

Godmanchester in Bloom 2009
for The Bridge Magazine

We seem to have come a long way in our first full year!

Since we last had an article in **The Bridge** we have won our first Anglia in Bloom awards. Godmanchester received a Silver Award in the Small Towns Category, and were regional winners in the Best Environmental Quality Award.

An excellent start but there is more to do with everyone's help.

For the first time we have wintering flowering hanging baskets in the Town, The flowers have improved greatly since Christmas and given Godmanchester a splash of colour after a long dull winter.

Dave Brown and his team, after a lot of hard work, have almost completed the public area at the end of East Chadley Lane. The wild flower meadow will soon be a reality. Thanks, on this, also go to the Hinchingsbrooke Park Rangers, HDC, and the Community School.

The Guides and Brownies helped us plant 2000 snowdrops along the Queen's Walk, with the 500 daffodil bulbs from Flying Brands Limited.

Carlie Campbell and her team arranged for 7 new trees to be planted along Tudor Road, with new whips at Judith's Field. The War Memorial flower rota works well.

Godmanchester Town Council has been most supportive all along, and gave us another grant for the existing, and some new, street hanging baskets. These now stretch along London Street, The Causeway, Post Street and The Avenue. We all look forward to seeing them give the Town another sparkle this summer.

Other generous Sponsors include The Community Association, Paul Smith of HDC, Jan Kaneen of Muir Housing, Luminus and the residents of Rectory Gardens.

The Allotment Association, under the leadership of John Hartshorn and Peter Weston has helped us take down the worst of the corrugated iron sheeting from the south boundary fence and Mary Evans with her young community helpers have planted the first phase of a partly flowering replacement hedge.

We have met staff from Wood Green, who would like to be more involved in the Town, while the Guides and Brownies have requested that we help them provide a feature to co-inside with their 100th Anniversary later this year.

We are also looking to provide brick planters for some of our streets. Alison Mackie has obtained our first £1000.00 grant for these.

Mary Stokes continues to co-ordinate the work done by our two schools, who received very favourable comments from the Anglia in Bloom Judges last year.

The St Mary's Churchyard Group with Malcolm Harris and his team worked hard at keeping this important area neat and tidy. Simon and Janie Price planted their first 1000 English bluebells.

On the 'Osier and Bird Conservation Project' Sheena Kynoch and her helpers have cleared areas and planted osier cuttings. With the help of Neil Renwick from the RSBB Sheena has organised a bird survey rota. We have some serious Twitchers in the Town! Some of them have put up Swift and Barn Owl boxes to attract these birds back into the area. We are looking at Nightingales next as a long term project!

We are tremendously encouraged by the support 'In Bloom' is receiving from so many people in the Town. Window boxes, hanging baskets and front gardens suddenly sprang into life last year, and we hope everyone will do the same in 2009. If you were unable to participate last time, perhaps this is your year. There will be certificates for the winners of the hanging baskets, window boxes and pub flower displays as well as front gardens this year! Peter Irving is kindly organising the judging again, which will take place in the fortnight leading up to the Anglia in Bloom Judges visit on Thursday 9 July. So please be ready!

A particularly welcome development has been the way neighbours have been coming together to help each other with small flower schemes. If we can take this to the next step, and expand the idea to cover whole streets, or groups of streets, it would be an eye catching long term project to the benefit of everyone as we move to 2012. Why not start a scheme near you?

We have some 62 Godmanchester in Bloom volunteers so far. If you are not already on board, do come and join us!

Contacts: Committee – John Thackray (Chair) 01480 420007, Mary Stokes (Vice Chair) Nina Collier (Secretary) Michael Turner-Cain (Treasurer) David Brown, Carlie Campbell, Peter Irving, Alison Mackie.