

🏆 Barcham Trees Award for Best New Landscape: Strutt Centre Rainwater Garden

Judged on: 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Judges: Jo Tarrant & Jeff Bates

Judges Award: For the contribution of the Belper Choir to the judging day

This pretty, traditional market town in Derbyshire has a wonderful community feel to it, welcoming to visitors and homely to residents. The Judges enjoyed the diverse tour filled to the brim with nature reserves, beautiful front gardens and volunteers galore. Whilst the mist and rain may have descended on the day, it didn't fade the flowers or the enthusiastic bloom group.

**Areas of Achievement**

Section A

Many of the pubs and restaurants offer quality displays, helping the overall floral effect of the town, particularly The Green House pub opposite the Memorial Gardens.

There is a great contribution of the Town Council grounds staff to the Bloom, they have a real input and pride for the work they do. St Johns Chapel is a welcoming location for the Town Council and has a lovely mix of baskets and perennial planting.

Section B

The Yarn Bombing and art trail around the town was fantastic, especially the Dr Who phone box - particularly when a resident asks "is it real, can I use it?" The wildlife planting and art work at the Railway station has a welcoming and "cared for" feel to it. The whole town overflows with history and the interpretation of that history is well documented in numerous locations across the town.

Section C

Across the town there are so many groups of people doing such good work to improve the town for everyone's benefit, this should be commended. Everyone is aware of the Bloom in the town and Belper has great links with the radio and press. The town has a varied and vibrant calendar of events which make Belper a great place to live and visit.

**Areas for Development**

Section A

Consider working with members of the Gardening Club to create a "Bloom Design Group" who could meet twice a year to help decide on the towns bedding display species and colour schemes. Continue to sell the Shop Door flower pots; offer a replacement service for pots starting to look tired or pot bound. Look into creating some "Hot spot" of floral impact in the Market Place to match the impact of the Memorial Gardens.

Section B

Consider a management regime in the Cemetery that would allow for a more diverse grass sward and a lower more naturalised mowing regime in some areas. Consider if there are any other areas of the town or buildings which would benefit from the installation of a rainwater drainage garden. The vegetable planting in the memorial gardens and riverside gardens were great; consider if any additional "veg beds" could be grown around the town.

Section C

Continue to raise the profile of the project to ensure the Swiss Tea Rooms at the River Gardens are rebuilt and brought back into reuse as soon as possible. Continue the good work in achieving valuable sponsorship from business for the floral displays across the town.

Consider if some of the towns bedding could be grown by the Whitemoor day centre to help with their funding.

**A85    B45    C44    Total 174 Gold**