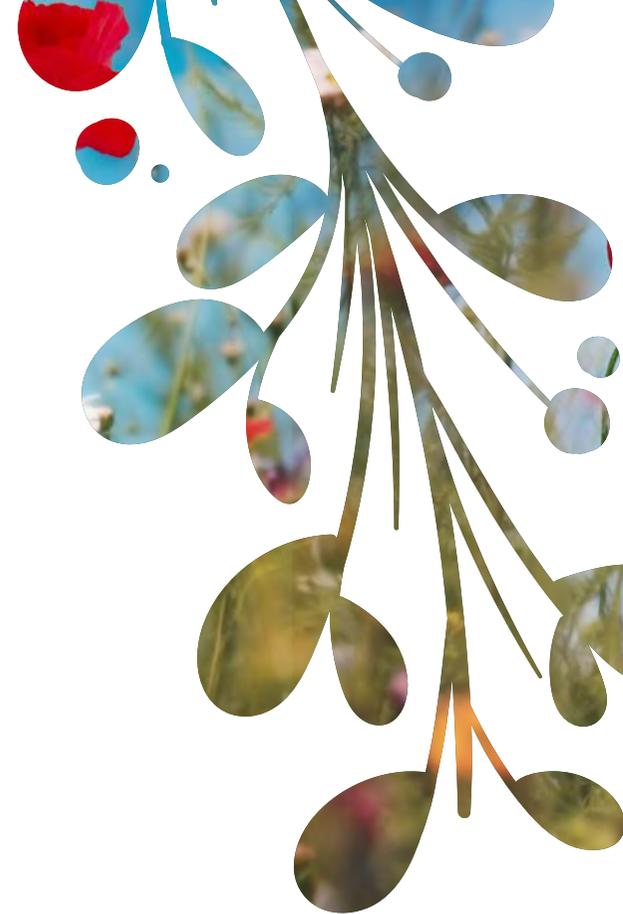


HENLEY IN BLOOM
PORTFOLIO 2025
HENLEY-ON-THAMES
TOWN COUNCIL



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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF HENLEY IN BLOOM, CLLR KELLIE HINTON

Welcome to the Henley in Bloom portfolio for 2025. As Chair of the Henley in Bloom Committee, it fills me with pride to introduce a snapshot of the incredible work our community has achieved this past year.

Henley-on-Thames is known for its stunning riverside setting and rich heritage—but what truly sets it apart is the passion and pride of its people. Henley in Bloom reflects that spirit. It is a community-wide collaboration that brings together the Council, local organisations, schools, volunteers, businesses, and individuals, all working toward a shared vision of a greener, more vibrant town.

This year, we have gone above and beyond in integrating horticulture with sustainability and biodiversity. Projects such as the nature-rich adventure golf course at Mill Meadows, demonstrate how function, beauty and environmental responsibility can go together. Our continued commitment to our climate and nature emergencies are not just statements—they're embedded in all our work, from campaigning for improved water quality in the Thames, Bee Friendly Town status, and ecological audits of our green spaces.

Equally, our community involvement has never been stronger. From school nature clubs and youth-led street art projects to the dedicated efforts of local gardening groups and generous business sponsorships, this portfolio is a testament to the town's collective dedication.

Henley in Bloom is more than flowers—it's about pride of place, environmental stewardship, and future generations. I thank everyone who has helped make Henley bloom, and I look forward to sharing the beauty and impact of our town with you.



Cllr Kellie Hinton

Chair, Henley in Bloom Committee

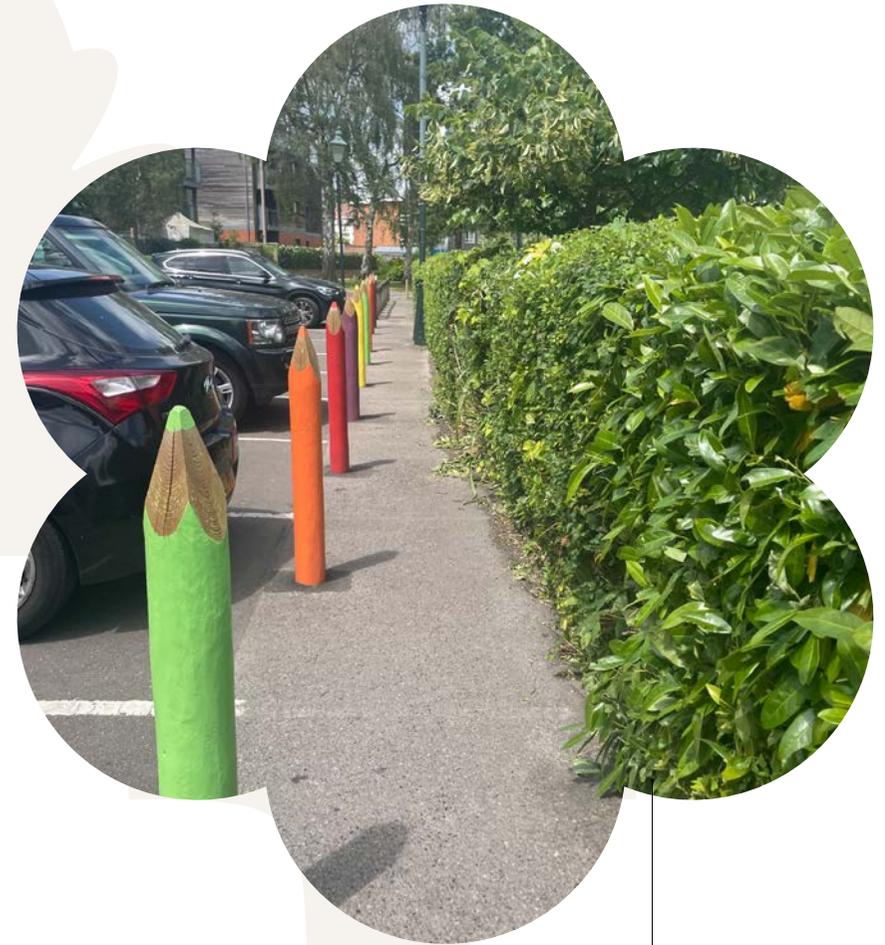


HORTICULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS

OVERALL IMPRESSION (A1)

We are lucky to live and work in a beautiful town, rich in natural beauty and steeped in history. This, along with the international reputation gained through events such as the Henley Royal Regatta, means that expectations are high from residents, businesses and visitors alike. We take pride in not only meeting and exceeding these expectations but doing so whilst also making our horticultural practices more sustainable, engaging with the community and tackling the climate and nature emergencies.

Throughout this portfolio we will demonstrate how the Council and community achieve this, through over 100 ongoing and recent projects.



PENCIL BOLLARDS

STATION ROAD
FLOWER BEDS

HANGING BASKETS

ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND



One of the most high-impact displays are our hanging baskets, planters and floral displays, provided by Windowflowers. These include:

- ❁ 251 hanging baskets provided for the Council (137), and residents and businesses (114)
- ❁ 28 roadside planters
- ❁ 19 air quality planters throughout the town centre
- ❁ 7 roadside flower beds, including at Market Place, Station Road, and Thameside
- ❁ The Phillimore Fountain on Hart Street

Another example of the high impact of the Council's projects is its flagship riverside park, Mill Meadows, which has held Green Flag Award status for the past 12 years. The park showcases several of the recent high profile projects, which are discussed in more detail later in the portfolio:

- ❁ An [adventure golf course](#) with a riot of wildflowers and other planting, which showcases the town's heritage.
- ❁ A recently renovated [adventure playground](#) with exotic planting designed to add to the sense of 'adventure'.
- ❁ A living wall on the Leichlingen Pavilion.
- ❁ A sensory garden
- ❁ A new hedgerow planted with [Eco Rangers](#) from Badgemore School
- ❁ A nature trail
- ❁ Hedge planting with [Greener Henley Wildlife Group](#) in Marsh Meadows
- ❁ 80m² of native wildflower turf has been laid to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day.
- ❁ New signage around the park
- ❁ [Giant logos](#) painted on the grass to celebrate national events such as VE Day, King's Coronation and Queen's Jubilee.
- ❁ Revising and reprinting the Mill Meadows Wildlife Trail booklet

TOWN HALL PLANTERS



GRAVEL HILL & PUDDING STONE



LIVING WALL



MAINTENANCE (A2)

We pride ourselves on the high level of maintenance of all our green spaces, both for visual impact and for sustainability. Not only do we look to maintain our areas, but we are constantly looking for ways to improve what we do. Some examples of this include:

Tree management. Whilst planting trees is good for the environment, it is mature trees that capture the most carbon and provide the best habitats for wildlife. With this in mind, we spend £30,000 per year on maintaining our mature tree stocks, including the introduction of Ezytreev tree management software and remapping of our trees.

Hedge laying. Parks staff are trained on hedge laying techniques and have used these on the hedgerows at Gillotts Field, Makins Recreation Ground, and Marsh

Meadows. In doing so, we enhance wildlife habitat, improve the hedgerow as a barrier, and promote the long-term health and vitality of the hedge.

Red Lion Lawn. This year, the Council transformed the riverside park, bringing it back to its former glory, with a new shelter roof, decking, paving slabs, beech hedge, cleaning the stonework, new planters, CCTV and signage, and new shade-tolerant wildflower mix.

MILL MEADOWS FOOTPATH



KINGS ARMS BARN



NORTHFIELD
END
PLANTING





Weeding. The Council has a policy of not using herbicides at all in our parks and open spaces, instead using techniques such as hand weeding, mulching, and weed rippers.

Peat free. We ensure that the compost we use for all projects is peat-free, and use our in-house produced compost wherever possible.

Henley Bowls Club. We have many local organisations in the town that take great pride in their surroundings, and many of these will be discussed later on. One shining example of this is the Bowls Club who, with the help of the Town Council, not only keep an immaculate green, but maintain their hedges, planters and flower beds to the highest standard.



Gravel Hill. We have recently transformed the Gravel Hill bed, replacing crazy paving slabs with a new lawn, improving the planting, installing an interpretation board in partnership with Viv Greenwood and the **Henley Archaeological and Historical Group**, and renovating the Leichlingen Apple, a gift from Henley's twin town in Germany.

GRAVEL HILL GARDEN



GRAVEL HILL LAWN



BELL STREET TRIANGLE



PLANT SELECTION AND PLANT QUALITY (A3/4)

Under the leadership of the Council's Deputy Parks Manager, the Council's planting schemes are constantly evolving as we plant, monitor, assess and review, making sure that the planting is as vigorous and vibrant as possible, as well as adapting to new requirements, such as more sustainable planting. Examples of this include:

- ❁ We source all our plants from **local suppliers**, and we use no annuals in Council-led planting projects, other than the Window flowers-planted hanging baskets and beds.
- ❁ The **adventure golf course** was originally planted in April 2022 and has been regularly reviewed to adapt to desire lines, reflect the themes of the course, replace failing or underwhelming plants, and ensure there is excellent year-round interest. Native tree and wildflower species were used wherever possible.

- ❁ The **sensory garden** at Mill Meadows is carefully curated to ensure that there is great year-round interest for all the senses, including a wonderful wisteria walkway and water fountain.
- ❁ In areas where the Council has been looking to plant wildflowers, particular thought has been given to the wildflower mix. For example, at the **Red Lion Lawn**, a shade-tolerant turf was used as it was under the canopy of a large mature tree, and a native beech hedge planted, which also provides natural protection from graffiti for the Grade I listed Henley bridge.
- ❁ At **Singers Park**, the previous privet hedge, which attracted litter and rats, was replaced with a thriving native beech hedge, additional native Hornbeam tree, and pollinator-friendly lavender borders.

SENSORY GARDEN

MILL MEADOWS
CRAB APPLES

ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND
PLANTING





- ❁ We are undertaking **ecological surveys** of the verges that we manage for wildflowers to make sure that they don't just become tall grass, but provide real benefit for pollinators, and year-round interest.
- ❁ The **living wall at Mill Meadows** features a variety of high impact and pollinator-friendly plants, and acts as a layer of insulation, keeping the building warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.
- ❁ We have a comprehensive **tree management strategy** with £30,000 of tree works per year to make sure our tree stocks are as healthy as possible. We also plant two trees for every tree that needs to be felled – c.30 trees per year. We make sure that where trees do have to be felled, it is proactively communicated to the community, with the reasons why.
- ❁ The Council's **hedge laying** at Gillott's Field and Makins Recreation Ground revitalise and densify the hedges, as well as enhancing them as wildlife habitats.



HART STREET TAVERN

KINGS ARMS BARN



PROJECT FOCUS

– ADVENTURE GOLF

The adventure golf course at Mill Meadows is a fantastic example of how horticulture, civic pride and environmental responsibility can be brought together in creating an asset for the community.

The project was conceived in 2021, when the Council was looking to revamp a disused putting green. The Council wanted a new attraction to bring people to the town to support the local economy and provide another income stream to support

the maintenance of the Council's parks and green spaces. It was decided that adventure golf would be the best use. However, the Council wanted it to be much more than just an income stream. In consultation with the community and the Parks team, a plan was formed to make it a celebration of the heritage of the town, with models and information boards of the town's historic features. Most importantly, the Council felt it was a perfect opportunity to enhance biodiversity on the site, with an ambitious planting scheme devised by the Deputy Parks Manager, Kyle Dowling,

ADVENTURE GOLF
COURSE WILDFLOWERS



ADVENTURE
GOLF COURSE
WILDFLOWERS



ADVENTURE GOLF
1ST YEAR DISPLAY

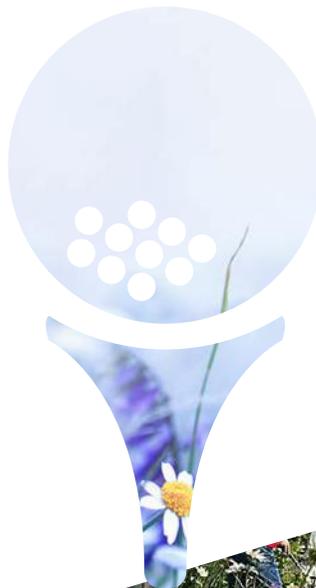




abundant with wildflowers, grasses, native ornamental planting and trees, creating both a sense of 'adventure' as you travel around the course, and providing for birds, insects and pollinators. The course is very popular with families and youth groups, and the Council uses this as an opportunity to showcase the impact that effective and thoughtful horticulture can have.



ADVENTURE GOLF COURSE
WILDFLOWERS



ADVENTURE GOLF COURSE
WILDFLOWERS



ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

PRIDE OF PLACE (B1)

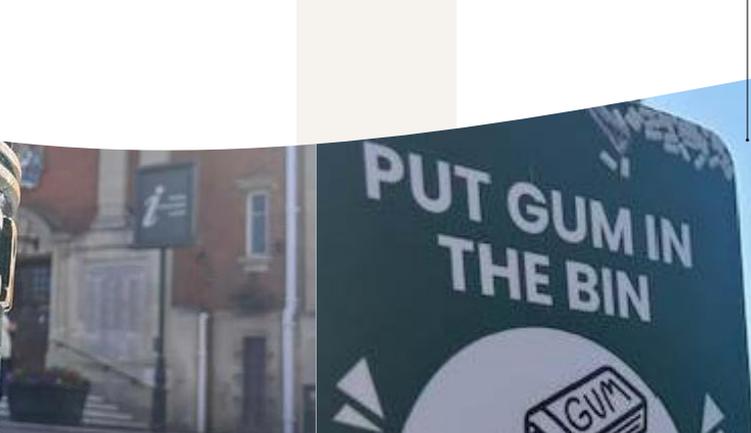
We take great pride in maintaining and enhancing the beauty of Henley, with a dedicated Town Centre Manager. Some of the recent projects the Council has delivered include:

- ❁ **Litter bins.** This year we have replaced 22 bins around the town centre, increasing overall capacity by 100% and increasing recycling capacity by 400%.
- ❁ **Street cleaning.** We have spent £16,000 per year on cleaning the York stone in the town centre and have increased this to £24,000 for the current year.
- ❁ **Bus shelters.** We are currently refurbishing all 12 of the Council's bus shelters, at a cost of £30,000.
- ❁ **Litter signs.** This year we have created designs for four new light-hearted anti-littering sign designs, with ten of each placed around the town centre.

- ❁ **Interpretation boards.** The Council in partnership with Viv Greenwood and the Henley Archaeological and Historical Group has, over the past decade, produced 11 historic information boards, with two new signs over the past two years, and another due this year.
- ❁ **Graffiti.** The Council removes graffiti from all signs and street furniture as soon as it appears, both through our Parks team and our contractor, The Shield Group.
- ❁ **Street sign cleaning.** We have recently cleaned over 100 street signs around the town, generously sponsored with a grant of £1,500 from the Henley Society.
- ❁ **Bunting and flags.** Last year we invested in new bunting for the town centre and this year we trialed Union flags for some of the 150 small Christmas tree brackets for the VE Day celebrations, with a view to expanding this in future years.
- ❁ **Phillimore Fountain.** The Fountain, once a working fountain at the bottom of the Market Place, is now planted up to match the hanging basket and floral displays around the town, and has recently undergone cleaning and refurbishment.
- ❁ **Street names.** The Henley Society has a longstanding campaign of restoring historic Victorian hand painted street signs around the town, refurbishing 19 signs to date.

NEW LITTER BINS

LITTER SIGN





- ❁ New fun coloured **pencil bollards** at the family parking spaces at Mill Meadows.
- ❁ **New block paving** outside the Mill Meadows Pavilion and renovated surfacing in the **toddler playground**.
- ❁ **Sculpture restoration**. As well as the Phillimore Fountain, this year we have carried out restoration work on two sculptures gifted to the town – the ‘Leichlingen Apple’ at Gravel Hill, and the bronze Mermaid at Red Lion Lawn.
- ❁ **Market Place**. Our Market Place is at the heart of the town and hosts the regular Thursday and weekend markets as well as a host of events, including the Christmas Festival, May Fayre, food and wine festivals, music events, and televising the Olympics and King’s Coronation.

RECYCLING BINS



RECYCLING BINS



TRAIN STATION PLANTER



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

(B2)

Being nestled between the river Thames and the Chiltern hills, the town's relationship with nature is at the heart of its identity. The Town Council declared a climate emergency in 2020, and a nature emergency in 2024. The Council and community go above and beyond the statutory requirements of the Environment Act 2021, and recent and ongoing initiatives include:

- ❁ **The Council considers the impact on biodiversity of all its decisions**, with it included in the impact assessment for every Council report, not just those related to horticultural and conservation projects.
- ❁ The Council employs three members of **staff dedicated to nature and conservation projects** – a Conservation Park Warden, and two Project Officers – one tackling the climate emergency and the other the nature emergency. This allows us not only to continue to make improvements, but to assess the impact of all our interventions.
- ❁ The mayor's key campaign this year was raising awareness of **water quality** in the Thames – more details of this are on page 11.

AIR QUALITY PLANTER



COMMUNITY ORCHARD



COMMUNITY ORCHARD PLANTING





- ❁ As part of its strategic plan, the Council is undertaking **ecological audits** for all its green spaces. For this year, these include Marsh Meadows, Gillotts Field, the Fairmile Cemetery, River Harp, the Valley Road Chalk Bank and Fairmile verges. These involve a preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA), biodiversity net gain report, and a 10-year management plan including detailed schedules of work.
- ❁ As well as the Gillotts Field **town green**, the Town Council has now dedicated Freemans Meadow and Makins Recreation Ground as town greens, to help ensure they are protected as public green spaces. We have also allocated 12 areas as local green spaces in our Neighbourhood Plan.
- ❁ The Town Council has recently installed air source heat pumps and solar panels on the Mill Meadows Pavilion, solar panels on Brunner Hall at Makins Recreation Ground, and **EV charging points** in the Mill Meadows car park.
- ❁ The Council has successfully achieved **Bee friendly town status**, and there are more details of this on page 11.

- ❁ Our **Conservation Park Warden**, Lex Vokes, works closely with the Greener Henley Wildlife Group, which has been working since 1993 to improve land around Henley for wildlife, maintaining a mosaic of habitats. Current areas of focus include Mill and Marsh Meadows, Valley Road Chalk Bank, Gillotts Field, the Greys Road embankment, and Watermans Spinney.
- ❁ We have installed 30 new **bird boxes** and 8 **bat boxes** in areas such as Marsh Meadows, the cemetery, and the Fairmile.
- ❁ Some other projects of note are the **Paradise Road community orchard**, **adventure golf course** (see page 7) and providing extra support for wildlife and maintenance at the **Holy Trinity churchyard**.



FREEMANS MEADOW



GREENER HENLEY
WILDLIFE GROUP



RIVER & ROWING MUSEUM
VOLUNTEERS



WILDFLOWERS



ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (B3)



As part of the Council's climate and emergency declarations (see page 9), we are committed to ensuring all our buildings and open spaces are managed as sustainably as possible, and ecological gardening practices are key to this. Some of our recent initiatives include:

- ❁ We have **greatly reduced the use of herbicides**, with no glyphosate being used in the Council's parks and open spaces, and instead using hand weeding and mechanical weed-ripping. On footways and kerb edges throughout the town, glyphosate usage has been reduced by over 50%, with a reduced concentration of glyphosate, and a policy of not using where it would come into contact with the soil, i.e. only on hard surfaces, e.g. where the kerb meets tarmac.

- ❁ All our diesel vehicles are now run on **hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO)**, reducing its carbon emissions by 90%. We have also invested in new **battery-powered handheld machinery**, to reduce noise and emissions from manual work.
- ❁ We have our own **composter**, to compost our own arisings, where at all possible, and we are in the process of constructing new composting bays at Waterman's allotments.
- ❁ Water usage at the **allotments** is also reduced through restricting **water usage** in wetter months and encouraging the use of rainwater capture by allotment holders.

MARSH MEADOWS
VOLUNTEERS



GREENCROFT ALLOTMENTS



- ✿ To reduce our water usage and waste, we have reduced the number of annuals in our parks, instead focussing on more sustainable planting with the same level of impact.
- ✿ We have also used planting extensively to address wider issues. For example:
 - (a) As part of the town's ongoing campaign to improve air quality, it has installed 16 **air quality planters** around the town centre, with planting designed to absorb pollutants and trap particulates.
 - (b) Led by our Deputy Park Manager, Kyle Dowling, we maintain a **green wall** on the Pavilion at Mill Meadows. Another example of a very successful green wall is the Vicinia development on Deanfield Avenue, and the Council's **Neighbourhood Plan** encourages developers to consider air quality, biodiversity and trees in their planting schemes.
- ✿ We have installed a **new drinking fountain** with a bottle filling station and dog bowl to help reduce plastic use in the park.



AIR QUALITY PLANTERS

COMPOSTER



PROJECT FOCUS

BEE-FRIENDLY TOWN

Led by Greener Henley's Diana Barnett and the Council's Project Officer for Biodiversity, Katrina Judge, Henley has this year achieved official bee-friendly town status through projects including:

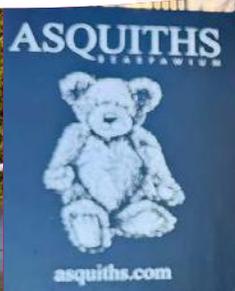
- ❁ **Extending the pollinator year** with flowering shrubs, early spring bulbs and late flowering perennial at Orchard Close, Ravenscroft Road, Simmons Road Housing Association communal garden, YMCA garden club, Henley Bowls Club, Millenium Court and Friends Meeting House.
- ❁ **Pollinator-friendly planting** at town centre businesses, including Asquith's Teddy Bear shop, the Kenton Theatre, the Bell Bookshop, Bluebells Florist, the Henley Florist, and hair offcut natural fertilizer from Mary Handy's Hairdressing.
- ❁ **Bee hotels and nesting sites** at Headway, St Katherine's Road, Ancastle Green, Orchard Close and Ravenscroft Road, and a bee brick workshop at Great Big Green Week.
- ❁ **Mini meadows** in recycled, donated flowerpots being 'fostered' for donation to flat dwellers and the elderly.
- ❁ **Increasing awareness** through the media, retailer's forum, special 'green screen' film screenings, such as 'Honeyland' during Great Big Green Week, and bee-friendly displays, such as in the Information Centre, and Bee Ambassador posters.
- ❁ Youth engagement including Little Hearts Pre-School making seed bombs; Henley College Pathways students and Gillotts School eco-club creating pollinator-friendly gardens; a beekeeper talk to pupils at Sacred Heart Primary School; and bee-friendly goodie bags given to all children taking part in the Great Henley Sack Race.



RIVER THAMES

ASQUITHS BEE DISPLAY

BEE POST BOX TOPPER



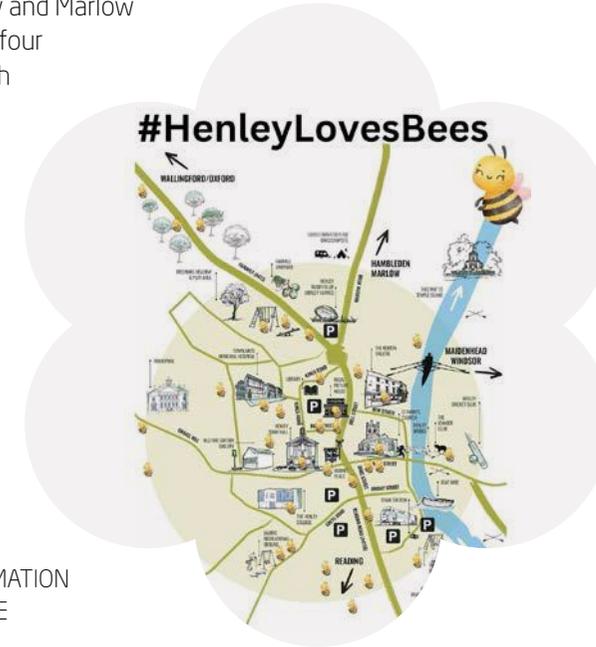


WATER QUALITY

Pollution of the river Thames has been a major news item this year, in part due to the actions of Henley Town Council, led by Mayor Rory Hunt. The work has included:

- ❁ The Council were the first local authority in the country to declare a **vote of no confidence in Thames Water**, with others such as Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxford City Council, Witney Town Council and Wallingford Town Council following suit.

- ❁ Our campaigning work was recognised in the **national and international press**, including a **BBC documentary on Henley's campaigning work** and an article in the **New York Times**.
- ❁ We have hosted meetings between Thames Water and over 20 local stakeholder groups to highlight concerns and have established a River Sub Committee with membership from over 30 local stakeholder groups.
- ❁ We have successfully campaigned for Thames Water to undertake its own **water testing** and publish the results. We have also bought our own water testing equipment and, with the support of Henley and Marlow River Action Group, are testing regularly in four different areas along the Henley reach, with results available on the HoTWater app and on the Town Council website.



HENLEY COLLEGE
PATHWAYS BEE PROJECT



TALK AT SACRED
HEART PRIMARY SCHOOL



INFORMATION
CENTRE



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITY & FUTURE COMMITMENT (C1)

Henley-on-Thames is a genuinely community-driven town, promoting belonging and shared responsibility. Residents actively help preserve its heritage and beauty, support sustainability, and ensure Henley remains a vibrant, inclusive community with year-round initiatives. Some highlights of this involvement include:

❁ **The Great Henley Sack Race.** A new litter pick co-organised by the Town Council and Henley Society. The first event in April saw 250 volunteers collect 300 bags of rubbish.

- ❁ **Other litter picking.** Regular community clean-ups include the **Henley Wombles** (60+ volunteers with assigned areas), a July river clean with **Henley Royal Regatta and Warriors on Waste**, an annual riverside pick by the **Rotary Club**, and support from **Invesco volunteers**.
- ❁ **Mill Meadows giant logos.** For the third year, local resident, Richard Pinches, has organised for the spraying of a giant logo (with environmentally-friendly paint) at the Town Council's Mill Meadows. For 2025 this was to mark the **VE Day celebrations**, and previous years were for the **coronation of Charles III**, and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.



HEDGE LAYING



GREAT HENLEY SACK RACE



NORTHFIELD END PLANTING





- ❁ **Climate and Nature Emergency Advisory Group.** A team of residents and experts guiding the Town Council on environmental projects and the ecological impact of strategic decisions.
- ❁ **Henley in Bloom Grant Fund.** Grants (up to £300) support small projects enhancing biodiversity and street appeal. Recent recipients include Holy Trinity Churchyard, Sacred Heart Pre-School, the YMCA, Henley College, and Valley Road Primary School.
- ❁ **Freemans Meadow and Makins Recreation Ground town green status.** Resident-led efforts, such as those by Friends of Freemans, led to these areas being voluntarily registered as town greens, protecting them from development.

- ❁ **Community payback.** The Council partners with Thames Valley Probation Service to engage probationers in maintaining parks and green spaces through litter picking, wildflower care, and mowing.
- ❁ **Strategic environmental planning.** Three Council staff are dedicated to environmental efforts, with their projects included in a five-year strategic plan.
- ❁ **Greener Henley Wildlife Group.** In collaboration with Conservation Park Warden Lex Volkes, the group runs habitat projects such as hedge planting, balsam removal, and wildflower conservation. Monthly work parties also maintain Marsh Meadows and Holy Trinity Churchyard to encourage biodiversity.
- ❁ **Northfield End and Bell Street Residents Group.** They plant and maintain beds at Northfield End, helped replant a disease-resistant elm to honour Rupert's Elm in partnership with the Henley Society and, with the support of the Town Council, plan verge improvements near Marlow Road roundabout in the coming year.



TREE AND HEDGE PLANTING

HOLY TRINITY CHURCHYARD VOLUNTEERS



COMMUNITY, EDUCATION, AWARENESS (C2)

The Council understands that whilst projects and their direct impact is important, it also has a role as a community leader, being able to inspire wider action through promotion and engagement with the wider community. Several examples of this include:

- ❁ **Eco Rangers from Badgemore Primary School** have been working with the Council's Parks team on a number of projects at Mill Meadows, including the planting of a new 'wild harvest' hedgerow, with saplings donated by the Woodland Trust.
- ❁ The Council has funded the **Sacred Heart Primary School nature club** to improve biodiversity around the school with bee hotels, bird boxes, bat boxes, and planting for pollinators.

- ❁ The Council's Deputy Park Manager, Kyle Dowling, has been working with children from **Valley Road Primary School** to create a pollinator-friendly mixed herb garden for their science class.
- ❁ With financial support from the Council, **Henley YMCA** has invested in bee friendly planting, bird boxes and tools to help their volunteer gardening group to improve biodiversity and teach gardening skills in the community.
- ❁ With a grant from the Council, **Henley College** have created three planters for pollinators, which are maintained by the College's Pathways Conservation and Gardening Group students.
- ❁ **Badgemore Primary School** have restored a pond at the entrance to the school, following the discovery last year of great-crested newts.



ECO RANGERS

ECO RANGERS

ECO RANGERS





- ✿ Greener Henley have established a **Schools Climate & Nature Action Network** with 17 local schools to formulate plans for how the schools can address both the climate and nature emergencies. Greener Henley also run an annual **Environmental Schools Science Challenge**, which this year focusses on the river as a habitat.
- ✿ Together, the Town Council and Greener Henley organise a **Great Big Green Week event in the marketplace**, an annual community-wide celebration of climate action, nature and sustainability. This year there is a focus on Henley as a bee-friendly town.
- ✿ Greener Henley, the Henley Standard and Town Council's **Nature Squared** campaign encourages residents to plant 1m² of native wildflowers leading to more than 185m² of wildflowers being planted so far.

LITTLE HEARTS
PRE-SCHOOL

PATHWAYS
BEE PROJECT

- ✿ The Town Council, through its **Communications Manager** Daisy Smith, promotes all the horticultural and environmental projects of the Council through its website, monthly newsletters, noticeboards and posters, at events, and social media channels. The Information Centre also has displays for projects, such as the Bee Friendly Town, and has a stall at markets.
- ✿ The Town Council is very grateful to the several **local media channels**, including the Henley Standard, Henley Herald, and Experience Henley, for their support in advertising the Council's various projects. The breadth of engagement is evidenced throughout the portfolio. As also mentioned, other environmental projects have also reached as far as the national and international media, including the recent BBC documentary focussing on Henley's campaigning for improved water quality, and an article in the New York Times.
- ✿ To celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, native tree whips were given to each pupil in every school in Henley.



VALLEY ROAD
PRIMARY SCHOOL



SUPPORT OF LOCAL GROUPS, BUSINESS SUPPORT, FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY (C3)

The Council believes that whilst the Town Council coordinates the application, Henley in Bloom is a project for the whole town and its strength and sustainability is dependent on the involvement of all areas of the community from local organisations, businesses and individuals.

Sponsorship is key to achieving many of the Council's projects and this year has increased its income from commercial sponsorship by £20,500. We are looking to double this in the coming year. In addition to this, the Council has received very generous in-kind support from creative agency, Tank2, with creating the new Henley in Bloom logo and this portfolio.

Christmas tree shredding. The Council also raises money through donations for the shredding of Christmas trees by the Town Council's Parks team. The arisings are then composted and reused.

All income raised is ringfenced for Henley in Bloom projects which in the past year have included helping to fund the Biodiversity Officer salary, the Henley College street art project, refurbishing the Leichlingen Apple at Gravel Hill, and funding the Bloom grant scheme.

The work of many of the local groups, such as the schools and churches, **Henley College, Henley Society, Greener Henley, Henley Wombles, Henley Archaeological and Historical Society, Rotary Club, Henley Bowls Club, YMCA, and Allotment Associations** has already been highlighted. However, there are some others that should also be mentioned:

- ❁ The **Northfield End and Bell Street Residents Group**, who look after many of the planted areas around Northfield End and carry out litter picking.
- ❁ The **Friends of Freemans Meadow** who have over 70 members and who were instrumental in working with the Town Council to get town green status and continue to work with us to enhance the park.

ADVENTURE
PLAYGROUND
OPENING



HART STREET TAVERN



- ❁ The **Gardening Buddies**, who have worked with the Town Council and carried out many projects in recent years, including planting and maintaining the bed at the Fire Station on West Street.
- ❁ The **Henley Business Partnership** who have a dedicated section at their monthly meetings to champion green issues and have hosted speakers to raise awareness around biodiversity and water quality.
- ❁ The **Henley Leichlingen Falaise Twinning Association** and **British-Slovene Society** whose contributions have included the Leichlingen Apple sculpture at Gravel Hill and the traditional Slovenian hayrack at Gillotts Field.



- ❁ The **River & Rowing Museum** host schools and SEN groups on a daily basis, educating them about the river and wildlife, using their educational facilities and Marsh Meadows. Their jetty is also used by the Rivertime Boat Trust, providing river trips for the elderly, disabled, SEN groups, and families and carers.
- ❁ The **Tony Lane Foundation**, set up in memory of a former Mayor of Henley, who funded two trees on Hart Street.

GRAVEL HILL AND PUDDING STONE



PROJECT FOCUS – HENLEY COLLEGE STREET ART PROJECT

This year the perfect opportunity arose to combine community participation, education and awareness, improving the street scene, and engagement with one of the Town Council's flagship campaigns of the past year: water quality.

The former Youth Centre site on Deanfield Avenue has been vacant for many years, awaiting development, and its hoardings were unattractive and likely to attract graffiti. Working with the owner of the site, the Council devised a plan to create a mural on the hoardings, focussing on the environment. The Henley College is across the road from the hoardings, and the Council was exploring ways with the College to better integrate students into the community. The Council engaged street artist Andrew Manson, who workshopped ideas with the College's Foundation Degree arts students, and put forward two proposals for the site owner and the

Council to choose from. The successful proposal, called 'Swansong', named after the ancient belief that swans only sing when they are approaching death, highlighting the town's campaigning around improving water quality on the Thames with a large swooping swan flying away from a polluted and dying river towards a clean and welcoming Henley on Thames, dotted with iconic Henley references, including Wind in the Willows and a yellow submarine representing George Harrison. The mural was completed in March 2025 and very well-received. It has brightened up the hoardings and created a sense of pride for the students involved and a talking point within the community.



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