

Judges Notes for Summer 2025



YORKSHIRE

Category B1 Small Business

Middleton Railway Trust Ltd Leeds

Gold

Overall Impression

The railway was built in 1758 to transport coal from Middleton to the developing town of Leeds. This was authorised by Act of Parliament making it the worlds oldest continuously operating railway. There is also a fine collection of railway engines and associated items within the museum and with larger items being displayed outside.

On entering the car park everything is well maintained and planters are used to provide some colour in what is rightly an industrial zone. The use of water butts is evident around the site as part of the attention given to the environment and use of resources.

The small bed at the entrance consists of perennial plants which apart from the display helps to highlight the entrance. Once on the platform the planters provide an impressive display and illustrate how much work has been put into planting and maintenance.

The line acts as a linear green space for wildlife and connects to Middleton park and woods, line maintenance is a mix of conservation and operational needs as the line operates on a regular basis.

It is fair to say that this is a hidden gem of which Leeds and others should be very proud of and encourage visitors to experience a significant part of the engineering history of Leeds.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consideration could be given to using hanging baskets on the shelter that have a reservoir, to reduce labour but also to make a better impression, if considered, care would need to be taken in respect of weight.
- Should the opportunity occur possibly through a wildlife group some observations of wildlife around the track could be interesting to see what is present.
- The recycling ash project looks to be resolving two issues and I hope it can continue.

- Expansion to the park is planned but dependant upon other organisations to allow it to happen, keep this in mind and when possible seek a resolution.
- Keep the plan for an expansion into Middleton park alive and whilst it is on the big wish list having a plan is a major step forward.

A possible difficult suggestion as much of the plant material is gifted, but if Begonia non-stop plants were used in some places they would form bigger plants and spill over the containers, but this is an only consideration if it did not upset the current system.

The Egg and Spoon Cafe, Filey

Gold

Overall Impression

The garden at the rear of the popular Egg and Spoon café is a real hidden gem; an oasis on Filey Main Street. As you traverse through the café you see hints of greenery and then the welcome view of the garden area at the back. This small courtyard contains several tables, each with their own potted plant, which are significantly enhanced by the range and breadth of planting.

A pergola is well covered with Wisteria providing an area of both beautiful blooms when in flower and also shelter both from sun and rain, enabling the courtyard to be used all year round. The narrow beds which are mainly in shade demonstrate a very good, appropriate use of planting for the conditions with strong healthy plants growing in all the beds. Hanging baskets full of healthy blooms give pops of colour adding further eye appeal. Several bird drinking stations are apparent to support the local wildlife.

There is a clear partnership between the café owner, Tilly, and Janet who undertakes the majority of the gardening duties which has provided a well stocked and tended garden area with year-round usage and appeal. The constraints of developing a courtyard garden as part of a café was noted, as well as the benefits of having the courtyard garden offered to café users. The disabled access is lined with troughs of cheerful annuals making it a positive entryway. Bunting gives the garden a festive air while keeping the seagulls at bay. The clever trompe l'oeil at the far end of the garden masks the storage area.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

In order to help maintain and further develop the garden the following could be considered:

- Improved use of social media to promote the courtyard area to a wider customer base

- Strengthening the sense of being in Filey, and within the Egg and Spoon, within the courtyard area
- Consideration if there are any opportunities for window boxes at the front and a door wreath made of natural materials
- Explore the possibility of enhancing biodiversity; for example bug houses, bee feeders, etc

Higgins Hairdresser

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

This is a garden which is clearly very much loved and cared for. There are pots and containers everywhere with a mass of colourful and healthy bedding plants tumbling out of them.

Everywhere the plants were in excellent condition and growing to their full potential.

The acer trees in the site provide a dramatic contrast of color and structure. There wasn't a corner of the garden, which had not had tremendous care lavished on it.

The garden surrounded the business on two sides and it certainly made the premises look extremely attractive

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It might be an idea to consider putting down weed membrane over the soil and covering that with perhaps bark chips or pea gravel, which should be safe options bearing in mind that the site is quite close to windows.
- Perhaps it might be possible to include some pots of scented planting such as herbs or lavender, which will increase the wildlife benefits of the site, and attract bees and butterflies.
- Perhaps some pot grown conifers might be an idea to introduce year round structure and provide a contrast from the colourful bedding in form and colour.

The Dusty Miller

**Gold & Category
Winner**

Overall Impression

The Dusty Miller sits on a windy corner of a very busy main road. However, it is a real credit to Rob and his team that the outside area is kept to such a high standard. Working with Northcliffe Environmental Enterprises Team, (NEET) is a great way to bring the community on board. NEET is a local charity that support individuals with additional needs. The work they undertake at the Dusty Miller is an excellent example of their high standards.

The plants chosen by them are bright and of a high quality. The outside eating areas and car park were spotless. It was good to see bird boxes and feeders that are being used. They are in the process of building a hedgehog area. Composting and water collection also takes place. It was lovely to see that Rob had incorporated planters from a resident into the display by the entrance.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It is good to see that the perennial sweet peas are starting to flower. Perseverance with this plant is the key to success.
- The window boxes on the first floor provide a welcoming first view for passers-by. However, they do suffer with wind damage though not to a great extent. It will be interesting to see what, if any changes to this plant selection is made.
- Whilst it is understood that the small strip of land at the side of the car park is not part of the Dusty Miller and ownership cannot be established. Consider pollarding the trees in the autumn and strimming the grassed area.

Overall Impression

Monk House is clearly a very inviting place to stay indeed while visiting York. The planted pots by the entrance gate give a lovely welcome to the site and the curved path invites the visitor to follow it. The serpentine shape of the grass area in the center of the garden has a soothing feel and invites the visitors to come in whilst making the garden itself seem larger and is a well thought out feature of the site.

The garden is pleasing in that there are small areas such as the one where vegetables are grown in pots and containers and the seating area with tables by the house itself, surrounded by pot plants where visitors can hopefully find a quiet spot in the garden even if there are others out there enjoying it.

It was pleasing to see the wide variety of planting in the garden and to hear that so much of it is wildlife friendly. Throughout the garden the plants were in an extremely good condition with no signs of pests or diseases at all.

It was impressive to see the range of pot grown herbs which are used in the breakfasts provided to guests. It was nice to see the pond. It has frogs in it and it was pleasing to find out that the site had a bird box and even a bat box on the chimney of the house and also pleasing to see water harvesting and composting taking place in the garden.

Artwork in the gardens a nice idea. It was impressive to see that the front gardens have been developed to be in keeping with the age and nature of the house itself and to hear of the part played by the entrants in introducing daffodils along the road verges.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- . Keep introducing scented planting into the back garden area. Maybe there might be space for some old-fashioned, fragrant sweet peas or fragrant roses which would be lovely for visitors to the garden.
- Keep working to benefit wildlife, although there isn't room in the garden for a full sized buddleia, there are very good dwarf buddleias that can be pot-grown now and they might benefit wildlife and could be in one of the areas where plants are grown in pots.
- It might be possible to add even more spring interest by introducing some of the species tulips, which are quite low growing, so would be suitable for this garden.

The Wagon and Horses

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

.The Wagon and Horses is a JD Wetherspoon's establishment and sits at the side of a very busy roundabout. Your initial impression is to smile at the lovely hanging baskets surrounding the premises. They are brightly coloured and well-tended. The business contracts out the purchase of these baskets in order to have uniformity across each of its franchises.

The landlord, Peter, takes a special interest in the planting he is able to influence. It is clear to see that there is a real love for the planting schemes. There is thoughtful consideration being placed on what will enhance his customers experience and not be invasive to the seating areas.

The pagoda is covered with Jasmine which emits a gentle fragrance. The Wisteria is clearly happy here as the images from when it was in flower are quite spectacular – especially considering this is relatively newly planted a couple of years ago.

The areas are clean and welcoming for customers you can almost forget you are by a busy main road.

Peter supports the Chapeltown in Bloom team who have been helpful with advice and who meet here weekly. After consultation with the team an apple tree was planted with a plaque to commemorate VE Day.

Peter has developed a 'living wall' which sadly this year has not been as successful as he hoped it would be due to the weather conditions. We discussed other possible plants that may be more successful in these drier conditions.

Peter has also introduced some plants to the conservatory area which help give a softer ambiance to the room. Peter has many good ideas and it is impressive to hear how he grows plants from seeds.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider tumbling tom tomatoes in a hanging basket –the small pockets on the living wall may not be suitable. It may be worth considering alpines and succulent plants for this.

- Hopefully, you are able to involve a small community group such as the scouts to help with planting outside the public house.
- As discussed, the hollies will benefit from being in a larger pot.

Whites Butchers - Hutton Cranswick

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

The shopfront planters were a delight to see – an excellent selection of colour and variety. They make a real impact and are a good addition to the High St in Hutton Cranswick. There was also a lovely interior window display with good quality plants, making for a very welcoming and clean impression.

This is only a tiny space but the planting is maximised to its full potential. James White Family Butchers stands in the centre of the village of Cranswick but occupies a tiny space fronting the main road and opposite the pond. This tiny frontage is packed with colourful planters giving a warm welcome to visitors and customers. Additionally, the shop has a fine display of indoor plants in the shop window which add to the overall display.

The overall impression we get from the owners of all businesses who support Hutton Cranswick in Bloom, is the wonderful enthusiasm and commitment to improve the environment of this community. James White Family Butchers is no exception to this and the beautiful floral display outside the shop is testament to this enthusiasm and commitment. Thank you for supporting the overall Hutton Cranswick Yorkshire in Bloom entry demonstrating the depth of community involvement found throughout the village.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

-
- Consider publicising the participation in Yorkshire In Bloom.
- Assuming they will not affect vehicle access, possibly consider a couple of hanging baskets or wall-mounted planters along the shop side to provide more impact from that perspective.

Spar store - Hutton Cranswick

Silver

Overall Impression

Planters by the entrance provide a nice array of colour, creating a lovely entrance way and inviting customers into the store. This splash of colour is clearly welcomed by customers. A very neat and tidy frontage to the Spar shop with well maintained raised planters, full of vibrant colour. The area was weed and litter free. Thank you for supporting the overall Hutton Cranswick Yorkshire in Bloom entry demonstrating the depth of community involvement found throughout the village.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider publicising the participation in Yorkshire In Bloom.
- The repainting/staining of the wooden planters on the forecourt would help raise standards.

Hutton Cranswick Fisheries

Silver

Overall Impression

Overall Impression

Well done to Hutton Cranswick fish and chip shop for having such a nice selection of plants in well positioned wall mounted planters. The shop front was very clean and well maintained this gives a very welcoming impression to both customers and the public. A good first time Yorkshire in Bloom entry. Thank you for supporting the overall Hutton Cranswick Yorkshire in Bloom entry demonstrating the depth of community involvement found throughout the village

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Some of the wall planters would benefit from trailing plants to cover the planters.
- Consider publicising the involvement in Yorkshire in Bloom
- Is there scope to add any additional planters or baskets within the confines of running a successful business

Judges Notes for Summer 2025



YORKSHIRE

Category B2: -Medium Business

The White Horse

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

The White Horse is much more than just a pub, restaurant and hotel – it has a real sense of being a community hub too. Very pretty planters and hanging baskets greet the visitor and there is an attractive beer garden with a nice selection of plants, herbs, a stage and large multi-media screen. It was good to see recycled items being put to good use. There is a very welcome attempt to encourage wildlife too. Overall, this is a strong and very worthy entry to Yorkshire in Bloom.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

If possible consider re-treating the woodwork/planters in the beer garden, which would improve the overall appearance of the garden.
A possible future addition to the beer garden to increase interest and variety could be to plant climbers to cover some of the boundary fencing such as clematis, honeysuckle or climbing rose.

Farm Shop at Cranswick

Silver

Overall Impression

There is a neat box hedge and some attractive planters to welcome visitors, and it was good to see old tractor tyres utilised as a planter.

The kids' activity area complete with miniature farming machinery is a great idea and offers a different play experience.

Thank you for supporting Hutton Cranswick in Bloom

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- If possible, consider painting/staining the planters by the entrance and applying a bit more care and attention around the car park – this would raise standards.

If possible, the addition of a couple of hanging baskets by the entrance would add interest.

Livingstones Motor Group

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

It was a pleasure to see a car dealership joining the In Bloom initiative, particularly as motoring is so often seen as the very antithesis of 'going green'.

It was clear to see from the efforts made that they are a genuine part of the local community and supporter of the local initiative. This was ably demonstrated by the display of posters from the local primary school and local artwork, plus the excellent planters on the forecourt. The planting display created from worn tyres was a particularly neat touch as was the floral display pick-up truck.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider the use of perennials and trailing plants for the wooden planters. The 'tyre planters' would benefit from insect attracting perennials such as Lavender, Sedums and Golden Rod.
- Consider if there are any additional parts of the site that can be planted up to further enhance the display, perhaps some hanging baskets, further planters or sustainable low maintenance perennials.

Abbeydale Residential Home

**Gold and
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

Overall impressions

. The judges didn't need an address to find Abbeydale Residential Home the flowers told the judges they had arrived. With over 3000 bedding plants used on the site along with a background of permanent planting, the garden was overflowing with colour. High quality

hanging baskets, hayricks and tubs around the site on all levels made a real floral statement and an obvious choice for opening for Open Gardens in Ilkley. The lime green cushions and umbrellas enhanced the planting.

There was a high class golf green with immaculate grass for the staff and residents to play on. A vegetable area and some glass space was provided for the residents to continue growing.

The gardeners should be commended on the high level of maintenance of all the floral features which makes Abbeydale such a wonderful place to live.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The greenhouse area could maybe benefit from a little more ventilation and removal of the lower leaves of the tomato plants.
- Consider encouraging other local groups and businesses to the benefit of 'In Bloom'.
- Maybe consider including a herb garden or some planters.

Goldsborough Hall

Gold

Overall Impression

Goldsborough Hall is a historic house with royal connections now run primarily as a wedding venue and exclusive hotel. The beautiful and varied gardens comprise lawned areas, herbaceous borders, woodland, wildlife area, orchard and a kitchen garden. A collection of over 130 cultivars of snowdrops is sited within the Woodland. In and around the Hall, stunning displays of mixed annual/perennial pots in groups brighten the patios and paved areas adjacent to the building, not only enhancing these areas but providing photo opportunities for wedding and other visitors. From the front of the building well-stocked and designed herbaceous long borders lead the eye to the landscape and Lime Tree Walk beyond. The calm and green Woodland area provides a contrast and has been underplanted in places with ferns, Hostas etc.

The business and gardens embrace the ethos of sustainability including a borehole for water and the productive garden which provides food for the kitchen and flowers for the house.

The local school pays visits to the garden on occasion and local villages benefit from the opportunity to raised funds at Hall events.

That the current garden has been restored in the last twenty years is due to the foresight of the Oglesby family and the standard of cultivation is due to the dedication of Mark, his team of staff and volunteers.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- . The Woodland area continues to be underplanted and as plants establish this will enhance this part of the garden.
- The area encompassing the Snowdrop collection is somewhat barren – could it be enhanced for example by use of sculpture/s (willow?) or other artefacts of a temporary nature (eg: tree hangings) perhaps referencing the snowdrops themselves?
- With two of the local villages now entering Yorkshire in Bloom, perhaps there might be opportunities to support their efforts on an ad hoc basis with advice on developing sustainable plantings?
- It was interesting to see the tropical plants on the Woodland edge. These, of course, are not without their challenges but with climate change and perhaps the development of new cultivars to cope with this it will be fascinating to see if they become more integral to the garden.

Tower Court Business, Retail and Health Centre Park York

Silver

Overall Impression

Tower Court Business, Retail and Health Centre forms a small section of the Clifton Moor industrial complex situated on the outskirts of York. As a first time entry into Yorkshire in Bloom, this is very much a work in progress.

The on-site team led by Ian Calpin is working very hard to achieve and is planning for the long term future. Tenants are being brought “on board” slowly and many environmental projects are planned for the future. There are established trees and the hedgerows are well maintained.

This is a good first time entry into Yorkshire in Bloom with plenty of scope to go further in the competition given time and good communications between all stakeholders.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to work with tenants, landowners and partners to look at and implement long term landscaping goals. Build on the partnerships already established.
- Continue to consider appropriate traffic management under trees where there are overhanging branches which could be a safety issue.
- We look forward to seeing your plans for a wildflower border come to fruition. Continue to introduce perennial, sustainable planting in keeping with neighbouring designs.
- It may be a slow process to bring Tower Court up to the environmental standards that you desire but you have vision and can see where you want to be which is vitally important.

Stirling Park York

Gold

Overall Impression

Stirling Park forms a small but independent portion of the larger Clifton Moor Industrial Estate situated on the outskirts of York. It has to be said that Sam's passion and vision for his work is inspiring and this shows through when looking at Stirling Park.

Around the industrial units there are a good mix of shrubs and wild flower areas increasing the range of pollinators enhancing the environment. The sustainable planting is divided on a regular basis and replanted/recycled elsewhere on site.

Excellent design skills are in evidence everywhere on site. It is clean and litter free. Tenant engagement is very good and will develop further. An excellent Yorkshire in Bloom business category entry.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to manage the client's expectations in matters such as tree maintenance.
- Continue to work with clients to keep kerb edges clean and tidy – a difficult task on such a busy estate where parked cars are the norm making access for maintenance difficult.
- We look forward to seeing your plans to plant small woodland bulbs on the bank by the York and North Yorkshire Wheelchair Service building.

- Your plans for gabbion cage bug hotels sound intriguing and is a good way to avoid creating a potential fire hazard when building with traditional methods such as wooden pallets.
- Continue to work towards your plans for a recycling area for composting plant waste.

Country Style Foods

Gold

Overall Impression

It was wonderful to see the mass of bloom that surrounds the Country Style Foods premises. The number and quality of pots and hanging baskets was truly impressive and everywhere the quality of the plants was really high. There is definitely a wow factor on this site.

It was impressive to hear how long Country Style Foods have been supporting the Yorkshire In Bloom initiative. The use of large, vintage jam tubs for summer and winter planting is a good idea and emphasises what the site is all about. The color scheme, which runs throughout the site was very attractive and well-chosen and the wide variety of plants in the hanging baskets and tubs produced a really special effect.

It was impressive that every aspect of the site, which could support plants and flowers have been beautifully planted up even walls and railings were beautifully decorated with bloom.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Obviously on a site producing food where hygiene is of the utmost importance, attracting attracting wildlife is difficult. However, perhaps it might be possible to include in the lovely display some pots of lavender, which would support pollinators and bring in butterflies and bees to the site, which staff would be able to enjoy.
- It is a really good idea to have benches in a planted area where the staff can perhaps enjoy a lunch break. Perhaps it might be possible to include in the planting some tubs of herbs, which would create a scented area for people to sit in while they were eating and also bring in butterflies and bees, which would make having lunch there a really nice experience.

Beverley Race Company Ltd

Gold

Overall Impression

The race course was very well presented, with summer bedding on the terraces and a good selection of sculptures used for height in the many displays.

On my tour I was highly impressed by the cleanliness and manicured nature of the site, as well as the many environmental enhancements to save water wastage and solar panels to generate power that have been introduced over the years to make the course more sustainable for the future.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Once inside the race course the floral displays are of an excellent quality, however the entrances to the stands would benefit from some easy to maintain sustainable floral features such as perennials.
- Consideration could be given the management of the centre of the track, with regards to the natural habitat of the area and encouragement of native wild flowers etc.

Paul Harrison Cars

Silver

Overall Impression

It is very refreshing to see car dealerships and garages making an effort to improve their immediate environment and Paul Harrison Cars are to be commended for this.

It is nice to see the palisade fence at the side of the garage being gradually covered by trailing plants. This is a good and long standing Yorkshire in Bloom entry. With a few additions as suggested by the judges comments this could easily push the entry towards the next medal grade.

Thank you for supporting the overall Hutton Cranswick Yorkshire in Bloom entry demonstrating the depth of community involvement found throughout the village.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider publicising the participation in Yorkshire In Bloom.
- If possible, weeding and the repainting of the wooden planters on the forecourt would help raise standards.
- Is there any way that any bird or bat boxes or insect hotels can be incorporated onto the site to encourage wildlife?

Category C3: - Large Business

Nidd Hall Hotel

Gold

Overall Impression

Nidd Hall made us smile with the combination of the beautifully maintained formal gardens near the house and the quirky features creatively built by Harvey and his team in the less formal grounds. Around the building there are some lovely planting schemes particularly the waterless water garden where the planting and surfacing are well designed to give the impression of a pond.

One of the most notable things at Nidd Hall was the creativity of the team around recycling and reusing items, tree stumps etc along with the staff having the autonomy to be creative with this to enhance the visit experience, encourage wildlife & biodiversity and add that 'Fun' magical element to the space.

There are many areas that are scheduled for renovation but they are not neglected. The team are well aware and are making plans within the resources that they have available to them to repair, rejuvenate and reuse. The repurposing of the horse from the entrance courtyard to his retirement paddock surrounded by wild flowers was a joy to see. The new planters which have been installed to replace the hanging baskets at the entrance are a lovely feature.

The small team of gardeners should be very proud of what they achieve on a limited budget.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to replace Roses and annual bedding with perennial planting to help to reduce the workload on the small team.
- We look forward to seeing the swing frame in its new incarnation as a floral fire pit.

- The ponds in the water garden have been drained for repair. This gives an opportunity to prune back the surrounding area allowing more light into the area and for redesign of the planting. This is a lovely, secluded seating area which should look wonderful once its refurbishment is complete.
- The courtyard canopy has been refurbished and looks very smart. It would be good to see the patched tarmac surface in the courtyard relayed or replaced with something more suitable to compliment this and complete the look.
- We were sorry to hear about the setback with the bee hives and wonder if nearby beekeepers at Horticap or Rudding Park could be approached for support in reestablishing the hives.

Rudding Park

**Gold and Joint
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

The beautiful grounds at Rudding Park have benefited from the input of a number of renowned garden designers from Humphrey Repton whose vision shaped the landscape and more recently Matthew Wilson who designed the ornamental landscaping around the buildings. The gardens are well managed by Sarah and her team who continue seek new innovations both in planting and in maintenance of the gardens.

We were interested to see the newest member of the team a robot mower which was diligently cutting the grass on the public lawns around the house. The grass is maintained slightly longer than normal in an ornamental garden which has enabled it to remain green during the recent hot weather. There are also no mow areas which are being managed for wild flowers with the introduction of yellow rattle, wildflower seed plugs and bulbs.

There is a borehole on site and the rooftop spa also captures rainwater which is stored in underground tanks. Water use is carefully managed using timers, seep hoses and water bags to avoid excessive evaporation.

The newly planted Trochadendron trees were interesting, a species that was new to both of us. Their introduction was part of a revision of the planting in the clocktower area to adapt to the changing climate. The clocktower terrace has also seen the addition of a new herbaceous border which compliments the same subtle blues and greens used around the rest of the site.

The Tristan May planters at the front of the building which would previously have been planted with annual bedding have been replanted with a mixture of Carex, Vinca, Salvia and Canna with ferns and Hellebore for winter interest. Small amounts of annual bedding are still used for impact particularly Nicotiana which is repeated around the site.

The kitchen gardens were a highlight of our visit. The gardens grow a wide range of herbs, salads and vegetables which are used in the onsite restaurant, Fifty Two.

The gardening team at Ridding Park also support the wider community with their Giving Back scheme and by hosting garden tours both of the main site and of the kitchen gardens. Opening the gardens as part of the NGS scheme has also raised money for charity.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

It is hard to see where we can offer suggestions for improvements on this well thought out site.

- Give consideration to the replacement of the roses in the topiary which are reaching the end of their life.
- We will be interested to see how the wild follower meadow in the coronation garden develops as wildflower seeding is carried out in the areas where the yellow rattle has been effective.

The Springs Retail and Leisure Park

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

The Springs is a large modern shopping complex just off junction 46 of the M1. There are a mix of high-street brands, a range of restaurants, a 10 screen cinema and a gym. Visitors can access the site from the new East Leeds Orbital road, the M1 motorway, cycle routes, a dedicated bus route and there is a proposed new railway station.

The site is clean and tidy and has good recycling facilities for visitors and businesses. The site is only a few years old and is new to In Bloom. The landscaping shows what plants prefer the area and there are lots of future plans including mulching and splitting the grasses and herbaceous plants to replant in areas where the landscaping hasn't grown as well. The multiple green walls are a real statement on the site, showcasing a range of shrubs on the walls. Trees across the car park help soften this area, create some shade and delineate the parking spaces. There is engagement with the tenants on site and with the customers, which will only reap benefits and community engagement workshops creating birdboxes.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

Discussing the site with Gemma and Sam there are plans to upgrade various areas over the next few years enhancing the landscaping and involving the tenants.

- Consider if there are opportunities for rainwater harvesting in the service areas. There maybe opportunities to work with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust or the local RSPB sites in awareness events possibly with some workshops in the school holidays.
- There are opportunities to try some other plants which may suit the site such as other types of grasses. There are also plans for a college on a nearby site and there maybe scope to involve students in art projects on the site.
- A site plan for visitors would be helpful to find the various shops and restaurants.

The site has lots of potential and with the plans for the station will only make the area easier to visit. We look forward to visiting The Springs again to see the developments.

White Rose Shopping Centre

Silver

Overall Impression

We would like to commend Clare and her team for their hard work and enthusiasm in maintaining this busy shopping centre to a good standard despite the difficult growing conditions this summer and also the amount of construction work which is taking place to extend Primark.

The hanging baskets looked very good and well maintained with a nice colour mix. The Village family area was very busy being the start of the school holidays but, nevertheless, was clean, tidy and colourful. The bees on the roof were an added bonus.

Thank you for a very good tour around an insight into the work which is needed to maintain such a large and busy area. Well done to all.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Tree dieback seems to be a problem across the site possibly due to stress of extreme weather conditions, compaction and other factors beyond your control. However, managing the problem may present its own issues as areas would have to be closed off for work to be done. Continue to work with land owners and other interested parties to draw up a programme of tree maintenance, replacement and renewal over the next 5 – 10 years.

- Perhaps the area outside Next could be reconsidered and redesigned. The roses are not in the best of health and the soil here is extremely compacted. Could the area be paved with cobbles or setts to make the area more manageable and visually more attractive?
- The board walk area was quiet and secluded but there may be a need in the future to clear overgrown water plants which are beginning to take over. Perhaps this area needs a long term programme of maintenance putting together to ensure its future.

We look forward to visiting again when the woodland walk around the perimeter of the shopping centre has been reinstated and reopened. We understand it has been closed for construction work and hope that this great community facility will soon be accessible once again. The reinstatement and reopening of the woodland area along with tackling some of the areas suggested for improvement over the next 12 months should move this entry up to the next level.

White Rose Office Park

Gold

Overall Impression

White Rose office park is a delightful landscape around offices and education buildings. Mainly cared for by, Simon, an experienced and dedicated horticulturist with support from the wider team, it has a gentle and beautiful aesthetic. The border planting includes many herbaceous perennials providing a vivid show from spring through to autumn as well as seed heads for structure and forage through the winter. There are areas of turf with both regular and relaxed mowing regimes which give the site a spacious appeal. The landscape is further enhanced by wilder areas where nature can flourish such as the bankside meadow and pockets of native wildflowers to support moth and butterfly populations. Over 20,000 mixed bulbs have been planted to herald spring and the start of the growing season. The horticulture on site complements the recycling measures, solar panels, bug hotels and habitats provided, which link with the aim to be a carbon neutral site by 2030. There is a sense of community with vegetables grown on site being offered to the café and the college at White Rose has adopted a small area of land to use with their students.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider updating tree stakes and ties for recently planted specimen trees as the site is fairly open
- Extend the meadow plantings to other areas of the site to enhance biodiversity and reduce frequent mowing of slopes

- Check displays in wooden planters have adequate growing room for next season
- Consider redeveloping the area which currently houses the Chelsea garden, this could be used as a development or engagement opportunity
- Think about adding some interpretation boards to the most interesting features/plantings and include a QR code for further information
- Donate spare bedding plants to the college project corner rather than incorporating in to main planting scheme

Leeds Valley Park

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

Leeds Valley Park is a light and airy site and, despite being in close proximity to major motorway networks, is very quiet.

Some of the plants and borders have struggled in the intense heat and drought but, overall, the area still looks well maintained. Credit must go to Eddie and Jason, the on-site team, for their hard work and dedication in what has been a difficult season. The site was largely litter free and very clean and tidy. All the boundary hedges to individual areas were immaculately maintained and the tree stock was impressive, particularly the multi-stemmed birch which obviously like the free draining soil.

The pond was a particularly nice feature. Thank you for a very good and comprehensive tour of the area.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It was apparent that some of the plants were doing well despite the drought but some, in particular the astilbes, were struggling. Perhaps some thought could be given to replacing these with a choice of plants that will be more tolerant of the free draining soil found here, yet will be able to cope with the wet winter weather and the wind which is funnelled through the middle of the site.
- Perhaps some thought could be given to a range of autumn and winter plants, such as coloured stems of cornus, which would extend the season and would be tolerant of the difficult conditions found here.
- In future years there may be some need to look at the proximity of trees planted very close to buildings. At present they camouflage the buildings very well but may be the source of future problems.
- Consider planting some small shrubs around your bug houses to aid insect populations.

Fox Valley Shopping Centre

Gold

Overall Impression

Fox Valley Shopping Centre is built on a former steel works. Planters and baskets decorate the whole of the busy shopping area. 48 hanging baskets have been purchased from a local grower, these will be composted at the end of the season. There are many display boards describing the proud history of the site, the loading bay pulley and the art works celebrating Samuel Fox are impressive.

The wild bio diverse area on the banking towards the rear of the centre has been hit by the current heat wave which we are all experiencing. However, it will regenerate. It is clear a lot of thought has been placed into the planting schemes to attract pollinators and also for the customers to enjoy while walking around the centre. There are some impressive bug hotels and hedgehog homes along with bird feeders, bird and bat boxes in a wildlife area. A further two boxes for swifts are to be located at the side of a building.

There is a composting area along with an impressive water catchment area in the service area around the back of the centre. A cardboard bailer is also in use. Solar panels are in place on the roofs of the centre. The team are working hard to increase the sustainability of the centre whilst improving the customer experience.

A local charity is sponsored yearly. This year it is The Dransfield Foundation which aims to help children and young people under the age of 18. The centre hosts many charity and community events throughout the year. The team are currently liaising with Stocksbridge High School to set up a Gardening Club.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider putting together a programme advertising your events.
- Continue to improve your bio diverse area.

Market Cross Shopping Centre

Silver

Overall Impression

This small and well cared for shopping centre is an area in a much larger shopping complex, next to Selby Abbey. There are several very good planters strategically placed around the pleasant seating area. These have an excellent variety of plants some of which are sustainable and others annual. There are several different colour schemes all of which add to the overall effect.

The plants are all well tended and in good condition due in part to the irrigation system and the efforts of team who look after them.

The hanging baskets were lovely. Everywhere is very clean and tidy and I could see that the public were enjoying this attractive place. There is limited space and opportunity for doing a lot to enhance the environment but they do what they can with plant selection sourced from local nurseries, the use of good peat free compost and no insecticides. Melissa has done a tremendous amount for this entry. Well done

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- In future it would be good to see more information about this very worthwhile project entering Yorkshire in Bloom, with their award displayed for everyone to see!
- Perhaps in the future you could do some work with schools and other community groups. Continue with plans for a herb bed.
- The area is surrounded by private and national companies many of whom have shop fronts and may well be interested in sponsorship to enhance their businesses as well as the general appearance the site.

Wellington Place Leeds.

Gold

Overall Impression

In summary the developers say, 'it is a dynamic Leeds neighbourhood development designed to shape the city and transform the way we work'. The development of office buildings has incorporated high standards of landscaping and environmental issues such as 100% on site recycling. Community is considered with a garden, outdoor gym, and other facilities along with an extensive events programme, miniature library, bird box's and bug house. Open space such as the town square, and landscaping with a good plant selection enhance the site. The list of positive features could go on but a significant feature is the restored railway buildings providing a museum and information about the former railway station. The buildings have been restored at considerable cost and now provide a sense of place to the whole development.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

Understandingly there was some evidence of drought stress in some plantings, commendably the decision had been made not to water even though as a commercial operator they are exempt from the current hose pipe ban.

- Some of the planting is ageing and it was good to hear that there is a planting review taking place which may include introducing some colour into what is a green plant landscape.
- Continue to keep the very high standards of maintenance of both the hard and soft landscapes.

Take every opportunity to explain to others how this development works and promotes sustainability and community engagement to the benefit of all.

Sheffield Forgemasters Engineering Limited

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

Both the Bee Friendly/Security Area Garden and the Rolls Garden are very well-maintained areas, neat and tidy with little to no weeds. Both gardens had an excellent selection of low-maintenance plants, appropriate for the beds they are planted in.

The Rolls Garden especially had bursts of colour from the Rudbeckia and lavender which, with the wildflowers over the wall at the River Don, attract a variety of insects.

Within the Rolls Garden, there are shelters for staff to sit in, with solar-powered lighting and charging ports available for downtime in nature next to the river. This area was extremely clean, well-kept, with bird boxes along some of the fences.

The Bee Friendly Garden houses insect boxes and has some fun planters from a past staff competition which relate to the line of work, i.e. hard hat planters and metal rose sculptures, which work well in this front garden.

The location of this garden is the perfect place to showcase metalwork, merging the natural elements with man-made decor. It was good to hear that the staff get involved in looking after the gardens, taking ownership of their outdoor spaces. They are fantastic spaces to enjoy, and the gardener/maintenance and staff should be proud of how far their spaces have come

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue work on the Bee Friendly / Security Area Garden. This garden is coming along very well and has been well-maintained but could benefit from some bursts of colour. Some Rudbeckia, similar to that in the Rolls Garden, could be introduced here to bring colour and link the two gardens together.
- It could be an idea to place some pots of colourful flowers on the Christmas Tree stand while there is no tree to lift the colour above the hedges, making it visible to those walking past.
- Could a bench be added to the Security Area Garden to encourage visitors or staff to take a break or wait outdoors.

Judges can't wait to see the third garden that's under maintenance. Good luck in bringing that garden into the mix next year!

Crystal Peaks Shopping Mall & Retail Park

Gold

Overall Impression

It is clear to see that this 1980s shopping centre was built for the community and is still successful in being a community centre for all. All entrances the judges saw appeared clean, litter free, and colourful thanks to an abundance of hanging baskets and planters. Staff and tenants are encouraged to get involved in working outdoors or getting involved with planting competitions, such as the hanging basket competition. Local schools participate in some events and planting, helping to teach the next generation about gardening and produce, while plants grown by the Landscape Team are also sold in the centre to raise money for local children's charities.

Wildlife is embraced at Crystal Peaks, with many provisions such as a hedgehog box, kestrel and swift boxes and swift sounds playing, bird and bat boxes, and established beehives on the roof which are managed by a local beekeeper.

Both judges admired the use of the fallen tree on a grass verge in the car park to encourage insects. This has been made a feature with the use of a small information panel to inform customers. The longer grass and wildflowers popping up around the trunk make for a great display, something unique and different to break up plain grass verges and established shrubs within the car parks.

The sensory garden is coming along well with a good selection of plants in the beds. The garden is in a quieter area outside, making for a calm atmosphere amongst the flowers. Users have been considered here with plans to plug desire lines with hardier plants, and

a wide path and turning circle at the end for wheelchair or mobility scooter users and prams.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Judges look forward to seeing the sensory garden once gaps have been filled. Could sponsorship from nearby shops be considered to help with the supply of plants?
- A shredder was mentioned to provide mulch from cuttings. This would be a great addition to prevent weeds in planted areas.

The judges thought that the relaxed mowing areas looked great and are working well to encourage insects and wildlife. Could more areas be considered for relaxed mowing?

Clifton Moor Retail Centre York

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

Clifton Moor Retail Centre forms part of the Clifton Moor Industrial Estate situated on the outskirts of York. All the public facing areas and service areas on this busy site were extremely clean, tidy and litter free. Perimeter hedges were in good condition and well maintained.

The sustainable planting of ornamental grasses and phormiums were a delight and will provide low maintenance, all year round interest in this functional landscape and car park. The working partnership between Ian and Sam appears to be paying dividends and this is vital to the long term future of the projects and plans. A very good Yorkshire in Bloom entry with definite possibilities of going further in the competition. There is a very good vision for the future and partners are working towards an ambitious outcome.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- We look forward to seeing your plans for a wildflower meadow come to fruition on this site.
- Continue to work with tenants, landowners and other stakeholders to seek their views as to how the landscape could be improved and personalised.

- The use of sustainable planting such as ornamental grasses and phormiums works really well and is very appropriate in a dry and fairly windswept area. Would it be possible to replicate this type of planting elsewhere on the site?

Clifton Moor Industrial Estate York

Gold

Overall Impression

Clifton Moor Industrial Estate is a fine example of how built up commercial areas can be havens for wildlife when there is ambition, vision and good leadership. Sam's communication skills are ensuring that his clients are "buying in" to the overall vision and a different way of doing things! Many of the tenants have created floral features including Easy Bathrooms, Community Bees, Ink Dot, Haxby Bakery and Orion Windows. There is so much to commend at Clifton Moor that we could have spent much longer hearing about the vision and plans for the future of the site. Involvement with the Pollinator Monitoring Scheme, the 21 species seed mix at the back of Community Bees, the bulb planting programme, the wildflower verges and the fruit orchard are but a few examples of how thinking differently can pay dividends. This is certainly the case at Clifton Moor. An excellent Yorkshire in Bloom Business entry.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- We look forward to seeing continued work with other tenants following the examples of blooming up at Ink Dot, Community Bees and Easy Bathrooms.
- Continue to take risks by thinking outside the box of what is normal and expected for this type of industrial estate. You are leading the way in thinking differently.
- Continue to develop your plans for a composting/recycling area on the confused and overgrown site at the back of one of your units which is currently unloved!
- We look forward to hearing how your plans develop to plant Purple Crocus for Polio Campaign.

Category B4: - Tourist Attraction

Ripon Racecourse

Gold

Overall Impression

Ripon Racecourse is justifiably proud of its reputation as “Yorkshires garden racecourse”. There is a fabulous vibrant display of annual bedding which is impressively all grown on site. The planting was carefully thought out not only to enhance the site but also to guide footfall and traffic away from the edges of buildings and the necessary sightline at the finish. The site is bounded by wetland habitats which are managed by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust this makes the site vulnerable to flooding which is anticipated and well managed. The Northern Marsh Orchid has been spotted and we were lucky enough to see a family of Oyster catchers The paddocks and arena car parks are managed to support wildlife with the grass being alternately cut and baled or left fallow.

Water conservation is carefully considered. There is access to a borehole but use has also been made of old septic tanks which have been cleaned and sealed for collection of grey water. No chemicals are used on the grass other than the racecourse and arisings are composted with the stable bedding and used widely on the site. Only seed compost is bought in.

Special touches such as the horse shaped trellis climbers and stable troughs reused as planters together with many reclaimed features around the site give Ripon racecourse a strong identity.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

The site is beautifully maintained and all operations are well thought out. It is difficult to see what could be improved.

- The annual bedding is beautiful and as it is all produced on site and there is a plentiful water supply there are not the usual concerns around the carbon footprint however the volume of bedding which is replaced twice yearly is a serious concern for an ageing and reducing workforce and it may be worth replacing some areas or adding structure with ornamental shrubs, herbaceous perennials and grasses.
- Consider working with Yorkshire Wildlife trust to supply interpretive notice boards in the car park or paddock area identifying birds, insects and plants which may be seen on the site

Overall Impression

The overall impression of the entry was excellent. KVVHR is very well supported and plays an important role in the local community as was evidenced by the three visits by local schools which were being accommodated on the line during our visit as well as the number of volunteers fulfilling roles essential for keeping the service running to a high standard.

Along the length of the line it was good to see a uniformity in the station platform furniture with the cream and red livery featuring prominently on items such as litter bins, lighting and station signage.

The floral displays were consistent across all the stations visited, but each station also managed to showcase its own identity. There was a clear commitment to maintaining traditional railway displays in keeping with the heritage of the line while at the same time mixing in more modern diverse planting aimed at providing habitats for the abundant wildlife in the Worth Valley. Along the embankments there was a good range of native and non native species providing a pleasant green corridor for the service to run on. There was little if any evidence of some of the more invasive species that plague many mainline routes which was good to see.

The judges were very impressed by the commitment shown by the volunteers on the line including the young person's group engagement with local young people some of whom have gone on to successful railway careers as a direct involvement with the organisation.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

We have split feedback down into individual stations as each had their own character and strengths or areas which might be considered for development going forward.

Keighley Station

- On arriving at Keighley it was clear that the volunteers do an excellent job. The main platform is well maintained and presented, with abundant hanging baskets at regular intervals along the station canopy. We then had the pleasant surprise of visiting the picnic area behind the opposite platform sandwiched between the heritage line and the main Keighley station platform from which there is access. The picnic area is a delightful is well maintained with a range of ornamental and wilder areas horticulturally there are opportunities to increase species diversity by adding wildflower species to the relaxed mowing areas.
- The judges agree that the signage through the underpass to the space could be improved to encourage more visitors to the area.

- Perhaps adding some simple invertebrate habitats to the space could also be an option?
- The judges also felt that there was a missed opportunity to compost garden waste created in the space and that perhaps it would be beneficial for a composting system to be built as a way of keeping waste not only tidy but also have the benefit of providing a source of compost to add back to borders reducing the need for watering and improving soil fertility in the process.

Ingrow West

The garden at Ingrow West is a credit to the volunteers who look after it. The range of herbaceous and perennial planting in the garden together with vegetable plants creates a calm oasis for visitors which makes excellent use of the space at the end of the platform.

- On the opposite side of the line to the garden there are opportunities to develop a species rich meadow area.
- To create more favourable conditions it might be beneficial to reduce the soil fertility prior to planting and use a seed mix suitable for the location which is somewhat shaded by the trees on the embankment.

Oxenhope

- The volunteer team at Oxenhope have created several areas of colour and interest on both sides of the platform finding creative ways to reuse plants and materials at the station. At the end of the rail there is a steep bank where a relaxed mowing regime has been put in place to improve biodiversity in the area. The judges felt that this development could be taken further by adjusting the species mix to include both native and non native wildflowers for an extended season of interest.
- Another thing of note was the selection of Buxus as an evergreen filler for planted containers on the platform. While Box has previously been a good background plant for a container, the arrival of Box Blight and Box Moth Caterpillar in Yorkshire is impacting on box populations so choosing alternative species for new or replacement plantings should be considered.

Haworth

The judges were very impressed with the work carried out by the new volunteers at Haworth Station who have only recently taken over the maintenance of the area and have carried out a considerable amount of clearance and replanting work in that time bringing the schemes at the station up to an excellent standard.

- Due to the nature of Haworth as a busy tourist destination the judges felt that it might be worth considering introducing external planting schemes to the outside of the station. While they accept that there is some antisocial behaviour in the area they felt that some well designed planting would further enhance the excellent work that has gone on in the inside of the station.

- It might also be helpful to find a way of incorporating water butts onto the platform to make watering more sustainable in the long run.

Damens

The smallest of the 6 stations Damens is a charming space which many visitors will only pass through. The planting is varied and mostly centred around a formal mixed bed planted with a mixture of plants which despite it's size has a strong personality which is maintained by a very small volunteer group.

- The judges felt that it may be worth reconsidering the use of bedding plants in the planting scheme, instead opting for additional perennial planting with gaps then infilled with fewer seasonally appropriate planting as required. This would not only create a more sustainable display it would also reduce the need to plant and replant bedding in volume each year.

Oakworth

The final stop on our journey Oakworth has a very different character from the other stations. Recently the sidings have been opened up and developed so visitors to the station can step beyond the platform into what was once the goods yard. While, to a certain extent this is still a working area and access is needed at all times every effort has been made to make the space welcoming to visitors with a cafe and tea wagon available to visitors to the station.

- Going forward the judges felt that there is scope for adding additional planting to the space, perhaps using wooden barrels which would be in-keeping with some of the rest of the goods yard street furniture, or climbing plants against the walls of the yard.
- There may also be opportunity for adding vertical herb planters to the fence separating pedestrians from the car park replacing the well used community herb bed that had to be removed to allow for the introduction of the fence.

Filey Bird Garden and Animal Park

Gold

Overall Impression

It was a pleasure to meet Fran, her enthusiasm for the bird garden and animal park was infectious. From the start the excellence and high standards across cleanliness, planting and sensitivity to the animals' requirements were notable.

The formal garden provides a major wow experience from initial glimpses and the differing vistas which open to you as you walked through it. The excellent range of plants were all healthy with the thoughtful planting choices promoted both natural biodiversity; the numbers of bees, flying and crawling insects was noted.

There is a significant emphasis on wildlife throughout the park. They take part in the Big garden watch, keep records of tadpoles, butterflies and moths and other conservation activities needed for zoo licence and have a sedum roof.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

The high standard of planting provides an excellent basis from which to consider how to enhance the offer at the bird garden. The formal rose garden with labels and the cottage garden are stunning. A wide range of communications, both hard copy and electronic, are used to raise their local area profile and proactively interact with neighbouring tourist focused facilities. Gardening and activities continue throughout the year and a multi-year plan of improvements was identified.

Further opportunities have been identified as:

- Reviewing the two planted areas in the car park to enhance the visual appeal in this area
- Finish the planned refresh/updating of the signs throughout the park
- Consideration of how to make it easier for the public to find the gardens/park from all directions, for example the use of what3words, providing distances from nearest roundabout, use of QR code to direct to a more detailed map

Burnby Hall Gardens

**Gold and
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

Burnby Hall is a wonderful place to visit on a warm and sunny summer's day. From the moment of entering the site it's impossible not to be delighted and impressed with Burnby Hall. The museum featuring the life and adventures of the Stewart family, to whom the people of Pocklington owe the wonderful gift of the Hall and its gardens is well worth a visit and fascinating.

The collection of water lilies shows a variety of gorgeous colours and the lovely, friendly fish living in the lakes must be loved by all the visitors to the site and are a charming element of the visit. The variety of planting in different areas of the site is very striking and everywhere the quality of the plants is excellent and the care given to them is outstanding throughout the site. The Edwardian rockery is a superb feature, as is the walled garden and many other areas.

Children visiting the site must love the stumpery with its unique Hobbit House. It was impressive to hear of the many ways children on the site are catered for and the range of materials which is produced for their enjoyment.

It must be lovely to visit the Tulip Festival and the Snowdrop Festival and there are many other exciting activities taking place year round.

It was lovely to hear about the many groups and organisations which the site interacts with and to hear about the work done with schools. It was also impressive to hear about the many volunteers who work in different ways to support the site.

Tremendous efforts have been made to support the environment by water harvesting, composting, and recycling and wildlife is encouraged and cared for in an impressive variety of ways throughout the site.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Perhaps It might be a nice idea to have information boards, just one or two around the site to tell people about the wildlife, for instance butterflies and birds which they might get a chance to see during their visit.
- It might be a nice idea to develop information leaflets telling visitors about the wildlife which they might see around the site and which might perhaps give them ideas for their own gardens.
- Visitors might like the idea of a photography competition each year featuring photographs which are taken in and around the gardens themselves.

Perhaps an information board near the rockery might be a good idea too just to make visitors aware of what a wonderful example of a rockery they are enjoying at the moment and perhaps how important rockeries were to sites like this in the past.

English Heritage Mount Grace Priory

Gold

Overall Impression

Mount Grace Priory is the location of a former Carthusian Monastery and an Arts and Craft house situated in 13 acres of grounds. Since 2017 a long-term project has been undertaken to re-vamp and extend the gardens. In some areas the plantings and design reflect the original history – as in the garden of the reconstructed monk's cell and in the terraces in front of the House.

Elsewhere, the extended garden areas improve the visitor experience, opening up new vistas and extending the growing season particularly with the use of bulbs. Volunteers from the local community support the gardens team in maintaining the site. There is an emphasis on growing and providing suitable habitats with wildlife in mind while retaining the attraction of a garden. Families are welcome, with an activity pack and trail on offer and local schools visit to undertake a range of activities. Interpretation at various locations around the site with both written and pictorial information provides an understanding of the history of the site.

The team at Mount Priory/English Heritage are to be commended on the sympathetic development of a beautiful and peaceful garden reflecting both its' heritage and wonderful location at the foot of the Yorkshire Moors.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

Areas for consideration are included in planned and on-going improvements to the garden:

- Continuing development of areas such as the King's Meadow, a wildflower area adjacent to the Priory.
- The proposed development of a natural playpark for children will extend the activities on offer for families visiting the site.
- A link bridge from the 'island' to the summer house lawn would improve circulation around the lower garden.

Himalayan Garden and Sculpture Park

Gold

Overall Impression

For those looking to visit gardens with a difference then this is a must-see! Skilfully using the natural topography, soil composition and plant selection the designers have created something very much akin to the Himalayan foothills. Although the site will look its best in spring, due in part to the specialist plants nurtured here, there is still an impressive array of lush evergreens, ferns and rhododendrons - the latter which form part of one the North's largest collections.

Complimenting the beautiful planting on the valley's southern slopes, the woodland on the northern slopes has been cleverly created by removing many of the original conifers and re-planting with rhododendrons to give it a unique 'open' feel. Lakes, numerous sculptures, an authentic pagoda and an arboretum add further points of interest and there is a perfect balance of spotless, very well maintained areas and more natural areas.

It was pleasing to hear about the all-terrain mobility scooters that visitors can hire which allow access to the steeper parts of the park.

There is excellent interpretation and plentiful information about some of the horticultural challenges the grounds team face. These are relished, however, and the team, ably led by Paul Dibb really know their stuff and then some!

These gardens are a wonderful place to get away from it all and the team recognise this by doing all their machine work either when the site is closed to the public or before opening times.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

The densely planted valley sides appear to be rich in bird life so perhaps consider installing a few more nest boxes, particularly in the Hutts Valley and Leopard Valley areas. A local birdwatching club/ornithological society may be happy to survey the site and advise accordingly.

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Thorp Perrow Arboretum

Gold

Overall Impression

A pleasing welcome at the entrance with boxes and planters filled with colour and seasonal interest.

The site is huge and offers many different areas to appeal to all ages and interests. There are events and crafting day classes held year round with additional children's events being held during holiday periods.

The tree collection is not only massive but impressive and a new up to date and comprehensive register is being produced shortly. This will list all rare trees, those at risk, existing champions and new additions.

This is a collection of national importance.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Given the importance of the collection perhaps some consideration could be given to extending the gardening staff base. This would permit increased monitoring of trees at possible risk due to old age, allow for planned replacement of existing infrastructure, permit staff to further develop and protect the site and add to its environmental value and credentials.
- Looking to the continued future of the arboretum perhaps external funding could be sought eg Heritage Lottery ?