



RHS Britain in Bloom Awards 2011
Hosted by TV Gardener Rachel De Thame

Cricklade, in Wiltshire, has been named this year's Champion of Champions at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Britain in Bloom Awards for 2011. RHS Britain in Bloom, supported by Anglian Home Improvements, works to improve people's lives through community gardening and is one of the largest voluntary campaigns in Europe.

A record 20 Gold medals, along with 36 Silver-Gilts, 19 Silvers and 1 Bronze were awarded to the 76 finalist communities, who were celebrating last night at the RHS Awards Ceremony, held in the Fairmont Hotel, St Andrews, Scotland and hosted by TV presenter Rachel De Thame. The event was attended by 500 community and gardening champions.

A number of discretionary awards were also given to communities and individuals who have demonstrated excellence in their commitment to the campaign.*

This year, over 200,000 volunteers from across the UK collectively invested 4.4million hours (equivalent of more than 500 years) of their free time to the campaign. The Awards Ceremony is the culmination of all this hard work and celebrates the efforts of more than 1,000 communities nationwide have made to make the UK a more beautiful, clean and environmentally friendly place to live.

Chair of the RHS Britain in Bloom UK Judging Panel, Roger Burnett, led a team of 12 RHS

judges who toured the UK in August visiting the 76 UK finalists, nominated from more than 1,000 participating communities to represent their region/nation in the UK finals. The judges assessed against three key criteria: horticultural achievement, community participation and environmental responsibility.

Roger said: 'My fellow judges and I noticed this year that many communities are facing even greater challenges than ever before because of financial conditions, political changes, civil unrest and that's not even to mention the unpredictable British weather! But we are extremely pleased to report how we have seen many communities using RHS Britain in Bloom as a solution and really pulling together as a group of volunteers, as communities, to continue to move forward, facing down everything from a tornado, to damage from rioting. No matter what the challenge, these finalists were confronting it with determination and spirit and making their communities better places in which to live.'

Martin Troughton, Marketing Director at Anglian Home Improvements, said: 'Congratulations to everyone involved in this year's awards. The standard has been very high and the judges have been impressed by the drive and accomplishment of the finalists. Each and every volunteer, up and down the country, should be extremely proud of helping to make this year's RHS Britain in Bloom another phenomenal success.'