



National  
Trust

# Festival of Blossom Partner Pack and Toolkit

Image: Relaxing in hammocks during the  
Festival of Blossom, Quarry Bank Cheshire ©  
National Trust/Annapurna Mellor

# What is the Festival of Blossom?

Festival of Blossom is a shared national celebration of nature, taking place from March to May each year.

Inspired by blossom, a wealth of creative, cultural and nature friendly events take place nationwide in places where people live, work and play. Activities bring people together, celebrating the beauty of nature and the hope of spring after winter and all the benefits this brings to individual and collective health, well-being and sense of community.

Festival of Blossom relies on a strong, supportive network that includes a diverse range of local partners, making the festival a meaningful part of their community's cultural landscape. We would love for you to be involved!



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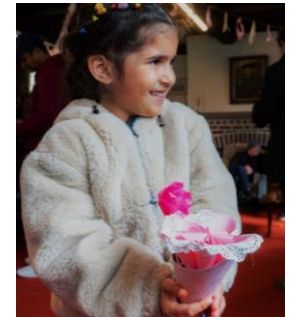
Festival of Blossom provides an opportunity for people to connect with nature and each other in a joyful and reflective celebration each spring.

# Who is this toolkit for?

We would love for you to join with the National Trust to celebrate blossom this spring.

This toolkit is for any organisation who would like to be part of Festival of Blossom and organise an activity, event or programme in 2025.

Over the following pages you will find advice and ideas for hosting events, engaging your community and helping people connect to nature wherever they are.



# Why take part in Festival of Blossom?



Festival of Blossom is about:

## **Bringing people and communities together**

Whether it's through guided nature walks, or outdoor yoga sessions, participants connect not only with nature but also with each other.

## **Celebrating cultural diversity**

Music, visual arts, dance, performance or storytelling provides a platform for individuals from diverse backgrounds to share their stories, traditions, and perspectives.

## **Building a creative and innovative community**

Activities from urban singing events to community orchard celebrations, require collective effort, local talent, passion, creativity and new ideas.

## **Building nature activism**

The impact of a connection to nature and a stronger bond with local green space on both individuals and society is profound. This heightened awareness can lead to support for local conservation efforts.

## **By taking part, you can benefit from:**

- Free marketing support
- Reaching new audiences and people
- Increased community support for your work
- A toolkit of resources and inspiration for nature engagement
- Being part of a national springtime moment supported by the National Trust & a peer support network

# What is blossom?

'Blossom' simply means flowers on a tree – typically conspicuous flowers in springtime that will develop into nuts, seeds or berries later in the autumn.

## Why is blossom important?

Blossom trees support insects from February, when there is little else for them to feed on. Insects support birds, bats and other mammals. Blossom trees provide food and habitat for wildlife in winter months as well as providing fruit and nuts to humans.

Trees absorb harmful pollution and sequester carbon. Trees also emit gasses that have proven to reduce stress levels in people. Time in nature often improves our mental wellbeing.

Blossom is often used culturally in many different ways from the culinary to the medicinal. Consequently, blossom may be important to people for many reasons. Delighting in the opportunity to really understand what blossom means to people is a big part of Festival of Blossom.

# Pretty.

# Powerful.

**Blossom isn't just beautiful. It's also a powerhouse for nature, crucial for reversing the decline of wildlife.**

- The flowers provide essential nectar and pollen to insects in spring when other food sources are scarce. They're especially important for bees, such as the buff-tailed and white-tailed bumblebees, that are out early in the year.
- Birds, such as blackcaps, feed on the insects that are attracted to the blossom.
- The autumn fruit is eaten by flocks of migrating birds like redwings and fieldfares.
- The trunks and branches are ideal homes for rare species such as the noble chafer beetle.

**Some types of blossom tree also have a close relationship with particular species that feeds on its flowers and leaves, such as ...**



**Crab apples** and pale tussock moth caterpillars



**Cherry trees** and the dark-edged bee-fly



**Hawthorn** and the green hairstreak butterfly

# Inspiration for events and activities

Any activity, large or small, that brings people and blossom together to celebrate nature can be part of Festival of Blossom. You could start small one year and build on it the next. There's no one size fits all.

Over the next few pages read some case studies of the varieties of activity that has happened in previous Festival of Blossom celebrations.

Case study pages are tagged so you can quickly see if they might be relevant to your plans.

Bringing people together

Getting creative

Working in partnership

Celebrating young people

Image: Festival of Blossom at Brindley Place, Birmingham © Shaun Fellow/Shinepix



## Bringing people together



Devon

An organic farm in Devon opened the 'doors' to their orchard to celebrate blossom. Children made bee masks, engaging in pollinators and blossom.

Similar events elsewhere included bioblitzes, games, food stalls with local honey and orchard products, talks, tours and workshops.



Coventry

In Coventry, a Blossom Takeover was hosted at a city centre community orchard/blossom garden. Local arts forums, historic buildings trusts and charities were involved.

The events included music, family activities, food, picnics, yoga and crafts.



Newcastle

Across local parks around the city of Newcastle, blossom arts and crafts activities were put on welcoming all, but especially children and any small siblings they might need to care for. The programme aimed to celebrate spring where people lived in an accessible way to reduce the barriers residents met to be able to safely use and be proud of their local green spaces.

## Getting creative



Telford

Telford Supports Refugees worked with artist, writer and performer Francesca Millican-Salter to celebrate the blossom season. A group of refugees met regularly to walk, talk and create pieces of art and writing expressing both the joy and sorrow of spring in a different place and explore barriers to accessing nature. Together a final, powerful podcast was created.



Plymouth

In Plymouth, the City Council held free, creative workshops and performances. Local organisations offered poetry, marine engagement, and nature-based workshops. A tree nursery was created. Across the Tamar Valley the railway line got involved with blossom activities and celebrations near stations allowing anyone using public transport to get involved.



Dorset

An open access local green space with blossom trees, popular with dog walkers in Dorset hosted pods where people could download a blossom inspired music playlist by scanning a QR code.

## Working in partnership



Manchester

In Manchester, a print and digital blossom 'Bloomtown' map was developed showing places to experience the joy of spring blossom in the city centre involving several different partners (such as Manchester City Council Parks and Manchester University). A series of fun, free, blossom themed activities ran at Manchester Castlefield Viaduct and NOMA including hands on crafts, performances and guided walks.



Birmingham

We Foragers Unquiet is an Arts Council England funded programme. Children and young people from schools across Birmingham attended creative workshops as well as people from the Dolphin Women's Centre and groups of Ukrainian families through Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Service. Brockhampton's orchard hosted these groups.



Leeds

In Leeds City, a partnership between Love Leeds Parks, a nonprofit organisation and the National Trust, planted several new cherry blossom trees in the city centre Burley Park alongside a programme of live music, poetry and food.

“ This project reached a huge audience, promoting the role community parks play in connecting residents to nature. ”

**CEO Love Leeds Parks**

## Celebrating young people



Belfast

EastSide Partnerships worked with groups of young people in Inner East Belfast to explore their local, urban glen and greenway through the blossoming trees and signs of spring. Groups explored their thoughts on nature and place, the resilience of trees blossoming after winter and the connection to Irish folklore. They showcased their poems and music in a cultural centre where they lived, celebrating both nature and the past and present community of East Belfast through song and word.



Swindon

In Swindon the parish council hosted a week of blossom events for young people including activities under blossom trees connected to the local libraries, activities at a tiny forest near a new housing development, a performance of the children's Goan Choir, a paint-by-numbers blossom mural on an abandoned substation, bug hotel building with school children and the Swindon Circus and Outdoor Art Project after school performances in local parks.



Manchester

In Manchester, Young Identity (who offer free creative writing workshops to young people across the city) used blossom and nature in springtime as a prompt for creative expression. A ticketed evening performance of the group's poetry was put on at the Castlefield Viaduct and filmed with local and national poets attending to hear the voices of young people.

# How could you take part?

We asked current partners involved in Festival of Blossom what they loved doing last year...

## Foodie themes

Organise a blossom inspired food sharing moment in a local park, community orchard, street or the garden of a community hub or cultural meeting space.

Host a tea party with blossom tea flavourings.

## Family fun


Welcome families to your local blossom hotspot for storytelling, facepainting, music, picnics, tree planting, nature walks and talks, sensory trails, singing and crafts.

## Health, wellbeing and connection to nature

Offer yoga, meditation, Qi Gong, Blossom Bathing or Tai Chi under blossom trees near where people live.

## Bringing people together through creativity

Invite people to participate in a pop up, outdoor, community choir performance, poetry slam or create an artwork together that captures what blossom, nature and spring mean to people.



Are you a community orchard looking to host a blossom event? **The Orchard Network** can offer additional information and support and add your activities to events listings for Orchard Blossom Day

## Hidden in plain sight

Galleries and museums might have blossom woven into objects and works of art. Could you create an unusual trail? Botanic gardens and glass houses of citrus often have blossoms from around the world. Could you explore collections in a different way using this nature moment this spring?

# Foodie themes

Sharing food and recipes brings people across community together to celebrate cultural traditions and diversity. We asked some of our partners to share their favourite blossom recipes.

## Pickled Magnolia blossoms

Magnolias have been part of Chinese cooking since ancient times. Pickled magnolia go well with Sushi:

Heat vinegar in a pan with sugar, salt until dissolved. Leave to cool. Pick magnolia buds (only where there is abundance on a tree!). Remove the hairy bit at the bottom of the flower. Pull off each individual petal from the bud. Pack a sterilised jar full of petals and pour over your vinegar. Try and pack your flowers so that they stay below the vinegar line, fully submerged. Seal the jar and leave for a week before eating the pickled petals.

Top tip: Different magnolias taste slightly different to each other so have a bite of a petal to choose which one you would like to use.

## Crystallised cherry blossoms or edible flowers

Hanami is a national festival in Japan, celebrating flowering cherry trees.

Yoshino cherry *Prunus x yedoensis* has edible blossoms. **Most cherry trees do not have edible flowers!**

If you can't find edible blossoms, use edible spring flowers like primroses and violas that have only just opened. They will be least likely to discolour.

Paint egg white over your edible flowers or aquafaba (vegan) and dust with caster sugar. Leave to dry on some baking parchment for an hour or so and use.

## Elderflower blossom honey

Blossom honeys have always been produced in North Africa. Used with dried fruit and cheese or in cakes and stirred into tea.

Pick elderflowers off their stems, you want to make sure you only have flowers that are dry.

Put some of the flowers into the bottom of a jam jar (sterilised) and pour honey over the top. If you see air bubbles give a stir to release them. Once you have filled the jar as much as you like you can seal and leave for three weeks. Strain out the flowers and the honey will be infused with the scent of blossom!

# Get creative with Blossomise

In 2024 as part of a national creative commission Poet Laureate Simon Armitage and his band LYR launched poetry and music to celebrate the arrival of spring. The National Trust commissioned them to collaborate with lots of people including choirs and young filmmakers to create a collection of poetry and music, called *Blossomise*.

Read one of the poems [here](#) and watch [this video](#) to hear the artists describe their vision for the project.

Creativity is an amazing way in for people of all ages and backgrounds to explore nature.

At the end of this pack, you can sign up to access Simon and LYR's collection of blossom inspired poems, songs, vocal scores and music videos in the Toolkit Hub to use in developing festival activities or as creative inspiration.



Poetry is resonating more and more with younger people, and people from a range of backgrounds. Particularly when it strays into musical territory and spoken word.

**Simon Armitage,  
Poet Laureate**



# What could you create inspired by Blossomise?

We asked partners involved in the festival in 2024 what they did with the Blossomise creative materials...



Image: two people listening to music in headphones under pink blossom trees © National Trust/James Dobson

## **Dance**

Music and dance are powerful ways to connect with people from different cultural backgrounds.

## **Perform**

Make space for local poets and spoken word artists to perform among the blossom or run a poetry “slam” event.

## **Write haikus**

Ask people to write their own haiku inspired by Blossom short poem using a pattern of three lines comprised of 5,7,5 syllables or sounds

## **Run workshops**

Invite a local poet or creative facilitator to run poetry writing workshops for your community. Use the Blossomise poems as inspiration.

## **Sing**

Invite local choirs to perform the blossom songs, singing in the spring, using the vocal scores or to perform other blossom-inspired music.

## **Make**

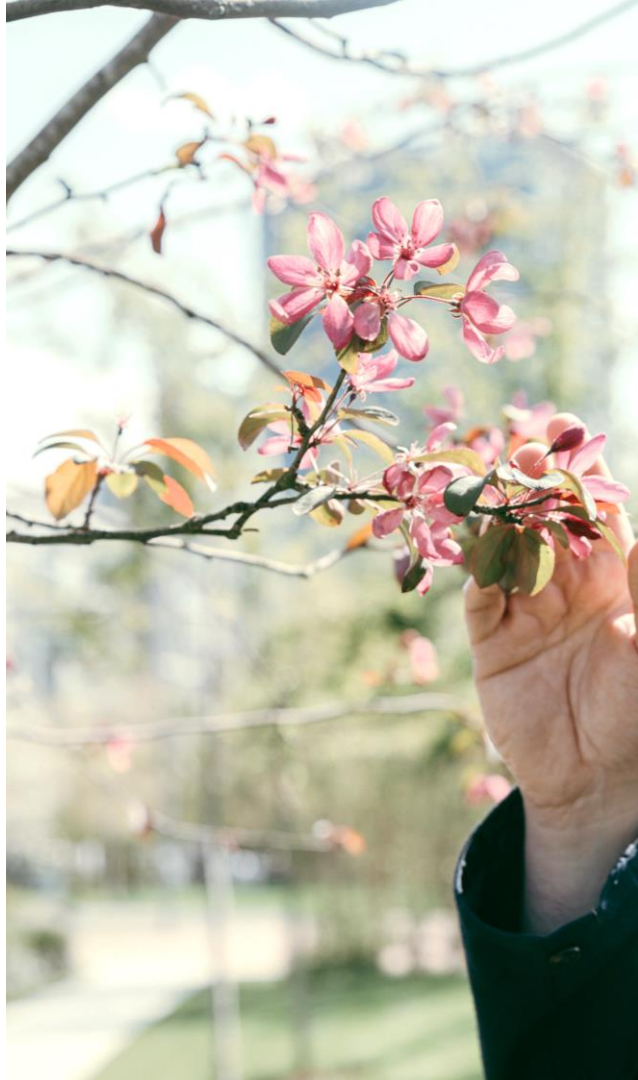
Present the poems or songs and create an immersive, blossom space e.g. an audio or film installation in a building. Invite people to get creative or enjoy mindful moments in the space.

“ Art is mimetic of nature, for nature is beauty. Trees, and particularly our blossom trees, are beautiful. The effect of this on people’s wellbeing, while hard to quantify, cannot possibly be understated.

Blossom trees in spring bring life, energy, places to sit and reflect, objects to watch sway in wind. They can ground us and remind us of the world beyond our immediate surroundings and take us out of ourselves when we need time away from the problems of our lives.

One of the great benefits of trees is they make ourselves, and correspondingly our problems, seem small.

**Tom Shuttleworth, Trees and Woodland  
Advisor, National Trust**”



# Marketing and Communications

## Things to think about:

How might blossom form part of a broader programme or activity you're planning?

How could your blossom activities be woven into your existing comms to enhance what you're planning?

How can you connect with people to reach new and more diverse audiences and communities with limited access to green space?

To support you to get involved with Festival of Blossom this year, at the end of this toolkit you'll find a link to sign up to the Toolkit Hub where you can find free marketing resources.

This can help you work with people to build your event or activity.

Love  
Leeds  
Parks



Share the joy  
of blossom

Take a moment to share your photos  
of blossom with #BlossomWatch

*This community blossom space has been brought to Burley Park to help  
more people to feel the joy of nature.*

*Scan the QR code to find out more.*

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Love Leeds Parks is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales with the charity number 1093208.





# Festival of Blossom Toolkit Hub

To accompany the Toolkit, there is a Hub of resources to support you in developing events and activity.

Some of the resources are available with Welsh translations.

Below is a summary of resources you will be able to access:



	Activities
	Creative Materials - Blossomise
	Marketing and Communications
	Planning and Evaluation

## Activities

Origami activity

Activity pack

## Creative Materials - Blossomise

Written poems and haikus

Audio recordings of poems

Songs

Music recordings without lyrics

Vocal scores and lyric sheets

Music videos

Documentary film

## Marketing and Communications

Guidance

Templates and editable posters

Logo Lockup guide

## Planning and Evaluation

Checklists

# Sign up to the Festival of Blossom Toolkit Hub

To access the Festival of Blossom hub and a range of resources to help you deliver an event you are required to [complete the sign up.](#)



[Sign up](#)

# Spring is coming!

The festival runs between March and May. However, with a changing climate the blossom season is arriving at different times across the country. You are invited to celebrate Festival of Blossom whenever works best for your community.

March

April

May

Your Festival of Blossom programmes, activities and events

Blossom celebrations  
launch 20 March



Plum

When  
different  
blossom  
blooms



Blackthorn



Cherry



Pear



Apple



Hawthorn



Rowan

# Spring 2025 calendar

Lots of other worldwide or national moments take place through spring. You could tie in blossom activities with other community celebrations. A few are listed below:

## March

**Holi** – 13 – 14 March

**World Poetry Day** – 21 March

**Spring Equinox** – 20 March

**International Day of Happiness** – 20 March

**National Tree Week** – 3 – 10 March

**International Scribble Day** – 27 March

**Eid al-Fitr** – 30 – 31 March

## April

**Spring in Your Step Campaign** – Through April

**Orchard Blossom Day** – Can be celebrated anytime between April and May

**Earth Day** – 22 April

**Stop Food Waste Day** – 24 April

## May

**National Walking Month**

**No Mow May**

**National Hedgerow Week** – 5 – 11 May

**Urban Tree Festival** – 10 – 18 May

**Mental Health Awareness Week** – 12 – 18 May

**Endangered species day** – 16 May (fruit trees can host critically endangered species)

**World Bee Day** – 20 May

**World Meditation Day** – 21 May

**National Children's Gardening Week** – From 24 May

Image: Castlefield Viaduct,  
Manchester © National Trust/Paul  
Harris

If you have a suggestion, question,  
would like more information or  
require this information in an  
alternative format, please email  
[blossom@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:blossom@nationaltrust.org.uk)

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