



LARGE VILLAGE CATEGORY 2026

Repton in Bloom

SILVER GILT AWARD

Judged on 1st July 2026

Judges: Richard Stephen, Julie Heath, Jayne Smith

Judges' Award: To the children of Repton Primary School for the displays of planted hay baskets and large pots at the entrance gates to the school.

Introduction

Repton is a small Derbyshire town with an impressive historic background. It has its roots in Anglo-Saxon times, hosted a mausoleum for the Mercian royal family, and was even attacked by marauding Vikings. The famous Repton School was established more than 450 years ago. This is the third year the town has entered the East Midlands in Bloom competition. Owen and Helen Jowett, who lead Repton in Bloom, warmly welcomed the judges at the Village Hall, where their tour started and ended, and where they were also introduced to Councillor Steve Hardwick.

Areas of Achievement

Section A – Horticulture

The tour commenced outside the Village Hall where the Maple Tree Café is situated. Pauline Little from the café has created and maintains an attractively planted border of perennials and seasonal planters which enhance the area.

The judges were delighted to meet the children from St Wystan's school who had created a pleasing display of sunflowers, bee-friendly planters and hanging baskets which contained lavender, foxgloves and fuchsia amongst other plants. The bee drawings, laminated cards and bee hotel outside the school added to the background and the result was a striking display. The lavender planting outside the school's Wellbeing Centre was also noted.

The two new tubs outside the Rathbone building were a pleasing addition to the route this year. The floral display at A. Moss Family Butchers Ltd was impressive, with four hanging baskets, three planters and three window boxes. The colourful and varied plants were well maintained and in excellent condition. A watering system has been installed at the premises. Alex explained that one of his customers helps each year with the organisation of the display and that they plan to use seasonal plants to maintain a display during the winter and spring. The house opposite at 6 Burton Road had a lovely display of floral planters and baskets. At the Repton Cross, a Grade 1 Listed Monument, planters of colourful annuals had been placed around the base. The display included some of the whisky barrel containers acquired with the assistance of specific funding from Repton Parish Council. Hanging baskets and tubs at the two bus stops and at the entrance to St Wystan's Church greatly enhanced the area, as did the brightly planted wooden troughs at the entrance to Repton School's 400 Hall which are planted and maintained by pupils. Inside the gates the borders provided a very colourful display and the lawned areas were beautifully maintained. The grass within the church grounds had been neatly mown by volunteers and the War Graves section of the Cemetery was planted with roses and was also well maintained. Not the easiest access but worth seeing. The Cloister,

cricket pitch and cafe areas of Repton School are a tranquil green space which can be accessed by the public out of term time. Impressive troughs of lavender and grasses outside the café were noted. The judges were transported by car to the Monsom Lane allotments. There are 31 allotments used by a number of different nationalities and age groups. Here a large variety of flowers, exotic plants and vegetables were in evidence. Overall, the site was being well maintained and was a lovely facility where family and friends could meet.

Repton Primary School took part in Repton in Bloom for the first time this year and have created a stunning and colourful display of planters at the entrance gates which are particularly impressive when the gates are closed. Small painted stones created by the pupils were included in the display. Headmaster Steve Tague introduced pupils Rocky, George, Olivia, Erin and Bethany who are members of the school's Eco-Council and are responsible for daily watering.

Section B – Environment

The emphasis on bee preservation by the children of St Wystan's is notable. The materials for the bee hotel were collected by the children from their site. At the allotments there was a composting area and wood chippings provided by a local business. Overall the allotment site was being well maintained and it held a wide variation of fruit, flowers and vegetables many catering for the diverse wildlife that lived there. There was also a communal area for general use and events. Water collection from the roof of the church was noted with the presence of a large water butt with several watering cans available for use there. The Wystan Arboretum was passed on the route but not visited. The judges were told that copper labels have been supplied by the council to identify the tree species, as previously recommended. In the main the streets along the tour were generally kept quite clean and free of litter and other detritus.

Section C – Community

Repton has a lively community as was in evidence at the Village Hall with exhibitions by the local history and art groups. The Repton Festival and Open Gardens give a boost to the area. The contributions of various businesses and private residences were obvious throughout the tour, including A.Moss Family Butchers, Repton School, The Repton Clinic, Mulberry Beauty Salon, Milton Road, Springfield Road, Sweet Pea Cottage and the Bull's Head public house to mention a few. Rhodes Financial Services made a significant financial contribution which funded a polytunnel at the allotments. Sandstone paving stones were also donated. At St Wystan's Church, Wendy is leading an initiative to raise funds to help to clear the paths and make them more accessible. Repton in Bloom contributed £50 towards the planting at Repton Primary School and this encouraged the school to participate. The local council have recently increased their contribution and this has helped fund the purchase of whisky barrels which have been planted and displayed along the route.

Areas for Development

Section A

It would significantly improve the route if the weeds at the roadside near the Village Hall, in the area around the entrance to the Church and along the roads generally, could be removed prior to the judging visit. Several locations let you down e.g. the base of tree opposite entrance to Askew Grove, Pinfold Lane etc.

If not already doing so, winter planting in the town centre, at Repton School and in the churchyard might be considered. The Open Gardens could possibly be expanded into a competition for residential properties which might encourage participation. Planting of further larger containers such as the whisky barrels could significantly improve the overall impact in the town centre.

Section B

A greater use of water butts might be considered and perhaps suitable buildings could be identified on the route for this purpose. It was noted that rainwater collection is not possible at the allotments. Is there any way in which this could be addressed? Some of the churchyard area was unmown. Might this be planted

as a wildflower meadow? Repton does have a rich medieval heritage. Maybe consider including what Repton did during the Second World War e.g. Burnaston Airfield. Consider working with the Wildlife Trust to carry out surveys of wildlife development in the churchyard, Arboretum and allotment. They will also help you engage more with the school Eco-Warriors.

Section C

It would be helpful if use was made of the 15 minutes allowed at the beginning of the judges' visit for there to be a short presentation of the progress over the year. A plan to introduce memorial planters to parts of Repton is in its infancy and the judges look forward to seeing how this develops. Use of the Community noticeboards could be made to publicise In Bloom events and the judges' visit. Greater use of media generally is to be encouraged and photographs could be taken on the tour to be used in publicity. Continue to encourage businesses to be part of your Bloom campaign, in particular through sponsorship, donations or doing their own thing.

Marks: Section A: 34 Section B: 22 Section C: 24 **Total 80**

Award achieved: Silver Gilt