

## PROJECT CLOSING REPORT - BUXTON IN BLOOM 2015

### 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

- This year's project was themed under the title **Buxton In The Pink** with the aim of pulling together the town into a similar-coloured flower scheme.
- At a local level, we issued flyers and through the Advertiser a set of entry categories, with prizes/plaques. The categories were updated this year and comprised Best Private Garden, Best Wildlife Plot, Best Hanging Basket/ Planter, Best School Garden, Best Community Project, Best Commercial/ Retail Garden, Best Flowerpot Person (Garden), Best Flowerpot Person (Commercial), Wow! Factor and Judges' Prize for Endeavour.
- The Wow! Category was supported with a prize from the Burbage Gardening Society, forging new links between the Society and the Competition.
- The new Flowerpot category brought entries across the town, and encouraged a different level of entry from the main gardening interest.
- At the regional level, we entered as a town and one school (Buxton Junior School) independently entered the Art competitions, although all nine schools throughout the town were contacted

From February to July 2015 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
- plotted an alternative route through the town from previous years 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
- 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.

September 2015:

- At the Awards Ceremony in September Buxton was awarded a Silver Gilt for the town as a whole and a separate Judges' Award for the Friends of Buxton Station. There were a large number of separate certificates sent at a later date for the Children's Art competition. We achieved a similar standing in the previous year's competition, with the comparative figures for each category given as follows:

	A	B	C	TOTAL
2014	77	38	36	151
2015	79	37	37	153

### 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 an awards ceremony in July for the winners of the various categories, which attracted larger numbers than last year. This event itself was a great success, particularly the level of involvement in the flowerpot people category.

	2014	2015
Community	5	5
Flowerpot		12
Garden	13	15
Hanging Basket	12	20
Retail	10	12
School		3
Sunflower		2
Wildlife		3
	40	72

- **Raising awareness / level of interest in Buxton**

We were again recognised and welcomed as part of the regional competition.

- **Creating lasting improvements to the local environment**

The planting of beds and planters at Waitrose and the reinvigoration of Ashwood Park, including newly-established wildflower patches which were very successful in the latter part of the summer. The horticultural element of the Friends of Buxton Station reinvigoration of the station area comprises planters and hanging baskets.

- **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, Friends of Buxton Station, Ashwood Park. Could try harder to include a wider diversity of community groups in the scheme next year including the Fairfield Wildlife Project. The Flowerpot aspect of the project reached a wide variety of participants.

Although categories were different from the last year, there was an increase in the number of entries:

- **Long-term improvements re graffiti, litter, conservation etc.**

None significantly notable.

#### 4. ANY FURTHER BENEFITS

- Friends of Buxton Station - The Judges Award raised the awareness and profile of the 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 - We had a number of volunteers involved at various levels with Claire Millard, Helen Davison and Viv Marriott joining the original members of the Bloom group
- Obtaining Silver Gilt Award for the town, a special Judges Award for the Friends of Buxton Station, and various certificates in the Children's Art competition
- Having an increased number of entries from various parts of town for the local competition for the second year.

#### 5. COSTS

Project expenditure against anticipated cost was as follows:

EXPENDITURE	£
Joining Fee	50
Production Brochure	14.46
Print Flyers Stationery	30.24
Expenses Judging Day and Awards Days	96
Prizes and Plaques	32.92
Planters/ Seeds and Plants	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 232.62</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>- £69</b>

INCOME	£
Waitrose Community Fund	150
Donations	13.62
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 163.62</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>£ 0</b>

## 6. LEARNING POINTS FOR THE FUTURE

- Schools - To get a closer link with schools earlier on in the academic year, and possibly involve them more closely in the Flowerpot project to allow more Flowerpot people throughout the town for the Judgesqvisit
- Judging criteria - One unfortunate aspect of the regional judging is the timing for Buxton in particular. Given our local microclimate, many of the gardens and floral exhibits are not at their best until late summer. The wildflower display in Ashwood Park was amazing for its first year of sowing, but did not look dramatic until late August. Judging takes place in the first two weeks in July and given the number of entries that need to be judged and evaluated by EMiB for September, this judging period may well not change. How we work around this to get the best out of the town during the judging period is one of the main challenges in increasing the judgesqscore.
- Funding - Locate more funding ahead of time to cover the budget.
- Stretch further afield - Moving outwards and involving areas of Fairfield, Harpur Hill and Burbage.

### EMiB JudgesqComments:

#### Areas for Development

##### Section A

Consider the scale of the planters along the River Wye and if they have the desired impact in their current location. Work with businesses to get more sponsorship of baskets and beds throughout the town. Survey the Peace garden to see if some additional perennial or annual planting can be added to continue the white flowering theme.

##### Section B

The portfolio shows some excellent conservation work in the woods around the town: try to include some of these walks into the tour to greater fulfil section B of the criteria. Try to ensure where possible the history of the town is fully conveyed on the judging tour. Continue to build relationships with the street cleansing teams in High Peak Council.

##### Section C

The children's planted training shoes were a great idea; continue to build the links with the schools encouraging their use of Buxton varied landscape. The Town Team and other partners help to keep the momentum of the Serpentine Community Farm going. The portfolio is a beautiful piece of work, consider laying it out in the order of the judging criteria and also consider giving the judges a photographic itinerary of the route.

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.

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