

Edinburgh's in the Britain in Bloom finals!

Edinburgh to Represent Scotland in the RHS Britain in Bloom Finals 2013

Judging will take place during July and August

Edinburgh has been selected from more than 1,000 entrants to take part in the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Britain in Bloom UK Finals 2013, the country's biggest voluntary campaign which involves more than 300,000 people. Edinburgh is one of 80 finalist and is in the Large City category.

Scotland nominated Edinburgh to the UK stage of the competition following regional and national judging last year. Edinburgh was selected for outstanding commitment to environmental responsibility, community participation and gardening achievement.

In July / August this year, Edinburgh's green-fingered volunteers will be showing off their commitment to a cleaner, greener Britain, by taking the Britain in Bloom judges on a tour of local projects and initiatives in a hope of being awarded Gold and being named category winner at the annual award ceremony, this year being held in Cleethorpes in October.

Andrea Van Sittart, Head of Regional Development, said:- "Thanks to the legacy of London 2012, the power of volunteering has never been more widely recognised or appreciated. Britain in Bloom saw a 30% uplift in sign-ups over the past year and this year, we have a record number of finalists. It seems more people are prepared to donate time and energy to projects like this, because they're aware that

improving their neighbourhoods can change lives and boost people's confidence, health and happiness. The Britain in Bloom campaign is making a difference, and people want to be a part of that."

"On behalf of the RHS, I'd like to wish every volunteer from Edinburgh the very best of luck in this year's UK Finals and look forward to celebrating with you all in October."

The kind of projects undertaken by Britain in Bloom volunteers, which judges will be assessing, include maintenance of parks and communal gardens, the management of natural spaces such as wildflower meadows and conservation areas, community initiatives to promote recycling and environmental awareness, and projects to involve local schools and residents.

Started in 1964 by the British Tourist Board as a way of marketing the country through floral displays, today Britain in Bloom is a campaign that brings communities together to enhance the look, feel and pride of a place, through gardening and environmental projects. Although the campaign runs all year round, the run-up to the judges' tour is a time when communities throughout the UK unite and redouble their efforts.

For more information on RHS Britain in Bloom and to download a copy of *Britain in Bloom: transforming local communities* visit www.rhs.org.uk/communities