



ADD YOUR GROUP LOGO HERE – and website address if applicable

PRESS RELEASE

Embargo: 12 noon, Friday 10 April 2015

***Name of Group* joins new 2015–2017
Britain in Bloom with the RHS Campaign
Group name organises *planting/ seed sowing event* at
(*time*) on (*date*) at (*venue*) to mark the launch of
Greener Streets: Better Lives**

A new Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Britain in Bloom campaign, **Greener Streets: Better Lives**¹, will aim to transform 6,000 unloved grey spaces over the next three years into planted-up, living, beautiful places for people to enjoy and to benefit the environment.

As the campaign begins, (*name of group*) will be part of a 300,000-strong army of Britain in Bloom volunteers planting millions of trees, perennials, shrubs and hedges across the UK.

Include the detail of your specific plans here – e.g. Name of group will lead a 100-strong group of volunteers in bringing a splash of vibrant colour to an area near the high street. Currently neglected and, in recent months, a dumping ground for all sorts of litter and a regular victim of fly-tipping, the area will be revitalised by volunteers who will clear it of weeds, litter, and rubble, before turning the soil ready for planting with nasturtiums.

*Add a quote here from the group leader or representative – e.g. “We are really looking forward to tackling this increasingly unpleasant piece of land and bringing a little bit more beauty to the centre of town. Once it’s transformed we’re hoping that it’ll become a very pleasant place for people to come and take a break while they’re visiting town. Everybody is welcome to help us on (*date*) - no experience necessary. And if it helps, there’ll be plenty of tea, coffee and cake on offer!”*

This is a useful place to add a supportive quote from a local community representative, MP, mayor or local councillor.

The RHS Britain in Bloom **Greener Streets: Better Lives** campaign forms part of a wider RHS call to action to get the nation **Greening Grey Britain**², to address the creeping loss of green spaces across the nation’s towns, cities and villages³. The RHS is giving communities 250,000 nasturtium seeds to kick start the campaign.

In 2015, parks face a crippling lack of proper funding and gardens continue to lose out to paving for cars. This trend for grey replacing green degrades the living environment, increasing flood risk and reducing air quality. It also has dire consequences for wildlife and has been linked to growing mental and physical health problems.

Speaking about how people can get involved, RHS Ambassador and Chelsea Flower Show Gold medal winner, **Adam Frost**, said: “Projects can range from planting along public walls,

and revitalising bald roundabouts or neglected verges with nasturtium seeds, to using planters and raised beds to brighten up a concrete corner, or creating a community garden with friends. While the proposition is simple, the possibilities are huge.”

Talking about why the campaign matters, newly appointed RHS Ambassador **Chris Beardshaw** said: “The increasing greyness across the UK should concern us all, we know the detrimental effect it can cause for our wildlife, the quality of the air we breathe and the increased risks of flooding as drainage routes disappear. To make a stand against concrete sprawl, RHS Bloom volunteers will transform unloved and unspectacular parts of their neighbourhood into something beautiful and make more public space greener.”

RHS Director General Sue Biggs said: “Greener Streets: Better Lives is a public challenge to create new colourful havens for wildlife and fight the developing concrete jungle in a beautiful way. Even a solitary pot of bee-friendly chives on an outside ledge can create feelings of connection to the environment, and just sprinkling a packet of forget-me-not seeds on a patch of brown earth can be rewarding.

“The Greener Streets: Better Lives community campaign forms part of an RHS call to action for the nation to get Greening Grey Britain. Anyone can get involved by creating a windowbox, pulling up a paving stone and planting up the space, having potted plants in a front garden or transforming a grey community area. Greening Grey Britain can be as big or small as you like, but we can all make a difference, one plant at a time.”

To register for **Greener Streets: Better Lives**, download ideas and resources and apply for free nasturtium seeds, community gardening groups should visit rhs.org.uk/GreenerStreetsBetterLives or telephone 020 7821 3122.

- ENDS -

Issued by (*group name*). For further information and images, please contact (*name here*) on (*number, mobile number, email address*).

Notes to Editors

¹Greener Streets: Better Lives participants are encouraged to get started during National Gardening Week, 13–19 April 2015. The RHS website is full of practical information and tips to help people get started. The RHS is also offering a free packet of nasturtium seeds to every community group that registers to take part. Once people have taken part they can share their pictures at facebook.com/rhscommunitygardening and spread the word further on Twitter by using #GreenerStreetsBetterLives

²Greening Grey Britain is the overarching RHS call to action asking the nation to transform hard, cold grey areas into beautiful places, to enrich lives and benefit the environment. Throughout 2015, initiatives across RHS Britain in Bloom, RHS Flower Shows, Gardens and shops, and RHS Scientists will highlight the detrimental impact of paving over Britain and demonstrate how anyone and everyone can plant up an area of hard landscaping, however small or large, to bring about improvements ranging from better health and wellbeing and providing food for bees and butterflies, to reducing flood risks and making Britain more beautiful.

3 About the RHS

The Royal Horticultural Society was founded in 1804 by Sir Joseph Banks and John Wedgwood for the encouragement and improvement of the science, art and practice of horticulture. We held our first flower shows in 1820, were granted a Royal Charter in 1861 and acquired RHS Garden Wisley, the first of our gardens, in 1903. From our first meetings in a small room off London’s Piccadilly, we have grown to become the world’s largest gardening charity.

Today the RHS is committed to providing a voice for all gardeners. We are driven by a simple love of plants and a belief that gardeners make the world a better place. 211 years on we continue to safeguard and advance the science, art and practice of horticulture, creating displays that inspire

people to garden. In all aspects of our work we help gardeners develop by sharing our knowledge of plants, gardens and the environment.

RHS membership is for anyone with an interest in gardening. Support the RHS and secure a healthy future for gardening. For more information call: 0845 130 4646, or visit www.rhs.org.uk/join

4. Britain in Bloom with the RHS

- UK's biggest community gardening campaign with up to 300,000 passionate local volunteers who work year-round to keep our neighbourhoods and streets green, clean and thriving
- Bloom started by the British Tourist Authority as a way to attract visitors to the UK through floral displays. In 2001, the RHS took over as organisers & have developed the campaign to include greater focus on community participation & environmental responsibility
- In 2006, the RHS launched a new grass roots level for Bloom – It's Your Neighbourhood (IYN) is aimed at small volunteer groups (e.g. youth groups; 'Friends of' groups etc.) and has grown from 342 to nearly 2,000 groups
- Since 1964, Bloom's evolved from what many saw as a rural hanging basket competition to a major socio / environmental campaign that's improving villages, towns and cities across UK

RHS Registered Charity No. 222879/SC038262