting has been put up in the park.

A large area of the riverbank which was previously neglected has been cleared and sown with wildflower seed which will add much needed colour to the area as well as attracting bees and birds.



Wildflower area

# Community Participation

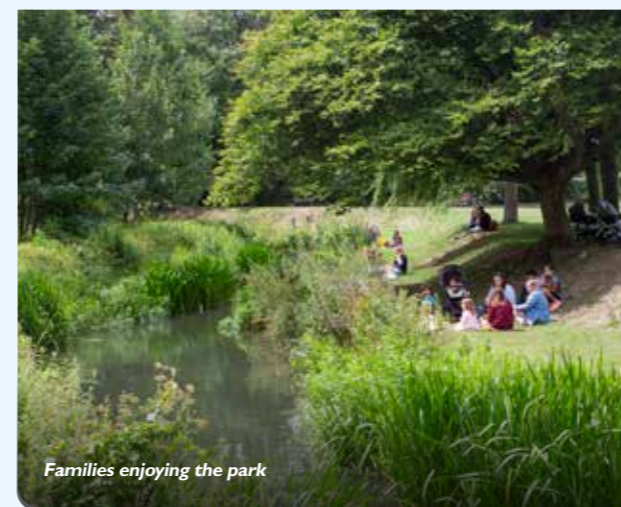
Around 20 events organised by Farnham Town Council, were due to take place in Gostrey Meadow over the summer months.

These had to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus situation. To facilitate these events, a project had been started to provide better electricity supply for music, lighting and sound.

This will be in place before our new events programme is relaunched in August within Covid-19 guidelines.



Christmas light switch-on event 2019



Families enjoying the park

In previous years, the Bloomin Friends volunteers would have supported the outside team with dead heading, weeding and watering. This group are mostly aged over 70 or shielding but as restrictions lift, they have started to help around the park and plant some planters. The volunteers will also be creating flower beds around the bandstand to add much needed colour.



Remembrance at the War Memorial

The park has been well used by individuals and families for their daily exercise and as the lockdown restrictions have been eased. Particularly in the warm weather, the park has been busy with people enjoying a picnic or children playing in the river.

In line with government restrictions, the playground was closed to the public but has reopened.

# Thank you for supporting Farnham in Bloom 2020

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## Thank you to our individual sponsors of Farnham in Bloom

Barry and Sandra Hartop  
 Dudley Pitman

Marianne and Gerald Nicholson  
 Michael Hockey

John Ely

## In loving memory of

Gill Ely  
 Madge Green

Marcia James  
 Kath Taylor

RHS Britain in Bloom Gold winner and category winner in 2019 • [www.farnham.gov.uk](http://www.farnham.gov.uk)