

WELCOME TO THE **40TH ANNIVERSARY**

OF THE VALE OF EVESHAM BLOSSOM TRAIL!









2023 marks the 40th year of the Blossom Trail and so much has changed since 1983, with additional orchards having been planted (and more are planned to celebrate the 40th anniversary). The route has been extended many times to incorporate not only the market towns of Pershore and Evesham, the Cotswold village of Broadway but many other delightfully picturesque villages and hamlets in the area.

The Vale of Evesham has been famous for its fruit and vegetable growing since medieval times and is known to be some of the most productive horticultural land in the country. For a few weeks between mid-March and mid-May the roadsides along the 55-mile AA signposted Blossom Trail route are ablaze with colour.

The Spring Blossom Trail can be enjoyed in many ways – as an adventure in your own time or as a funfilled organised day out. To enhance your experience, this guide focuses on the horticultural highlights the area has to offer including award – winning parks, garden centres, nurseries and farm shops (many with cafés) with some embracing the 40th anniversary celebrations by producing "blossom themed" food and drink.

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ABOUT THE **BLOSSOM TRAIL**

For four decades the Vale of Evesham Blossom Trail has been recognised as one of the top 'wonders of spring' and can be experienced on foot, by bike, car or coach.

The term blossom is given to a cluster of flowers that bloom on any plant – this can include magnolia, hawthorn, blackthorn and ornamental cherry.

Blossom trees, however, tend to be associated with the fruiting (Prunus genus) varieties – these include cherries, plums, apples, pears, peaches and crabapples.

The blossom usually appears between mid-March and mid-May with plum and apple blossom being the most common sight along the Blossom Trail. The white plum and damson blossom are the first to spring in this natural work of art, with the white pear and the pink apple blossom following later depending on the weather.





Blossom provides pollen to pollinators such as bees who initiate the cross pollination necessary for the trees to reproduce by producing fruit. The colour of the blossom that can be seen throughout the Vale of Evesham range from the delicate white of pear, plum, orange, some cherry and most almonds; to the variable degrees of pink from apple, peach and cherry.



HISTORY OF THE BLOSSOM TRAIL



The 8-mile Vale of Evesham Blossom Trail was created with its main aim being to capitalise on the natural beauty and horticultural fame of the Vale of Evesham.



Sadly, the Blossom Trail and the rest of the country was affected by the disastrous outbreak of Foot and Mouth causing the launch of the 40-mile route to be postponed.



However, during the late 1980s and early 90s it became apparent the traditional orchards were diminishing.



The new route was promoted and continued to attract thousands of visitors.



To retain the viability of the Trail, an extensive survey was carried out to assess the opportunities available to extend it to 20 miles long. This allowed us to not only include new orchards but also to include the town of Evesham and the delightful villages in the Vale.



To celebrate its Silver Jubilee, the Blossom Trail was extended once again to 55 miles – this time to include apple orchards and the charming village of Broadway.



Another survey was undertaken and this time it was decided to extend the route further to 40 miles to include Pershore and the surrounding area. This provided visitors greater access than ever before to experience more of what the area has to offer.



Today the Blossom Trail takes in the towns of Evesham, Pershore and many villages including Broadway and the Lenches. With many 'branch offs' along the trail incorporating Broadway Tower and Croome there is now something for everyone.



THE BLOSSOM

APPLE

The blossom of apple is usually tinged with pink and an apple orchard in May is surely the most beautiful site in the farmed landscape. Apples are pollinated by all sorts of insects including long-horn beetles, malachite beetles, butterflies and solitary bees.



PEAR

Large old pear trees can be seen along roadsides and in hedgerows dotted through the Vale. The majority of these big trees produce small pears used for making perry. The bark of a pear tree divides into small rectangular sections making it quite distinctive.

PLUM

The pure white plum blossom is on show for a very short period in April and attracts an assortment of pollinators including, hoverflies, dagger-flies, bee-flies and small beetles. Plum orchards once dominated the landscape around the Vale but only a few of these special places now remain.





CHERRY PLUM

I his is typically the first fruit blossom of the year. Often planted as hedgerow shrubs or as small trees on orchards. An important early nectar source for honeybees which will have used up their stored honey over winter.





DAMSON

The delicate blossom is not such a common sight in the vale nowadays, being mostly restricted to hedgerows and along water courses. All the old damson trees in the Vale are infected by a fungus Taphrina insititiae which causes twiggy growths known as Witches' Brooms

BLACKTHORN

A common shrub turning hedgerows white in early spring The abundant blossom attracts many pollinators including hoverflies and bumblebees.



GETTING AROUND THE TRAIL

There are many ways to get around the trail on a gorgeous spring day.







WALKING

If you would like to enjoy the wonderful countryside by foot, then Worcestershire's Vale and Spa makes an ideal location. By offering a range of routes, from long, short, easy or difficult, there is something that allows everyone the opportunity to enjoy the views.

The walking routes are easily accessible and can be located all around the trail - marked by a black walking sign. From here, you can follow the arrows and signs that will take you over stiles, along bridleways and through stunning blossom orchards filled with colour.



- The Wychavon Way
- The Shakespeare's Avon Way
- The Millennium Way
- The Cotswold Way

For more information visit www.valeandspa.co.uk/walking

Cycling around the Blossom Trail couldn't be easier The National Cycle Route 442 is perfectly situated to enjoy the blossom – the route travels from Worcester to Evesham via Pershore, taking you through quiet villages and country lanes. It really is the best way to get close to nature.

To help you get around the route, there are many blue Spring Blossom Trail signs to look out for on junctions. To assist, a GPX file of the route is available to download from our website - www.valeandspa.co.uk/cycling







GUIDED TOURS

One of the best ways to explore the Blossom Trail is on a coach tour and having your own tour guide onboard is the perfect complement to your day as they will share fascinating historical and entertaining facts about the blossom and the area. The Springtime in the Vale Coach tour is arranged by Royal Motorways and this year will take place on Thursday 13 April 2023.

Visit www.royalmotorways.co.uk for more information and to book your seat.

If you would like to book a tour guide for either a coach tour of the Blossom Trail or a walking tour of historic Evesham, contact Helen Piper on 01386 765972 or email helen.piper@normandygite.org.uk

BY CAR

Travelling the Blossom Trail by car provides the opportunity to visit the many pubs, restaurants, cafés and farm shops within some of the most picturesque villages in the county. Serving fresh local produce, local beverages (including a specially created Blossom cider at Wayside Farm Shop) not to mention delicious blossom cream teas, these many and varied establishments offer gastronomic delights in relaxing and beautiful surroundings - you will definitely be spoilt for choice.





We are excited to announce that Bikeaway Ventures are working in partnership with Cycle Evesham Vale to bring you a brilliant new Blossom Bikeaway 2023 event.



FEATURING:

- Updated routes for all abilities from 12 – 49 miles
- Catering by TOAST winner of 'Pub of the Year' in the Visit Worcestershire Tourism Awards 2022
- Medal and drinks voucher for all cyclists
- All proceeds to Vale of Evesham Community First Responders and supporting cycling in the Vale of Evesham.

At Smart Trees Field Farm HouseHill Furze Road, Bishampton, nr Pershore, WR10 2LZ **From 9am**

For more information and to enter visit www.cycleeveshamvale.org/blossom-bikeaway

BUSINESSES OF INTEREST

Witnessed the beautiful blossom?
Been inspired to create your own blooming haven?

With numerous garden centres, nurseries and other points of floral interest along the route, make a day of it during your travels. If you need some refreshments before/during/after your shopping, check out the characterful farm shops. Many sell the local produce that is created from the fruit trees along the Blossom Trail

GARDEN CENTRES & NURSERIES

- Walsgrove Farm
 www.walsgrove.co.uk
- Walcot Organic Nursery www.walcotnursery.co.uk
- Blue Diamond @ The Valley www.bluediamond.gg/evesham-garden-centre
- Station Garden Nurseries

 Station Garden Nurseries
- Badsey Garden Centre www.valegardens.co.uk
- Broadway Road Nurseries
 www.broadwayroadnurseries.com
- Castle Nurseries
 castlefarmshop
- Cotswold Garden Flowers
 www.cotswoldgardenflowers.co.uk
- W.J Rowlings Nurseries www.wjrowlings.com
- Wayside Nurseries

 Wayside Nurseries

- The Real Flower Confetti Fields
 www.confettidirect.co.uk/
 flowerfields
- Pershore Garden Centre www.pershoregardencentre.co.uk
- Four Acres Nursery
 Four Acres Nursery
- 19 Hayloft Nurseries www.hayloft.co.uk
- The Secret Garden Centre www.brownshomehardware.co.uk
- Three Springs Garden Nursery
 Three Springs Nursery
- **Birlingham Nurseries** 01386 750668 / 07973 500921
- Mill Lane Nursery www.milllanenursery.co.uk
- 26 St Peters Garden Centre www.stpetersgardencentre.co.uk

FARM SHOPS

- The New Hampton Farm Shop www.hamptonfarmshop.com
- 4 Chadbury Farm Shop and Café www.chadburyfarmshopandcafe. co.uk
- 5 Ellenden Farm Shop and Café www.ellendenfarmshop.co.uk
- Castle Nurseries Farm Shop
 Castlefarmshop

- Wayside Farm Shop www.waysidefarmshop.com
- Clive's Of Cropthorne
 Clive's Of Cropthorne
- Revills Farm Shop
 www.revillsfarmshop.co.uk
- Stoulton Farm Shop 01905 840995













Pershore is a small but thriving picturesque Georgian market town situated on the banks of Shakespeare's River Avon. Renowned for its association with the horticultural Vale of Evesham and its famous Plum Festival, the town is also legendary for its beautiful 13th century Norman Abbey which sits within the award-winning Abbey Park.

Pershore will entice you back time after time with its wealth of unique independent shops, an indoor market, quality restaurants, pubs and cafés serving locally sourced produce. If you are planning a short break in the area, The Angel Hotel, the Star Inn and Woodlands 159 offer quality. affordable town centre accommodation. Pershore has an integral link to local agriculture and horticulture and there are many farm shops, garden centres and nurseries in the area. These include Revills Farm Shop and farmhouse café. Mill Lane Nursery, Birlingham Nursery and Garden Centre, Four Acres Nurseru and Hauloft Plants Ltd. Pershore College. a national centre for horticulture situated on a 60-acre site just outside Pershore plays a key part of teaching future generations the importance of horticulture plus they have an on-site garden centre and nursery.



Events for all the family take place throughout the year with a celebration of food, music and community fun to name just a few. Number 8 Community Arts Centre is the hub of the town as far as entertainment is concerned.

Pershore is located only a short drive away from the National Trust's Croome Court and Tiddesley Wood (where the Pershore Yellow Egg Plum was found in 1827). Managed by the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, this is a semi-natural ancient woodland with impressive showings of spring flowers and fruit blossom.



One of the "must go to" horticultural attractions during the summer months are the Confetti Fields in the nearby village of Wick - usually open at the end of June to the beginning of July. The confetti, made from delphinium petals, and used by the rich and famous, is sold all year round which will help to make your big day even more special.

For more information about Pershore, please visit www.valeandspa.co.uk/pershore





Droitwich Spa is a charming, canal-side town surrounded by beautiful Worcestershire countryside. Its pastel-coloured high street is awash with character reflected in crooked buildings and historic monuments which depict the town's history with salt. Did you know Droitwich Spa is famous for salt?



The town owes its existence to natural brine springs which sit above beds of pure rock salt 200ft below the ground. Dissolved by underground springs, artesian pressure forces the salt to the surface as brine. Its density and buoyancy are only rivalled by the Dead Sea.

Droitwich Salt was historically celebrated for its great purity and today this natural flavour still comes through. Harvested by hand at Churchfields Saltworks, the salt can be purchased from many shops in the town including Waitrose and Droitwich Spa Heritage Centre.

If you're visiting the town, Droitwich Spa Heritage Centre is the best place to start your adventure. Find out what's going on around the town and visit the onsite museum to learn all about the award-winning salt and its link with the Romans. View sculptures, artwork and monuments. During the month of September, you will be able to visit Salt Fest and witness actors re-enact the moment Romans discovered the town.

Of course, there's more to this historic town than salt!



Explore 'The Wonky High Street's' independent shops, cafés and restaurants where you can buy handmade goods from talented

SACRED HEART CHURCH



PARKS



(situated by the canal) and Lido Park. These are perfect for picnics!

> For more information on Droitwich Spa, please visit www.valeandspa.co.uk/ droitwich-spa







Droitwich in Bloom is a beautiful artificial flower trail created bu Wuchavon District Council working with local florists Bluebells Florist and Flowers of Elegance. Last year five creative displays were hidden around the town including a rainbow bench, photo frame and heart.

This year promises to be bigger and better than before with new displays joining the trail. Floral-themed arts and crafts workshops for children are also being considered.

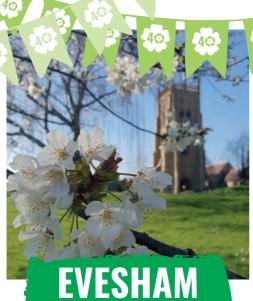
Strike a pose and share your photos of the trail on social media using





f > 0 #DroitwichInBloom

www.valeandspa.co.uk/droitwich-in-bloom









The historic market town of Evesham charms visitors with its stunning range of heritage buildings and architecture centred around the majestic Bell Tower. Evesham boasts an exciting and varied events programme with something for all ages. The independent art-deco Regal Cinema has a repertoire of blockbusters. live music and events. The Henrican Theatre hosts a lively programme of live entertainment from ballet to dramas and national stand-up comedy acts through to jazz ensembles.

The award-winning Abbey Park lies adjacent to the River Avon which is home to great events, water activities and a prestigious angling venue.

Evesham offers an international repertoire of places to eat and sample

local food, including award-winning establishments with a great selection of independent cafés and child-friendly venues. The town provides the ideal central base to explore the wider area including nearby Stratford-upon-Avon and the Cotswolds.

The Almonry, a museum housed in a 14th century building that was formerly part of the Benedictine Evesham Abbey, focusses on the history of the town and the horticultural Vale of Evesham. It is also the towns' Tourist Information Centre.

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Vale's Blossom Trail numerous blossom themed events and activities are planned at the Almonru from 1 April 2023.

For more information, please visit www.almonryevesham.org or call 01386 446944

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Horticulture is at the centre of Evesham, including its famous asparagus. This local delicacy is highly celebrated throughout the county with celebrations beginning on St Georges Day!

The many farm shops within the Vale are key to the agriculture and horticulture of the area and can be the best places to purchase Vale of Evesham Asparagus and other local produce.

THE VALLEY

A visit to Evesham wouldn't be complete without experiencing The Valley – a shopping, garden and leisure centre located on the A46. Complete with 25 shops, four eateries, a miniature railway and a new 18-hole Aztec themed adventure golf course, suitable for all abilities over the age of two. Celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Blossom Trail, The Valley is hosting the first ever Blossom River Tours on 28 – 30 April 2023.



For more information, please visit www.thevalleyshopping.co.uk

For more information on Evesham, please visit www.valeandspa.co.uk/evesham







Broadway's unique location makes it the perfect base to visit Worcestershire's Vale and Spa. Home to one of the longest high streets in England, with horse chestnut trees and a mixture of period houses and picturesque honey-coloured Cotswold stone cottages, it is often referred to as "The Show Village of England".

The high street features many independent shops, restaurants and cafés. If you are looking for somewhere to stay why not check into the Lygon Arms or the Broadway Hotel. For a luxury self-catering accommodation in Broadway in the heart of the stunning Cotswolds area of outstanding natural beauty, then check into the Broadway Country Cottages. The Broadway Activity Park/Playground is the perfect location for a picnic with the family or to let the children play and run off some steam.

The village has an interesting artistic heritage which includes well-known artists, writers and performing artists such as William Morris, John Singer Sargent, Capability Brown, J.M. Barrie and designer Gordon Russell. Examples of their legacies can be found throughout Broadway and at attractions such as Broadway Museum and Art Gallery and the Gordon Russell Design Museum.

Located a short drive or walk from the village is Broadway Tower & Park – a family-owned destination set in a 200-acre estate of parkland filled with red and fallow deer. Complete with a visitor centre the Tower museum has a roof platform which provides breath taking views over 16 counties and 62 miles in each direction. Relax in the Morris and Brown café or hire an e bike to explore the local countryside, and don't miss the Cold War experience in the Tower's Nuclear Bunker.



There are many gardens and National Trust properties located in and around Worcestershire's Vale and Spa that have stunning parkland, gardens and orchards which provide magnificent blossom and floral displays throughout the year.

Spetchley Park and Gardens www.spetchleyparkestate.co.uk

The Lavender Fields at Cotswold Lavender

www.cotswoldlavender.co.uk

The Real Flower Petal Confetti company

www.confettidirect.co.uk/ flowerfields

NT - Snowshill Manor and Gardens www.nationaltrust.org.uk/

snowshill-manor-and-garden

NT - The Fleece Inn www.thefleeceinn.co.uk

NT - Croome Court www.nationaltrust.org.uk/croome

NT - Hanbury Hall www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ hanbury-hall

NT - The Firs, birthplace of Sir Edward Elgar www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-firs

For more information on Broadway, please visit www.valeandspa.co.uk/broadway



Come and see some of the best attractions in and around the village. Scan the QR codes to find out more



EXPLORE

Whilst enjoying your journey around the Blossom Trail, consider visiting one of the many award-winning parks or picnic areas. Most are set alongside tranquil waterways resulting in nature proudly presenting its greatest assets.

Parks

The Green Flag parks within the town centres are bursting with colour when in full bloom and offer a wonderful setting to also entertain children or simply relax in idyllic surroundings. For more information on all the parks and their facilities, including those not on the trail, visit www.valeandspa.co.uk/parks



Highlights include:

- Wetland area and boardwalk
- Community Orchard
- Children's play area, water play and skatepark
- Historic Abbey
- Avenue of mature trees



Highlights include:

- Fishing at Heriott's pool
- Tree carving
- Home to the Lido
- Sport courts
- Children's wet and dry play areas



Highlights include:

- Ornamental herbaceous borders, shrub planting
- Historic Bell Tower
- Illuminated avenue of lime trees along the river
- Children's play area, water play and skatepark



Highlights include:

- Canal-side picnic areas
- Children's play areas
- Salt history mosaic
- · Wych barge seating area
- St Richard's statue

Picnic Areas

There are numerous picnic spots dotted along the Blossom Trail that provide a great opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of the towns. These are marked on the route map and include:





Eckington Wharf

On the bank of the River Avon, delights awaiting you include narrowboats, graceful swans, willow trees and a medieval sandstone bridge.

Elmley Castle

Sitting at the foot of Bredon Hill, listen for the calming sound of the babbling brook and birdsong from the adjoining wildlife-rich wood.

Jubilee Bridge

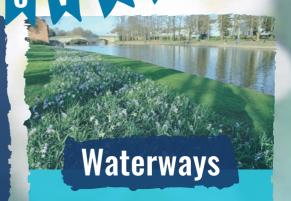
A lovely quiet little spot on the River Avon near Fladbury. Consider taking a walk upriver towards the delightful Fladbury Mill.

Fish Hill

You will find wildflowers, colourful woods and Cotswold landscapes here. It is an old quarry, though only the most observant would guess that.

Pershore Bridges

Based around the beautiful medieval bridge, the River Avon is teeming with wildlife, boats, anglers, walkers and picnickers enjoying the outlook.



The river and canal don't only provide a beautiful setting to witness the blossom but also presents the opportunity for a wealth of activities to be enjoyed.

With numerous waterside pubs, cafés and restaurants, they are a haven for walkers and cyclists as the generally level footing provides a comfortable journey.

Consider a boat trip for a more relaxing exploration of the river or canal, whereas the adventurous can try canoeing, kayaking, stand up paddleboarding and more.



you can do on water, visit
www.valeandspa.co.uk/
waterways



The Vale of Evesham is one of the most beautiful parts of England with an amazing variety of landscape and wildlife; from the banks of the River Avon to the hills of Bredon and the Cotswolds; from flood meadows to traditional orchards; from the elusive Otter to the rare (and equally elusive) Noble Chafer.

As with most areas in England, modern day pressures threaten much of the landscape and its wildlife.

In order to preserve the historic landscape, Vale Landscape Heritage Trust was set up in 1999 to conserve for public benefit the natural beauty, wildlife and heritage and to advance the education of the public in a natural, historical and present-day environment in the Vale of Evesham.

The Trust presently own and manage 18 sites, which are remnants of a past where people were more connected to the land and the season. These include traditional orchards and floodplain meadows, safeguarding declining wildlife in many areas. Butterflies, birds, mammals and reptiles all thrive on our land, where disturbance is kept to a minimum and no harmful chemicals are used.

More information can be found on our website

www.valetrust.weebly.com