

IN BLOOM WORKING GROUP MINUTES- 5th February 2020, Spencer Suite, 9.00am

Attendees: David Brown, Ruth Burgess, Bob Edwards, Margaret Gartside, Martha Hayes, Amanda Martin, Patti Pinto, Glen Williams

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** Members are respectfully reminded of the necessity to submit any apology for absence in advance and to give a reason for non- attendance.
 - None
- 2. Minutes of the Last Meeting:** To approve the notes of the previous meeting as a correct record.
 - Approved
- 3. Declarations of Interest:** Members are requested to declare both “pecuniary” and “non-pecuniary” interests as early in the meeting as they become known.
 - None
- 4. IYN Update:** The groups have replied to Ruth’s original email on what help they would like. ACTION RB: to arrange a meeting for all IYN, at the end of March. ACTION: DB & PP- to find out how many neighbourhoods would work in one day- to ask judges opinions at Birmingham seminar (21st February).
 - Buglawton In Bloom (BiB)- at the meeting agreed that there will be no hanging baskets. CIB agreed to have a clean-up at Buglawton on one of the monthly town tidies to clear a section by the railings so that these are exposed. PP has been through the marking sheet with Buglawton to explain the scoring and where it can be improved. BiB would like help painting a fence and installing a bench, they are also getting a bird bath. BiB are looking to have more community involvement with the scouts and WI. Concerns raised over the bee hive in the wildflower strip at the grass edge of the Church House- RB/ CTC is sorting a risk assessment for this.
 - New Life Church- will be entering as a neighbourhood again this year. Albie is back working in the garden, there is also a volunteer coordinator at NLC that has a group that goes out to work on people’s garden. The volunteer coordinator is looking for funding for equipment, suggested to apply via; Margaret Williamson Memorial Fund, Congleton Town Council, My Bright Idea at Cheshire East.
 - Astbury Mere (AMCP)- PP has the portfolio, but will be updating it to include the biodiversity. PP questioned whether to keep AMCP in the In Bloom entry and not a separate neighbourhood- agreed to keep as In Bloom. MG has spoken to Jo Money (Community Projects) who would be interested in coordinating activities, such as willow weaving, but would need funding for this. Check with Matt Axford- Ranger, about activities that are already put on here and the different groups that use it, such as information on the park runs and to show how far they have run etc. Suggested to have interpretation boards- create a design and put this to the trust, then look for funding if approved. (Biodiversity, history, species, community use/ groups etc.) MA has been making flower boxes for the edges of the car park. It would be good for the trust to apply for a Green Flag.
 - Community Garden- PP has suggested to have this area as a separate neighbourhood- decided at the moment that the site isn’t strong enough on its own, but should be included in main tour. PP to update on progress at next meeting.

** There are many areas that have started as neighbourhoods and then not maintained afterwards, agreed that the core projects should come first and looking best before starting new groups.

** RB- will be having a meeting with Congleton Football Club to see how they can get involved with In Bloom.

** Margaret’s Place- x2 cherry trees to be removed and replaced with likewise trees. ACTION RB to price up the cost of a new path across the grassed area- path has gone through to Partnership for possible funding. Can we do something in the corner where the car is, suggested fencing with climbing clematis?
- 5. AOB:**
 - Penny-farthing Sculpture- JMac had an email back from Highways, they need to go through legal and planning and get a safety audit, this could take a while to get signed off. Jackie has indicated timelines for June for In Bloom- Highways are on board with this, it will just take time. Suggested to get the CE Cllrs to help lobby for this. Need to send timescales to Belmont Engineering to make sure they can fit the works in.
 - Rhino Sculpture- GW has been sent information on this, but needs to get in contact to discuss cost etc. Ongoing action. Where would this be situated if we had a bear made? GW to update at the next meeting.

- IB Stickers have been created to hand out at In Bloom events, for volunteers to wear. Organic cotton bags with the in Bloom logo are in the making and JMac has started the campaign on the new bin sticker posters, letters have been sent and posters are up to advertise this.
- Trees for Congleton- ACTION RB to cost up the maintenance for this. Three major planting areas; Quinta Park, Marshall Grove and Padbury Lane.
- Sat 7th March- first clean-up starting at Congleton Park to include some tree planting, 10am-12 noon- GW to confirm this.
- Sat 21st March- Keep Britain Tidy clean-up- proposed start from Community Garden
- April clean-up at Buglawton In Bloom
- Gold Rosettes- MH ordered from JAF Graphics- will be added to the sign once received.
- PP has spoken to JMon who has a lot of information on the community garden- possibility to have an information board on the history of this.
- PP will be researching the nine other entries for BIB- a lot have already planted trees, wildflower meadows, put up sculptures- working with the young, elderly and everyone in between. Need to look at the discretionary awards and see which ones we should go for.
- RB email- finding grot spots- send out to schools to get them active. Street signs- PP, a lot of these need cleaning- let RB know to add to the list to be actioned.
- Street signs- could these be planted at the bases? Adopt your street sign to look after and plant around it. ACTION PP- to put a post out on Facebook- keep RB in the loop to any responses as needs to be noted for future maintenance of the area.
- Flower Festival at St. Peter's Church, they are keen to do this again- to be included in the national competition, as unable for it to stretch over both weeks to cover the regional North West competition. Congleton Choral Society are also putting on a garden trail.
- Hydro Scheme Weir to be included in the portfolio and tree planting. Also have a section in the portfolio for planting trees and volunteer section.
- BE suggested for a bore hole somewhere in Congleton to extract water- ACTION RB to speak to Graham Construction on the practicalities of this.
- AMCP- St. Mary's are doing a "Lost Words" project with the wildlife trust- this will be enlarged and laminated to decorate the visitors centre area.

6. Date of next meeting: after Birmingham- same time as IYN.