



Bloomin' marvellous for Epsom and Ewell

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Go Epsom Business Improvement District, and dedicated volunteers from across the borough were delighted to pick up a number of awards for Nonsuch Park, Epsom Town Centre and Ewell Village at this year's South & South East in Bloom awards.

For the first time, Nonsuch Park picked up two awards, a prestigious Gold Award for Large Conservation Area and a Silver Gilt Award for Heritage Park.

Judge **Peter Holman**, who is also Chairman of the South & South East in Bloom scheme, praised the efforts of the Nonsuch Voles Volunteering Group, and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Operational Services and Countryside Team, who all work together for the overall benefit of the park.

Mr Holman said, "Woodland management, planting new trees and beds, and uncovering and restoring horticultural features all add value. Since my last visit, it's good to see progress and the natural areas of the park are an excellent example of what can be achieved to benefit wildlife."

Ewell Village kept its Silver Award status in the Large Village of the Year category and was congratulated on the efforts of the community volunteers who help maintain the Gertrude Longhurst Memorial Garden and Bourne Hall Park.

The council's work at Bourne Hall was also praised. The judges said, "With its historic grounds, Bourne Hall showed noticeable improvements to the area at the rear of the building, which now forms an outdoor extension to the café area. It is understood that planting to soften its appearance is planned along with a new children's play area. Adjacent to the pond, a new pollinators bed has been successfully planted and looked attractive.

"The Wheatsheaf public house was pleasing to see and welcoming. Also of note was the work at Gertie's garden."

Epsom Town Centre entered the Business Improvement District category and retained its Silver Award status. The judges noted the planting schemes in Rosebery Park, the 'Pocket Park' in South Street and the new planters outside TK Maxx, they were also impressed with the murals around the Town Centre and the Lidl Living Wall in Upper High Street.

Councillor **John Beckett**, Chair of the Environment Committee, said "I am pleased to see the hard work and dedication of the council, Go Epsom, businesses, residents and volunteers has been formally recognised at this year's South & South East in Bloom awards.

"Maintaining our standards by winning Silver Awards in Ewell Village and Epsom Town Centre again and improving on last year's awards tally by winning Gold and Silver Gilt for Nonsuch Park is a brilliant achievement.

"Plans are already being put in place for the borough to take part in Bloom next year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who is committed to ensuring our borough is the best it can be for the local community, visitors and wildlife all year round."

Karen Pengelly, BID Manager at Go Epsom said, "Epsom is a lovely town, and the introduction of planters, murals and general greenery are welcome additions to our street scene. Visitors and local workers have commented on how much they appreciate the efforts of everyone involved in making Epsom look even better. Onwards and upwards for 2024 - there's always more to do!"

The awards were held at RHS Wisley on Friday 29 September 2023.

South & South East in Bloom is part of Britain in Bloom and runs annual competitions across the counties of Kent, Surrey, East & West Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, East & North Dorset and East Wiltshire.

Related reports:

Bloom awards for Epsom and Ewell (2022)

Image: Rosebery Park in Spring: © Copyright Marathon and licensed for reuse under this Creative Commons Licence