



# Media Release

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pr1040.Entente Florale Results.doc

DATE: 14 September 2004

photo opportunity – see below

## DOUBLE GOLD IN EUROPE IN BLOOM

HARROGATE and Darley have pulled off their floral double act by both taking **GOLD** in this year’s prestigious Entente Florale (Europe in Bloom).

Harrogate’s Mayor joined members of the council’s parks team and representatives from Harrogate and Darley In Bloom Committees at the awards Ceremony in Aix-les-Bains on Friday, 10 September to hear they had headed off entries from 10 European countries to bring home this ‘floral golden crown’.

It is a sweet smell of success for these two North Yorkshire towns as it is the first time in the competition’s history that two entries have come from one district. And with both taking gold, it is going to be a hard act for others to follow.

It is twenty-seven years since Harrogate took the title in 1977 at the first ever Entente Florale competition and Councillor Pat Jones, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Amenity Services, is confident that more wins will follow.

She said: “We thought we were doing well as a district when we had three entries in the National in Bloom competition. No one had achieved that before. But when Harrogate and Darley, in another first, were chosen to represent the country in the European competition we already knew we were winners.

“This is such a tremendous result. A lot of people have worked very hard to restore the district to the top of the floral tree. In the past four years, we have had three first places in the Britain in Bloom, but it doesn’t get any better than a double gold in the European competition. I think the benefits to the district will be felt for a very long time to come.”

And if two gold medals wasn’t enough, Harrogate’s horticultural charity Horticap made it a hat-trick by being awarded the Lucija Cikes special award for ‘Therapy through Horticulture’. The European judges nominated Horticap, based at Blue Coat Wood Nursery, during their tour of the town in July. The judges were particularly impressed with what they saw at Horticap, whose aims are to provide training in horticultural methods, allied crafts, rural skills and marketing of produce for people with a learning disability. ENDS

**What the judges said:**

**more...**

Harrogate is truly a colourful and clean city. We commend the town's integrated policies. It is green by design and clean by hard work and awareness. The judges unhesitatingly and unanimously award the town a gold medal.

Darley is aware of its location in the beautiful Yorkshire dales. They have pursued a sensitive and thoughtful enhancement of houses and gardens. The judges have no hesitation in awarding a gold medal.

**PHOTO OPPORTUNITY : Members of Harrogate and Darley in Bloom and Harrogate Borough Council will be showing off their trophies on Wednesday, 15 September at 12.30 pm on Montpellier Hill, opposite Bettys Tea Rooms.**

**NOTE TO EDITORS:** Entente Florale is a prestigious European competition similar to Britain in Bloom. Each country puts forward two representatives, one for the Town category (population 10,001 and upward) and one for the village category (population up to 10,000). The Jury then visits the town/village during July and early August and an assessment is made. The overall aim of the competition is the improvement of the quality of life for local urban and village communities.

The other participating countries were Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands and Slovenia, each of which nominates one of the judges who will visit Harrogate and Darley this summer. The competition is organised by the "Association Européenne du Fleurissement et du Paysage" (AEFP.) and was founded 27 years ago, initially between Great Britain and France.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** Councillor Pat Jones is available for comment on 01423 872466. More technical information is available from Mr Patrick Kilburn, Head of Parks and Open Spaces on 01423 556704 or Sue Wood, Community Liaison Officer on 01423 556757. More information on Entente Florale, please contact the British judge Maurice Baren on 01535 643100.