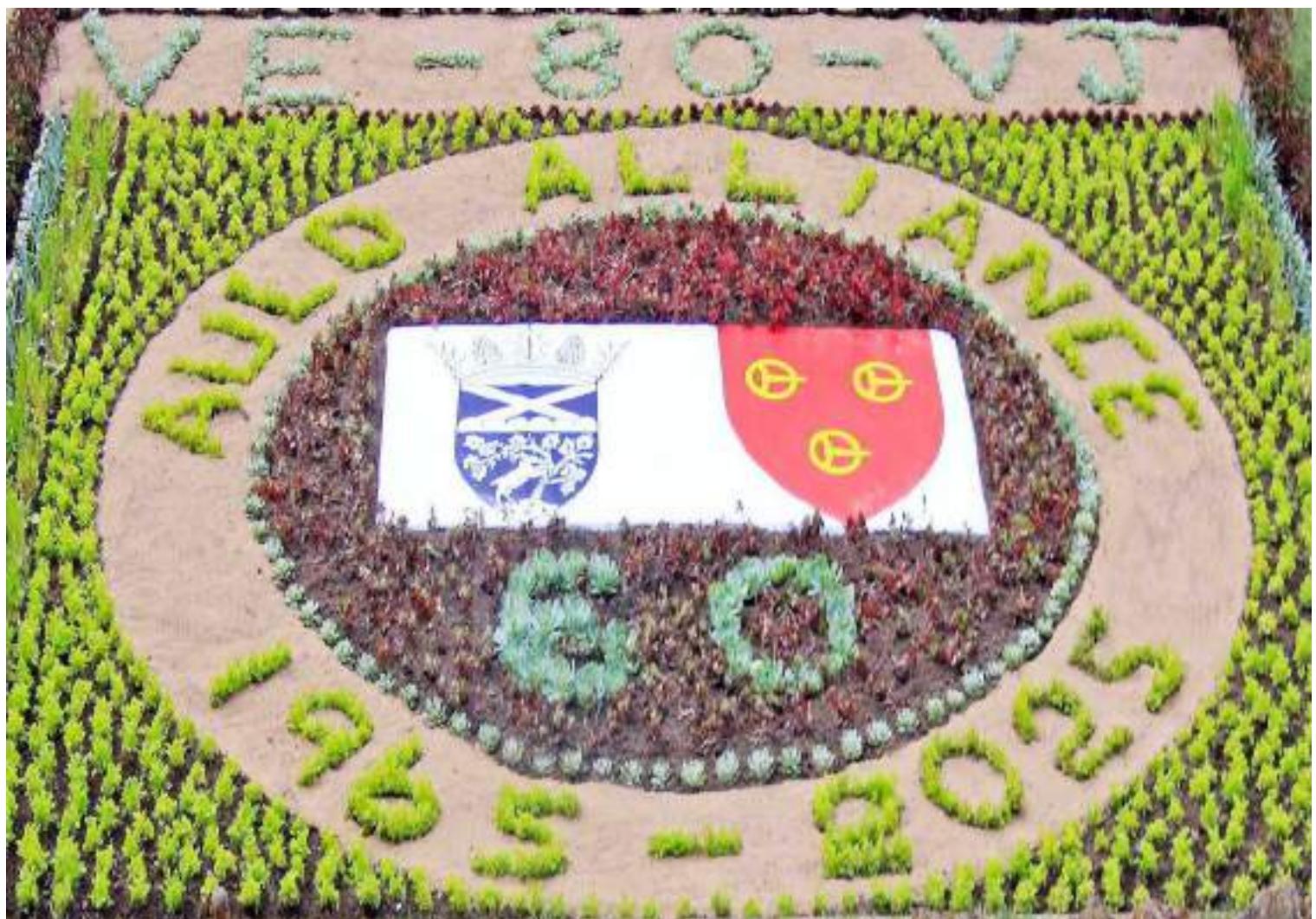


# BLOOMING HADDINGTON

## Beautiful Scotland 2025



F'book [wwwbloominghaddington](http://wwwbloominghaddington)



## Introduction

Haddington is the historic county town of East Lothian. Its Anglo Saxon name dates from the sixth century AD when the area was in the Kingdom of Bernicia. The town, like the rest of the Lothians, became part of Scotland in the tenth century. Haddington received Burgh status, one of the earliest to do so, during the reign of David I (1124–1153), giving it trading rights which encouraged its growth into a market town when it was the fourth-biggest town in Scotland.

The town centre retains its historic street plan with the original open triangular medieval marketplace, divided by a central island of buildings. To the north and south the medieval rigg pattern of burgage plots can still be observed with narrow buildings fronting the main streets and long plots behind stretching back, originally to the line of the old town walls. The county has traditionally been known as the Garden of Scotland with fertile soil along the banks of the River Tyne having been cultivated – and also fought over – for centuries. Haddington featured in The Guardian's happiest places to live in the UK in May this spring.



After the community council and local shopkeepers took ownership of the hanging baskets from East Lothian Council, Blooming Haddington was created in 2013 to bring various community groups together to widen their activities and develop different areas in the town.

The group's strength lies in effective partnerships, bringing together a network of businesses, community organisations and East Lothian Council (ELC) all sharing the Blooming Haddington vision for the town. We enjoy support from other organisations including Amisfield Preservation Trust, St Mary's Pleasance, St Mary's Kirk, Friends of the River Tyne (FORT), Haddington Rotary, Haddington Community Council and many individuals from the community, all supported by East Lothian Council. We all have the common aim of improving and sustainably conserving Haddington.

Our main purpose is to make our town a nice place in which to live, work and visit 365 days of the year. Achieving awards is an 'extra' and helps give our volunteers a boost. In 2013 we were best Beautiful Scotland newcomer with a silver gilt medal. Since then we have received golds every year and been category winner several times in Beautiful Scotland. We have twice represented Scotland in Britain in Bloom, winning gold and the town category both times. In 2024 we again won the medium town category and two discretionary awards in Beautiful Scotland.



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## Review of the year 2024-2025

### Summer 2024

- Volunteers water baskets, planters and boxes on a rota-basis.
- Regular volunteering sessions. We introduced regular coffee breaks and occasional home-baking from members of our committee.
- Beautiful Scotland judging day.
- Blooming Haddington Wheelbarrow competition, map of the wheelbarrows produced, judging and award presentations.
- East Lothian Horticultural Society show again held in the town.
- Amisfield open days as part of Scotland's Gardens Scheme and celebrated The Ancient Fraternity of Free Gardeners of East Lothian.



## Autumn 2024

- Hanging baskets were taken down. Volunteers replaced the summer with winter bedding in the planters.
- Apple picking and pressing day at Amisfield.
- In-person Blooming Haddington AGM in November. We welcomed the Lord-Lieutenant of East Lothian, the Provost of East Lothian and a local MSP. Plans for the coming year discussed.
- Monthly Committee meetings scheduled.
- Bulb planting in tattie boxes and in the Mercat Cross.
- Keep Scotland Beautiful awards in Aberdeen.



## Winter 2024/25

- Tour of town to highlight areas for development. ELC given 'wish-list' for ongoing work.
- Haddington Rotary and other groups continued clearing the Curling Pond.
- Maintenance sessions at Oriental garden, Lady Kitty's garden and Monument Park.
- Bulbs planted at different locations around town by Blooming Haddington and ELC.
- Worked on plans for the coming year including the new carpet bed and a tree to commemorate our founding chair.
- Monument park and ideas for sustainable planting.
- Over 800 trees planted over three days a mile up-river by FORT to help with biodiversity and flood prevention.
- Wreath workshop at Amisfield.



## Spring 2025

- A 20 sq. metre carpet bed was installed on Sidegate at the entrance to the Town Centre funded by Blooming Haddington.
- The entrance bed at Monument Park was planted with shrubs and perennials.
- Frequency of volunteering sessions stepped up.
- Ongoing clearance of the old curling pond and new planting of wild flowers.
- FORT litter pick and Himalayan balsam removal days.
- Yarn bombing patterns and wheelbarrow trail promotions shared with local groups.
- Promotion of Blooming Haddington with stalls at Amisfield's plant sale and in the town coinciding with the April Farmers' Market.
- Amisfield plant sale with teas raised over £3,000.
- Blooming Haddington, Amisfield and curling pond walking tours during Haddington festival week.
- East Lothian Council biodiversity officer presented to Committee.



## A Horticultural Achievement

### Town Centre

The group started in 2013, taking ownership of Haddington's Blooming Baskets from the Community Council and bringing other community groups together. We organise and look after 155 hanging baskets in 2025 with a largely yellow theme based on surfinia petunias, marguerites and lysimachia. The baskets are planted by ELC and, along with others for bloom groups in the county, have allowed us to keep the council plant nursery, one of very few now left in Scotland. This gives us a wider range of plants as we can over winter then propagate tender perennials. Local shops and other traders and individuals fund the baskets which are maintained by Blooming Haddington volunteers and composted at the end of summer. We use seasonal bedding in the baskets for maximum impact in a very small area: the 155 baskets total area is barely 20 sq. metres.

Low-level planters around the Mercat Cross enhance this important feature. In 2024 14 one metre square boxes with reservoirs replaced our 13 three tier planters to allow more sustainable planting and to reduce watering. Plants include shrubs and perennials. They are supplemented with annuals for additional colour. In autumn we add bulbs and some winter/spring bedding such as pansies and wallflower. Six large 'tattie' boxes around the town have year-round displays of evergreen shrubs also supplemented with annuals for additional colour. Blooming Haddington volunteers maintain all the planters. Rotary, local businesses and individuals sponsor the planters.



The baskets in the nursery.

Summer colour in the town centre.



One of the 14 new planters with a mix of annuals and perennials.



A tattie box with shrubs.



Paulownias with dahlias and annuals in  
Neilson Park



Geraniums as ground cover



Herbaceous bed at  
Maitlandfield

## Public open spaces

Neilson Park is our 5-ha central public park maintained by ELC with rugby, cricket and tennis pitches and a large children's play area. It has large perennial beds, notably a 100 metre long border running the width of the park. Another bed features Paulownia trees pollarded to enhance their leaves. This bed and three circular beds include some seasonal plants, notably cannas and dahlias, which are overwintered in the ELC nursery. Blooming Haddington liaised with the ELC to agree a site to plant a Himalayan birch tree on the edge of the sports pitch to honour our founding chairperson who passed away in August 2024.

ELC also maintains perennial borders in the town at prominent sites such as major junctions. The 40 metre bed on the West Road, at the old railway station, was restored with wildlife friendly, sustainable planting. Fencing around the bed with an innovative railway theme was installed. An Indian Bean tree, funded and planted by Blooming Haddington, marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of town's twinning with Aubigny-sur-Nere, while another tree commemorates the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the return from the war of the Royal Scots regiment. This spring we combined with ELC to install a carpet bed at the Goat Corner to give a horticultural focal point to the town.

Thousands of spring bulbs enhance the entrances to the town and parks including a wave of purple crocuses funded by Rotary near the river. Recently, more bulbs were added to a stretch of over 300 metres along the river bank and at the entrance to the golf course. Annual seed mixes, incorporating some native wildflowers such as red poppies and blue cornflowers, as well as cosmos to prolong the flowering season, give summer colour at low cost.



Crocus add spring colour to many verges.

Daffodils by the Tyne Lade.



Early summer in a herbaceous bed.

Annual mix with corn marigold, cornflower and ox-eye daisy .



Signage at the old railway site.

**The Oriental Garden** A small garden restored by Blooming Haddington by a lade from the River Tyne with plants from Asia and some others that fit the informal character of the garden. This year, work has focused on further planting in dry soil under the lime trees and reshaping the overgrown banking in the lade. A sloped access has been installed, the bridge over the lade restored, and a new wooden sign placed at the entrance. A bench was designed and donated by a local company. The pond has become a home for frogs.





**St Mary's Pleasance Garden** ([www.haddingtongarden.com/](http://www.haddingtongarden.com/)) is maintained for the public by Haddington Garden Trust, between St. Mary's Churchyard, Lady Kitty's Garden and Haddington House. Some of the garden's boundary walls were built by Napoleonic prisoners of war. The design reflects the features of a 17<sup>th</sup> century Scottish garden. There is a mount, sunken garden, boxed hornbeam walk, cottage garden, orchard and meadow, period rose border and raised herb beds. The pleached alle of laburnum is its most spectacular feature in May and June. Recent developments include redesign and planting of the cottage garden, installation of a new sundial and stone plinth in the sunken garden (made locally), and a tree planted in commemoration of the coronation of King Charles III.



Laburnum alpinum



A martagon lily in the informal area.

**John Knox tree** An oak tree marks the place where John Knox was born. It was damaged badly during Storm Arwen but the Council's tree expert has managed to save it. Railings around the tree have been renovated and a plaque and a re-cycled planter now mark the spot.



Some of the roses in June.

*R. gallica Versicolor*, 12th century; *R. Gertude Jekyll*, a modern shrub rose.

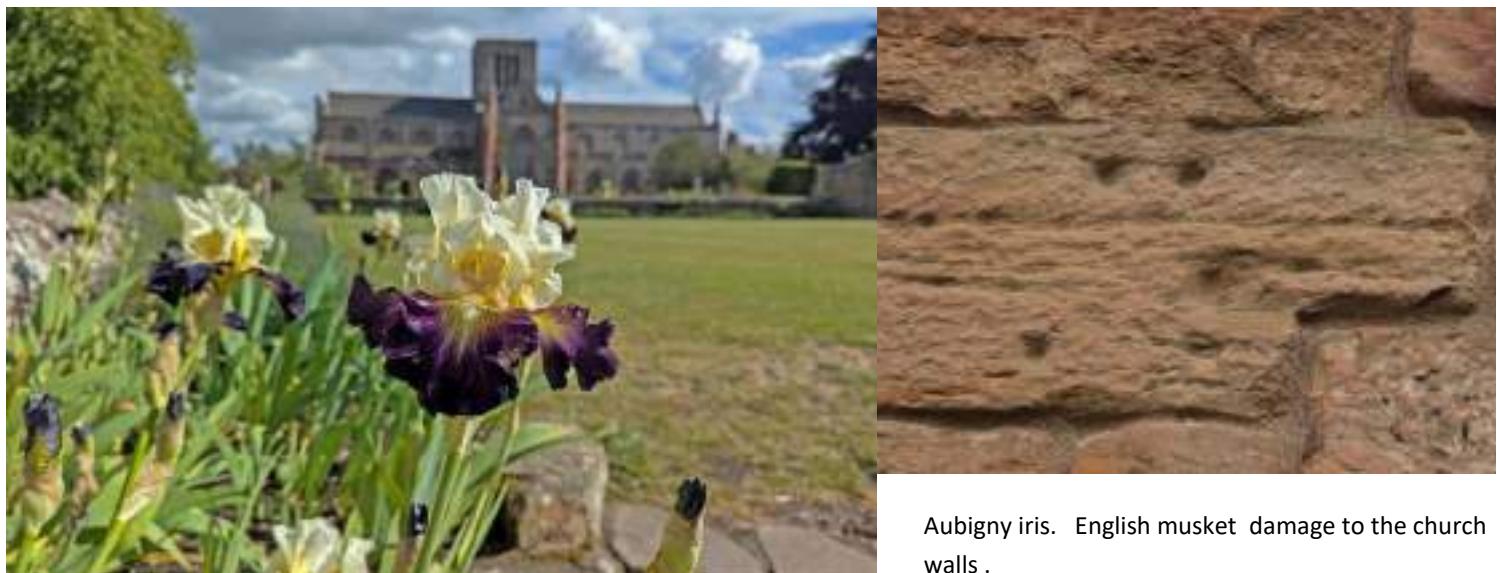
*R. centifolia Muscosa*, pre 1700; *R. x damascena Semperflorens*, Ancient.

*R. alba Maxima Plena*, 16th century.

*R. Pompon de Bourgogne*, pre 1650; *R. Rambling Rector*, 1899.



**Lady Kitty's Garden** is a public space, between the Nungate Bridge and St Mary's Church, with an area used to play pétanque, particularly by the Twinning Association when the town hosts visitors from our twinned town Aubigny-sur-Nere. Blooming Haddington added a range of lavenders to the garden, with a French theme (albeit the lavenders are all English varieties!). Lavender varieties planted are *L. angustifolia*, *L. Hidcote* and *L. rosea*. In 2023, we worked with the Siege of Haddington Research Group to add gabion baskets to commemorate Scotland's longest siege in the 16h century. The baskets were built locally and were funded partly by the Local Area Partnership and the design incorporates wicker baskets of earth, decking and planking, behind which artillery pieces were positioned. Aubigny Auld Alliance Iris are planted close to the entrance and this year, other repositioned from elsewhere in town around the gabions.



Aubigny iris. English musket damage to the church walls .

**Monument Park** The monument and the Giant Redwood tree dominate this small park. Thousands of bulbs (daffodils, crocus and a bees mix) are planted in the lawns; seats have been added and paths upgraded. Shade-loving plants in the beds including Heuchera, Brunnera, Hosta, Persicaria , Astilbe and ferns. This spring a range of shrubs were added to the entrance. Heathers are planted around the monument which also serves as a war memorial.





**Amisfield Walled Garden** ([www.amisfield.org.uk](http://www.amisfield.org.uk)) On the edge of the town, but with strong community links, it is one of the largest in Scotland. The eight-acre Amisfield Walled Garden was built between 1782 and 1788 by Francis Charteris, the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Wemyss. Its 16-foot-high stone walls, ornamental pavilions in each corner and derelict bothies outside the walls are A listed for their historical importance. The walled garden was part of the policies of Amisfield House, a Palladian mansion demolished in the 1920's. Over the past 25 years, the garden has been transformed from a neglected and overgrown wilderness into a beautiful garden space and thriving community facility. The garden is leased by the Trust from East Lothian Council for a peppercorn rent and is open to the public free of charge.

Care has been taken to design the path framework to be in character with the historic 18<sup>th</sup> century walls and garden buildings. Paths divide the garden into distinct spaces, including mixed shrub and herbaceous borders, vegetable beds, espaliered apple walks, a maze, a wildflower meadow, sensory gardens and a winter garden. Hedges of beech, hornbeam and yew are used to divide the spaces and provide enclosure. Trained fruit trees, including apples, plums, figs, cherries and apricots, are grown against the high stone walls. Garden furniture includes a number of hardwood benches donated by supporters of the project. The design of these is approved by the Trust before acceptance, in order that they are of suitable quality and sympathetic style. In addition, the Trust commissioned two seats from local craftsmen for specific areas, including a drystone wall and seat in the winter garden and a new bench in the 'smell' sensory garden.



The scale of the garden lends itself to planting large swathes of herbaceous plants. Many of these are propagated by division from donated plants or are grown from seed. A nursery bed has been established to bring on young plants and to produce plants for sale to raise funds. When budgets allow, plants are purchased from local nurseries to create variety in the planting of new beds and to provide stock plants for future use.

Plants have been chosen to be easy to maintain by a (generally) low-skilled workforce. As an example, four rectangular beds of mixed grasses and perennials next to a main footpath have been planted up with the plants laid out in diagonal rows of each species. From the path, the beds appear as a solid block of planting, but the beds are straightforward to maintain as planting in rows allows weeds to be easily identified and simply hoed out.



Edibles outside and in.



Propagation area.

Relaxing in the garden.

High standards of maintenance are achieved by having a large volunteer group available to work in the garden, under the supervision of a full-time volunteer coordinator. Many tasks are carried out by hand, such as hand weeding, hoeing, raking, edging grass and barrowing compost. Training is given for more specialised tasks such as fruit tree pruning and plant propagation prior to such work being undertaken. Recycled material such as mushroom compost or green waste is incorporated prior to planting, and beds are mulched with compost after planting. Waste bark chippings donated by local tree surgeons is used as a mulch on access paths at the back of planting beds, or is left to partially decompose, then used as a weed-supressing mulch on hedges and trees.

A recent development is the employment of a 'Well-Being' coordinator. The garden is now a well-loved local attraction, and through publicity on the 'Discover Scotland's Gardens' website and opening under Doors Open Day, it is becoming known to a national and even international audience. The garden featured on Beechgrove Garden in August 2024. The volunteers were awarded The Queen's Award for Volunteering in 2019.

Outside the walled garden, the woodland area and meadow are managed primarily with wildlife in mind while maintaining access for the public. A number of native trees have been planted to replace the aging field maples and the majority of the invasive rhododendron has been removed. The focus is now on controlling the invasive snowberry to encourage native flora and fauna.



## B Environmental Responsibility

### Biodiversity



**Friends of the River Tyne (FoRT)** The River Tyne runs through the heart of the town. The river is home to a range of wildlife. Moorhens, mute swans, mallard ducks, greylag geese and herons are often seen on the river. You may even spot a kingfisher or an otter. The edges of the river are not mowed to encourage wildlife. There is an annual purge on non-native Himalayan balsam, which damages the banks and crowds out native flora, by the group who campaign to improve the ecology of the river and raise awareness of its value.



Swan family.



Heron with fish.



Monitoring river life.

Attacking the balsam.

**Habitat creation** There are wildlife ponds at the Oriental garden, Amisfield garden and the golf course. A 'bug hotel' at the town car park has an educational role. Bat and bird boxes, which are checked by the appropriate licence holders, are in position along the river, in the woods outside Amisfield and around St Mary's Pleasance. Wild flower meadows feature in Amisfield Walled Garden and St Mary's Pleasance. Annual mixes at roundabouts provide colourful nectar sources. A biodiversity hedge with a range of native trees, shrubs, including berry-bearing types for birds at Amisfield has been planted by pupils from a local primary school.



**The golf course**, owned by East Lothian council, and leased to the golf club, is managed with environmental principles in mind. Fertiliser and pesticide use is kept to a minimum and the rough areas provide habitat for wild flowers and insects, including many types of bees and butterflies. There are two large ponds.



Wild thyme

Scottish bluebells

Ragged Robin

## Curling pond project

Rotary Haddington has secured a 25-year lease on a piece of unmanaged ground at the southwest of Haddington beside the River Tyne. This 10-acre area is being transformed into an attractive, accessible and biologically diverse space for all to enjoy. The area needs to be managed in a sympathetic way to improve biodiversity with targeted work. The focal point is the old curling pond which had become very overgrown. We have already started. We were awarded funding by Nature Hubs (in association with Starbucks) which will allow the creation of improved habitat. The restoration will involve removing some trees, scrub, and silt to create open water with shallow margins planted with reeds and other aquatic plants that will restore this feature making it available for amphibians and the many invertebrates that live their lives in or beside water. It will be a new resource to be used by both primary and secondary schools and a wonderful place to see local wildlife.



Bogbean.

Reed bunting.

Wild iris.



**East Lothian Countryside Rangers** East Lothian Ranger Service has one of the highest ratios of staff per head of population in Scotland. This has a positive effect on countryside management. One ranger is dedicated to the Haddington area. The rangers work with schools and other community groups encouraging environmental responsibility, including supporting youngsters aiming for the John Muir award. This is a national environmental award but particularly relevant in East Lothian where John Muir grew up. Rangers organise activities like litter picking, path maintenance, wildlife monitoring and removal of invasive non-native species. An e magazine Mud In Your Eye circulates four times a year among the hundreds of countryside volunteers in the county. The biodiversity officer presented on their work to Blooming Haddington this spring.

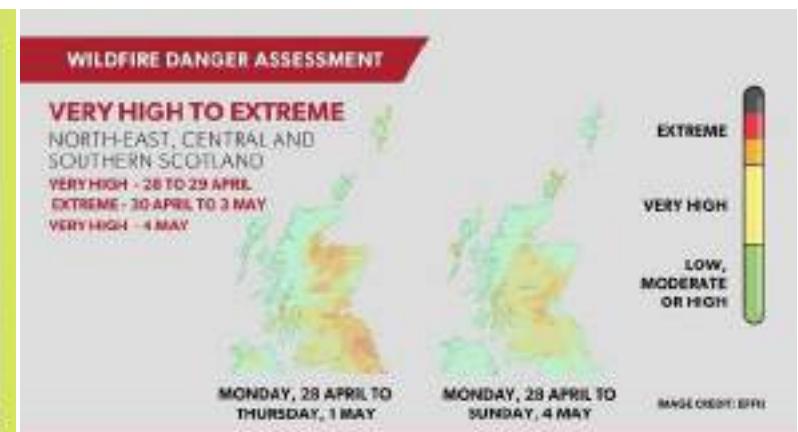
The biodiversity officer presented on their work to Blooming Haddington this spring.



## Path volunteers.



## River sampling.



Former railway, now a public walk/cycle /horse route.



## Monthly info notice.

## Materials

We recently carried out a plastic audit and now our only plastic items can be used more than once, mainly pots and seed trays. Even old compost and gravel bags are regularly reused when we weed and collect litter. We use builders' bags for cuttings whenever possible, so that they can be reused. All these policies contribute to reducing our use of carbon.

**Peat reduction** We cooperate with our colleagues in ELC's plant nursery in trials to eliminate peat in compost; we currently use ICL professional growing media with reduced peat. We find that peat free compost performs poorly with some plants, requires much higher quantities of water and plant food. We now use relatively little bagged compost: 50 bags for the baskets with another 20 to top up planters. This compares to at least 50 tons of recycled green waste mainly used on permanent beds. We re-use spent compost from our baskets and tubs as mulch on our beds.



ELC nursery trials. 2023 reduced peat in the middle; 2024 better performance but only as pots sat on capillary matting

**Chemicals** Street cleaning aims to prevent detritus building up to allow weeds to establish and damage pavements. However, parked cars means that some weed killer use is needed. This is limited to glyphosate on pavements and gutters. No chemical treatments are used on any of the flower and shrub beds or on grass. This year we purchased weed burners to deal with problem areas such as weeds in paved areas

Our own compost and leaf mould are used when we make or replant our perennial beds.



Compost bins.

Recycled green waste from household bins.

**Sustainable planting** Jointly with ELC we use a maximum of 25,000 bedding plants for the whole town over summer and winter. Our hanging baskets are equivalent to an area of 15 sq. metres while our planters are equivalent to around 40 sq. metres in total approx. equivalent to one small and one of the larger perennial beds.

Our tattie boxes and the new planters feature mostly perennials. Our old 3-tier planters were donated to bloom groups around the county and to the council for a cemetery. The range of plants we grow means there are nectar sources from February to October



White-tailed bumble bee on clover



Colonising tree bumble bee.



Bee collecting pollen from thistles



Wall brown on knapweed.



Peacock on coltsfoot.



Small copper.



Colonising small skipper on thistle.



Common blue on meadowsweet.



Six spot burnet moth on ragwort.

## Sustainability and Carbon Reduction 2025

East Lothian Council's Amenity Services Team is responsible for Grounds Maintenance, Street Sweeping, Burial and related front-line services. The following summarises our progress in making East Lothian more environmentally friendly.

Annual Bedding Displays have been reduced by over 50% and replaced with perennial herbaceous and annual 'wildflower' displays, some of which are self-sustaining.

Sports Pitch dressings are now predominantly based on green waste recycled sources collected and processed locally.

Diesel vans consuming up to 120 litres of fuel per week have been replaced with Gator / Polaris type vehicles which consume only 20 litres per week.

Trials continue to replace our fleet of strimmers, hedge trimmers and mowers with rechargeable battery powered units. Approximately 10% of our fleet is now battery powered.

Overall waste recycling figures for the service now achieve 98% for mixed waste, 95% for mechanical sweeping and 100% for green and inert waste. The waste is diverted from landfill and after recovery from the waste types, the residual is sent for SRF or RDF (Waste to Energy). The example below is for the period April 2024 to March 2025.

TOTAL		TOTAL WEIGHT	RECYCLED WEIGHT	SRF/RDF WEIGHT	%age
MIXED		1390.57	1362.759	27.811	98.00
SCRAP		2.44	0.000	2.440	100
ROADSWEEP		1359.08	0.000	1359.080	95.00
GREEN		667.04	667.040	0.000	100
WOOD		0.60	0.600	0.000	100
MATTRESS		164.38	164.38	0.000	100
INERT		35.52	35.52	0.000	100
TYRES		7.02	7.02	0.000	100



Street sweepers collect detritus reducing the need to spray.

A volunteer with a weed burner.

## C Community Participation

Blooming Haddington brings together a network of community organisations, businesses and the Council, all sharing a vision for the town. It is underpinned by a strong core group of volunteers. We have a fixed volunteering session on Wednesday evenings in the summer to encourage regular attendance, plus weekend and other ad-hoc, weather dependent sessions. Watering of the hanging baskets takes place regularly on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Our Blooming Haddington bibs give identity and promote teamwork. We also like to have a social aspect: chat over coffee during volunteering sessions, home baking, lunches, nights out.



Stall at Haddington Farmers' Market.

Adding decorations

Our **Community Wheelbarrow Trail** is now a regular annual event to bring the community together. A trail map is produced pinpointing wheelbarrow locations, shared on social media. Judging takes place in August including a public vote via social media or email. To support the environment and encourage biodiversity the certificates presented are printed on wildflower seeded paper. In 2024, we extended the trail to allow entry of planters of equivalent size to a wheelbarrow. The theme this year is “Nature & Biodiversity”.

**Winner - Neighbourhood Overall Winner 2024**

27

**Winner - Public vote**

30

**winner - Organisation**

25

**Joint winner - Junior**

15

**Joint winner - Junior**

16

**winner - Individual**

9

**Winner - Business**

33

**Yarn Bombing** 2024 saw the start of our yarn-bombing efforts linked to the Beautiful Scotland theme. It was so successful that we continued into the winter with hundreds of knitted/crocheted Remembrance poppies which decorated the railings in Monument Park. The community is now preparing to decorate the town with “Nature & Biodiversity” items for the summer.



**Haddington Garden Trail** was originally created in 2016 and is based on the tour we use for the Beautiful Scotland judges. It takes in the town centre and the best of our gardens, including St Mary's Pleasance and Amisfield Walled Garden. This year we have refreshed the trail with updated photographs, new drawings and incorporated more areas of the town. Drawings are from a local artist and a local care home donated money to pay for printing. We also arranged for St Mary's Pleasance Garden to be listed on <http://discoverscottishgardens.org/>

**Tours and groups** During Haddington Festival in May, Blooming Haddington, Rotary and Amisfield all held guided tours throughout the week. Neilson Park, Monument Park and St Mary's Pleasance were used as locations for various events. We organised a spring tour of the Council's plant nursery for our volunteers.



FRIDAY 30 <sup>TH</sup> MAY		
10:30	BLOOMING HADDINGTON WALKING TOUR.	MEET 10.15AM AT CORN EXCHANGE FOR A 10.30AM START.
11:00	AMSFIELD WALLED GARDEN WALKING TOUR	GARDENS WILL BE OPEN FOR VISITORS FROM 10 AM TO 4 PM
14:00 - 16:00	MADE CRAFTING HADDINGTON. A TWO HOUR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES HANDS ON "SUPERHEROES" THEMED WORKSHOP.	£5 PER CHILD. BOOK SPACES WITH MADEIN EASTLOTHIAN.NGMAIL.COM
18:30 - 19:30	SILENT DISCO 5-11 YEARS OLD. A FUN EVENING OF SONG DANCE AND GLO LIGHTS.	TICKETS: £5. LINK ON THE BACK PAGE HADDINGTON RUGBY CLUB
19:30 - MIDNIGHT	HADDINGTON PIPE BAND FAMILY CEILIDH	MAITLANDFIELD HOTEL
20:00- 21:00	SILENT DISCO 12 - 16 YEARS OLD. A FUN EVENING OF SONG DANCE AND GLO LIGHTS	TICKETS: £5. LINK ON THE BACK PAGE HADDINGTON RUGBY CLUB

**Young people** A group of nursery children helped us plant and water annuals in the ‘tattie box’ outside their premises. We co-operated with the local secondary school Knox Academy reinvigorating indoor plants in the library.

### Amisfield

65 regular volunteers take part in the five half-day sessions held each week throughout the year (weather dependent), accumulating over 6,500 man hours worked. The community education building provides a space to run training courses, hold meetings and provides an exhibition and sales area. Workshops are held throughout the year and included vegetable growing, propagation, pruning, wreath making, basket weaving and mindfulness. Amisfield held four events to welcome the community, including an Easter Egg Hunt, Plant Sale and Apple Picking/Pressing day. These events are particularly popular with families. Volunteering opportunities for pupils from local secondary schools contribute to their bronze and silver Duke of Edinburgh awards. Rural Skills students from East Lothian secondary schools took part in a range of activities helping to maintain the garden and develop their skills.

Funding was secured to employ a second member of staff. The part-time wellbeing and outreach worker has enabled Amisfield to make more connections with the local community and has extended capacity to support volunteers and visitors with additional support needs and other barriers.

In 2019, the garden received the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service, the highest honour given to volunteer groups in the UK.



Hedging skills course



Nursery gardener

**Publicity** Blooming Haddington's success is celebrated on the signs at the entrances to the town. We have a social media presence on Facebook, a dedicated email address and receive regular press coverage. St Mary's Pleasance attracts individuals, groups, schools and provides photographic opportunities for weddings and special occasions.

**Connections** A new wellbeing and outreach worker has enabled Amisfield to make more connections with the local community and has extended capacity to support volunteers and visitors with additional support needs and other barriers.



23:06 43% Haddington Facebo... ...

John Hamilton ...  
All-star contributor 11m

'Bonnie lad' Rab has been awarded the BEM in the King's Birthday honours, something that's been well deserved and not before time.

I'm sure you'll join me in congratulating him – chuffed to bits for him.

||| ⌂ <

## Funding and Support

The total cost of the baskets and planters in a typical year is approximately £8,000 per annum, financed by sponsorship from businesses and individuals. Costs for businesses are kept low at £45 per basket and £120 per planter. We applied for and received £900 from the Community Council for replacement batteries for our bowsers and to pay for the baskets to be installed and removed. We have also received £1,000 from Tesco's Blue Badge Scheme for plants for Monument Park and £150 from donation boxes in the High Street shops. A local care home has provided funding for ten hanging baskets and the costs of the garden trail leaflet. These figures exclude those for the community groups involved with Blooming Haddington.

Non-financial support from businesses includes:

Significant contribution from East Lothian Council's parks team, planting up the baskets, transporting materials around the town and other ad-hoc support;

Donations of plants from local pub Waterside Bistro for use in the planter at the Knox Tree. Lots of support and encouragement from local councillors including their involvement in judging day and nominations for volunteering awards.

**Plans for the future include:**

Another 'brain storming' session to discuss ideas for improvements in the town in the coming year(s).

Our AGM will again be held in the autumn.

Ongoing initiatives to expand and develop our volunteer base.

Refreshing the lavenders in Lady Kitty's garden.

Planting a new cherry tree at the entrance to the golf club to replace one destroyed by a storm.

Friends of the River Tyne will continue to focus on conservation of habitat, diversity and flood management.

The annual summer river clean-up is scheduled for 12 July.

Amisfield is open as part of Scotland's Gardens Scheme in August.

Continued development of the Curling Pond with Rotary.



**Volunteers needed  
this Saturday**

Assemble here 10am



## LATEST NEWS

Public consultation seeking views to inform the East Lothian Open Space Strategy 2025

