

PROJECT CLOSING REPORT - BUXTON IN BLOOM 2014

1. OVERVIEW

To participate in the Royal Horticultural Society hosted event throughout the town with particular focus on the core principles of horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation

2. DETAIL OF WHAT TOOK PLACE

- 13th January 2014 Bloom was raised at the I&V meeting
- 11th February 2014 Jane McGrother came to the I&V meeting of to explain the whole Bloom set up. Buxton in Bloom Town Team Project Group was formed comprising Janine Morris, Jane McGrother, Tina Heathcote Jo and Dave Holdway
- At a local level, we issued flyers and through the Advertiser a set of entry categories, with prizes/plaques. The categories comprised Best Front Garden, Best Hanging Basket, Pub/Hotel, Retail premises and Best Street. These were split during judging to include a distinct category for Pubs and Hotels, and as a result of price increases some plaques were changed to shields, but the Best Street plaque honoured.
- At the regional level, we entered 2 Neighbourhoods, namely Byron Lodge and Lismore Road. Two schools became involved in the Art and Photography competitions, the Infant and Junior schools, although nine schools throughout the town were contacted
- From February to July 2014 we:
- tried to involve all areas of the town in the competition, including schools, businesses, private gardens, housing associations, community organisations, clubs and community groups.
- set out a list of specific projects / initiatives and invited entries through the media, advertising and personal contact e.g. best front garden, best hanging basket, best street, best business premises, best pub, school art and photography competition
- plotted a set route through the town for judging in July to take in the best of the projects / initiatives with representatives of East Midlands in Bloom
- called for recruits, volunteers and participants through advance media contact
- made contact with specific persons / organisations from previous years experience of the competition
- kept in touch with ongoing horticultural developments throughout the town to ensure that the floral displays will be at their optimum during judging in first two weeks of July.
- At the Awards Ceremony in September Buxton was awarded a Silver Gilt for the town as a whole, a separate Judges Award for the Serpentine Project and Silver Gilt for Haddon Hall for Retail/ Commercial Premises. One pupil also won Gold for her age group in the Art Competition. There were also a large number of separate certificates sent at a later date for the Children's Digital photography and Art entries. Given that we weren't even expecting to reach the bottom of the board, to achieve one criteria less than Gold at our first attempt back is a resounding success.

3. ASSESSMENT AGAINST AIMS AND SUCCESS CRITERIA

The aim of the project was to:

- To involve the community in a horticultural / environmental project throughout the town
- To encourage a sense of pride, ownership and responsibility for the town
- To raise the profile of Buxton Town Team
- To engage with existing, and recruit new, members

The measurable success criteria of the project were as follows:

- Positive media coverage

Huge amount of coverage in both the Advertiser and Pure who covered the story throughout the year and included a good number of photographs along the way.

- Positive feedback from those involved
We had a small awards ceremony in July for the winners of the various categories. This event itself was a great success, with some entrants not being aware that they had been entered (Wye Bridge) and feeling a great sense of wanting to be involved and try harder next year. It would be hoped that the certificates displayed in the retail premises who received prizes will inspire others to take part.
- Raising awareness / level of interest in Buxton
Whilst attending the Awards Ceremony in September, we were greeted like long-lost family but also with a certain sense of joy as having us back in the competition. Much of this has been fostered by Jane McGrother over the years, but there is an interest in being part of something wider and having the achievements of the town being shown to a wider public.
- Creating lasting improvements to the local environment
The planting of beds and planters at Waitrose and the attempt to re-establish the wildflower area at Milnthorp. The creation of the Memorial bed at Sparrow Park.
- Cleaner and greener surroundings
See above.
- Increasing the sense of community involvement
Various schemes added to the input of Bloom including Serpentine, Poole's Cavern, Community Orchard, WW1 planting at Sparrow Park, Scouts planting at Spring Gardens, painting of the hoardings. Could try harder to include a wider diversity of community groups in the scheme next year. This being our first year, much of the activity was undertaken by the core Bloom group. Events such as Spring Clean were judged by the East Midlands judges, but this cannot be classed as Bloom per se.
- Long-term improvements re graffiti, litter, conservation etc.
None significantly notable.

4. ANY FURTHER BENEFITS

Serpentine

- The Judges Award raised the awareness and profile of the community project, and this could be applied to other community group projects next year such as the Fairfield Community Project.

Recruitment of new members to Town Team

- Jo and Dave Holdway became an integral part of the Bloom group and strong members of the Town Team as a result

Obtaining Silver Gilt Award for the town, a special Judges Award for the Serpentine Project, and Gold in the Children's Art competition

Having a good number of entries from various parts of town for the local competition for the first year out.

5. COSTS

Although a budget of £850 was agreed, this was due to the East Midlands Bloom deadline meaning the project had to be approved before external funding could be confirmed. The intention was that the project would break even if possible.

Project expenditure against anticipated cost was as follows:

EXPENDITURE		
	Budget	Actual
Joining Fee	50	56.00
Production Brochure	100	200.00
DVD	100	N/a
Print Fliers Stationery	150	153.59
Expenses Judging Day and Awards Days	150	188.16
Prizes and Plaques	600	
Cash Prizes		345.00
Awards		339.33
Planters/ Seeds and Plants	550	167.47
Total	£ 1,700	£ 1,449.55
Net Expenditure	£ 850	

INCOME		
	Budget	Actual
HPBC Councillors		875
Waitrose Marketing		100
Waitrose Community		443
Total	not set	£ 1,418
Net Expenditure		£ 31.55

6. LEARNING POINTS FOR THE FUTURE

Schools

- To get a closer link with schools earlier on in the academic year. Dave Holdway has specifically been selected this year for liaising with schools and to get a greater connection with as many schools as possible year on year.

Judging criteria

- Being our first year, we picked up what we could with regards the whole Bloom process, and we have a much greater understanding now that the whole thing runs on two levels: Local (Buxton in Bloom) and Regional (East Midlands in Bloom). Both require different approaches, and it is our aim to make the local judging process much simpler, and also to communicate the criteria to the entrants in advance of the competition so everyone is aware of what is being judged and how.

Treasurer/ Accounts

- There is a difficulty in trying to run the project and having the accounts run by another party. I personally would like to know exactly how much funds are available at any given point, and how much has been allocated or spent. I would appreciate the Town Team directors discussing this matter and coming to an alternative arrangement, should the Town Team support Bloom again in 2015. Either accurate receipts and expenses forms of what has been allocated, or appointing myself as second treasurer so that I can keep tabs on where the budget is at any one time.

Stretch further afield

- Moving outwards and involving areas of Fairfield, Harpur Hill and Burbage, particularly Ashwood Park

Overall, given the short time frame we gave ourselves to work with (most Bloom groups start in August of the previous year), the small size of the team running the project, the number and quality of entries, the great response from the media, and in general everyone who was approached to help out, I would qualify this year's Bloom project as a success.

Name: Janine Morris

Date: 07/11/2014