



16th June 2025

Winnersh Garden Centre helps Woodley school children bloom in gardening competition

Young gardeners from Woodley's primary schools came together last week for the annual Year 1 School Tray Garden Competition, proudly supported by Winnersh Garden Centre. This year's event had a "Kindness" theme, which inspired budding horticulturists from Highwood, Rivermead, and Beechwood Primary School to get creative and work as a team to make a themed garden that represented friendship and working together.

Organised by Jackie Andrews as part of the Woodley Cluster Project and Amrit Virdee from Waingels College, and with plants kindly donated by Winnersh Garden Centre, the competition saw pupils from different schools pairing up in teams of four to design and build their tray gardens in an event hosted by Waingels. The focus was on imagination and teamwork, with each group putting their own spin on the "Kindness" element.

The children's trays featured fantastic storytelling and playful additions like Stickman figures, bridges, treehouses, and swings, adding fun and imagination to their miniature gardens. Ponds, shell areas, and gravel paths brought the soil and connected the spaces, showcasing movement and fun, echoing the joy of outdoor play.

Judges **Cassie King, PR Officer from British Garden Centres**, who own the Winnersh store, **Woodley Town Mayor Cllr David Bragg, and Brenda Milton from Woodley Flower Club** had the tough job of picking the winners, looking for originality, storytelling and how well the children worked together. Parents were invited to join the presentation and applaud the young gardeners at a special awards ceremony led by Louise Quinell, Head of Beechwood Primary School.

The results were:

- 1st Place: "The Happy Garden" (Beechwood and Rivermead)
- 2nd Place: "The Features Garden" (Beechwood and Highwood)
- Teamwork Award: "The Beautiful Adventure Park Garden" (Beechwood and Rivermead)

Every child who took part went home with a certificate packet of seeds to sow at home, courtesy of British Garden Centres, to help them keep growing their love of gardening. The top three teams also took home plants to grow in their own outdoor spaces. All of the tray gardens went on to be displayed at the Woodley Carnival, alongside entries from the experienced members of the Woodley Flower Club.



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Cllr David Bragg, Woodley Town Mayor, was impressed with the children's efforts, commenting: "It was a real pleasure to see the incredible creativity and teamwork from our young gardeners. Each tray garden told a unique story of kindness and friendship, which made judging both a joy and a real challenge. The passion and imagination displayed by Highwood, Rivermead, and Beechwood children were truly inspiring."

Cassie King, PR Officer at British Garden Centres, said, "It is always such a joy to watch the children's ideas take shape in their tray gardens. Their creativity shone through in every detail, and it's lovely seeing how much fun they had working together, sharing ideas, and getting their hands dirty. I hope these children will carry that enthusiasm with them, whether it's in their own gardens at home or in future projects at school."

Jackie Andrews of the Woodley Cluster Project said, "The children did so well again this year, creating really beautiful gardens. They all enjoyed thinking about what they do in their gardens and how you can use gardens to help you feel happy. Everyone worked with enthusiasm, and the atmosphere for the whole day was one of joy! I would like to thank everyone involved in the day – our judges, Waingels College for hosting the day and running the workshops, the Year 1 teachers for making the arrangements so that their pupils could take part and Winnersh Garden Centre for donating all the plants, compost and prizes, without which we simply would not be able to run this project."

ENDS:

WORD COUNT: 608

Notes to Editors: British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group, with 73 centres around the country. The group is owned and led by the Stubbs family, who also own and operate Woodthorpe Leisure Park in Lincolnshire.

BGC was launched in 1990 with the opening of Woodthorpe Garden Centre, funded by brothers Charles and Robert Stubbs. Since 2018, it has expanded rapidly with the acquisition of 50 garden centres, allowing it to grow from its heartland to the business it is now, with 73 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham. The group has a team of 2,700 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, three growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres and Woodthorpe Leisure Park and Woody's Restaurant & Bar.

Social Media

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