

Amersham in Bloom

PORTFOLIO 2026



COMMUNITY | CREATIVITY | BLOOM

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Introduction

Amersham in Bloom began in 2007 as a Town Council initiative to enhance the appearance of the town through participation in the regional Britain in Bloom campaign. Three years later, Amersham achieved its first Gold award, recognising not only improved planting but the growing commitment of local people.

Since then, Bloom has evolved from a gardening project into a community movement. Inspired by other successful Bloom groups, we shifted our focus from creating displays *for* the community to creating them *with* the community. Today, residents, schools, businesses, community groups and volunteers all play an active role in shaping, caring for and improving Amersham. Bloom is no longer a separate organisation working within the town, it is a shared approach to caring for the place we all call home.

This grassroots model has transformed Bloom into a catalyst for civic pride, environmental action and community wellbeing. By giving people opportunities to contribute, learn new skills and take ownership of their local environment, we are creating improvements that are valued, maintained and sustained by the community itself.

The core aims of Amersham in Bloom are to:

- create a more beautiful, biodiverse and climate-resilient town
- deliver lasting improvements that future generations can enjoy
- inspire children and young people to care for their environment through practical learning and participation
- strengthen community connections, wellbeing and pride of place
- encourage local stewardship so that caring for Amersham becomes everyone's responsibility

As Bloom has evolved, so too has our planting. Early displays focused on seasonal colour using annual bedding. Over recent years, we have transitioned

towards permanent, pollinator-friendly planting that improves soil health, supports wildlife and reduces long-term maintenance.

This year, increasingly unpredictable weather has accelerated that transition. We have continued to adapt our planting for a changing climate, expanded our biodiversity monitoring through community science with partners such as Wild Amersham, and strengthened the involvement of residents, schools and local organisations in caring for shared spaces. Our ambition is not simply to improve Amersham today, but to build a community that has the knowledge, confidence and ownership to care for it long into the future.

The success of Bloom depends on strong partnerships. Local businesses, community organisations, schools and volunteers contribute funding, expertise, materials and thousands of hours of practical support. Whether planting flowerbeds, maintaining green spaces, collecting biodiversity data, building habitats, creating public art or fundraising, every contribution strengthens the shared ownership that sits at the heart of Bloom.

This year alone, community support has enabled us to:

- expand the community allotment
- increase pollinator planting, extending wildlife corridors across the town
- expand the children's art trail with new murals, sculptures and community-created artwork
- deliver new environmental projects, including Environment Day, that encourage residents of all ages to get involved in caring for Amersham

Year Review: 2025-2026

Monthly Highlights

July

- One communications box painted by TalkBack charity



August

- Beds, borders and wildflowers flourish



September

- One communications box painted
- 'Bring it Back' initiative - first session
- Fundraising for the new Bloom season began, including Heritage Day



October

- Recycled art sculptures, created by Heatherton School and The Beacon, displayed at St Michael's Church as part of their eco week
- Seed collection at the community allotment



November

- Crocus bulbs planted with Stony Dean School
- Spring bulbs planted by the Bloom team and Stony Dean School; bulb 'lasagne' planted by the Missenden Walled Garden charity



December

- Leaf clearance throughout Amersham
- Planters and tubs planted with seasonal bedding
- Last of 35,000 bulbs planted as part of Bring it Back project

January

- Christmas tree collection and composting
- Trees mulched at Willow Wood
- RSPB Garden Birdcount conducted by Bloom volunteer



February

- Crocuses flowered
- 'Tree of Life' multi-canvas art mosaic, created by local secondary school and home educated children, displayed at The Chilterns Lifestyle Centre
- Development begins on the new allotment plot



March

- Spud Club gardening sessions resume at the community allotment, as well as Bloom & Brew sessions for adults
- Community litter pick



April

- Potting on of plug plants by Stony Dean School and Bloom volunteers at the community allotment
- Native wildflower plugs planted at St Mary's Church as part of the 'Bring it Back' initiative, in conjunction with Amersham Museum and Wild Amersham
- Amersham Environment Day event
- Launch of the tallest sunflower competition
- Replacement of bees on Sycamore Corner
- New polytunnel erected at community allotment, funded by the National Gardens Scheme



May

- Bluebells in Hervines Wood bloomed
- Wildflowers sown with Heatherton House school at Hervines Park and within their school grounds
- Tulip bulbs lifted and stored
- Street signs planted with perennials and sunflowers
- One communication boxes painted
- Monitoring of 'Tweet Street' bird boxes (four occupied with nestlings)



June

- Summer refresh of town planters, borders and Memorial Gardens
- Beavers help to plant hanging baskets at the community allotment
- The National Lottery Community Fund grant awarded to develop wheelchair accessibility at the community allotment
- Sculpture project with The Beacon





Over the past 18 years, local people have worked together through Amersham in Bloom to transform neglected spaces into thriving community assets. As planting has evolved from seasonal displays to permanent, wildlife-friendly landscapes, residents, schools, businesses and volunteers have become active custodians of these spaces, ensuring improvements are both environmentally sustainable and cared for long after planting day.

Memorial Gardens

The formally designed Memorial Gardens are a cherished community space that respectfully celebrates local heritage while evolving to meet the needs of people and nature. They include the recently restored WWI War Memorial, WWII and Covid memorial plaques, the Peace Garden with its pond and wildflower lawn, a sensory garden featuring a pollinator bed and barefoot path, WWI replica models and planting, the Queen's Rose Garden commemorating Her Majesty's 90th birthday, a green roof, bug hotel and the King Charles III Coronation Clock.

Cared for through a strong partnership between the council, volunteers and the wider community, the gardens have become a thriving hub where remembrance, learning and environmental action come together. Community ownership is at the heart of their success, with local people of all ages helping to shape and care for this special place, creating opportunities for intergenerational learning and shared stewardship.

This year has seen further improvements driven by a commitment to lasting environmental stewardship. The river within the Peace Garden has been restored, while the sensory garden has been enhanced with a renewed barefoot path and water feature. Overgrown shrubs have been replaced with a diverse selection of pollinator-friendly plants, strengthening habitats and ensuring the gardens continue to flourish as a welcoming space for wildlife and the community. The summer bedding will be lifted and overwintered at the community allotment, and replanted around the town next year. Together, these practical actions reinforce local pride of place and demonstrate how grassroots care can create lasting environmental and social value.

Signature Flowerbeds

Our four brick flowerbeds, known as the town's 'signature' beds, welcome residents and visitors at the main entrances to the town and create a strong sense of arrival and local identity. In 2022, all four were transformed from traditional seasonal bedding

displays to sustainable, lower-maintenance planting schemes featuring drought-tolerant species such as sedums. This transition reflects a long-term commitment to climate resilience, reducing water use while providing year-round interest and valuable habitat for pollinators.

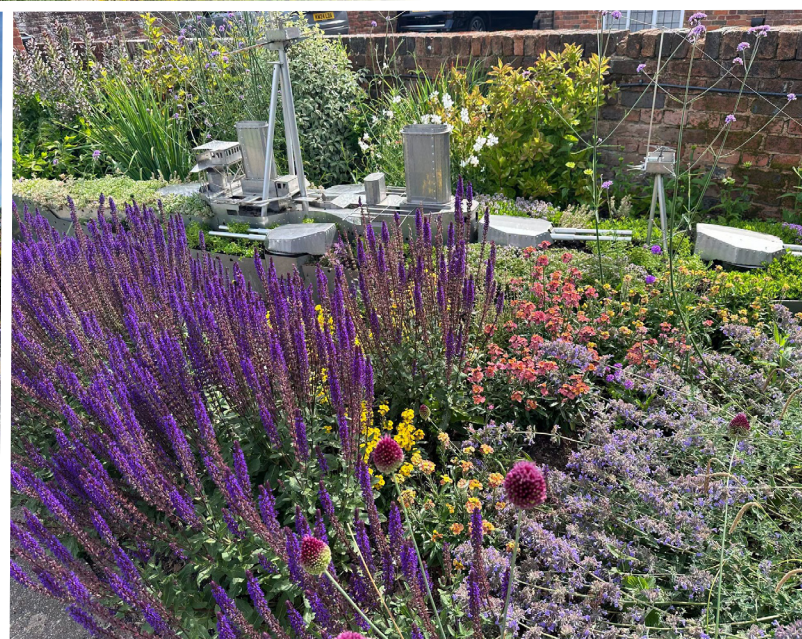
The beds also celebrate the creativity and ownership of the local community. In previous years, they were designed and planted by local schoolchildren through our annual 'Design a Flowerbed' competition, fostering environmental awareness, civic pride and intergenerational connections.

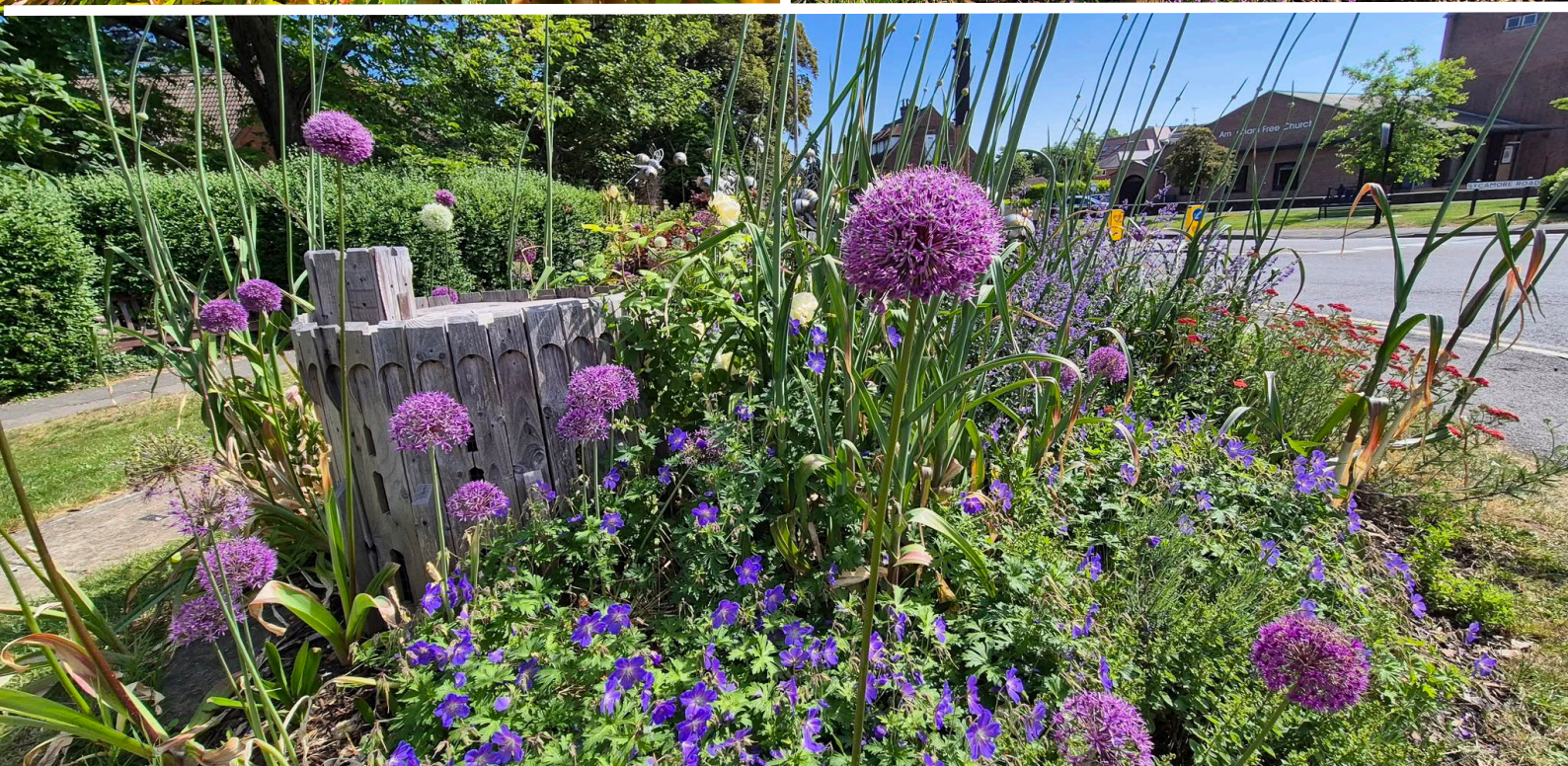
Front Gardens

As you travel around Amersham, it is clear to see the pride that residents have in their own spaces. Over the past two years, over 150 certificates of recognition have been awarded to residents within Amersham whose gardens demonstrated interesting and thoughtful planting, environmentally friendly practices, and/or designs that encouraged biodiversity (e.g. pollinator-friendly flowers, wildlife habitats). A sample are shown below. The initiative was instigated to help foster community cohesion, and has been well received by proud residents.



HORTICULTURAL ACHIEVEMENT





Planting

Alliums in the Memorial Gardens (April 2026)

Permanent Planting

Permanent planting has increased in areas managed by Amersham in Bloom. 18 months ago, the 'Tom Yum' bed—usually planted with annuals—was transformed into a dry bed with a mix of yellow and blue toned perennials and gravel 'river' running through the middle. It is now thriving with pollinator activity.



Left to right: Planting outside the public toilets; Bed created and managed by residents at Lexham Gardens; Planting at the Free Church

Retail & Service Areas/Premises

Amersham in Bloom receives excellent support from our local businesses, many of whom have wonderful floral displays which add vibrancy and colour to our thoroughfares. In more recent years, we have noticed a surge in businesses actively enhancing their frontages, many with permanent and/or pollinator-friendly planting.



Left to right: CP Hart; Martin Moore; Tom Yum

Spring bulbs

To ensure that Amersham remains colourful throughout the seasons, the beds and borders around the town are planted with spring flowering bulbs. At the end of the season, tulips and daffodils are lifted and stored ready for re-planting in November; native bulbs, e.g. daffodils (*narcissus pseudonarcissus*), bluebells and crocus, are left in situ. Last year, over 35,000 bulbs were planted by volunteers, Council staff, Stony Dean School and the Missenden Walled Garden Charity. The spring road signs are sponsored by residents who pay a donation towards the cost of the bulbs.



Top (L to R): Ambers/London Rd West junction; Bluebells at Hervines Wood; crocus at St. Mary's Church
Middle: The evolution of the bulb lasagne on the corner of Highlands Road (pictures 1 and 2); Muscari at St. Mary's Church
Bottom: Street sign bulbs; Memorial Gardens tulip display; planting of the bulb lasagne by the Missenden Walled Garden charity

Allotments

Amersham Town Council manage three allotment sites within Amersham with a combined total of over 300 plots. Three of the plots have been combined and turned into a community allotment. Many of the plots use companion planting for natural pest control, with wildflowers, pollinators, wildlife ponds, dead hedges/fences and bug hotels to encourage wildlife. Some allotment holders donate produce to the Grow to Give scheme.





Pollinators & Biodiversity

Stanley Hill (May 2026)

Over the past nine years, we have steadily increased perennial, pollinator-friendly planting and expanded areas of wildflowers across Amersham in response to the national decline in pollinating insects since the 1930s, as well as created habitats for other insects, bats, birds and amphibians. This long-term approach reflects our commitment to restoring biodiversity, building climate resilience and creating connected habitats that benefit both wildlife and the wider environment.

Amersham Meadows

We increased wildflower pockets around Amersham by 10%, naming them Amersham Meadows. Together with the street sign planting, they form a pollinator corridor stretching from Old Amersham to Amersham-on-the-Hill. The wildflowers were sponsored by ADRA (Amersham & District Residents Association).

Street Signs

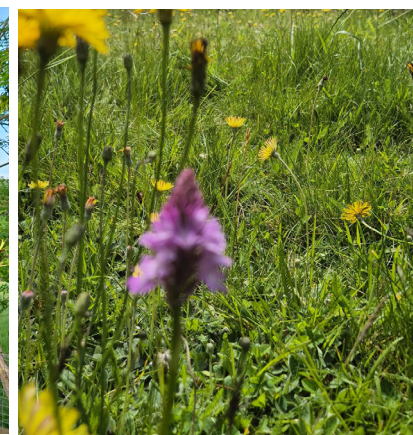
More than 100 street signs are now planted with pollen- and nectar-rich species, creating small but connected habitats throughout the town. Local

residents help care for many of the displays, while schoolchildren water them on their walk home using leftover drinking water. Small everyday actions that demonstrate how environmental stewardship has become part of community life.

Grass Verges

Many of our grass verges have become 'no mow' areas, rewilded with wildflowers or left to regenerate.

Left to right: Wildflowers at St. Mary's Church; street sign pollinator planting; bird box installation at Pioneer Scout Hall (May); native orchid in St. Mary's Churchyard rewilded area (June)





L to R: Planting of new perennial bed in the Memorial Gardens (June 2026); Scouts creating a pond at Pioneer Hall (May 2026)

‘Bring it Back’ Initiative

Bring It Back, an intergenerational partnership between Amersham in Bloom, Wild Amersham, Amersham Museum and St. Mary’s Church, was initiated last year to restore the biodiversity of St. Mary’s Churchyard.

Churchyards provide strong foundations for restoration of biodiversity, being less impacted by intensive agriculture, harmful chemical sprays, ploughing, and development that have left the UK so nature-depleted.

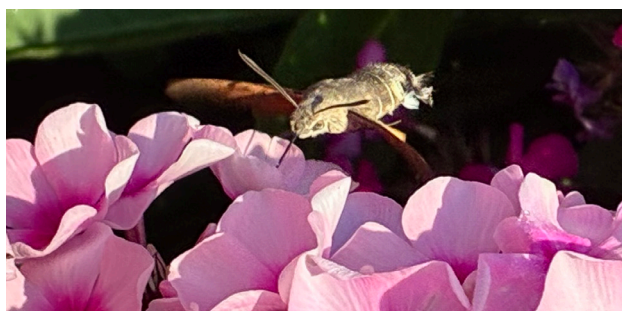
Bring It Back gives young adults in the community a space to build up practical skills and support a greener future for the churchyard through planned sessions led by ecology and history experts. To date, 6 areas have been roped off to rewild (with orchid emerging this year) while the perimeter has been planted with native wildflower plugs. Six bird boxes have also been installed.

Amersham Band Hall

Wild Amersham are helping Amersham Band restore a meadow to chalk grassland and to improve a native hedge. Regular plant inventories are undertaken, as well as monitoring for birds, butterflies, reptiles and amphibians.



*Above: ‘Bring it Back’ planting at St. Mary’s Churchyard (April)
Left: A hummingbird moth in the Memorial Gardens*





Environment Day (April). Sunflower seedlings were distributed as part of our Tallest Sunflower competition. The plants were sown by Stony Dean School students and Spud Club children at the community allotment

Sustainability underpins everything we do, with a strong focus on practical, grassroots action that empowers the whole community to play a part. We are continually reviewing the way we work to reduce our environmental impact, from improving waste management and reducing unnecessary consumption to making everyday changes, such as serving drinks at our popular band concerts using more sustainable practices. By embedding environmental responsibility into both council operations and community events, and working in partnership with volunteers, local organisations and residents, we are creating lasting habits that reduce our carbon footprint while encouraging a shared culture of environmental stewardship and pride of place.

Single-Use-Plastic-Free Band Concerts

In 2021, we made our summer band concerts plastic-free, encouraging visitors to bring their own reusable cups and installing a tap to refill water bottles. Reusable cups were introduced in 2024 which have proven successful.

Recycling

We have continued to raise recycling awareness this year, with a strong focus on behaviour change, specifically around encouraging people to use the correct bins (or take their recyclable waste home with them).

Environment Day

Environment Day brought the Amersham community together to explore the small, practical actions that can make a big difference in creating a greener, more sustainable town. The event inspired residents to learn about everyday sustainable practices while connecting them with local community groups,



Volunteers marshall waste disposal at the Picnic in the Park event

charities and environmental initiatives already making a positive impact. Through a range of exhibitors, interactive displays and a programme of informative talks, attendees discovered how collective action and individual choices can help build a more environmentally responsible future for Amersham.

Medic to Medic Recycling

In May 2022, we began our partnership with Medic to Medic, a campaign that recycles not-widely recyclable items, e.g. used ink cartridges, marigold gloves, corks and Pringles tubes. We currently have three collection points in Amersham, and to date have collected nearly 325kg of waste that would otherwise end up in landfill.

Repair Cafe, Seed Swap & Toy Swap

The Sustainable Amersham Repair Café is a community event held on the first Saturday of alternate months at St Michael's Church. In the last year, 187 items were successfully repaired. Wild Amersham (part of Sustainable Amersham) also organise seed swaps at these events and have donated

surplus seeds to the community allotment. 545 toys were rehomed at three toy swaps, delivered by the Green Families group, with surplus toys donated to the Chilterns Toy Bank and to local PTAs.

Eco-Green Shredder

As part of our efforts to improve resource management, the Town Council purchased an Eco Green composting shredder/bio-mixer in 2019 to grind, mulch and mix biodegradable products. The composter has reduced the need for traditional disposal while producing a usable product, bringing both environmental and financial benefits.



Stony Dean School students mulch trees at Willow Wood

Christmas Tree Recycling

Our Christmas tree recycling scheme, introduced in 2021, has proven to be a huge success. This year, we collected 685 trees (with around 300 more taken to the depot by residents), raising £4,872 for bloom. Residents paid a small donation to have their Christmas tree collected and taken to the council depot, where they were mulched using our Eco-Green shredder. The resulting compost was then used to mulch the trees at Willow Wood as well as many borders and beds around town. Seven tonnes of mulch was also given to the local allotment sites.

Conservation

Willow Wood (2024)

We make every effort to effectively manage resources, conserve and enrich biodiversity, reduce waste, improve the local environment and, ultimately, protect and restore Amersham's natural resources, including wildlife, for current and future generations.

Resource Management

The underground water system, which has halved water usage in the Memorial Gardens, was refurbished in 2024. Additionally, rainwater harvesting systems are in place at Pondwicks, Stanley Hill Cemetery and the Town Council depot. We use water butts throughout Amersham including Sycamore Corner, Stanley Hill Cemetery and the Memorial Gardens. A watering system is hidden within the framework of the Coronation Clock and the Peace Garden, negating the need to surface water. A large tank has been installed at the community allotment.

Bug Hotels

We have nine bug hotels at Willow Wood, Sycamore Corner, Pondwicks (complete with dead roof) – currently the largest in southern England – and the community allotment. All have been built by the Amersham in Bloom team, scout groups and children.

Bird Boxes

Last year, 16 bird boxes – built by Columbus Explorer scouts from 1st Chesham Bois Scout Group and Stony Dean School – were installed along Sycamore Road to form 'Tweet Street'. Three were known to be

L to R: water harvesting at Stanley Hill Cemetery; bug hotel at the community allotment; one of three raptor boxes at Willow Wood, built by Stony Dean School students



occupied this year. A further 6 boxes were installed in St. Mary's Churchyard as part of the 'Bring it Back' initiative, and 2 boxes installed at the Pioneer Scout Hall.

Trout

Since the completion of restoration works along the River Misbourne, large numbers of brown trout have returned to spawn at Barn Meadow. To protect this threatened species, signage has been erected to discourage fishing, as well as educating dog owners on the negative impact of allowing their dogs to enter the river at spawn sites.

Bat Boxes

Over the past four years, we have installed 25 bat boxes in our woodlands.

Tree Planting

Over the past 18 months, five tiny forests were created to improve air quality, 'green' urban spaces and boost biodiversity while mitigating the impact of a changing climate. Additionally, Stony Dean School students planted a further 35 trees at Willow Wood as part of the legacy project which has seen over 8,000 trees planted in the last 14 years. A further tiny forest is in the pipeline, as well as planting 35 more trees at Willow Wood, donated by a visitor to Amersham.



Top to bottom: tree planting in partnership with Paradigm housing association; Stony Dean School students clear vegetation at the tiny forest on King George V field (April 2026); River works signage

L to R: Underground water system in the Memorial Gardens; Tweet Street resident





Community Science

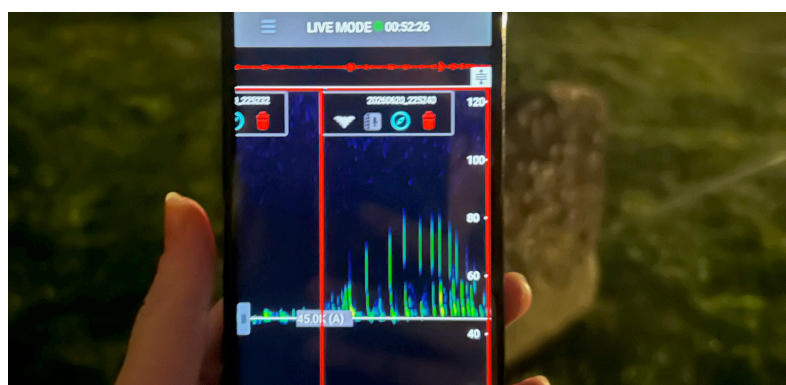
Community (or ‘citizen’) science plays an important role in monitoring biodiversity as the climate changes by involving people in collecting valuable observations of plants, animals and ecosystems. Beyond generating useful data, community science also encourages environmental stewardship by fostering a stronger connection between people and nature, increasing awareness of conservation challenges, and inspiring communities to take an active role in protecting biodiversity.

In order to measure the environmental impact of our initiatives, we have expanded our citizen science programme, enabling volunteers and community groups to help monitor the wildlife our projects are supporting. We also conduct tree surveys.

In the summer, Sustainable Amersham conducted surveys of the bug hotels in Pondwicks and the Memorial Gardens. Kathryn Mellor, a Masters degree student (University of Gloucestershire), has conducted a study to monitor bats and ground invertebrates in St. Mary’s Churchyard to create an ecological baseline in support of the Bring it Back scheme. During the bat survey, a Nathusius’s pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*), an uncommon migratory species, was detected.

Wild Amersham have also conducted monthly bird walks to monitor bird populations, as well as checking refugia for amphibians and reptiles at four sites and taking inventory of local flora and fungi.

Additionally, we have invested in a thermal camera to monitor hard to access habitats, such as bird boxes. This year, 3 were successfully occupied. We will monitor the boxes for winter roosting.



Top to bottom: survey of minibeast hotel in the Memorial Gardens (July); pitfall traps in St Mary’s Churchyard (June); bat detecting (May & June)



Pond dipping at the community allotment



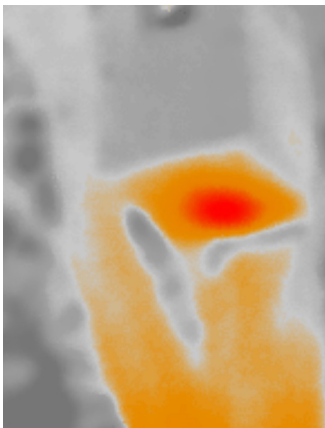
Survey of bug hotel at Pondwicks



In spring, 42 frogs and 5 newts were counted at the allotment



Wildlife is logged at the community allotment



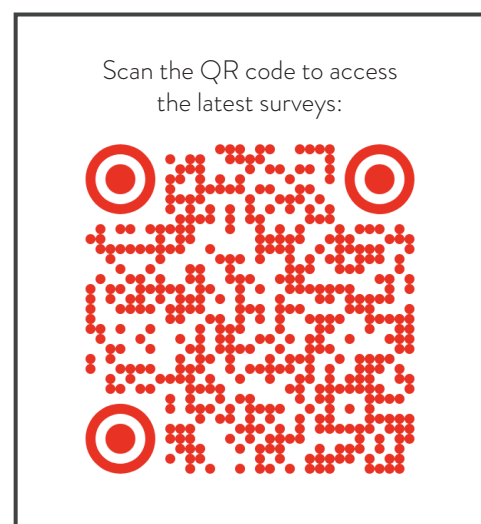
This year, we invested in a thermal camera to monitor wildlife, including Tweet Street bird boxes



Toad found under refugia mat in Pondwicks



Snake found in St. Mary's School meadow. There are 14 amphibian and reptile refugia in Old Amersham





Pride of Place

Veolia removing the weeds on the Royal Mail forecourt (July 2026)

Litter picking and pavement scrapes

We hold an annual community litter picking event to coincide with the Great British Spring Clean. 64 residents (including children) and volunteers from Sewa UK attended this year, collecting 62 bags of waste. Recycling is separated from general waste.

Additionally, Stony Dean school students frequently collect litter, as well as scrape pavements. This year, three students have carried out regular litter picks to obtain

their Duke of Edinburgh Award. We also conducted litterpicking sessions with 1st Chesham Bois 'Trailblazers' scouts unit as part of the Big Help Out, 2nd Amersham-on-the-Hill Brownies & Guides, and 75 pupils from The Beacon school.

Litter picking stations at Hervines Park and Church Mead are well used.

Misbourne River Action Group

The Misbourne River Action Group keep the chalk stream at

Amersham free-flowing and free of litter and debris. They have undertaken two sessions this year, removing 8 bulk bags of debris.

Street furniture & displays

We have an annual maintenance programme for the refurbishment of benches, planters and wooden bins in Amersham. Where possible we remove graffiti from street signs and utility boxes. This year, we have painted the planters on Sycamore Road as well as installing 7 additional planters throughout Amersham, all made inhouse.

*Top (L to R): litter picking with Stony Dean students (April); litter picking station at Church Mead; Misbourne River Action Group signage
Bottom (L to R): Clean up day in Old Amersham and Amersham-on-the-Hill (April)*



Monuments

The WW1 memorial in the Memorial Gardens was cleaned and repainted last year. The water fountain is cleaned on a monthly basis.

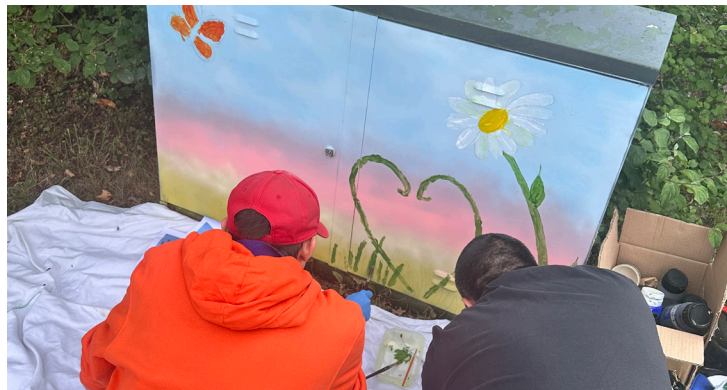
Sculptures

A further sculpture, created by students from The Beacon, has been installed in the Memorial Gardens, extending our children's art trail. In total, 12 sculptures have been installed to date, the majority of which have been designed by local artists.

Communication Boxes

Since 2022, we have painted 33 communications boxes, in partnership with Openreach and Virgin Media/02. The initiative is multi-generational; the nature-themed boxes have been designed and painted by Council staff, Bloom volunteers, local artists and illustrators, and school children (pre-school through to secondary). We have also advised multiple community groups and councils on initiating their own project. Each year, the boxes are cleaned and revarnished.

Many of the boxes have a QR code to direct visitors to the Amersham Town Council website to download an art trail map. The art trail map can be downloaded by scanning either of the QR codes opposite.



Top to bottom: WW1 monument painting (2025); box being painted by TalkBack charity members (July 2025); comms box painting at Sheepfold Lane (May)

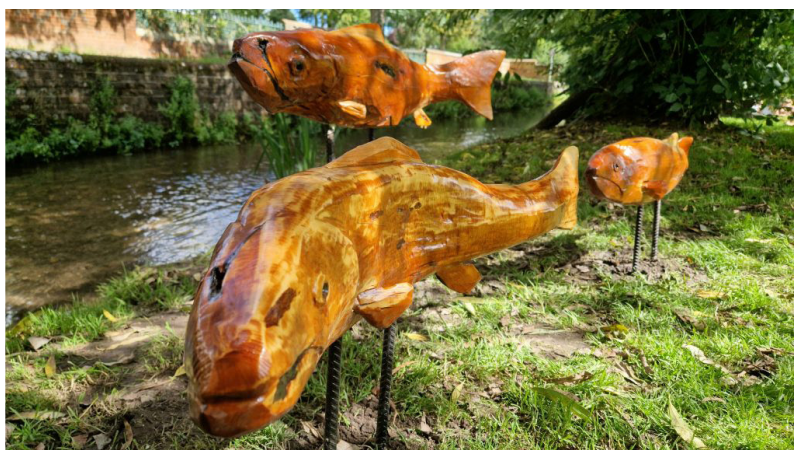
Public art:

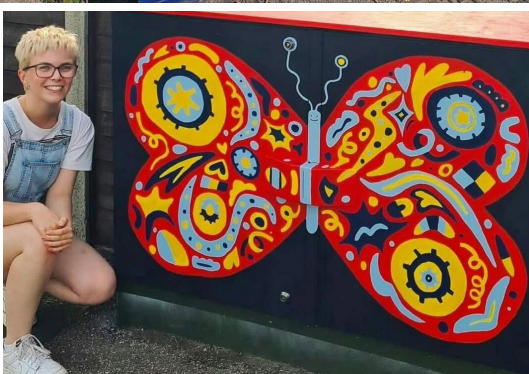


Sculptures:



The art trail is funded by The Entertainer, ADRA and Rotary of Amersham. Physical copies of the map are available from the Memorial Gardens tea hut, the red telephone box nearby the bio-strip, and the Town Council offices







Volunteers & Groups

Missenden Walled Garden volunteers planting the bulb 'lasagne' on Highland Road (November 2025)

Community participation lies at the heart of everything Amersham in Bloom achieves. By bringing people together to care for and enhance our shared spaces, we inspire a lasting sense of responsibility, environmental stewardship and civic pride. Participants of all ages, from toddlers taking their first steps in gardening to older residents sharing a lifetime of knowledge, play an active role in creating a greener, more welcoming community.

This year alone, an estimated 1,000 people have actively participated in Amersham in Bloom, including 6 community groups, 11 schools and numerous businesses. Together, they demonstrate that caring for our town is a shared responsibility, strengthening community spirit while creating a lasting legacy for future generations. We are contacted regularly by residents and businesses who want to get involved.

Bloom Volunteers

Our team is always on hand to weed, re-pot plugs, plant beds and borders, litter-pick, scrape pavements, water the gardens and street signs, work with schools, paint communications boxes, and anything that is asked of them—you couldn't wish for a more hardworking, dedicated team!

Many residents contribute their time in other ways, such as knitting items for the postbox toppers.

*Top: potting on plugs at the community allotment (April); summer bedding planting (June); Naomi Honour with her postbox topper creations (June)
Bottom: building the polytunnel at the community allotment (May); fundraising at Picnic in the Park (June);*







L to R: scything; fungi workshop; owl workshop

Wild Amersham

Wild Amersham engages local residents to explore, protect and restore nature in Amersham. This year they have:

- organised 25 events about local flora and fauna, including an annual Dawn Chorus walk and seasonal 'plants and places' walks with a botanist
- held 4 scything sessions with volunteers
- continued restoration of part of a playing field at St Mary's School into a wildflower meadow, including the planting of a native hedge
- turned four large lawns into wildflower meadows at Amersham Hospital
- conducted numerous surveys including monthly bird walks and checking refugia for amphibians and reptiles at four sites



Survey of the River Misbourne



Nature walk

Leaders of the 1st Chesham Bois Scout Group

Our partnership with the Leaders of the 1st Chesham Bois Scout Group began in 2015 when they created wooden models for the Memorial Gardens to commemorate Alice in Wonderland's 150th anniversary. Since then, the displays have become more innovative and unique, and many are now permanent features around town. The skill, talent and commitment of the leaders of the 1st Chesham Bois Scout Group is unwavering.

This year, the group has built, raffled and auctioned steel bees and hosted bee making workshops to raise funds for Bloom, and built wildflowers for the new display at Stanley Hill. They also built and installed replacement bees on Sycamore Corner.

All models are built by 1st Chesham Bois Scout leaders at their scout hall. So far, 40 residents have made bees at the bee-making workshops.



Above: Bee raffle and sculpture sale at Picnic in the Park
Below: Replacing the bees on Sycamore Corner (May)





COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION





Amersham Town Council

Amersham Town Council lead and fund Amersham in Bloom. However, the Council team, despite carrying out the majority of the works, fall under the radar somewhat, in particular the grounds team who diligently work behind-the-scenes—Amersham in Bloom’s true unsung heroes!

While the office undertake much of the administration—including liaising and working with schools, funding applications, publicity (including managing social media), purchasing plants, trees, seeds etc.—the depot team are responsible for much of the ‘backstage’ labour and many of the activities so easily taken for granted.

Mowing, hedge trimming, cleaning of road signs, planting of trees, maintenance of street furniture and sowing the wildflower meadows throughout town are just some of the tasks that the grounds team do daily.

In addition, the team have been pivotal in our tree and hedge planting activities in the past decade, and have also undertaken the ground works for many installations (such as in the sensory and Peace gardens), helped to construct the largest bug hotel (Pondwicks), developed the community allotment, and have installed benches, recycling bins and water harvesting systems. Led by Mark Richardson, the team provides the often ‘invisible’ yet all important cog in the Bloom machine!





Beavers planting hanging baskets at the community allotment (June)

Engaging children and young people is central to creating a healthier, greener and more resilient future. By providing opportunities to learn, contribute and lead, we are helping to foster a lifelong connection with nature and a shared sense of responsibility for the places we all value. Through hands-on activities, environmental projects and community events, young people are not simply participants but active partners, bringing fresh ideas, enthusiasm and creativity to local initiatives.

Stony Dean SEN School

Stony Dean School students have been pivotal in many of our Bloom campaigns, from sowing wildflowers, mulching and planting trees, to scraping pavements, raking leaves, planting out feature beds and developing the community allotment. The objectives of Stony Dean are to enable students to achieve effective communication and interaction, employability and independence; our partnership with the school provides hands-on experience and helps the students to develop valuable life skills.



May

Woodside Junior School

Woodside Junior School pupils attended the community allotment and helped to sow seeds, paint signs and lay weed barrier. For many of the students, it was their first time at an allotment. We were also approached by the school to advise them on their pollinator and wildflower planting, and donated perennials grown by children at the community allotment.



April

Heatherton School

Heatherton School have assisted with wildflower sowing at Hervines Park, as well as sowing seeds within their school grounds.



The Beacon

The Beacon created a 3D mosaic badger for our art trail. The structure was created from recycled materials by local artist Colin Pells. A poppy veil, comprising more than 3200 poppies, was once again installed on the Market Hall to commemorate Armistice Day. Every pupil from the school took part in the project which was led by teacher Michelle Jackson.

Beavers, Cubs, Guides and Brownies

This year we worked with local beavers, cubs, guides and brownies to litter pick, plant hanging baskets, and develop a pond in their hall grounds.



'Tree of Life' art mosaic, a collaboration between all local secondary schools and home educated children. It was installed at the Chilterns Lifestyle Centre in September

Little Bloomers

Little Bloomers, our horticultural group for families, launched last year. This year, regular sessions have been held at the community allotment to help with the development of the new site.

Duke of Edinburgh

We currently have 6 students from different schools and home education volunteering for their Duke of Edinburgh award: three litterpickers, and three who undertake horticultural activities, e.g. planting with the Bloom volunteers at their weekly sessions.

Amersham Youth Council

We are currently in the application process for our new Youth Council, giving a voice to young people aged 14-19 on the local matters most important to them. The Council will be appointed in October.





Education & Awareness

Missenden Walled Garden members planting out the 'Bee Banquet' bed using plants that they donated

Education and awareness are fundamental to achieving lasting environmental change. By helping people understand the value of biodiversity, sustainable practices and climate resilience, we empower residents to make informed choices and take positive action within their own neighbourhoods. Sharing knowledge transforms environmental initiatives from isolated projects into a collective community effort, where everyone has a role to play.

Community Allotment

Woodside Community Allotment—a joint venture between Amersham in Bloom, Discovery Sprouts and Joley Makes—was launched in January 2024. This year, we relinquished our old plot for a larger corner plot. This new plot has been developed with the help of Town Council staff and councillors, Stony Dean School students, volunteers, Little Bloomers and Woodside Junior School pupils.

The allotment now comprises two greenhouses (one funded by Barnett Waddingham), a wildlife pond, dead hedge (created using locally sourced materials), a large polytunnel and wheelchair accessible flooring (funded by the National Garden Scheme), ample raised planters, and a bug hotel with hedgehog house.

The remaining accessibility flooring, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, will be completed in autumn.

Three beds have been created following Hügélkultur principles, and all planters comprise companion planting for pest control, higher yields and pollinators, as well as improved soil.

Currently, the allotment hosts the following sessions:

- Spud Club (pre-school gardening club)
- adult drop-in sessions
- home education
- Little Bloomers family sessions
- work experience for Stony Dean students
- ad-hoc sessions for community groups and schools

Left to Right: Spud Club filling planters (Feb); seed collection (Sep-Oct 25); Town Council team preparing the greenhouse base (Feb)





This year, plug plants were potted on at the allotment by Bloom volunteers and Stony Dean School students, and later planted throughout Amersham. The salvias from the Memorial Gardens will be propagated and overwintered in the polytunnel for replanting next year.

Future plans:

- Use spare greenhouse to experiment with growing world food and teaching children about other countries and cultures
- Looking at agricultural practices in warmer climates to see how they adapt
- Focus on soil health and water management
- Empty planters to be planted with spring bulbs and green cover for over wintering
- Liaising with GP surgeries to discuss gardening for social prescription
- delivering a curriculum focused on functional skills (for SEND and home education students)

Tallest sunflower competition

After a year's hiatus, we resumed the annual 'tallest sunflower' competition, utilising Spud Club and Stony Dean School to sow and grow the seedlings at the community allotment, which were then handed out at the Amersham Environment Day in April.

Top to bottom: Beavers planting hanging baskets; Home ed group planting fruit trees; Stony Dean students building 'dead fence' around pond; Bloom volunteers pottling on plugs; Councillors (pic 1) and Duke of Edinburgh student & Bloom volunteer (pic 2) constructing the polytunnel; student sowing sunflower seeds for the sunflower competition; Colin Pells building dead hedge using locally sourced materials

Signage

All of our feature beds and greened spaces have information boards to provide project rationale and details of the planting scheme. We also have clear signage in many of our wild areas to raise awareness of pollinators and discourage trampling. The signs are designed inhouse and printed by a local company. Where possible, we have included QR codes to help the public recreate some of our planting and features at home.





Funding & Support

The ‘build a bee’ workshops, along with bee raffles and bee sales, allow residents to take a ‘piece of Amersham’ home with them.

Amersham in Bloom is a true community partnership. While core funding comes from Amersham Town Council, grants, sponsorship, fundraising and donations help keep costs to local taxpayers to a minimum.

Despite losing long-standing sponsors due to a challenging economic climate, local businesses contributed around £7,000 this year, including £3,000 from new supporter Marks & Spencer. Many chose to sponsor specific projects, such as ADRA’s support for the wildflower meadows.

To make up for the loss, we rallied even greater community support and took a more innovative approach to fundraising. Alongside plant sales, band concert refreshments, card sales, Heritage Day activities, raffles and Christmas tree collection, we expanded initiatives including selling Amersham-themed posters, metal sculptures and ‘bee making’ workshops, while selling the original bees from the bee bed to fund their replacements. We were also paid for three talks to local groups (Chalfont St. Giles Gardens Association, Amersham Gardening Association, and at the Synod Eco Day). Together, these activities raised an additional £6k+ for Bloom. We also secured three grants this year from Rooting for Wildlife (Affinity Water), the National Gardens Scheme and The National Lottery Community Fund, the latter two supporting the community allotment. In total, £18k was raised for Bloom this year.

The organisations, businesses and volunteers listed below demonstrate the remarkable community spirit behind Amersham in Bloom. Their generosity, skills and time are helping create a greener, more beautiful and sustainable Amersham for everyone.

Amersham & District Residents Association (ADRA)	Amersham Gardening Association	1st Chesham Bois Scout Leaders	Missenden Walled Garden charity
Amersham Action Group	Brownies & Guides	Veolia	Paradigm Housing
Shardaloes Equestrian Centre	Discovery Sprouts	The Entertainer	Local artists
Tax Assist	Joley Makes	Barnett Waddingham	Affinity Water
Savills	Sewa UK	King’s Chapel	Amersham Free Church
Old Amersham Hotels Group	Wild Amersham	Buckinghamshire Council	Sustainable Amersham
Amersham Dec	Home educators	Scouts, Cubs and Beavers	Amersham Museum
2nd Amersham Common Beavers	TalkBack	Bloom team	Chalfont St Giles Gardens Association
Marks & Spencer	National Gardens Scheme	The National Lottery Community Fund	



Amersham poster sale at the Christmas event



Fundraising stall at Picnic in the Park



Card sales are held frequently throughout the year



Replacement bees were funded by the sale of the old bees



Plant sales are held several times per year



Amersham Action Group fund the telephone box planting. They also funded the telephone box

Website We have an 'Environment' page (collating useful information for residents and businesses to work together to support the environment, as well as a 'Gardening for Food & Wildlife' video series) and dedicated Bloom section on the Town Council website.

Social Media Our Amersham in Bloom Facebook page has 1.6k followers (an increase of 7% since last year), with regular updates shared to the Town Council Facebook page (3.4k followers, an increase of 21% since last year).

Bloom section:



Environment page:





Whether a legacy tree planting project or revamp of a derelict corner, there is no doubting the positive impact of Bloom on the local environment. Not only that, but participation creates opportunity: three Stony Dean students have been employed by the Town Council, while three artists have been commissioned for other projects due to the visibility of their community art.

The next few pages highlight 'before and after' photos of some of our projects.

Before & after (top to bottom): Highland Road verge tree planting; trees and planters along Sycamore Road; hedge planting at Willow Wood; new trees at Woodside Close. The corner has also been planted with spring bulbs and sown with wildflowers.





Tree planting behind Ambers of Amersham (2015)



First tree planting at 'Jubilee Wood' (Willow Wood) 2012



Since 2012, over 8000 trees have been planted by the community at Willow Wood (behind Stanley Hill Cemetery) to form 'Jubilee Wood'.

The small 'bio-strip' in front of the Royal Mail Sorting Office is a prime example of how a small, urban space can be softened with a mix of shrubs, grasses, and perennials to enhance the streetscape, support local biodiversity, and improve air quality. The project was funded by Amersham Action Group and Savills.





The Metropolitan 1 steam locomotive at Oakfield Corner (2021)



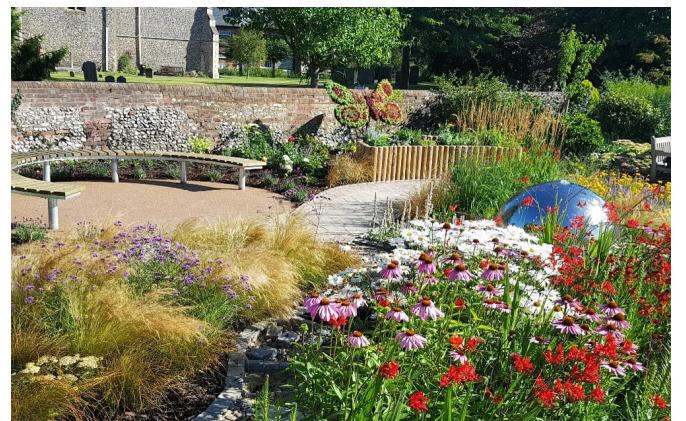
The 'pocket forest' at Chiltern Avenue (2024)



Creating the butterfly bed outside the Chiltern Lifestyle Centre (2024)



Transforming an unused part of the Memorial Gardens into the sensory garden (2021)



Sycamore Corner





Conclusion & Future Plans

Over the past year, Amersham's commitment to creating a greener, healthier and more sustainable town has continued to grow. Through community-led action, we have expanded bee-friendly planting, improved the way we manage and reuse resources, expanded our community outreach, generated crucial data, and ensured that our greened spaces continue to thrive to support both wildlife and people.

At the heart of this work is a simple belief: caring for Amersham is a shared responsibility. Bloom is not a separate initiative, but a way of bringing together residents, businesses, schools, volunteers and local organisations to take pride in the place we all call home. By empowering people of all ages to get involved, we are creating lasting environmental improvements while strengthening the connections that make our community resilient.

This collective approach has generated remarkable momentum. It has inspired thousands of volunteer hours, enabled the group to secure more than £18,000 in funding, in spite of economic challenges, and delivered projects that simply would not have happened without the dedication, generosity and stewardship of local people. Alongside tangible improvements to our streets, parks and green spaces, Bloom has become a catalyst for learning, collaboration, civic pride and a deeper sense of ownership of our shared environment.

Over the past 18 months, we have continued to find innovative ways to enrich green spaces, increase biodiversity and encourage more people to play an active role in shaping the future of Amersham. Every project reinforces the idea that small, individual

actions, when taken together, can have a lasting impact.

Looking ahead, our ambition is to build on this foundation.

Priorities include:

- developing a long-term tree planting strategy to help the town adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change
- creating social prescribing opportunities through the community allotment to improve health and wellbeing
- progressing a sustainable water resource strategy
- delivering a collaborative art project as part of our effort to bring more art into the landscape, involving every school in Amersham
- delivering a curriculum focused on functional skills (for SEND and home education students) at the community allotment

Together, these initiatives will continue to embed environmental stewardship into the everyday life of our town, ensuring that Bloom remains not simply something we do, but a shared commitment to caring for Amersham for generations to come.