

PROJECT CLOSING REPORT – BUXTON OPEN GARDENS 2016

1. OVERVIEW

A two-day event based around private gardens opened to the public, including gardens of special interest, and with some featuring art displays, workshops, story-telling or plant sales.

2. DETAIL OF WHAT TOOK PLACE

26 private gardens, 2 public gardens, 2 hotels and 2 Church gardens opened for each of two days over the weekend of 11/12 June. These were plotted on a map which served as the individual's entrance ticket and which were sold, generally in advance, for £2.50 via the TIC, Pooles Cavern Visitors Centre and the Green Man Gallery. Many gardens provided additional attractions such as art, refreshments or plant sales and proceeds from these went to the good cause of their choice.

3. ASSESSMENT AGAINST AIMS AND SUCCESS CRITERIA

The aims of the project were to:

Aim	Assessment
to act as a pilot scheme for events based around the RHS Chatsworth Show starting in 2017	Event was successful and is planned to be repeated on the RHS weekend in 2017, establishing the basis for other coordinating events.
to encourage visitors to Buxton and start promoting Buxton as a gardening destination	There were certainly a number of visitors who came to the town specifically for the event. Promotion on the 'Open Gardens' website appeared very worthwhile (and was free).
to encourage people with gardens in Buxton to improve standards and get the best from them	The level of enthusiasm engendered by the event was encouraging in this respect
to develop and encourage the gardening community in Buxton	Increased interaction and friendly rivalry seemed a positive outcome!
to raise the profile of Buxton Town Team.	Achieved

The measurable success criteria of the project were as follows:

Success Criteria	Assessment
At least 10 gardens open on both days	As above, 26 private gardens + others
At least 100 maps sold	460 maps sold
Positive feedback from visitors to the gardens, garden owners and artists/performers	Very much so
Expressions of interest from other organisations for a bigger event in 2017	Not from other organisations, but certainly from gardeners and participants
Positive publicity about the event in all local media	Achieved

4. ANY FURTHER BENEFITS

Opportunity of fundraising for other organisations was welcomed and encouraged collaboration. Gardeners Benevolent Fund, Chernobyl and Christies were amongst those to benefit.

Surplus resulted in immediate ability to commit to funding for planters on the Crescent hoardings which was then match funded by Buxton Civic Association, providing a very positive and visible 'knock-on' benefit.

5. COSTS

Project expenditure against budget was as follows:

EXPENDITURE		
	Budget	Actual
Printing 500 A4 folded maps	£262	
Gardens signage no more than	£100	
Miscellaneous stationary costs	£50	
Event Insurance	£104	
Printing and other costs		£ 409.86
Commission on ticket sales		£ 138
Total	£516	£ 547.86

INCOME		
	Budget	Actual
100 maps/tickets @ £5	£500	
460 maps/tickets @£2.50		£ 1150
Donations		£70
Total	£ 500	£ 1220
Surplus	£	£ 672.14

6. LEARNING POINTS FOR THE FUTURE

Organisers need to know when to ask for assistance. Production of the map (ticket) was rushed and last minute due to an unsatisfactory first attempt. Money was wasted on abortive printing. Maps should include more detail, including pedestrian only routes. Preview nights have been suggested, so that people opening their gardens also get chance to see others. Longer opening hours?

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