

## PROJECT CLOSING REPORT - BUXTON IN BLOOM 2016

### 1. OVERVIEW

To enter Buxton in the Royal Horticultural Society East Midlands in Bloom and to run a local competition to promote community participation and interest in gardening, cleaning and decorating the town.

### 2. DETAIL OF WHAT TOOK PLACE

This year's project was themed under the title 'Painting the town red!' with the aim of pulling together the town into a similar-coloured flower scheme.

- At a local level, we distributed flyers and posters and promoted in the Advertiser and Pure Buxton. Presentations were also given at the Burbage Gardening Society to promote all the Town Team gardening projects. The categories were reduced in number this year and comprised Best Private/Business Garden, Best Hanging Basket/ Planter (Private/business), Best School Garden, Best allotment and Best Flowerpot Person (Private/business). After judging we added Judges' Prizes for Endeavour and Art in the Garden.
- The Flowerpot Person category brought entries across the town, and encouraged a different level of entry from the main gardening interest. Four workshops run at the Green Man Gallery, swimming pool, Funny Wonders stand in Pavilion Gardens and the WI.
- We entered Buxton in East Midlands in Bloom. The judging day itinerary covered the Sensory Garden at the Dome, Buxton Railway Station, Crescent and the surrounding area, Grinlow Woods, Buxton Primary School and Pavilion Gardens.
- We encouraged community gardening groups to enter RHS 'It's Your Neighbourhood' (IYN) assessment as part of East Midlands in Bloom.

#### September 2015 to July 2016:

- Tried to involve all areas of the town in the competition, including schools, businesses, private gardens, community organisations, clubs and community groups.
- Set out a list of specific projects / initiatives including painting bicycles red (with Guides and Scouts), planters behind Waitrose, Ashwood Park (including Waterside Care), planters on the Crescent hoardings.
- Gained a total of £500 sponsorship from 2 local businesses Staden Nursery and No6 Tea Rooms.
- Prepared for the East Midlands in Bloom judging day:
  - Plotted route through Buxton to include best projects and a variety of different aspects of the town (talking into account the judging criteria) for East Midlands in Bloom judging.
  - Kept in touch with ongoing horticultural developments throughout the town to ensure that the floral displays were at their optimum during judging in first two weeks of July. This included liaison with HPBC to ensure that the judging route was clean, tidy and weed free.
  - A calendar of all horticulture related events and volunteer participation was created, together with a complete photographic record.
  - Produced a portfolio showing the progress throughout the year of various projects in the town, linked to the RHS judging criteria.
  - Produced of a video to present to the East Midlands in Bloom judges.
- East Midlands in Bloom judging day - 15 July 2016 - Organised lunch, coffees and hosts for the judging day including the mayor, local gardeners, members of community groups and HPBC staff.

#### August 2016:

- During the first two weeks in August we judged all the local Buxton in Bloom entries.
- Designed and produced certificates for presentation at the local awards ceremony.
- Sent out thank-you cards to everyone who had contributed to Buxton in Bloom.

### September 2015:

- Organised the local Buxton in Bloom Awards Ceremony at the Palace Hotel. Prize. Invited over winners plus one guest per winner and Bloom project supporters to the event which was attended by over 50 people.
- 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 Sensory Garden at the Dome. We achieved improved our scores in each of the categories and increased our overall score by 7 to 160. The comparative figures for each category given as follows:

	A Horticultural achievement	B Environmental responsibility	C Community participation	TOTAL
2014	77	38	36	151
2015	79	37	37	153
2016	<b>81</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>160</b>

- Ashwood Gardeners had entered Ashwood Park in the RHS It's Your Neighbourhood competition and were awarded Level 3 'Advancing' (68/100) which is a really high score for a first time entry.

### 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.
- Involve all areas of the town and as many organisations as possible in a common enterprise.
- To raise the profile of Buxton Town Team and recruit new members.

The measurable success criteria of the project were as follows:

- Sponsorship from two local businesses No6 Tearooms and Staden Lane Nurseries.
- Positive media coverage. Huge amount of coverage in both the Advertiser and Pure who covered the story throughout the year.
- Increasing the marks awarded by RHS and the award of a Silver-Gilt.
- Success of Ashwood Gardeners in It's Your Neighbourhood Awards awarded 'Advancing'.
- Positive feedback from those involved: We had an awards ceremony in September 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 and hanging basket categories (see below).

	2014	2015	2016
<b>Community</b>	5	5	Encouraged entry of IYN
<b>Flowerpot</b>		12	25
<b>Garden</b>	13	15	15
<b>Hanging Basket</b>	12	20	21
<b>Retail</b>	10	12	Included in garden and hanging baskets
<b>School</b>		3	1
<b>Sunflower</b>		2	Not run this year because of judging in school holidays
<b>Wildlife</b>		3	Not run - included in allotments and gardens
<b>Allotments</b>			4
	40	72	66

- Creating lasting improvements to the local environment: The planting of beds and planters at Waitrose, Crescent planters and the regeneration of Ashwood Park including the award of a grant to clear and replant the central flower beds.
- Increasing the sense of community involvement: Many other voluntary and community groups in the town helped with various projects: Scouts, Guides, WI, Lions, Burbage Gardening Society and others. Various schemes added to the input of Bloom including Serpentine

Community Farm, Poole's Cavern and Grinlow Woods, Friends of Buxton Station, Ashwood Gardeners, the litter picking team, planting Turner's Memorial and the planters along the Crescent hoardings. The Flowerpot persons aspect engaged a wide variety of participants. The painted bicycles also raised the profile of the Town Team.

- Long-term improvements in graffiti, litter, conservation etc: The litter picking team have reduced the amount of litter around the town. There is noticeably less litter in Ashwood Park due to the efforts of the litter picking team, the Ashwood Gardeners and the support of WatersideCare which has enabled us to river clean.

#### 4. ANY FURTHER BENEFITS

- Increased the level of collaboration with HPBC.
- Obtaining Silver Gilt Award for the town and a Special Judges' Award for Sensory Garden at the Dome.
- Over 50 people attended the local Buxton in Bloom Awards Ceremony.
- Gardeners around Buxton donating plants, following talks given at Burbage Gardening Society.
- Andy Parker produced a video to present to the EMiB judges that has been uploaded to the Facebook site and shown at the local bloom awards.
- Raised the profile of Ashwood Park, especially with HPBC, by entering it in the RHS 'It's Your Neighbourhood' competition.

#### 5. COSTS

Project expenditure against anticipated cost was as follows:

EXPENDITURE	£	INCOME	£
RHS EMiB entry fee	50.00	Sponsorship from No6 Tea Rooms	250.00
Print Flyers Stationery	64.46	Sponsorship from Staden Nurseries	250.00
Paper and printing ink for portfolio and certificates	57.94	Donation from member of public**	200.00
Paint for the bike installations	77.79		
Bunting	108.16	WI donation for bunting	40.00
Frames for certificates	18.00		
Planters/ Seeds and Plants	154.50		
Expenses Awards Day (Palace Hotel)	*		
Attendance at East Midlands in Bloom awards Ceremony	51.00		
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 581.85</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 740.00</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>£581.85</b>	<b>Surplus</b>	<b>£ 158.15</b>

\* Still awaiting the invoice from the Palace Hotel for 50 teas/coffees

\*\* Money accounted for in 2015 financial reports

#### 6. LEARNING POINTS FOR THE FUTURE

In order to manage Bloom, both the East Midlands in Bloom and the local competition a bloom committee is required with committee members all with dedicated jobs. This year the burden of most of the work fell mostly to three people and this is not sufficient. East Midlands in Bloom takes a huge amount of work including the portfolio, planning of the route and the judging day itself. We need to take stock and understand the benefits of both competitions.

In order to produce the portfolio a detailed diary of the year of gardening together with photographs needs to be maintained. Again this in itself is a huge piece of work.

A dedicated Town Team email for bloom is required as I did receive a few rude emails/phone calls and do not feel happy that these were coming to my home phone/email address.

### EMiB Judges' Comments:

#### Areas for Development

##### Section A: Horticultural Achievement

There was much evidence of floral decoration of the Town – perhaps more emphasis on this in the route would have been beneficial. Involving local businesses is improving, but even greater participation may make the town even more colourful and also help with funding new projects. Try to ensure that the development work at the Crescent involves the In Bloom group as this could have a large impact on the Town.

##### Section B Environmental Responsibility

The judges were impressed by the walk round the Poole's Cavern area. Continue the promotion of this area – particularly amongst schools. A short presentation by the local authority to the judges on recycling rates, dealing with litter, graffiti may be of help. Signage in the town was good but with new developments this needs to be kept under constant review. We understand the reason for not visiting Serpentine Community Farm, but on balance do

feel that this is such an important initiative that you should either visit or have someone from the Farm meet us on tour to talk about their progress.

##### Section C: Community Participation

Community involvement is a strong area for this entrant, with the Town Team bringing many voluntary groups together; ensure that In Bloom maintains a strong presence on that Team. Do try to check that the tour will work in practical terms on the day, to minimise the likelihood of being stood waiting to view one of the stops. The Station project group has been particularly successful. Perhaps consider offering the group somebody from In Bloom with experience of all year planting schemes, composting and maintenance. Equally somebody from that group could become more involved with In Bloom – giving even more help in funding, and helping getting things done – projects which at first sight seem impossible!

**A:81 B:39 C:40 Total: 160**

Overall, given 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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