

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Dedicated to a Colourful Cranbrook



To promote community spirit, social inclusion, and improved opportunities for everyone to fully engage in enhancing Cranbrook Town Centre and various green areas around Cranbrook with planting and maintaining of flowers and shrubs. The aim is to improve the cultural life of the community with the object of improving the quality of life for people who live and work in Cranbrook and surrounding areas.



Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Contents

Contents.....1

Introduction2

Horticulture.....2

Environmental.....5

Community.....11

Financial Report20

Potted History of Cranbrook in Bloom.....22

Press Coverage and Articles.....24

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Introduction

Cranbrook in Bloom first blossomed in the early 90s and became a charity in 2018, its aim to beautify the town with planters of carefully selected flora as shown by the statement on the front page of this portfolio.

Since then we have developed widely varying areas of the town and have received several awards from South & South East in Bloom and Britain in Bloom. Our activities have involved local groups, businesses and individuals whose enthusiastic continuing assistance enable us to fulfil the aims of the charity.

In 2017 we had the opportunity to develop an event – Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May - in association with the Chelsea Fringe Festival. Focussing on local producers this is now an annual event celebrating ‘everything that grows and what you can do with it’. The High Street is closed to traffic and stalls, Morris dancers, bands and children’s activities fill the space. (see p.13)

Horticulture

Perennial boxes

In contrast to the seasonal planting on the sunny side of the High Street, we implemented a perennial scheme on the shady side which has been very successful. Plants include Fuchsia, Geum, perennial wallflowers, Tiarella, Heuchera, Armeria, Hosta and Brunnera ‘Jack Frost’ for more shaded areas. Bespoke planters appropriate to the historical setting of Cranbrook are made from recycled scaffold boards. Planting plans are created to complement their location.



The photos above show these planters now that they are more established.

Winter and Spring planting

The remaining planters (approximately 55) were planted up again with violas and our stored “Tete-a-tete” daffodils as this combination had proved popular with townsfolk the previous year.

The Tete-a-tete were more successful than the Minnow daffodils and provided a great early spring show. These have now been dried and stored for replanting again in Autumn 2025.

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Summer and Autumn planting

This year we chose to go with a bright, single colour, scheme so we used mostly semi-trailing Geraniums and Verbena with some other highlights around town using Dragon Wings Begonias and Illumination/Non-Stopping Begonias.

The compost in these planters was replaced in the summer with 36 bags of new Westland peat-free compost sourced from a local nursery who also supplies the plants. More information in the “Environmental” section below.



Roundabout

Designed by the late local garden designer Kate Ball, her advice has been invaluable for the maintenance and health of the plants.

Cranbrook in Bloom has had a licence to cultivate the Wilsley Pound roundabout for the past 21 years. Annual maintenance includes two early spring visits to trim the previous season's growth and ad hoc visits if needed to deal with weeds. Apart from basic maintenance the roundabout is maintenance free, has won an award for drought tolerance from South & South East in Bloom and survives remarkably well considering its location at a busy junction. It is a noted local landmark!

Vegetation removed from the roundabout (over 30 bags each year!) is recycled by taking it to Forge Orchard where it is turned into compost for future use in the orchard.



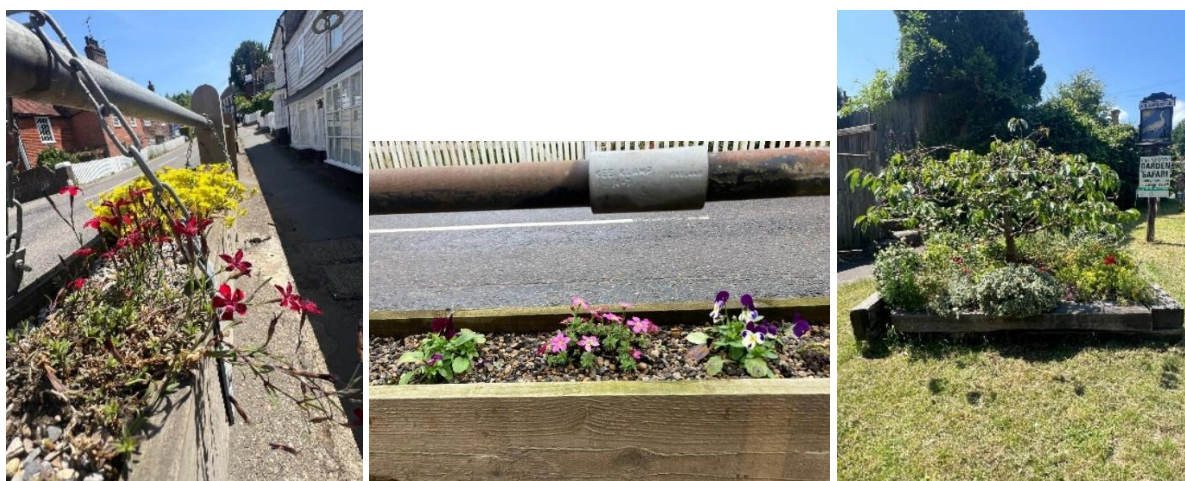
Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Eastern approach

Having thought that this approach to the town could be improved we have made changes.

Following discussions between Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council (CSPC), the Conservation Area Advisory Committee and the Highways Department at Kent County Council (KCC) and following reviews of the historical context of the scaffold pole railings on The Hill, KCC Councillor Sean Holden allocated a grant to cover the cost of creating 26 hanging planters. Planting has been designed to accommodate differing growing conditions across the planters from the top of The Hill to the bottom.

The planters contain around 10 different varieties of alpine, over 200 plants in all.



Since planting the Amelanchier and white Hawthorn alongside the existing raised bed in 2022, after some highways work, the trees are doing well tended by a team of volunteers who live nearby. This provides a pleasing entrance to the town from the East

The Spinney – Trees and wild flowers

The Ball Field, gently sloping with lovely views, is a valued recreation area and the expanse at the top was identified as an ideal location for a spinney to be planted with native species.



Funding was provide by Councillor Sean Holden (Kent County Council) via Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council who tasked us to undertake the project from planting plan and

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

selection of trees to planting out. We invited local people to sponsor a tree in memory of a loved one or special occasion and all 32 trees were sponsored. Planting in January 2021 by the local community ranging in age from 11 to those in their 80s was done to the accompaniment of torrential rain and since then the trees have flourished.

The spinney was further identified as an ideal location for wild flowers and we financed this initiative ourselves. Following turf removal, once again in pouring rain, 2 kilos of an insect-friendly flower seed mix was sown. At the end of summer 2024 they were strimmed and left to drop their seeds before being raked up to prevent enriching the soil. More rattle seeds were added to keep the grass under control.



Other

- ✿ All plants are sourced from local independent nurseries using peat free compost
- ✿ Drought tolerant plants chosen wherever possible
- ✿ Planting schemes included around 1,500 winter and 780 annual and perennial summer plants and bulbs
- ✿ At least 25 local businesses, clubs, schools and groups contributed time and/or financing
- ✿ Cranbrook in Bloom has helped to maintain the War Memorial plants and immediate environment in recent years, however as there has been a substantial amount of building work at this junction opportunities for maintenance and enhancement have been limited. We do hope to work with the developer to plant up this area when it is finished and we have been allocated £250 towards bulbs etc.
- ✿ “The Copse” is an area at the south end of the high street (see Environmental section) which we have enhanced with support from Kent Wildlife Trust and the area is now a designated Roadside Nature Reserve. We were very pleased to see another orchid appear this year, in a different place.

Environmental

The Library Pond

The Library Pond (which is owned by KCC) had been somewhat neglected for many years until 2023 when a Cranbrook in Bloom volunteer, Kevin Warman, spearheaded our approaches to KCC to get some maintenance work done. KCC have responded well and we have continued to work with them as the pond is in urgent need of desilting and vegetation clearance.

In February 2025 Cranbrook in Bloom funded a working party, guided by Kent High Weald



Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Partnership, who removed a lot of the vegetation in the pond. What we removed was the bad stuff, invasive grasses and reeds mainly, which were slowly choking the pond and contributing to the silt levels rising to a point where the pond floor was becoming higher than the summer water levels! So far this year, although it is not deep anywhere, the water level has at least been sufficient to maintain the huge amount of frog spawn which arrived within days of the vegetation removal. The, let's call it "frog-fest", was very promising and the subsequent tadpole population explosion shows the pond is alive and well worth saving.

In early June 2025 some strimming and maintenance work was done by KCC and we have heard that there are plans afoot to do some desilting in the winter when the fauna has moved away to hibernate which is fantastic news, thank you KCC!

Local naturalist Sarah Harrington-James has provided lots of excellent advice on how best to help the pond thrive. Our hope is that once the desilting has been done we will encourage local schools and other children's groups to come along for a pond dip, teaching children not only about the lives of the pond inhabitants but also about the need for safety around water. Classroom learning is so much better if it can be backed up with actual real-life experience and here in Cranbrook we have a wonderful resource to make use of.



Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

B-Lines

We are extremely pleased to have been acknowledged as contributors to the “Buglife B-Lines” project since 2020. This project aims to work with lots of local groups who, together, create habitat stepping stones on the national network of identified insect super-highways. The stepping stones help the UK’s invertebrate population to move around the country rather than become isolated in pockets. Cranbrook in Bloom, along with St Dunstan’s Church, Cranbrook Museum and the parish council, now provide a line of habitat stepping stones through the heart of the town. Cranbrook in Bloom’s entry can be seen on the B-Lines map on the Buglife website www.buglife.org.

Forge Orchard

This area has been bequeathed to local resident and long-time supporter of Cranbrook in Bloom Ivor Hatcher. Ivor has looked after it for many years and plans to continue making this area available to the community, improving the boundaries and seating and enhancing the educational aspect. This is often used by families and local groups like the Brownies as an educational and green space for picnicking and exploring.

Over the past few years the Brownies and Guides have made bug hotels and hedgehog hideaways along with wooden name plaques for some of the ancient fruit trees. The orchard also has bat boxes.

As our on-going work in town results in a lot of natural waste (old plants, bulbs compost etc) we use an area of the Forge Orchard to compost and recycle it into useable material. This is then used to enhance the Orchard itself and this ensures as much as possible is recycled and continues to add to the bio-diversity in town.



Car Parks

- ☼ Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish council are responsible for the 3 car parks in town
- ☼ Jockey Lane car park has 3 electric charge points for 6 cars. Two of the spray-painted hoardings, created during the Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May events in town, now adorn this area. This car park includes a wild flower area maintained by Cranbrook in Bloom incorporating mainly hardy Geraniums and Vinca.

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

- ☼ Regal Car Park has 3 planters, donated by Councillor Sean Holden on behalf of KCC, which are maintained by Cranbrook in Bloom. We have a mix of plants which are attractive to bees
- ☼ We are fortunate that Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council maintain our car parks (under licence from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council) and as a result they are all free at the point of use
- ☼ Tourist information boards in Tanyard and Regal car parks were replaced in early 2023 to help visitors enjoy all we have to offer



The Crane Valley

Crane Valley is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is well maintained by Kent High Weald Partnership (KHWP), Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Cranbrook in Bloom. Work is undertaken by volunteers on specific workdays as arranged by KHWP.

The surrounding area, which includes children's play equipment, is kept clean and tidy by Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish council, Ivor the Parish Warden and Cranbrook in Bloom.

Cranbrook in Bloom volunteers have been litter picking in the Crane Valley on a regular basis.

Cranbrook in Bloom has helped maintain the wetland area and helped replace the boardwalk, which now completely surrounds this ancient landscape. More information is available on the KHWP website (<https://khwp.org.uk/your-greenspaces/crane-valley/>)

Cranbrook in Bloom and KHWP have jointly organised "Bat walks" to identify local bat populations.



Recycling and Waste Disposal

- ☼ Since the removal of the recycling bins from the Regal car park, which has improved that area reducing littering and opening up 5 additional car park spaces, recycling is now collected direct from households on a weekly/fortnightly basis
 - Brown bins – Glass, Plastic and tin
 - Black bin – Garden waste (optional, additional charge)
 - Small bin – Kitchen waste
 - Small green box – Waste paper
 - Green bin – Anything else

Larger items can be collected from the kerb-side by arrangement with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and there are recycling bins available in nearby Goudhurst and

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Staplehurst along with a municipal recycling and waste disposal facility in Tunbridge Wells

- ☼ Town bins are emptied by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council 6 days a week
- ☼ Parish bins are emptied twice a week
- ☼ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council contractors drive round sweeping the road gutters in town, this includes the roundabout at Wilsley Pound
- ☼ Poo-bags are provided by the parish council at 3 locations within the town
- ☼ Regular litter picks are arranged in town by Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish council and ad hoc litter picks by volunteers help to keep the town litter-free
- ☼ Fly tipping and graffiti, thankfully rare in Cranbrook, are quickly dealt with by Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish council

Composts, watering and general maintenance

We continue to use Westland's peat-free compost with added John Innes No. 2 supplied by a local nursery.

We recently reviewed the use of compost from the local green waste management with a view to perhaps using that as a source of compost for our planters in future but have decided, based on feedback, that we shall continue to use Westland.

All planters were built with water retention in mind, creating a reservoir at the bottom of each that uses capillary action to keep the compost moist. The first 44 planters were funded by a donation from the Co-op in town and subsequent additions were paid for by a grant from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

The alpine plants on The Hill were chosen for their drought tolerance. These are topped up with a gravel/soil mix and then a final gravel layer to enhance the plants and water retention.

We mulch the perennial planters to further enhance moisture retention and regularly take cuttings and divisions to replace any die-backs and also to produce additional plants for sale at fund-raising events in town.

The watering is mainly done using the bowser, kindly financed by the Co-op. Where possible the water used for this comes from rainwater collection at Hallwood Farm in Hartley where the bowser is stored.



Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Wildlife friendly activities

- ☼ Tub planting in the Regal car park targets bee friendly plants
- ☼ The Ball Field planting (The Spinney), which is 174m long by around 4m wide (planted 2022), focusses on wild flower and wildlife friendly planting
- ☼ The library pond maintenance, which had somewhat lapsed in recent years, has restarted
- ☼ Bug hotels have been placed in the Forge Orchard by the Guides
- ☼ Bat boxes are in the Crane Valley and Forge Orchard
- ☼ Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish council designated an area within St Dunstan's Churchyard for re-wilding. This has been left to grow naturally and Cranbrook in Bloom have added to the bio-diversity by adding some foxgloves and cowslips with the help of Cranbrook School gardening club
- ☼ The Copse area was "topped" by KCC to encourage wild flowers

Grass maintenance

Kent County Council are responsible for many of the grass areas in and around the town and Cranbrook in Bloom has a close working relationship with Kent County Council grass maintenance team.

- ☼ Sheafe Drive, Angley Road is cut twice a year (sight lines are cut three times a year)
- ☼ Wilsley Green is cut every six weeks between March and October but particularly six weeks AFTER the spring flowers (daffodils etc) have finished flowering
- ☼ The Copse is a Roadside Nature Reserve (RNR) receiving a cut in October/November to help enhance bio-diversity. There is a three-foot strip, closest to the road, which is cut in March to maintain highway safety

The Copse

This is an area at the south end of the high street that Cranbrook in Bloom continue to maintain. Previously it was quite overgrown, full of brambles and tended to encourage lingering, loitering and littering. Since Cranbrook in Bloom became involved around 15 years ago it has become a haven for wildlife, both flora and fauna, and the top of the bank is now an established "Freedom Path" used in preference to the footpath next to the main road. With guidance from Kent Wildlife Trust we introduced more native plants.



A comprehensive list of plants was produced following a meeting with Kent Wildlife Trust on site. The list includes Narcissus, False Oxlip, Forget-me-not, Primroses, wild Violets, Milkmaids, Wild Pea and many others.

Working parties keep this area clear of litter, minimise unwanted invasive species and generally maintain as needed. Cranbrook in Bloom volunteer Dinah is particularly interested in this area and maintains a record of new plants and wildlife especially in spring when The Copse is at its best.

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025



Community

We are honoured that, for the second year running, Cranbrook in Bloom have been invited by Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council to judge the Cranbrook Allotments Novice Cup. The winner will be presented with the cup at our presentation evening.

The “Community herb box” adjacent to the market cross in the centre of town, donated to us a few years ago, is maintained by David and Joe who live close by. It was made from recycled wood by a local craftsman. We encourage the community to help themselves to this community resource planted up with herbs purchased/donated from a local nursery.

Local Schools, Nurseries and Groups

Rainbow/Brownies have emptied and replanted 2 boxes outside Church House using compost and plants supplied by Cranbrook in Bloom matching the town planters. These are maintained by the Rainbow and Brownie groups.

Cranbrook Primary School are fortunate to have a “Forest School” and we look forward to inviting them along to a pond dipping session at the Library pond. Cranbrook in Bloom provided runner beans for the children to grow this year, competing to see whose is the tallest.

We are looking to find more ways to work with other local educational establishments such as Belle Vue School who have also shown an interest in pond dipping sessions.



Active gardening clubs in schools increase childhood awareness of gardening and the environment right through from the primary school up to and including the senior schools.

The museum garden is generally maintained by volunteers, particularly Cranbrook U3A, overseen by the museum curator. Cranbrook in Bloom donated a mulberry tree to the museum in 2023 to celebrate the museum’s 50th anniversary. They support the Cranbrook Garden Safari by inviting people to their vegetable plot and garden and by providing tea and cake to visitors.

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Events organised by Cranbrook in Bloom

Plant Sales

All plants are either propagated by volunteers or donated by supporters. The plant sales are an excellent way to not only sell plants and raise funds but also to meet people and talk about our 'In Bloom' campaigns.

A financial and community success raising over £2,000 each year from plant sales outside a member's house and at community events. This is aided by our new card machine for electronic payments.



Cranbrook Garden Safari (16th June 2024)

This is one of the highlights of the Cranbrook in Bloom calendar. The 11 private gardens we had open were supported by the Museum, St Dunstan's Church, the Windmill and the allotments. Teas, home-made cakes and refreshments and a plant sale were available on the day. It was an excellent day and as always was a valuable contributor to our finances as well as bringing more people into Cranbrook.

The Garden Safari is only possible due to the generosity of local resident supporters of Cranbrook in Bloom who open their gardens and welcome the public for the day.



Radio Kent support this event by advertising it for us both before and on the day.

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Front garden competition

This is an annual event organised by Cranbrook in Bloom encouraging people to enter their front gardens into 5 separate categories. This is a well-supported community event with over thirty entries for which we present certificates along similar lines to the Chelsea Flower show (Gold/Silver gilt/Silver etc). Categories include “Window boxes”, “Wildlife”, “Tubs”, “Hanging Baskets” and “Front garden” judged by Brian Swann, a keen local gardener.

Presentation evening

This popular annual event took place in the Vestry Hall in October 2024. This is a time to get together with our many volunteers and local gardening enthusiasts to recognise and reward their varied and valued contributions to our efforts through the year. This year we were pleased to have the certificates awarded by the Mayor of Tunbridge Wells, Councillor Nancy Warne, and there was also a well-received talk by local horticultural lecturer James Pashley on the well-being benefits of gardening.

Invitations to this event are extended to people who have helped us during the past year and to local parish and borough councillors and a general invite is extended to Cranbrook residents.

Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May - A Cranbrook in Bloom event

This annual event has been a huge success since its inception in 2017 and has become a much-loved local event also drawing visitors from outside the area. Taking place on the same Sunday in May each year our visitor numbers are regularly in excess of 3000 across the day, attracted by a vibrant social media presence and flyers/posters distributed locally. We are grateful for support from Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council, local businesses and generous patrons. It is run by a team of 6 and on the day numerous local people provide invaluable help on the ground.

Stallholders range from local food producers to plant nurseries, stick makers, basketry, craftspeople in iron and wood, pottery and glass plus local and national charities including those for swifts, Wellbeing in the Weald and the Kent Wildlife Trust. We are delighted that most of our stallholders are so happy with the friendly vibe that they return year after year, whilst we also invite new participants to keep the event fresh.

Each year we have invited the charity U CAN Spray to create a huge mural focussing on our theme and in 2025 it featured a hedgehog. It was created across the course of the day and will be displayed long-term in the town.

Further activities highlighting the plight of hedgehogs included:

* The Children’s Craft Area encouraged ideas to make hedgehogs out of various media and also to learn about the need for hedgehog highways. Volunteers had knitted and crocheted lots of small hedgehogs to give away

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

- * A Create a Poster Competition for children aged up to 6, and 7-12, was to design a poster that encouraged people to help hedgehogs. It was judged by the Mayor of Cranbrook and prizes were offered by Pages Newsagents
- * The Stone Street Window Walk Competition drew another street in the town into the event and involved searching for 26 numbered cards in shop windows which included pictures and information about hedgehogs and how to support their wellbeing. Prizes were generously donated by Blighty's, a Cranbrook high street shop
- * In 2025 our market cross display was centred on a large steel panel, made specially for the event by Cranbrook Iron, showing Hedgehog and Friends. With it was a hedgehog house made by the Wealden Men's Shed (Cranbrook), a small log pile, and displays of information about supporting and encouraging hedgehogs, including information about the two closest hedgehog rescue centres



Additionally a Hedgehog Information Obelisk, a nine-foot-tall structure, displayed posters from a range of hedgehog and wildlife charities. It drew a lot of attention and volunteers gave out information about Hedgehog Street and Thorne Hedgehog Rescue.



"U Can Spray" mural

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Calendar

This is our fourth year of producing the Cranbrook Calendar and it remains very popular, featuring views and flora, from gardens and other areas around the town, taken by local residents. Printed locally by Stationery Express it is an excellent fund-raiser and advertisement for the town and is always in demand.



Support for local initiatives

Apple Fayre - October

In support of the annual Cranbrook Apple Fayre we sold apple cakes, jams, chutneys, preserves, and, of course, apple pies and crumbles as well as running an apple pressing stall selling apple juice to raise funds for Cranbrook in Bloom. During the day we had a team of volunteers, including enthusiastic children under the supervision of their parents and the apple presser, washing, scratting and pressing the apples. In all we pressed and sold over 100 pints at £1.50 a pint.

Apples were kindly donated by a local fruit farmer who also delivered them on the morning of the fayre, our hand apple press was busy during the day. The remaining pulp, around 30 sacks, was donated to a local pig farmer.



Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Christmas market 2024

This took place in Jockey Lane car park. Cranbrook in Bloom had a stall selling wreaths and handmade wooden Christmas ornaments and decorations made by volunteers using materials foraged from local volunteer gardens and hedgerows (with relevant permissions of course!). A team of 2 – 5 volunteers worked tirelessly to produce our wreaths over a few days preceding the market.



Christmas Trees in the Church

20 Christmas trees were donated to St Dunstan's Church. The trees were then sponsored by different local businesses and charities who decorate "their" tree creating a marvellous spectacle in the run-up to Christmas. Cranbrook in Bloom were keen to get involved, sponsoring and decorating one of the trees in support of this local church initiative.



Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Further community involvement

Number of volunteer hours: At least 8000

Volunteers have been responsible for:

- ✿ Collecting plants from local suppliers
- ✿ Regularly weeding roadsides and paths around town, the roundabout, flower beds and boxes, the library pond and the war memorial
- ✿ Local business owner Charlie from Cookshop painted wood preserver on the lavender planters at the pinch points
- ✿ Planning receiving and preparing the new planters
- ✿ Meetings to prepare for town events
- ✿ Manpower at events
- ✿ Preparing plants and compost ready for planting
- ✿ Removing old plants, disposing of spent compost, refilling and replanting planters



Fund raising activities

- ✿ Millennium outings – Community group donation
- ✿ Cranbrook in Bloom events
 - Plant sales
 - Garden Safari
- ✿ Sundry fund raisers including:
 - Local craftsman spoon making
 - Donation pot in local shop
 - Christmas market
 - On the Green raffle
 - Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May tombola
 - Apple Fayre
 - Cranbrook in Bloom calendars
 - Busker raised
 - Small amounts also from Amazon Smile and Tunbridge Wells Lotto

Total raised 2024/2025 just over £6,000

- ✿ We didn't seek a grant from Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish council for general use but they did provide £700 towards Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May.

Other community involvement

- ✿ We are fortunate to have "The Glass House", a social enterprise offering second chances to women prisoners reaching the end of their prison sentence, in town. As they say on their website "Our leafy shop, located in the charming market town of Cranbrook, Kent, provides an opportunity for our team to work outside prison grounds. They can save money, gain experience and begin to prepare for their life

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

after release. At certain special times of the year, we sell our plants elsewhere in the real wide world too”

The Glass House had a garden entered into the Chelsea Flower Show in 2025 and were awarded a magnificent Gold! A superb performance by them!

- ✿ Members and supporters are kept informed of activities and work parties via MailChimp. This is in line with the new Data Protection regulations (GDPR)
- ✿ We send out a quarterly email newsletter with top tips for gardeners
- ✿ We contribute an article, informing locals about what we have been doing and what is coming up, quarterly to the parish magazine “Parish Cake”
- ✿ We regularly advertise events in local publications such as the “Wealden Advertiser”, “Whats On” etc
- ✿ The Cranbrook in Bloom website has our contact details, photos and information about up coming events as does our FaceBook page

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Historical Cranbrook

We are fortunate to have many historical landmarks in town for visitors to enjoy including:

☼ Museum

- A unique archive covering all aspects of Cranbrook's history
- The museum has a well-kept garden tended largely by the U3A group
- The garden has a particular interest in herbs that have historically been used to provide dyes

☼ Windmill

- Working Smock Mill built in 1814
- Now owned by Kent County Council but run by a dedicated team of local volunteers
- Regularly open for visitors and often used by schools for education on the history of Cranbrook and milling
- Believed to be the tallest smock mill in England
- There is a consultation taking place by Kent County Council regarding the future funding of the windmills in Kent which they are responsible for, including our wonderful smock mill. We are concerned about the outcome of this and hope that a secure funding can be found.

☼ St Dunstan's Church

- Also known as the Cathedral of the Weald
- Over 500 years old
- One of the most important churches in Kent, after Canterbury Cathedral
- A regular "Messy church" event provides fun and messy craft activities for families and children
- Innovative fund-raising including music events that benefit from the wonderful acoustics
- Used by local schools e.g. for speech days and festive services

☼ Cranbrook School

- Founded in 1518 and given a Royal Charter by Elizabeth I in 1574
- A mixed state and boarding school
- Ages 11 – 18 years
- Substantial land owners in town with responsibility for the upkeep
- As a large organisation Cranbrook School is a major contributor to the local economy

☼ Baptist Church

- Formed in 1780, still active today
- With a strict adherence to religious principles we avoid working adjacent to the church on Sundays

☼ George Hotel

- Played host to King Edward I in 1299, and Queen Elizabeth I in 1573
- Dating back to the 1300s it is one of Cranbrook's most historic buildings

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Financial Report

Our accounts are prepared each year by McCabe Ford Williams, Chartered Accountants. They do not charge us for this work.

<u>Income</u>	£	<u>Expenditure</u>	£
Donations/ Sponsorship/ Grants	6,450.00	Events	5,005.00
Fund Raising	6,000.00	Watering	3,445.00
	<u>£12,450.00</u>	Plants/compost	3,500.00
		Sundries	500.00
			<u>£12,450.00</u>

We have a year-end balance of £15,670.83 (£14,001.46 – 2024) that will cover our predicted expenses for at least the next year.

Sponsorship

We have been very grateful for the sponsorship provided by LeGrys (incorporating Lloyd Martin) over recent years. We are now in discussions with a potential new sponsor.

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Trustees and Committee

Trustees

Linda Page – Chair (Member of Cranbrook Conservation Area Advisory Committee)

Jemma Wilson – Treasurer

Marian Cumberland – Secretary (Member of Tourism Forum)

Gwenneth Heyking – Trustee (Chair Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May)

Margaret Williamson – Trustee

Valerie Mummery – Trustee (Social Media)

Alison Alston – Trustee

Michael Eastwood - Trustee

Committee Members

Julie Warman – Membership/Minutes Secretary

Kevin Warman – (Website and Social Media)

Rosemary Clarke

Marion Cranmer

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Potted History of Cranbrook in Bloom

1994	The first entry. Result third [out of 3 entries]
2003	Funding from SEEDA enabled us to obtain a water bowser
2006	After several years we were granted a "Licence to Cultivate" certain areas of the town. This gave us the go-ahead to landscape Wilsley Pound Roundabout. Sponsorship came from local businesses. An overgrown pond was exposed in the library grounds. We arranged for debris to be cleared and a dipping platform erected.
2007	Wilsley Pound roundabout awarded "Landscape Award" [South and South East in Bloom]
2008	We adopted an old orchard for which we have an educational pack. An outside classroom has been made and is frequently used.
2011	Funding from the Big Lottery, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish council, KHWP, Kent County Council, and Explore Kent has enabled us to produced a free local walking guide.
2012	Awarded GOLD in South and South East in Bloom competition. Received the "Beat The Drought Award"
2013	Our local Borough Councillor provided a grant to buy planters for bee-friendly plants in the Regal Car Park, the ownership of which had recently been transferred from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to the Parish Council.
2014	A website was set up with help from two local businessmen. We received GOLD for the second time and were invited to enter Britain in Bloom for which we received SILVER GILT.
2015	We were invited to enter Britain in Bloom again and awarded SILVER GILT. Brilliant result.
2016	5000 purple crocuses planted. Larchmere House Nursing Home involved for the first time. No entry into the South and SE in Bloom competition, but still very busy. A portfolio was produced.
2017	Our campaign this year was sponsored by Don Bros, a local business. We won a GOLD award in the South and South East in Bloom Competition. We organised the first "Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May". This was a two-day community event to showcase Cranbrook. It was linked to the Chelsea Fringe "alternative garden festival" and supported by local businesses and Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council.
2018	Cranbrook in Bloom campaign kindly sponsored by Don Bros and the Parish Council again. We achieved a Gold award in the S&SE in bloom and a Silver Gilt in the BiB. We worked with Hartley House Care Home, Cranbrook Primary School Gardening Club and Forest School. Continued assessment of the Copse, Designated Roadside Nature Reserve with the Kent Wildlife Trust. We replanted the War Memorial. Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May event ran again for the second year running on the last bank holiday in May for one day.
2019	Entered into South and South East in Bloom – Winners of "Small towns" category, Gold award. Entered into Britain in Bloom – Silver Gilt award Fund raising continued with Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May event, Garden Safari event and Plant sales Planted whips at the library pond First aid course undertaken to ensure safety of volunteers

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

	Risk assessments reviewed, updated and added to
2020	COVID – seriously curtailed a lot of events and we had to cancel plans for many community events such as Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May and the Garden Safari. Maintenance of the tubs and planters and the various areas around town continued in accordance with the ever-changing guidelines.
2021	Development of the spinney on the Ball Field New hanging planters and enhancement of the eastern approach to Cranbrook Maintenance and increase in the number of planters in town Re-energised our community of volunteers after a quiet 2020 Cranbrook Garden safari returned Funding from Co-op used to buy a bowser to aid watering
2022	15 new planters made by Woodpeckers of Kent using recycled scaffold boards placed in the High Street to replace old damaged planters Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Council planted a tree in the Ball Field to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's platinum jubilee Cranbrook in Bloom bought and sold around 90 tree whips for "Plant a tree for the jubilee" Insect-friendly flower meadow created at the top of the Ball Field
2023	Spinney and flower meadow on the ball field is developing nicely A memorial tree was planted at the spinney to commemorate the life and huge contribution to the town by the late Phil Mummery After it had been left for many years Cranbrook in Bloom are now working with Kent County Council to rejuvenate their Library Pond
2024	Gold award South and South East in Bloom More Yellow Rattle sown in the spring at the Ball Field Library Pond rejuvenating in progress Cranbrook in Bloom invited to judge CSPC allotment competition

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025

Press Coverage and Articles

Articles and advertisements were included in local, regional and national magazines and newspapers:

Cranbrook in Bloom

Our work around town – such as maintaining the planters in the High Street, Stone Street and the Co-op Car Park, looking after the Crane Valley, the copse at the top of the High Street and Forge Orchard, costs money so fund-raising is always a challenge, but it's also great fun. Please look out for us and come along to support events such as the Garden Safari, Plant Sales, Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May and the Apple Fayre, we are always happy to see you.

LIBRARY POND
Some of you may have seen the recent activity at the Library Pond in town. This local amenity has been somewhat neglected for years now so we started a dialogue with KCC, who own the pond, to see if we might be able to work together to bring it back to its former glory as a wildlife haven for people to enjoy. KCC were, happily, in full agreement (kudos to Caroline Frater and Sarah Gilbert for their help) and, despite

The pond dipping produced better than expected results and the smiles to prove it

budget constraints on both sides, we have been working with them to restore it. Initially, this consisted of clearing some of the excess shrubbery, keeping the grass down, removing the tree limbs which had fallen into and grown over the pond and generally tidying up. Little has been removed from the site, most of the growth has been used to provide on-site wildlife habitats for the surprising number of creatures who call the pond home. Later in the year, when the impact on breeding

cycles will be minimal, we might be able to remove some of the build-up of silt so that the water stays habitable for longer, especially during dry spells.

We were joined this spring by local ecologist and countryside officer Sarah Harrington-James who has a Great Crested Newt licence and who helped us conduct a 'pond-dip' to see what was there. She was very positive about the state of the pond with a good variety of invertebrates in evidence. Their presence bodes well for animals higher up the food chain. Indeed, within a few days of our very first clean up session a large amount of frog spawn was deposited!

We hope to conduct a more detailed survey of what lives here later in the year but, in the meantime, please go and have a look at what we've done.

WISLEY POUND ROUNDABOUT
Cranbrook in Bloom undertakes a tidy up of the roundabout a few times each year. The weather has been somewhat against us but we managed to remove much of the excess growth in April and it's looking better. Have a super Summer!

26 The Cake • Summer 2024

The Cake

Tasty local stories, published by Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council

Winter 2024-25 | FREE

SUNDAY MAY 25TH 2025
CRANBROOK GOES NUTS IN MAY
10AM TIL 4PM

A Great Family Day Out!

CRANBROOK GOES NUTS IN MAY

Free Parking

STREET FESTIVAL
CELEBRATING EVERYTHING THAT GROWS
Plants Arts & Crafts Music
Food/Drinks Court Children's Activities

Follow us on Facebook.
Full line-up at
CranbrookGoesNutsInMay.co.uk
Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May
with Cranbrook in Bloom

Cranbrook in Bloom
Garden Safari
Sunday 15th June
10.30am - 5.00 p.m

15 GARDENS OPEN
+ Windmill, Church and Museum

Homemade cakes and teas

Tickets £5.00 from Pages
Newsagents or at the gardens.

Cranbrookinbloom@outlook.com
Marian 07780526766

Cranbrook in Bloom

Our hard-working volunteers were rewarded for their year-round contributions in keeping Cranbrook looking outstanding with a Gold Award at the South & South East in Bloom celebrations, held on 29 September at RHS Wisley. The It's Your Neighbourhood entries from Evernden House and Hendley Drive gardeners were again recognised as for their efforts and both received Thriving awards – only a few points off an outstanding rating. Well done to Pam, Clive, Richard, Dave, Judith and George for their commitment in creating true gardening areas for everyone to enjoy.

Our own presentation and thank you evening held on 6 October was attended by Deputy Mayor Nicholas Pope and his wife Ingrid, who kindly presented certificates to our front garden competition entrants and others involved in this year's campaign.

A big thank you to everyone who came along and congratulations to those who received an award or certificate. It was very much a community evening involving so many people, confirming that every little helps a lot. Results in full are as follows:

Wildlife Friendly Gardens

Gold: Annie Hatcher (garden pictured); Sarah Harrington-James.

Silver: Humphrey and Jane Evatt; Bill Mitchell.

Ornamental Gardens

Gold: Graham Drinkwater.

Silver Gilt: Bill Mitchell.

Silver: Judith Mills.

Hanging Baskets

Silver Gilt: Annie Hatcher; Beverley Coster; Richard Parker; Bill Mitchell; Sharon and James Pashley.

Silver: Graham Drinkwater.

Planters/Tubs

Gold: Richard Parker; Pam Samways; Sue Shaw.

Silver Gilt: Mary-Rose Lea.

Silver: Graham Drinkwater; Linda and Brian Swann; Annie Hatcher; Beverley Coster.

Bronze: Thomas and Margaret Harding.

Window Boxes

Gold: Pam Samways; Sue Shaw.

Silver Gilt: Beverley Coster.

Bronze: Graham Drinkwater.

Front Gardens

Gold: Ros Field; Sarah Harrington-James; Sharon and James Pashley; Pam Samways.

Silver Gilt: David and Rosemary Ettridge; Richard Parker; Linda and Brian Swann; Graham Drinkwater; Bill Mitchell.

Silver: Annie Hatcher; Beverley Coster; Judith Mills; David and Jayne Barrow; Mary-Rose Lea; Sue Shaw.

Bronze: Humphrey and Jane Evatt; Thomas and Margaret Harding.

Allotment Cups

1st prize – S. Humphrey (plot 6)

2nd prize – Clive Watt (plot 20)

RIGHT: Pam Samways and Clive Boodle, two of the Hendley Drive gardeners, received their RHS It's Your Neighbourhood Thriving certificate, awarded by South & South East in Bloom, from Deputy Mayor Nicholas Pope at the Cranbrook in Bloom presentation evening.



3rd prize – Mike Huxley (plot 5)
Novice – N. Taske (plot 30)
Highly commended – S. Pashley (plot 34)

Certificates of Excellence

- USA Museum Gardeners
- Food For Thought
- Cranbrook School Gardening Club
- The Cramp Club
- Kent High Weald Partnership
- Cranbrook Rainbows and Brownies
- Cranbrook Juniors Football Club
- Allotment Volunteers, Wellbeing in the Weald
- Cranbrook Bowls Club

Certificates of Appreciation

- Crane Surgery herb garden
- Union Mill
- Cranbrook Museum
- St Dunstan's Church
- Travis Perkins
- Millennium Outings
- The Cramp Club
- The Herb Box by the Octagon
- Cranbrook Farm Shop
- McCabe, Ford & Williams Accountants

- Peter Wright, Cranbrook's busker
 - Robin and Elaine Beck, litter pickers
 - Julie Hazelwood, litter picker
 - Garry Pethurst, the spoon-maker
- The town planters are now rejuvenated with cute looking violas, and daffodils will follow in the spring. We hope to see you at the Christmas Market at Jockey Lane Car Park on Friday 8 December, when we will be selling Christmas wreaths, table decorations and our Cranbrook in Bloom 2024 Calendar.

JOIN US

Volunteering keeps Cranbrook in Bloom thriving, and everyone is invited to join us, green fingers or not. If you visit our website and register as a supporter/member, we will then keep you informed of what is going on and let you know when and where our working days are.

Our 2024 Calendar is already on sale at Stationery Express, Cranbrook Farm Shop and Pages Newsagents.

Community Spirit – We've Got It!

How lucky are we to live in Cranbrook and Sissinghurst? The Cake looks back over the last year at the events organised by the people of Cranbrook for the benefit of all in the community to enjoy and get involved in.

March: Sissinghurst Flower Show

April: Cranbrook Operatic and Dramatic Society;

Blackadder Goes Forth

May: Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May; The Weald Games

June: Cranbrook In Bloom Garden Safari; Sissinghurst Flower Show

July: Cranbrook on the Green

Cranbrook Juniors FC Fun Day

September: CranFest Music Festival

Sissinghurst Flower Show

October: Cranbrook Apple Fayre

Cranbrook Literature Festival

Cranbrook Operatic and Dramatic Society: Made in Dagenham

November: Cranbrook Art Show

All this plus monthly music gigs in the Vestry Hall, Queen's Hall events including Comedy Club, kids' cinema, live bands plus regular concerts by Cranbrook Choral Society and Cranbrook Town Band and the numerous sporting opportunities throughout the year. Community spirit is alive and kicking in Cranbrook and Sissinghurst!

EVENT NEWS

Cranbrook in Bloom

We have been keeping a close eye on the High Street and Angley Road junction, as we are very keen to see more than just a grassed area at the entrance to Cranbrook. This, and all entrances to the town, are very important. The new junction layout lends itself to shrubs and low maintenance roses, which will make the area interesting and welcoming, showing we care about Cranbrook.

We are hoping to speak with Kent County Council and Hill Development soon to ask that they not only replace the thousands of bulbs we planted in previous years, but also agree to undertake the ongoing enhancement and maintenance of the area.

CRANBROOK GOES NUTS IN MAY

Behind the scenes, we are busy organising the very popular Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May, which will take place on 26 May this year, celebrating all things that grow. Make sure the date is in everyone's diary, as it's a great day out for all the family. Look out for details of how children can get involved, with our crafty tent, and adults with the beer and the bands.



CRANBROOK'S GARDEN SAFARI

Our famous Garden Safari will take place on Sunday 16 June. Don't be shy, sign up to open your garden! It's great fun meeting like-minded people and it helps raise funds to keep the town looking so good.



LIBRARY POND AND SEATING AREA
Kevin and Marian have met with KCC and library representatives to work towards the area being reopened on a regular basis. This is such a relaxing spot that it should be available to everyone for eating your lunch, reading a book, chatting or just contemplating. We were very disappointed when the area was locked and consequently out of bounds, but thanks to Kevin's persistence, things are looking promising for the spring.



ABOVE: Pond dippers enjoying themselves before the area was locked up.

Cranbrook in Bloom will enter the regional South & South East in Bloom competition this year and judging will be in June. Our front garden competition will be judged in the week commencing 17 June. This gives you plenty of advance notice to have your gardens and the surrounding areas in tip-top condition for both judging days. Please let us know if there is an area in Cranbrook that is gardened by a group of neighbours or friends, as it could be entered in a category such as the 'It's Your Neighbourhood'. Parks, Church Yards, Businesses and Allotments also have separate categories in the regional competition.

The second Big Help Out

Coming in April/May; look out for the posters and help out with the ongoing maintenance of the Ball Field trees and wildflower area.

Cranbrook in Bloom 2025



Cranbrook in Bloom went Nuts in May

Livening up the High Street since 2017, Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May returned on Sunday 26 May with its unique energy and charm to celebrate gardens, gardening and every aspect of growing. Over 50 stalls made the day a huge success with many returning, and several newcomers welcomed too. After a nervous start the weather was kind to us and our dancers, bands and artists, including children's craft, with Mayor Raj Bisram choosing the winning entry.

As ever we couldn't do this without dedicated volunteers and support from local benefactors. Huge thanks, therefore, to them and our Headline Sponsor LeCrys Lloyd Martin, Guy Johnson, Buss Murton, Harpers & Hurlingham and Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council plus the Nuts in May team: Alison Alston, Penny Ashdown, Rosemary Clarke, Marian Cumberland, Linda Page and Marion Pethurst. If you'd like to be involved, let me know!

www.cranbrookgoesnutsinmay.co.uk
Gwenneth Heyking, Cranbrook in Bloom

EVENT NEWS

Cranbrook in Bloom Awards 2024

We had a very relaxed and friendly evening on 18 October in the Vestry Hall. Cllr Nancy Warr, Mayor of Tunbridge Wells, accompanied by her husband Matthew, presented certificates to our front garden competition entrants and our certificates of appreciation.

Each year we invite residents to enter their front gardens into our competition, which was kindly judged this year by Brian Swann. Brian, a very keen gardener himself, found it very interesting and enjoyed visiting gardens in the town of which he was previously unaware. We are very fortunate to have such a variety of gardens in Cranbrook, appreciating the work and enjoyment that these bring to us and the resident gardeners is a joy.

- Wildlife Gardens - Silver Gift: Julie West; Ricky Wilkes and Melanie Mason, Silver: Jane and Humphrey Ewart.
- Ornamental Gardens - Gold: Graham Drinkwater.
- Hanging Baskets - Silver: Graham Drinkwater.
- Planters/Tubs - Gold: Judith Mills, Silver Gift: Sue Shaw, Silver: Graham Drinkwater.
- Window Boxes - Gold: Sue Shaw, Silver Gift: Graham Drinkwater.
- Front Gardens - Gold: David and Rosemary Ettridge; Jane & David Barrow; Judith Mills; Ros Field; Ricky Wilkes and Melanie Mason; Jane and Humphrey Ewart; Graham Drinkwater, Silver Gift: Sue Shaw, Silver: Dinah Badcock, Bronze: Margaret and Thomas Harding.

Certificates of Appreciation are awarded by Cranbrook in Bloom to individuals, groups or companies that have shown support over the past year, having a positive effect on our efforts throughout the year. As the title suggests, they are appreciated by all of us. We'd like to thank the following...

- Matthew Blunt: for being particularly hands on this year at many of our working party days.
- Peter Wright: Cranbrook's Busker for his generous donation.
- John Piper: for keeping the Cramp Club looking great all year round. The hop is particularly impressive.
- CSA Museum Gardeners: volunteers at the Museum garden, for keeping it interesting for visitors and locals.
- Cranbrook Rainbow and Brownies: for planting and taking care of the planters outside Church House.
- Cranbrook Millennium Outings: for their kind donation.
- Joe Green and David Taylor: for tending the herb box at the junction of High Street and Stone Street, keeping it fresh and tidy.
- The Co-Op: for maintaining the planters outside their store.
- Dave Mitchell, Andy Lewis and The Cramp Club: for their help and generosity at Nuts in May.
- Food for Thought: for their wonderful hanging baskets.
- Perigo & Son: for their pots & planters.
- McCabe, Ford & Williams: for their accountancy support.
- Travis Perkins: for their continued support.
- George Hotel: for their efforts this year



Judith Mills, proud winner of two gold awards this year, smiles for the camera alongside Cllr. Nancy Warr.

which enhanced their building and our Town.

- Cranbrook Farm Shop & Nursery: Nick Driver and Angela Harris for their continued support.

Peter Every, a South & South East in Bloom judge, presented the It's Your Neighbourhood awards. These are awarded and judged by South & South East in Bloom, for areas that are maintained over and above the call of duty by residents. The areas in Cranbrook that received awards would otherwise be maintained to a bare minimum. However, Judith Mills and Julie West (following on from Lynn Smith) have both made the area outside Major Clarke House and Evernden House into proper gardens.

Well done and thank you to Julie, Judith and their helpers. Congratulations also go to Ros Field who won our gardening competition. Please email us at cranbrookinbloom@outlook.com if you would like to volunteer with Cranbrook in Bloom.

Monday 26th April

CRANBROOK IN BLOOM Plant Sale.
 9am-12.30pm at 1 Providence Cottages,
 Angley Road, TN17 2HG. Plant
 donations welcomed, contact Marian
 07780526766.

Cranbrook Goes Nuts In May

Sunday 25th May
 10.00am - 4.00 p.m

**Don't miss this great day out,
 Free Parking, Plant Nurseries,
 Woodcarving, Local food stalls,
 Childrens crafts tent,
 Food, Drink and Music.**

music@gbzmgmt.co.uk



Charity No 1123988

Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May!

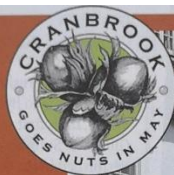
Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May returns again this year with its unique energy and charm on Sunday 25 May 2025, 10am-4pm. Seeing the High Street full of stallholders and visitors celebrating gardens, growing and the beautiful and luscious results still give us the same buzz as that first year in 2017!

Our popular Window Walk competition, in Stone Street, will focus this year on the hedgehog and we aim in general to focus on the plight of this much-loved and essential creature, and how to help it thrive. It might also appear in the children's craft area.

The food offer will include the ever-popular Brown Bread providing sweet and savoury snacks, Santer Vegetarian and a hog roast. You will be able to quench your thirst at either end of the street with Cranbrook's award-winning Larkins' Alehouse and the Cramp Club (Pimms and lager) and we encourage visitors to explore the Union Windmill, Cranbrook Museum and to climb up St Dunstan's Church tower for fantastic views.

We are proud to announce that LeGrys Lloyd Martin continues as our Headline Sponsor enabling Nuts in May and our umbrella organisation Cranbrook in Bloom to continue their fabulous work. Special thanks particularly to Guy Johnson, Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council, Buss Murton and Harpers & Hurlingham. We couldn't do it without them!

Join us and celebrate anything and everything that grows and what you can do with it - dead or alive! Contact: Gwenneth Heyking - 07721 672348 / music@gbzmgmt.co.uk



LeGrys

INCORPORATING
LLOYD MARTIN

18 The Cake • Spring 2025

Community Grants

UKSPF funding was also awarded to 25 community projects across 14 towns and parishes in the Borough, including Cranbrook in Bloom, Paddock Wood Wildflower Meadow, Lamberhurst Playground, Pembury Footpath Signage, and allotments in Benenden, Rusthall and Brenchley and Matfield.



FEATURE

Cranbrook in Bloom Activities

On May 28th, Cranbrook High Street was packed for Cranbrook Goes Nuts in May, we had a successful plant stall and the planters looked great.

GARDEN SAFARI
Despite the unsettled weather on Sunday 18 June, the garden safari was well supported and we would like to say thank you to everyone who came along to enjoy the open gardens. Many thanks also go to the twelve gardeners who bravely invited everyone to visit their private spaces. This is an important fundraising event for us, and

your support is necessary and appreciated. The plant sale outside Horsley Place was a success, all donated plants gratefully received and sold.

"We have three hours to show the judge how much we have to offer with our horticultural and environmental efforts during the year"

PLANTERS

There are now over 60 planters in the town (probably our limit). Placement of the new replacement ones, in October, will finish this grant-enabled project. They all need maintaining, by painting with wood preserver every year, planting up as necessary, watering and dead heading. Quite a task! Volunteers for these tasks and others are always welcome.

CRANBROOK IN BLOOM JUDGING

Once again Cranbrook was at its best on 7 July when Barty, the South & South East in Bloom judge, visited to assess Cranbrook in the Small-Town category of the regional competition.

We have three hours to show the judge how much we have to offer with our horticultural and environmental efforts during the year. Community involvement is also an important consideration and we always surprise ourselves at the number of volunteer

hours that accumulate over the year – we clocked up over 5,000 this time round! Barty seemed impressed with the effort on all fronts and we are looking forward to reading his report and hearing the results when they are announced in September.

Thanks to everyone involved. Volunteers include not only members and supporters of our group but also schools, clubs and other volunteering and community groups. Cranbrook Museum has a beautiful garden maintained by U3A gardening group, the allotments are gardened by residents of the parish, Belle Vue school assisted in the wildflower area in the Ball Field and Cranbrook School Gardening and Wildlife Club were involved in our tour on 7 July.

Our annual presentation evening is on Friday 6 October in the Vestry Hall and everyone is welcome to come along and meet us. You can also find out more about what we do at www.cranbrookinbloom.co.uk

