



Luton in Bloom 2025

Impact Report

Our Story So Far...

LUTON IN BLOOM

Luton in Bloom is more than just a gardening competition it is a movement that encourages residents to engage with nature, learn new skills, build meaningful relationships, and foster a sense of pride and community in Luton.

Our vision, which began three years ago, continues to thrive as we work towards reducing social isolation, improving well-being, and creating a healthier, more connected town.

This year, Luton in Bloom has had a profound impact on our community, from the young to the elderly, as we brought people together to grow, share, and create. We are proud of what we've achieved, and this report highlights the positive social and mental health outcomes of our efforts, as well as the tangible growth of our community initiatives.



Our Sponsors

Luton in Bloom wouldn't be possible without the generous support of our incredible sponsors. Thanks to their commitment, we're able to create meaningful opportunities for the local community, from developing vibrant gardening spaces where people can come together, share knowledge, and learn new skills, to hosting our exciting farmers' market that brings fresh produce and a real sense of togetherness to the heart of Luton.



Luton Rising - Headline Sponsor
& Community Garden Sponsor



Luton Council - Best Residential
Front Display Sponsor



London Luton Airport - Best Fruit
and Vegetable Patch Sponsor



Luton Point - Best School
Garden & Best Early Years
Garden Sponsor



MK Contractors- Best School
Garden & Best Early Years
Garden Sponsor



Funding towards Workshops

Our Judges

Luton in Bloom wouldn't be possible without the support of our incredible judges, who generously give their time to visit and appreciate all the wonderful gardens.



**HM-Lord Lieutenant
Susan Lousada**



**Ryad Khodabocus
Luton Council of Faiths**



**Neelum Mughal
Inspire FM**



Hannan Ali DL



**Hazel Simmons MBE
Leader of Luton Council**



**Camilla King High
Sheriff of Bedfordshire**



**Manaaz Akhtar
Head of Marketing
Luton Rising**



**Peter Adams
St Mary's Church**



**Soraya Bowen
Alzhiemers Society
Regional Fundraiser**

Social Impact

The World Health Organization estimates that 1 in 10 people globally feel lonely, with certain regions, including the UK, experiencing even higher rates. In Luton, we know that loneliness impacts many, and social isolation is linked to a variety of chronic conditions, including high blood pressure, heart disease, and even dementia.

However, gardening has been proven to provide a solution. According to the Mental Health Foundation, 88% of people who garden for more than 6 hours per week report higher life satisfaction. The National Garden Scheme found that 79% of residents felt their mental health and wellbeing improved through gardening.

By connecting people with nature and with each other, Luton in Bloom is making a difference in the lives of those who might otherwise feel disconnected. Our competition, workshops, and community events have provided opportunities for people to build new relationships and combat the negative effects of isolation.

Over a quarter
(28%) of people
across all ages
report having no
one they can call a
best friend.

Nearly **1 in 10**
people report
having no
friends at all
(Ref: YouGov).

Our Workshops

Our Seed Sharing Event - Luton Point

We hosted a Seed Sharing Event inside Luton Point, which was attended by over 500 people.

The atmosphere was vibrant and filled with energy, as people of all ages and backgrounds came together to share seeds, plants, stories, and gardening tips.

This event exemplified the spirit of Luton in Bloom a celebration of community, diversity, and collective growth.

**Over 500
attendees!**

"Thank you for such a wonderful day, my children loved meeting all the animals you had"
-Ms Connor

"I have never been to a seed sharing event but I am so glad I came across this in town, I managed to pick up some pea shoot seeds and swap them with my pumpkin seeds"
-A Khan

"I brought my own seeds from my garden down and managed to swap with the Luton in Bloom Team, Im now going to try and grow a tomato" - Mr Bakshi



Our Seed Sharing Event - Survey Results

based on 109 participants

28.4% of participants told us that they do gardening weekly followed by 24.8% who said they do it monthly.

11% stated they never did gardening.



35.2% of our participants in this survey were aged 35-44.



54.1% of our participants in this survey stated they had lack of time which is why did not do gardening.



You told us "More investment in green spaces"

"More child interactive and friendly"

Based on the information collected we based our future workshops on the needs of the community!

"More knowledge of gardening"



Check out the video here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibvK5GItVPU>

Into the Wildlife with Matt



12
participants
attended

The Wildlife Trusts is a federation made up of 46 Wildlife Trusts and a central charity (the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts).

Matt hosted a workshop on how residents of Luton can help make a difference to our wildlife. Many of us have foxes, birds, badgers and other wild animals which may pay a visit now and then to our gardens.

Matt showed the group how to ensure their gardens were safe for wild animals, but also how residents could make their own mini meadows in their back gardens

"I did not know how important wildlife was until attending this workshop. I will be taking more care when cutting my grass and filling mud holes as I want to keep those who come to my garden safe" - Mr Nawaab

"Today I found out there is around 88,000 different species of animals, plants and fungi are known to share the UK with us. That is crazy to think! Matt was bvery helpful" - Miss Evans

**Check out the video here:
<https://youtu.be/J3guILM1VP4>**

Young Growers: A Guide for Kids to Grow



Laura from young growers hosted a workshop for the young growers within our town, children were able to do a range of fun gardening activities with their parents on the day.

Sowing microgreens - This is really fun for families to take home and grow on a windowsill plus it teaches them a new skill.

Wildflowers seed balls - A messy one but again even good for those that don't have gardens as they can throw them at parks.

Herb exploration area - This includes a herb tray for sensory exploration along with colouring sheets. Children were also given some packets of coriander, basil and parsley to take home and sow.

"Trying to get my children into the garden has been hard as it is not seen as the norm, attending laura's session has peaked their interest and now they are super excited to see their seeds grow! Thank you Luton in Bloom for this activity" - Mother of 4 children aged 5-11

"Sadly we do not have our own garden, but learning we could plant our wildseeds in the park next door was exciting!"

***20 young people
attended with their
parent***

Seed to Sprout with Shazeena Hussain



Shazeena hosted our “Seed to Sprout” workshop, where she guided participants through the fascinating life cycles of both flowers and vegetables.

With a warm and engaging approach, she explained the germination process in detail breaking down how a tiny seed transforms into a thriving plant. Beyond the science, Shazeena also made it practical and accessible by demonstrating how anyone can start germinating seeds at home using everyday items like a damp paper towel and a plastic bag.

Her hands-on examples and easy-to-follow steps inspired participants to try it themselves, showing just how simple and rewarding it can be to grow your own plants from scratch.

“It was such a fun and informative workshop! Shazeena made it easy to understand, and now we feel confident starting our little garden together as a family.”

“My kids were so excited to go home and try growing their own veggies we’ve already got seeds in paper towels on the windowsill!”

“We never realized how simple it could be to start growing plants at home this workshop sparked a whole new family hobby!”

30 attendees

Stockwood Garden Tour: A look into beautiful gardens in Luton



The Stockwood Gardens Tour, hosted by Jo Oliver, offered participants a rare behind-the-scenes look at one of Luton's most stunning green spaces. With her deep knowledge and passion for horticulture, Jo guided visitors through the gardens, sharing fascinating insights into the history and unique features of Stockwood.

A highlight of the tour was the exploration of the dedicated sensory garden, where Jo explained how thoughtful design can engage all five senses sight, sound, smell, touch, and even taste. Participants not only experienced the sensory garden firsthand but also learned practical tips on how to create their own sensory spaces at home, using simple, accessible techniques to make gardens more inclusive and enriching for everyone.

"The sensory garden was such a beautiful and calming space. It gave me so many ideas for making our own garden more interactive for the kids."

"I never knew there was so much history and thought behind Stockwood Gardens, Jo made every corner come to life!"

"This tour really opened my eyes to how gardens can be enjoyed in so many different ways not just visually, but through all the senses."

25 attendees

Check out the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhAm7XE2vBk>

Meet the Expert with Faizlet Khan



Faizlet Khan hosted our “Meet the Expert” workshop, which provided learners with valuable insights into gardening, including information about various flowers and fruits and their seasonal growth patterns. The workshop was delivered in both English and Bangla, allowing greater participation and engagement, particularly from the Bangladeshi community, who have a strong interest in gardening.

Participants had the opportunity to ask questions and gain practical knowledge about planting and caring for different types of plants and flowers, making the session both informative and interactive.

“When knowlege is shared in a language people understand, it doesnt just plant seeds in the soil it plants them in the heart too. I felt more connected than ever before

25 attendees

‘Gardening teaches us about seasons, but sharing wisdom across cultures teaches us about connection with others within our community, today I found out what a khodu was and i found it super interesting’

Check out the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4qlMjc7G5c>

Gardening for Beginners with Advocacy 1st



We hosted a Beginners' Guide to Gardening session at the LETS Hub, welcoming the Advocacy 1st team from Community Connex Ltd. Community Connex works with people with learning disabilities, autistic individuals, those facing disadvantages, and their families, helping them lead healthier, happier, and more inclusive lives. Their vision is a world where everyone, regardless of ability or background, is treated as an equal citizen.

During the session, the group had the opportunity to get hands-on experience with gardening learning the basics, picking up useful tips and tricks, and even taking home their own plants to continue growing. More than just a gardening lesson, the session offered a space for connection, where participants bonded through shared experiences and the joy of growing something together.

"I never thought I could grow something with my own hands now I feel proud, like I can do more than people expect."

"Gardening today wasn't just about plants it was about feeling included, being part of something, and knowing I belong."

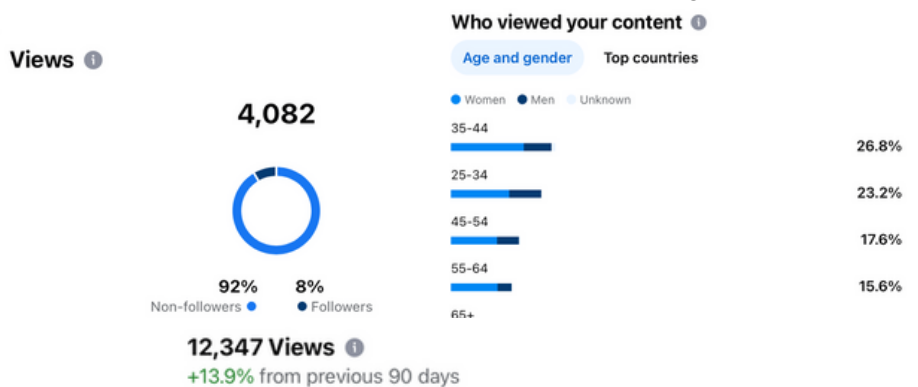


10 attendees

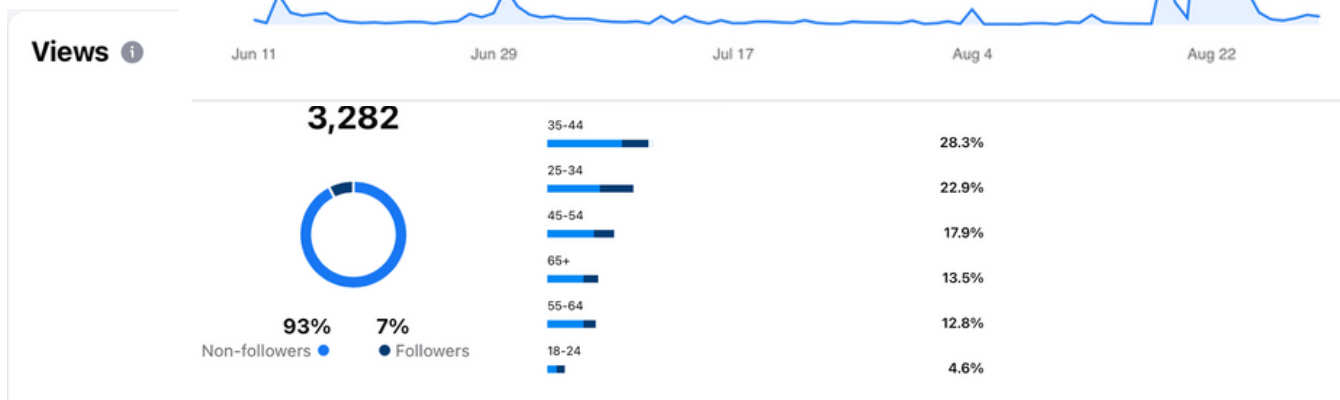
Social Media Impact

We know the impact social media has on sharing messages, here are some of the results based on our posts.

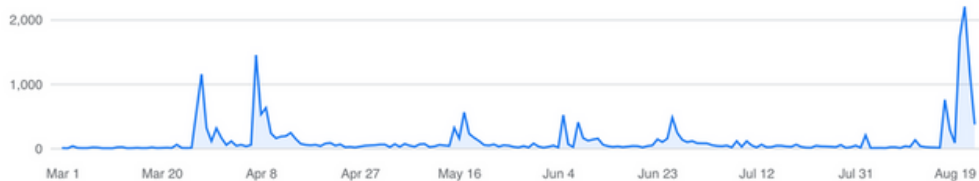
Luton Farmers Market Poster – 92% of viewers were non followers and 26.8% were aged 35-44



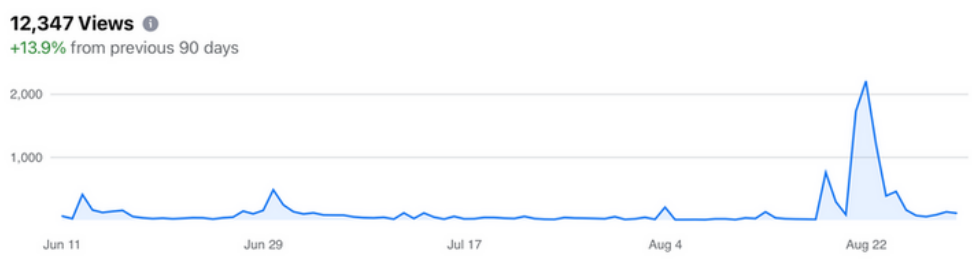
Seed Sharing Event Poster – 93% of viewers were non followers and 28.3% were aged 35-44



22,233 Views ⓘ
-- from previous 185 days



Social Media views have increased by 13.9%



Luton in Bloom Farmers Market

Luton in Bloom proudly hosted its third Small Farmers Market in St George's Square, drawing over 1,000 attendees and featuring 30 diverse stallholders alongside vibrant family-friendly activities like a bouncy castle, kids' corner, face painting, and henna.

But beyond the stalls and smiles, the market was a powerful celebration of community. It served as a platform for small businesses, local growers, and creative individuals to showcase what Luton truly has to offer its people.

Rooted in values of unity and inclusion, the event brought together residents from all walks of life, regardless of race, religion, or background. At its core, Luton in Bloom is about more than just flowers or markets it's about planting the seeds of connection, growing a stronger community, and recognising the everyday people who make this town thrive.

The celebration of competition winners and runners-up added a joyful note, reminding everyone that when we grow together, we all bloom.

5 Categories

30 stalls

1,000 Attendees



Our Highly Commended Competition Entries



**Best Early Year's School Garden
Highly Commended went to
Training Depot Day Nursery**



**Best School Garden Highly
Commended went to Whipperly
Infant School**



**Best Fruit and Veg Patch Highly
Commended went to Aloucious and
Jijy**



**Best Community Garden Highly
Commended went to Roots To
Recovery**



**Best Residential Front Display
Highly Commended went to Aysha
Begum**

Photo from her garden

Our Winners

Competition Entries



**Best Early Year's School Garden
Winner went to **Clever Munchkins****



**Best School Garden Winner
went to **Denbigh Primary School****



**Best Fruit and Veg Patch Winner
went to **Rukshana Khan****



**Best Community Garden Winner
went to **Grasmere Community
Garden****



**Best Residential Front Display
Winner went to **Mr & Mrs Azad****

Luton in Bloom - Quotes

"I had a wonderful and insightful time visiting the Community Garden entrants. The work they do using the space they have to support people's wellbeing is fantastic! Luton in Bloom has done a great job at highlighting them." -

Hannan Ali DL Community Garden Judge



Being part of Luton in Bloom has been such a joyful experience for me. I feel truly honoured to be one of the winners. The competition has inspired me and encouraged me to keep growing and creating, while also bringing people in our community closer together through a shared love of gardening and nature. -

Rukshana Khan, Fruit & Veg Patch Winner

"We are delighted to have been highly commended in the Luton in Bloom competition. Our whole school community joined in to help us make better spaces outdoors, with everybody helping to dig, rake and plant. We love being in our new areas and learning about plants and gardening. Taking part in the competition was so exciting and we look forward to continuing our gardening adventures and buying some new plants and seeds with our award. Thank you Luton in Bloom."

**Whipperly Infant School -
Best School Garden Highly Commended**



Luton in Bloom - Quotes

" A diverse town grows together as people come together in many diverse ways. Luton in Bloom is fast becoming one of the key factors in that objective, as it brings people together from different backgrounds who often garden in different ways with a focus that opens up many possible conversations. Gardening is English, but it's also Irish and Caribbean and Pakistani and Indian and Romanian and ... "

Judging for Luton in blue has become one of the high points of my year!"

Peter Adams - Fruit & Veg Judge



The High Sheriff of Bedfordshire Camilla King was proud to support and judge school entries for this year's Luton in Bloom community project run by Community Interest Luton. The event celebrated growing fruit, vegetables and flowers, using upcycled items, and saw many pupils getting their hands dirty!! The enthusiasm and originality shown by the students was truly awesome, making the judging process difficult. Congratulations to Denbigh Primary and Clever Munchkins. Thank you to all those involved; the event was "Blooming marvellous."

High Sheriff of Bedfordshire



Luton is full of such wonderful garden-based community projects, we are very proud to be one of them and could not be happier with our award, well done to all who have taken part and may we all keep blooming and bringing the bloom to Luton" -

Samantha Smith, SIG Penrose Roots to Recovery project manager



Luton in Bloom - Quotes

"We're honoured to win 'Luton in Bloom' for Best Residential Front Garden. We hope our love for gardening inspires others to grow their own green spaces, helping our town to blossom."

Mr and Mrs Azad, Residential Winner



The platform provided by Luton in Bloom to showcase a variety of organisation caring for their community; raising awareness and allowing them to network with each other is great. The Farmers Market held in St George's Square was a great success. We had the opportunity to connect with other charities and businesses who share our passion for people and the environment. We look forward to following up on opportunities to collaborate and support each other in the coming year. Keep up the outstanding work, Luton in Bloom!

Richard Marshall - Grasmere Community Garden- Community Garden Winner



"It was such a joy to visit three community gardens, each making a real difference to the communities they serve. These gardens are special places where we can find peace, learn, and spend time together. I am most grateful to Luton in Bloom for organising this competition, where every participant is a winner in fostering such meaningful change"

HM Lord Lieutenant Susan Lousada



Luton in Bloom - Quotes

"Taking part in Luton in Bloom has been such a rewarding experience for our school community. The children have loved getting involved, learning about nature and taking pride in creating something beautiful together. Being recognised in the competition has inspired us to keep growing and caring for our environment – it's been a wonderful journey for everyone at Denbigh Primary."

**Denbigh Primary School -
Best School Garden Winner**



"I was honoured to be asked to be a Judge for the Luton in Bloom competition this year. Seeing all the work the applicants had done was fantastic obviously congratulations to the winning organisations but well done to all who took part. Can I also say well done to the team at Luton in Bloom for keeping this environmental issue on the agenda with all ages in our town. For the first time this year I have managed to grow tomatoes from a plant given me from Luton in Bloom quite an achievement for someone who has never grown anything!. It is wonderful to see the food we eat growing and a great way of getting our young people involved in the environment where they live. Well done to all".

Hazel Simmons - Residential Judge



**Check out the video here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TzODiRHWwyo>**



Looking Ahead: Continuing to Grow Together

As we reflect on the success of Luton in Bloom 2025, we are excited to continue building on this momentum. Through gardening, we are not only beautifying our town but also improving the mental and social health of our residents. Gardening helps build strong communities, promotes well-being, and fosters a culture of care and connection.

Luton is a town full of potential, and by continuing to nurture the seeds of friendship, collaboration, and community, we can make sure that Luton in Bloom grows year after year, making a lasting impact on our town.

The success of Luton in Bloom 2025 is a testament to the power of community-driven initiatives. Together, we have not only improved the beauty of our town but also created stronger social connections that can help combat loneliness and isolation. We look forward to continuing this journey and creating an even more vibrant, connected Luton in the years to come.

"Call it a **clan, call it a **network**,
call it a **tribe**, call it a **family**.
Whatever **you** call it, whoever **you**
are, **you** need one." - Jane Howard**

**Welcome to the
Luton in Bloom Community**

