

Congleton In Bloom Working Group
22nd July 2020 Virtual Zoom Meeting, 9.30am

MINUTES

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.
 - Anna Morrison
2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting:** To approve the Notes of the previous meeting as a correct record– 6th June
 - 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.
 - David Brown- Cheshire East
 - Patti Pinto- William Dean Trust (WDT)
4. **Working in Partnerships-** Need to show that CIB works in partnership with many groups as the judges last year said they like the way we work together with IYNs and other groups. For example, Exmouth’s portfolio displays this well, showing the group work by month.

Apart from IYNs (x9) GW suggested, as we have the support of the public, mention that we work in partnership with all residents of the town. U3A, Guides, Rangers, Scouts, Cubs, Beavers, all schools, nurseries, care homes, Dane Housing, Jubilee Club at New Life Church, St. Peter’s, Saint Mary’s, allotment groups, NCS, individual volunteers- all groups that are invited to the celebration event. Congleton Partnership, Sustainability, Tree Group, Green Working Group, Cheshire East, Highways, Ansa, Plastic Free Congleton, Keep West Heath Tidy group. ACTION MH- to compile a list for the next meeting.

Look into connecting with: ATC Air Cadets, Army Cadets

Suggested to make the portfolio look different and stand out- make very community orientated. Need to make more of our achievements- PP to research who has achieved GOLD status in the last 10 years.

ACTION MH- look at CE Highways summary of stats and create this for Congleton. Also incorporate Streetscape stats.
5. **Successes of 2019-20**
 - Getting into the finals of BIB
 - GOLD Status
 - Trees planted
 - Wildflowers in Congleton- hit the timescales of the plan
 - Getting plants for the roundabouts and hanging baskets during the COVID restrictions- staff like the new suppliers, plants were very healthy and look great.
 - Biggest ever turnout for a town tidy before COVID- over 50 people.
 - Streetscape staff have carried on throughout the pandemic with less staff and resources.
 - New Bath House website
 - U3A garden group have continued to go out with volunteers to work on community gardens etc.
 - NHS plaque
6. **Update from Tree Group- (over 1000 trees planted)** ACTION RB- to collate a map of Congleton with tree icons to show where new trees are planted and add to the website. Over 200 volunteers putting in over 300 hours planting at different sites.
7. **Town Tidies-** GW proposes the next town tidy for Saturday 1st August- plastic free Congleton are joining in with this event. 10am-12noon with different starting locations- GW coordinating. PP suggested Princess Street car park. ACTION MH & RB to advertise- send out to database of volunteers, Chronicle, website, social media. Risk assessment needs updating.

To Note: 11th-27th September national “Keep Britain Tidy” dates moved from March.
8. **Green Flags Success-** Three new Green Flags for primary schools (international award from eco-schools England) Buglawton (back after a long break), Saint Mary’s (6th flag), Marlfields (7th flag) CIB hopes that

Smallwood will renew in the autumn on schedule. In addition look into Mossley and Havannah to renew and Congleton High School to apply. GW questioned one for Eaton Bank Academy.

WDT will be supporting as many schools that apply to be COVID-19 ready come September.

Congleton Park Green Flag will be judged in September, along with Heritage Green Flag award.

ACTION- to get every school in Congleton a Green Flag by next summer.

- 9. Route-** Should we be checking the route in the next couple of weeks to see what might need extra work before next summer? This is when we can see what is in flower at judging time. GW suggested to book the minibus, Monday 3rd August, 10am, meet at Astbury Mere.
UPDATE: Monday 10th August- same details as above.
- 10. Volunteers-** We got a great response to both town tidies and tree planting and have expanded our volunteer base. Should we send out paper certificates in recognition? We want them to come out again in September for clean ups and in November to plant more trees. In addition we should try to include volunteers in some wildflower plug planting. All good publicity.
- 11. Tree Planting-** Should be appearing in next Bear necessities in August.
- 12. Plans-** What are the plans for 20-21 and beyond?

 - Try to get more schools to enter the Green Flag accreditation.
 - Plan to have more trees planted in autumn.
 - Wildflower meadows with the blue heart campaign.
 - Adding flowers and landscaping to the Cenotaph site.
 - In the autumn look at perennial planting scheme for Park Lane roundabout then we will have three sustainable roundabouts and 2 mixed bedding.
- 13. Any Special Projects-** Congleton Park is 150 years old in 2021- events in the park for 2021, looking to include a Garden Festival by FoCP. Community Gardens celebrates 25th anniversary in 2021 also. Bermania will be 10 years old, ACTION BE- to liaise with traders. Congleton Charter Year in 2022- MH on Heritage and Charter group so can get In Bloom involved through these avenues.
- 14. Wildflowers Areas-** (with blue heart signs)- Wildflowers at Windsor Place- these are signposted and blue hearts will be added to advertise the campaign- made by rejuvenate. These blue hearts could be added to the edges of the Town Woods- PP would like to see 250 over Congleton.
Cheshire East are aware of Congleton's wildflower areas.
- 15. Sculptures-** Traders Marketing group are looking at Bear Sculptures, although these will be smaller for the shop windows. DB suggested a Bear Quiz that incorporate both trails.
ACTION RB- to chase the penny farthing sculpture- get this created by Belmont as if unable to be placed on the Park Lane roundabout, it can be situated elsewhere.
- 16. Signage-** Suggested that more story boards are needed at various locations, ACTION PP to create and to send to group for approval.
- 17. Questions to be thought about before meeting**

 - Do we produce a short portfolio, using a calendar and photos with brief intro (Exmouth) format? ACTION MG & PP to get together pictures and information together and pass to MH to make into a "CIB Lockdown" portfolio.
 - How can we support our established and new IYNs or other volunteers?
 - How can we recognise our volunteers this year? Agreed to create certificates accompanied with letter from the Chair- to be sorted in September.
 - Should we ask for photos of people's gardens (not competition) lots have been very busy in their gardens this spring and summer due to lockdown. U3A has already done this for their members. I have seen some lovely front gardens as I have been wandering around town.
 - Floral trail through Congleton leaflet (no rush as we have almost a year before judging)
 - Questions were all agreed by the group.

18. AOB:

- Congleton News & Views are putting on a garden competition- 25th July deadline. BE has contacted to ask for pictures once judged.
- Website- separate Congleton In Bloom website- look at set-up and maintenance costs and bring to the next meeting.
- 2021 Calendar- to show scenes of In Bloom and the neighbourhoods- ACTION ALL- to send images to RB.
- Organise a Community Plant Swap for April/ May 2021.
- Wall at Antrobus Street, suggested to paint and enhance, ACTION GW- to contact high schools to potentially create the designs.
- Roodhill Wall- repaint with anti-pollution equipment, ACTION DB- to contact Cheshire East.
- Link Road Update- CTC officers are working with Parish Councils to design the new roundabouts.
- Link Road Trees- ACTION GW
- Crocus bulbs are being supplied again this year by Congleton Rotary, supporting the Purple4Polio scheme.
- Green at the back of the Town Hall- looking to create wildflower segments, bug hotels, hedgehog houses etc.
- Portfolio, ACTION MH- to print copies of last year's portfolio for the In Bloom team to take on the route tour.

19. Date of Next Meeting: Monday 24th August 2020, 10am