



South Swindon In Bloom



Portfolio 2025

www.southswindoninbloom.co.uk

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Free weekly activities during the summer in Town Gardens, Queens Park and GWR Park – Park Yoga and Band Concerts



Welcome to South Swindon

South Swindon is a predominantly urban area situated to the south of the main Bristol to London railway line with a population of around 65,000.

South Swindon has a very diverse community with 10 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (mini communities used by government to measure deprivation, education attainment, housing, etc) that are in the 20% most deprived areas in the country.

South Swindon Parish Council is responsible for the ground's maintenance and street cleaning operations within public open spaces, roadside verges, and pavements. In addition, the Parish Council look after 22 play areas and manage 14 allotment sites with 576 plots.

The history of South Swindon features strongly in the South Swindon Green Trail, an 8-mile circular trail running around the parish boundary and linking up the 3 main green corridors running across South Swindon.



South Swindon in Bloom

South Swindon Parish Council first entered the Pennant Class of the South-West in Bloom competition in 2019 and was awarded a Silver Medal as well as the City of Bath Trophy for Best Victorian Park. There was no competition in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions and in 2021, we again achieved a Silver Medal with a Silver Gilt Medal in 2022. Each year, we have tried to take on the feedback from the Judges to improve our entry.

In 2023, we entered the main competition for the first time and achieved a Gold Medal and were also awarded the Tesco Cup. In 2023, the community of South Swindon entered 17 sites in the Its Your Neighbourhood competition with 4 sites achieving Level 5 (Outstanding) and 7 sites achieving Level 4 (Thriving). In 2024, we were awarded a Gold Medal in the Champion of Champions category and our volunteers and community organisations entered 24 IYN sites, with 6 sites achieving Level 5 (Outstanding) and another 6 sites achieving Level 4 (Thriving).

In recent years, South Swindon in Bloom has developed a more collaborative partnership with local community groups, organisations, businesses, and volunteers as well as local Councils and National Agencies.

In October, volunteers and stakeholders who contributed to the South Swindon in Bloom project gathered to celebrate all their efforts after their fantastic gold award in the Southwest in Bloom competition. They were presented their Certificates of Thanks and the Its Your Neighbourhood awards.



South Swindon in Bloom Presentation Event held at TWIGS

A new South Swindon in Bloom Steering Group has been established with representative bloom community partners to help co-ordinate and increase participation with the main objectives of:

- Increase volunteering, especially from ethnic minorities and young people across all Bloom sites.
- Improve communication and awareness of Bloom projects across all our communities – social media, new web page, posters, fliers etc.
- Fund raising.
- Organise events and promotional activities.
- Provide training including workshop sessions.

New for 2025

- New Community Development Officer appointed by the Parish Council to help support Bloom
- Trees, shrubs and perennials planted along the new Fleming Way Linear Park by Swindon Borough Council.
- Swindon Schools Grow Together Project starts with pilot schemes at 4 local Primary Schools
- £850k refurbishment of the Buckhurst Sports Pavilion, Playzone, football pitches and skatepark, including a new mural.
- Supporting newly formed community gardening groups with refugee charity, The Harbour Project based at Broadgreen and residents at the new housing development of East Wichel.
- New collaboration and support WhatsApp group for South Swindon IYN's.

- Alongside other areas of Swindon, South Swindon has support the Keep Swindon Tidy 200,000 Bag Challenge, encouraging councils and communities to remove rubbish from their areas and make the cleaner.
- Queens Park
 - Refurbishment of the Mesothelioma Garden.
 - Work commenced to refurbish the lakes
 - New Chatty Bench
- Town Gardens
 - A new 5-year Management Plan produced and Green Flag entry.
 - Pond & fountain refurbishment and filter system
 - Replacement rose beds
 - Third largest Hindu “Holi Festival” event in the country
- GWR Park
 - Sub-station Mural
 - Tree Carving
 - Gardeners Depot
 - New Pride and Chatty Benches

Financial Review

Bloom Group	Amount	Received from
South Swindon in Bloom	£4,000	South Swindon Parish Council (*)
Blossom Festival	£5,000	National Trust
Blossom Festival	£1,000	Nationwide Building Society
Queens Park Theatre in the Park	£2,500	Nationwide Building Society
GWR Park Gardener Base	£1,000	Scottish & Southern Electricity
Town Gardens Christmas Art Installation	£2,500	Nationwide Building Society
Town Gardens Christmas Art Installation	£8,000	Arts Council England
Old Town Community Gardeners	£250	Front Garden Group
Old Town Community Gardeners	£3000	Plant Sales & Open Gardens Day
Old Town Community Gardeners	£300	Local Billboard Company
Old Town Community Gardeners	£1,000	The Hop
Growing South Swindon Community	£2,700	Rotary Ball
The Gap Community Garden	£600	Redrow Southwest
The Gap Community Garden	£1,500	Waitrose
Manor Road Community Garden	£5,500	Stonewater Housing Association
Kent Road Community Planter	£1,000	Hilliers Funeral Service
Cupcake Planters	£1,500	Swindon Borough Council
Westcott Rec Tree Planting, new bins, benches and path	£6,974	Trees for Climate
Westcott Forest Garden & Tree Nursery	£6,000	Starbucks Corporate Grant
TWIGS	£10,000	Great British Gardens

(*) South Swindon Parish Council also provide a significant amount of support from their Councillors, the Office team as well as the Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning teams, for which we are extremely grateful.

Horticultural Achievements

South Swindon Parish Council are responsible for the management and maintenance of 3 formal parks each one with different characteristics and seasonal interests. Town Gardens and Queens Park are included in the “Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England”.

Town Gardens is a traditional Victorian style park that remains at the very heart of the local community of Old Town and has a rich combination of historical and cultural heritage along with traditional landscape features.

Highlights include spectacular spring blossom displays from magnolias and cherries as well as formal spring and summer bedding, a rose garden, a spring meadow, public art, a recently refurbished aviary, a frequently used bandstand, and concert bowl for various vibrant cultural activities. In 2024, the gardens will be celebrating their 130th anniversary.

towngardens-swindon.co.uk



GWR Park was established in the 1840's initially as a cricket pitch for GWR employees and then as a formal park in the 1870's when formal beds and glasshouses were laid out. In June 2024 the Park celebrated its 180th anniversary.

In 2021, a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was produced in a partnership between the Parish Council, Swindon Borough Council and Historic England.

In 2023, GWR Park Blossom Circle was officially opened in conjunction with the National Trust along with the creation of a new formal rose garden and herbaceous borders.



Queens Park was created during the 1950's and now provides a green oasis of tranquillity amongst the hustle and bustle of the town centre. The design and features of the park reflect the informality of that period. Highlights include a comprehensive collection of trees and shrubs, mixed borders, a paeony bed, a community garden, lakes, a rose garden, and formal bedding as well as a performance space. During 2024, the Mesothelioma Garden was refurbished and in 2025 work has started on the refurbishment of the lakes.



The new **Fleming Way Linear Park and Travel Interchange in the Town Centre** is due to be completed by Swindon Borough Council during 2025 after undergoing a £33m transformation. More than 173 semi-mature trees along with 23,000 bee friendly shrubs and perennial plants have been planted along with a sustainable drainage scheme, solar powered bus shelters and new toilet facilities.



Local businesses also contribute increasingly to South Swindon in Bloom. At the headquarters of the Nationwide Building Society, a new orchard has been planted and the grass beneath left for biodiversity. The local Brewers, Arkells are well-known in Swindon for their seasonal hanging baskets including several pubs in South Swindon – The Sun Inn, The Clifton Hotel and Longs Bar to name a few. The Old Town Gardeners are now looking after the window boxes at The Hop Inn in Old Town.



Above: The Clifton Hotel

Left: Longs Bar

Belle View and Broome Manor Lane islands are located adjacent to some of the busiest roads in Swindon. Both areas used to be planted up with seasonal bedding plants, but the Parish Council decided a more sustainable approach was required and replanted the beds with low maintenance and sustainable plants.



Swindon Growers is a group set up to promote and connect Swindon's many gardening, growing and allotment groups and is for likeminded gardeners or those who want to learn. A newly created monthly newsletter shares gardening related news, gardening related events or offer help and support to each other.

In April, the third annual Swindon Growers Summit took place at Christ Church in Old Town with expert speakers, local suppliers, plant sales, compost testing, community stands, local clubs and societies, Q&A sessions, a seed swap, raffle and refreshments. Money raised went to several local charities and organisations including TWIGS, Old Town Community Gardeners and Prospect Hospice.



Environmental Achievements



Wildflowers @ Pipers Way



Thriving Meadow @ Croft Wood



Cow Parsley @ GWR Park

Rewilding

The Parish Council, along with suggestions from local residents, have identified a number of roadside verges and other areas that have the potential to develop into wildflower areas. These areas have been taken out of routine maintenance and managed for biodiversity with an annual grass cut and removal regime carried out in late summer.

In addition, there are many roadside verges across the Parish which are planted up with naturalised crocus, daffodils as well as wooded areas with snowdrops and bluebells. These areas provide a splash of early spring colour, popular with local residents and pollinating insects. After the naturalised bulbs have finished flowering, many of these areas are followed by cow parsley, buttercups and other wildflowers including 3 species of orchids adding to the season of interest.

Rewilding sites are identified with a timber post along with a Bee logo to acknowledge that the area is being pro-actively managed and maintained for biodiversity.



Pro-active Management Marker Post



Stages of rewilding management – seed sowing, cut & clearance at Shaftesbury Lake

Biodiversity

South Swindon is rich in biodiversity and contains several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) including geological SSSI's dating back to the Jurassic period, Local Nature Reserves (LNR's), Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM's), and County Wildlife Sites. The more notable designations include Coate Water Country Park, The Quarries, Old Town Cycle Path, Rushey Platt, Radnor St Cemetery and Great Copse. We work closely with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust who provide specialist advice to ensure biodiversity is encouraged.

Knowledgeable and qualified volunteer Ecologists Ian Johnson and Helen Senior are helping us to survey and monitor the rewilding areas to record the number of orchids that are flowering and a general ecological survey annually to determine how these areas are developing over time by recording the number of orchids that flower.

A local Entomologist, Marc Taylor M.Sc. has recorded the beneficial impact plantings has had on biodiversity. Marc says, *“As my recording efforts have demonstrated, the corridor from the Town Centre, through Theatre Square and on up to Mr Cod Community Garden all have bee species living, feeding and breeding in them”*.



Bird & Bug Boxes

Our dedicated volunteers construct and maintain numerous bird nesting boxes, as well as several bug boxes including a giant bug hotel made in the Town Gardens that was constructed by children as part of the Blossom Festival.

Composting

We have introduced leaf mould and composting areas at Town Gardens and Queens Park as well as local Bloom projects at Cambria Bridge and Pipers Way. We hope to introduce more local composting initiatives in the future. The Parish Council has also invested in a new chipper to allow us to process woody waste material.

Use of Peat

All the bedding plants that we buy are grown using peat-free compost and wherever possible, when we buy plants from local garden centres or nurseries, we try to source plants grown in either peat free or peat reduced compost.

Our bedding plant supplier collects the used plant cell trays which are then sent off to be recycled and re-used as new trays and pots.

We also use soil improver compost from a local waste company made from 100% green waste as well as our own leaf mould collected from the Town Gardens.

Use of Glyphosate

The use of glyphosate has been prohibited by the Parish Council for several years and therefore strimming has become more important for controlling, as appropriate, the grass growth around obstructions and margins of roadside verges and open spaces.

Water Harvesting

Water storage containers have been installed to collect rainwater from the roof of buildings in Town Gardens and Queens Park as well as water butts in several of our community gardens. We plan to increase the number of water storage containers wherever practicable.

Recycling

There are several segregated waste bins provided in Town Gardens and Queens Park where visitors are encouraged to recycle their rubbish in addition to the general waste bins. Waste is also recycled by the café operators in the Town Gardens who also provide recyclable / biodegradable drink cups.



Home-made Water Harvesting at The Gap

Energy Efficiency

New solar panels have been installed on the roof of the Buckhurst Sports Pavilion as part of an 18-month improvement programme costing over £600,000 to improve the sports pitches and facilities for the local junior football club and ladies' teams as well as a refurbished skateboard park. Solar panels have also been installed on the roof of the Parish Council Offices at Broadgreen.

Litter & Graffiti

South Swindon Parish Council provides nearly 400 waste bins on the streets, parks and open spaces, the majority of which are emptied 2-3 times a week by the Parish Council. The Parish Council also facilitates and supports numerous community litter-picks and Corporate Volunteering activities. For example, Volunteers from the Nepalese Association of Wiltshire carry out regular litter picks at various locations around the eastern side of the Parish. Keep Swindon Tidy group also organise regular community litter picks across Swindon.

The Parish Council also have 2 precinct sweepers who deal with litter and debris on footpaths and cycleways. Road sweeping remains the responsibility of Swindon Borough Council although the Parish Council are currently in discussions with the Borough on a partnership arrangement.



The Borough Council are also responsible for the control of weed growth on the public highway. It is hoped that by the two Councils co-operating on road sweeping to remove detritus build-up in the gutters, the amount of weed growth can be reduced

The Parish Council has a 'zero tolerance' approach to graffiti where it occurs on Parish Council controlled land and offensive graffiti is removed within 48 hours whilst other incidents of graffiti are removed as soon as possible. The site-based gardeners in the formal parks as well as the play maintenance team remove

small incidents as required. Major incidents of graffiti are referred to the Borough Council for specialist cleaning. However, graffiti on private property such as buildings, and utility cabinets remain the responsibility of the legal owner, and the Parish Council is unable to act. Following comments from the judges last year, the Parish Council is currently in discussion with the Borough Council and other Parish Councils to explore options to help deal with this problem across the whole Borough.

The ever-popular PaintFest (Street Art) Festival which takes place every September has seen many of the sites prone to tagging / graffiti transformed into brilliant and colourful works of public art – see page 29.

Westcott Community Tree Nursery and Forest Garden is an exciting new project with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. It aims to collect and grow, locally sourced seed, nuts, berries and cuttings from tree and shrub species, that can be used to supplement tree planting schemes in and around the Borough.

Alongside the production of local trees, the area also provides opportunities to demonstrate and provide other tree-based habitats as well as a “Fedge” (a woven willow living hedge), with beds containing varieties of willow that provide materials for basket making, hazel coppice for bean poles etc., an orchard, seasonal fruits, berries, and perennial food.

As the tree nursery develops it will provide a safe and secure place for people of all abilities to be involved and gain new skills, knowledge and meet with others especially similar community allotmenters nearby.



Volunteers planting trees at the Forest Garden



Construction of the new wildlife pond



Local Scouts helping with tree planting

Community Achievements

Volunteers and local community groups meet regularly to carry out routine maintenance visits necessary to keep all our schemes looking good throughout the year.

The Old Town Community Gardeners meet every Monday afternoon to maintain the increasing number of sites around the Old Town area.

Cambria Bridge Community Gardeners meet every fortnight to develop the area along the old Canal path and around the Play Park, transforming the area into an attractive, nature friendly, interactive outside space.

Residents in the Kent Road area came together to plant up a new raised bed with sponsorship from Hilliers, a local family funeral service.

Prospect Place Conservation Area residents took part in a successful and enjoyable Container Planting Workshop with support from South Swindon in Bloom and sponsorship from the Parish Council as part of their local Bloom competition and IYN entry.



Above: Kent Road Gardeners Community Planter



Above & Below: Residents from Prospect Place Conservation – Container Planting Workshop



Old Town Community Gardeners were formed 10 years ago to help improve the local environment through litter picking and gardening. Since then, the group has become a familiar sight around the Old Town area working on various sites and advising new groups. The group are responsible for the following community gardens, planters & activities:

- The Marriott Beds & Tree Walk (IYN)
- Dewell Mews & Newport St (IYN)
- Station Approach (IYN)
- Apsley House (IYN)
- Mr Cod @ Prospect Place (IYN)
- Fishing for the Moon (IYN)
- Hesketh Crescent Beds (IYN)
- Queen Victoria House Planters
- Arts Centre & Library
- The Hop Inn
- Old Town Open Gardens
- Plant sales
- Workshops



Mr Cod Community Bed



Fishing for the Moon Community Garden



Planting up the window boxes at The Hop Pub



Old Town Open Gardens



Hesketh Crescent Play Area Community Bed



Dewell Mews Border



Old Town Gardens Plant Sale raised £700 of Charity



Marriott Bed in Winter

Mill Lane Community Garden (IYN) was constructed early in 2022 on an overgrown piece of waste land by a group of keen residents and has seen an increased sense of community with participants ranging from 8 years old to 80.

The bed is used for growing a range of herbs, vegetables and companion flowers and perennial plants. The garden has proved very popular with residents.

Unfortunately, the land has now been sold to a Developer who plans to build a house on the area. The group whilst disappointed, hope to build on the community spirit and continue to garden together.



Mill Lane Community Garden

Cambria Bridge Community Beds and Herb Patch (IYN) are looked after by the Growing South Swindon Community Group. The area includes a popular and productive raised bed growing a range of popular herbs along with a few vegetables and companion planting, a small soft fruit garden, a raised bed planted with a range of perennial plants, several compost/leaf bins, hedges, a rewilding strip, and a mud kitchen.

The environment here is harsh for growing plants – the low level raised beds are placed on top of tarmac. In addition, the beds surround a children’s playground, kickabout area and wheels park so again this adds to the challenges. A net barrier has recently been installed to try to prevent stray balls from the kickabout area from damaging the planting.

Despite these difficulties, the beds are popular with the local community providing fresh produce and an attractive area to sit and relax just a few hundred metres from the very centre of Swindon.



The Friends of Shaftesbury Lake (IYN) is an established group of local residents who are passionate about the lake and the surrounding area located in Park South. The group have worked with the Parish Council to put on a Wildlife Discovery Day at the lake in April as part of the annual Blossom Festival with activities including Pond Dipping, a Discovery Trail, Face Painting, build a Bug Hotel and learning about wild flora and fauna with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.



Shaftesbury Lake Wildlife Discovery Day

The Gap Community Garden (IYN) is another project started in 2022 in Park South, so named as the garden is hidden away and can only be accessed through a “gap” between two blocks of houses. The garden was set up to encourage community involvement and help provide free food.



£600 Grant Presentation to The Gap from Redrow Homes SW



The Gap surrounded on all sides by houses

Angel Ridge Community Growing Project (IYN)

was started by a group of keen residents in 2024 to improve and maintain an area of open space surrounded by blocks of apartments. With the support of the Parish Council, new raised beds have been added and planted with a variety of shrubs, perennials, mixed with herbs and a few vegetables. The residents hold regular work parties and have secured a grant from the Parish Council as well as donated plants and tools from residents. An overgrown and unused site has now been transformed into an area for residents to use



Manor Road Community Growing Project (IYN)

is another new initiative started in 2024 to transform a n overgrown and underused area into a community focussed, safe and secure place for growing and learning.

The site will be used as a community space for residents including those in nearby flats and sheltered housing as well as for children, staff, and families from the adjacent Robert Le Kyng Primary School. It is anticipated that the space would be a place for the local community to come together to share and learn new skills around food, biodiversity, growing and nature.

The initial phase will involve extensive clearance and restoration of the site to create a positive asset for the community. The project is a partnership between Growing South Swindon, Swindon Growers, Swindon Borough Council and South Swindon Parish Council.



Community weed and tidy up at Manor Road

The Great Western Wellbeing Memorial Garden is a new initiative by the Brighter Futures Charity in memory of the 300+ lives lost at the Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust due to COVID. The garden with 8 different zones is located adjacent to a pond at the entrance of the hospital and is planted with modern perennial planting, colourful borders, trees, and seating.



Christ Church Rose Garden has been the final resting place for the ashes of more than 1,300 local people. Although it is now closed to new interments, it remains a centre for remembrance and consolation for many families. Many of the departed are remembered by small plaques but many more are unmarked, and it remains a key part to the local community.

The Revd Canon Simon Stevenette says “The garden is a place of peace and remembrance for the many visitors to our site and we are acutely aware of our privilege and responsibility for looking after it. Over the past year, a team of dedicated volunteers have been working to restore the first part of the garden to a more accessible, manageable, respectful, and dignified, final resting place.” Most of the church grounds are now managed for wildflowers and biodiversity.



Radnor Street Cemetery was designated as a Local Nature Reserve in 2003 and started to manage the site for biodiversity. The Friends of Radnor Street Cemetery heritage group were formed to tell the important story of the cemetery through the people who are buried there. Burials include civic dignitaries, members of the Great Western Railway hierarchy, the boilermakers and plate layers, the philanthropic benefactors and trailblazing women, the teachers, and tradespeople and the 104 servicemen who lost their lives because of their military service in two world wars. The small team of dedicated volunteers research and write about those buried in the cemetery, conduct guided cemetery walks, help maintain the Commonwealth War Graves, help visitors locate family graves, hold exhibitions in the Chapel and have an annual Remembrance Day Service.

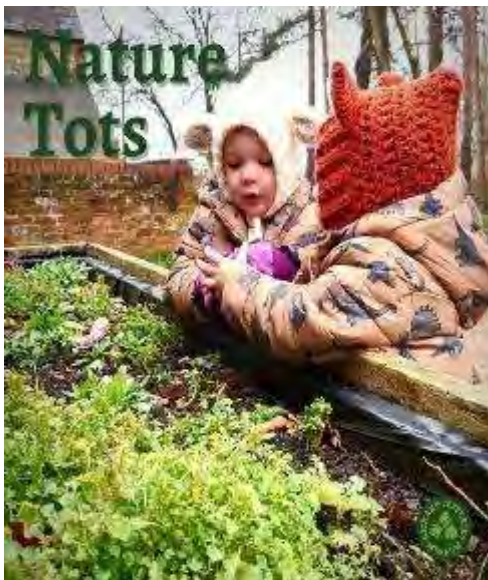


Richard Jefferies Museum (IYN)

The Museum Trust was founded to develop and manage the museum which honours Richard Jefferies, a well-known Victorian writer, and a pioneer on environmental issues and one of the first people to use the term “wildlife”.

The museum contains a 17th century thatched cottage, a 19th century three-storey farmhouse, outbuildings, gardens, a small copse, an orchard, and vegetable gardens. The Richard Jefferies Trust has introduced a programme of arts, music, and nature events, including activities for young children and has a small museum café.

In 2024, the Museum was judged to be Outstanding (Level 5) in the Its Your Neighbourhood competition.



TWIGS Community Gardens (IYN)

The beautiful themed gardens are green sanctuaries in the middle of Swindon, where each distinctive space can be explored and visitors can connect with nature and each other. The gardens are places of healing and engaging with nature through horticultural therapy is a powerful way of reducing stress and finding a sense of purpose. The gardens are also a resource to give people who experience mental health problems the chance to regain confidence, self-esteem and to learn new skills.

The gardens have evolved over 25 years thanks to the hard work and dedication of our band of staff and volunteers, and through this collective effort we have managed to nurture an oasis of calm and beauty in the middle of a bustling town.

The gardens are open to the public every Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 10am and 3.30pm. Plants and products are also available to buy and a number of public events are held throughout the year.

The adjacent Olive Tree Café also provides opportunities for people who need support with their mental health. Please visit our website at [TWIGS Community Gardens - Swindon | The Recovery Tree Charity](https://www.twigscommunitygardens.co.uk/)



Illustrative Map of the TWIGS Garden



Rainbow Garden in Spring



Perennial Beds in Summer



Twigs Volunteer

Prospect Hospice (IYN) was founded in 1980 for the local community and with the local community's support. This site was opened in 1995 and has been supported by volunteers ever since. The volunteer gardeners play a huge part ensuring our gardens are maintained and looking beautiful for the enjoyment of our patients, their families, visitors, and the local community. There are 12 regular volunteers led by Lead Volunteer, Yvonne, who tend to the gardens every week come rain or shine.



Once a year we share the gardens with the local community at our summer fete. The Remembrance Garden is open every day for families and friends, providing a peaceful area to create a lasting memory of loved ones whilst strolling around the bluebell path or to take a moment at the memory tree.

The volunteers make the decisions around the maintenance of the gardens and planning what needs to be done. They have been busy clearing woodland areas of dead and overgrown shrubs and reinstating hedges and fences around the borders. They care about how the gardens are maintained, making, and using their own compost totally peat free, and thinking now about how we can integrate a wormery to further reduce food waste and add nutrients back into the ground. Water butts are scattered throughout the gardens and used to water all the planters.



The gardens bring a great deal of enjoyment to the patients, and a tranquillity which is really appreciated. The volunteers ensure that the patients patio areas are always at their best and encouraging the local wildlife to come out and say hello. Robin, a family member said; *'Our time spent at the hospice has left us with some very special memories. My mother absolutely adored nature and loved being outdoors. Her room looked out onto the stunning gardens that were teeming with wildlife. We'd sit at my mother's bedside with the patio doors open and watch extraordinary things. The bird feeders were awash with birds; we saw woodpeckers, goldfinches, and blue tits feed along with pheasants and even watched as muntjac deer grazed just 15 feet away from us. Nature gathered outside the windows, and, for my outdoorsy mother, it felt almost magical and was incredibly comforting.'*



Central Community Gardening (IYN) is a project managed by the Mechanics' Institution Trust and supported by the LiveWell team at Swindon Borough Council, Central Area Resident Improvement Group, the Harbour Project, and South Swindon in Bloom. A variety of outdoor activities take place across several locations, including the Central Community Centre and Westcott Allotment.

The project aims to provide inclusive gardening activities that bring people together and promote sustainability and horticulture. Two volunteer-led groups regularly participate in the gardening activities organised by the Mechanics' Institution Trust and the LiveWell team. These groups are the Global Gardeners and Mechanics' Maintenance Team.

The Mechanics' Maintenance Team participates in gardening as well as other activities such as painting and litter picking around the Railway Village to help keep the area clean and tidy.

The Global Gardeners mostly focus on the Community Allotment and Central Community Garden. The project is funded by the Wiltshire Community Foundation.



Every Cloud (IYN) is a charity run by volunteers offering a variety of activities, and events which support the mental health and well-being of all in the community through various Arts & Crafts, the natural world, and gardening.

The Farmhouse Garden is planted in a cottage garden style with many herbaceous perennials along with some herbs, vegetable, and a raised pond.

Next to the garden there is a Community Orchard containing many historic fruit varieties as well as a sculpture garden.

The restored barn is the base for various activities and events run by Every Cloud and is set within the natural environment of Stanton Park and Local Nature Reserve.

In 2024, the garden was judged to be Outstanding (Level 5) in the Its Your Neighbourhood competition.



Swindon Schools Grow Together is a new Bloom initiative for 2025 with the start of a pilot scheme involving 4 local schools, each receiving a Starter Pack containing the basic items required to start a gardening project thanks to a grant from South Swindon Parish Council and donations from gardening clubs and community.

Each school has their own WhatsApp group which has a detailed video and pictorial record of the progress being made as well as an easy way of contacting the schools. School Champion Teachers within each school are receiving customised support by Bloom members with 1 to 1 workshops and tutorials and Q&A sessions along with visits and free / sponsored tickets to local gardening events.

King William School in Old Town has received support to plant up a “Reflection Garden” with robust, sensory, pollinator friendly, companion plants with year-round interest along with educational value that sparks curiosity which has resulted in a new Gardening Club being formed at the school supported by Bloom members. Lesson plans have also been produced to help support gardening activities.



Above: Pupils from King William St. School



Below: Schools Starter Kit



Cultural Events and Activities

The Parks and Open Spaces of South Swindon are home to numerous cultural events and activities which take place throughout year. These include events, public art, exhibitions, sculptures, and memorials. Some of these are shown in the photo gallery below, others will be included on the tour. Details about the Bandstand concerts, Music in the Park, Theatre in the Park, and other events taking place can be found on the Parish Councils web page - <https://southswindon-pc.gov.uk/events/>. A selection of promotional information about these events will be available at the Presentation.

Below are a few examples of the many displays of Public Art around South Swindon. A Mural Trail produced by Artsite will take you to a variety of locations to see the eye-catching and thought-provoking artwork – more details can be found at <https://www.artsite.ltd.uk/swindon-art-trail>



Our Partners & Supporters

South Swindon in Bloom would like to thank our partners for their continued participation and support:

- Angel Ridge Community Gardeners
- Arkell's Brewery
- Artsite & Post Modern
- Badbury Park Primary School
- Brighter Futures Charity
- Cambria Bridge Community Gardeners
- Christ Church
- Earthwatch Europe
- Every Cloud
- Friends of Radnor St Cemetery
- Lawn Manor Academy
- Good Gym
- Great Western Community Forest
- Growing South Swindon Community
- Harbour Project
- Historic England
- Keep Swindon Tidy
- Manor Road Community Growing Project
- Mechanics Institute Trust
- Mill Lane Community Gardeners
- National Trust
- Nationwide Building Society
- Old Town Arts Centre & Library
- Old Town Business Association
- Old Town Community Gardeners
- Plastic Free Swindon
- Prospect Hospice
- Richard Jefferies Museum
- Royal Wootton Bassett Academy
- Salvation Army
- South Swindon Parish Council
- Stonewater Housing Association
- Swindon Borough Council
- Swindon Growers
- The Gap Community Gardeners
- TWIGS (Therapeutic Work in Gardening)
- Wiltshire Police
- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Parish Videos

The Parish Council has produced a few information videos which can be found on their website: [Gallery | South Swindon Community | South Swindon Parish Council \(southswindon-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

Parish Notice Boards

Information about activities taking place is regularly posted in community information boards located in the formal parks and other community facilities across the parish.

Social Media

Links to our various Social Media sites:

- [South Swindon Parish Council | Facebook](#)
- [Old Town Open Gardens | Facebook](#)
- [South Swindon in Bloom | Facebook](#)
- [Old Town Community Gardens | Facebook](#)
- [Swindon Growers Facebook](#)
- [SSwindoninBloom \(@SSwindonBloom\) / Twitter](#)
- [SSinB Instagram page](#)
- www.facebook.com/growingsouthswindoncommunity
- <https://www.instagram.com/southswindonparish/>



In addition to the online coverage, we also have regular coverage of activities and events in local media outlets such as the Swindon Advertiser, The Ink Online, Outlook Magazine, Swindon 105fm, BBC Radio Wiltshire. The Parish Council are now producing and delivering a quarterly newsletter.