

**A COMMUNITY campaign to make Loughborough bloom is being backed by Charnwood Borough Council.**

Weekly newspaper The Loughborough Echo launched the initiative by entering the town into next year's Britain in Bloom contest - and called on community groups and organisations to help bring flower power to the area.

The idea has received widespread support and Council officers are working alongside the Echo's editor, Andy Rush, Leicestershire County Council and other key partners to help make the project blossom.

Loughborough was the winner of the Small City Award in the 2003 East Midlands in Bloom competition but has not entered the contest since then.

Mr Rush said community support was key to making the idea flourish.

He added: "On a personal front, the goodwill which has greeted the In Bloom campaign has been quite moving.

"All of those approached have been enthusiastic and it has generated a real community spirit in the town.

"It is no longer the Echo's idea - it has become a partnership.

"The support given, and continues to be given, by both the Borough and County councils has been fantastic.

"Everybody wants Loughborough to



# Bloomin' marvellous



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be a brighter place and with that amount of goodwill, I firmly believe it will happen."

Cllr Peter Lewis, Charnwood's Cabinet member for Leisure, praised the Echo for its forward thinking idea.

He said: "The initiative that the Loughborough Echo

took, comes at just the right moment.

"In recent months, I've been looking for ways in which much of our work with open spaces, parks, allotments, can be carried out in partnerships with local people - ways in which they can take ownership of their own space.

"Borough Officers must be there to advise, to support, to encourage. But our main task

seems to me to facilitate.

"This is true community politics. And what the Editor, Andy Rush, did was to completely enhance this philosophy with a magnificent project which over-arches all.

"How can we make our town, the largest in the County, a place where we can enjoy the richness and diversity Nature offers, whether it be in flowers, in shrubs, in bushes or in trees? And let's not forget the wildlife these spaces also encourage.

"How can we enhance our public spaces through the horticultural and artistic skills of people who see this as offering them a chance to make Loughborough special and distinctive?"

"This imaginative initiative is designed to involve all of us, young, old, schools, colleges and university, our business community, international companies, local Government professionals, elected Members from Borough and County, and just simply those hundreds of citizens who love planting and seeing their work blossom and colour our streets.

"To the Loughborough Echo and its staff, the countless people who have come forward with ideas and contributions, colleagues on Charnwood Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council, I say a very sincere thank you.

"We've an epic team who can make a colossal difference."

Judging for the 2009 competition takes place next July.

To find out how to get involved, call (01509) 634 504 or 635 812 or log on to [www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/loughboroughinbloom](http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/loughboroughinbloom)

Alternatively, visit the Loughborough Echo's website - [www.loughboroughecho.net](http://www.loughboroughecho.net)