

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

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| <b>COMMITTEE:</b>               | <b>Community &amp; Environment</b>   |                 |                  |
| <b>MEETING DATE AND TIME</b>    | <b>3 November 2022</b><br><b>7.00pm</b>  | <b>LOCATION</b> | <b>Town Hall</b> |
| <b>REPORT FROM</b>              | <b>Ruth Burgess, Streetscape Development Manager and Congleton In Bloom team</b>   |                 |                  |
| <b>AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE</b> | <b>Congleton in Bloom Success at National and Regional Competitions</b>  |                 |                  |
| <b>Background</b>               | <p>Congleton in Bloom, the 10 Its Your Neighbourhood Group and 2 Businesses received an outstanding set of results in the 2022 RHS In Bloom competitions.</p> <p>Congleton was the runner-up in national large town competition and also received gold and won the regional competition, although cannot be put forward to the National finals next year. Congleton in Bloom also received a North West in Bloom Green Discretionary award for Gardening in a changing climate.</p> <p>The 10 Its Your Neighbourhoods received 7 top level 5 gold awards and 3 level 4 thriving awards.</p> <p>One business received a gold and the other a thriving.</p> <p>A tremendous set of results for the town and reflecting the hard work and dedication of many people including the In Bloom Team, Congleton Streetscape Team, all the IYN groups, the businesses, sponsors and volunteers that work together on initiatives to make Congleton greener and cleaner.</p> |                 |                  |
|                                 | <p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Achievements</i></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Britain in Bloom: <i>Finalists in</i></b> 2001, 2007, 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020 (Cancelled), 2021, 2022</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Britain in Bloom Silver:</b> 2007, <b>Britain in Bloom GOLD:</b> 2014, 2016, 2018 &amp; 2022</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>BIB Community Awards 2022:</b> Highly Commended: Green Solutions, Achievement: Community &amp; Planting with purpose</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>North West in Bloom GOLD:</b> 2000, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011-2019, 2021, <b>2022</b> (15 golds)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Best Large Town North West in Bloom:</b> 2000, 2005, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2021, 2022</p> <p style="text-align: center;">North West In Bloom Discretionary Award 2022: Gardening in a changing climate</p>  |                 |                  |

## 2022 RESULTS

**It's Your Neighbourhood - 7 | Level 5 - Outstanding (GOLD), 3 Level 4 -Thriving**

### **IYN Congleton Community Garden- RHS IYN Level 5 Outstanding GOLD**

Many volunteers have worked in this garden, in Lawton Street, over the 25 years since its creation from a space left derelict when the cinema was knocked down. Entered NWIB as a new IYN for 2021. Planted and maintained by volunteers, including the 'Gardening Gang' and the U3A gardening group. The garden has won many awards. It is planted with a huge variety of trees, shrubs, hardy perennials, bulbs, grasses and has 25 species of roses in the "scented" garden.

### **IYN Congleton Bath House & Physic Garden- RHS IYN Level 5 Outstanding GOLD**

Congleton Bath House was rescued from demolition. A Physic Garden with a range of medicinal, industrial and edible plants was created within the grounds by Congleton Building Preservation Trust, complete with a Georgian Bath House. Open days each spring & autumn; 14 volunteers, meets every Monday 11am -1pm.

### **Buglawton In Bloom – RHS IYN Level 5 Outstanding GOLD**

A team of volunteers who love gardening and want to make Buglawton "a blooming marvellous place." The team of volunteers first formed back In 2003 and has continued to improve the area around Buxton Old Road and Church House Public House. By planting many flowers, including wildflowers and trees. Meets every Sunday 10am-12pm

### **Bromley Farm In Bloom RHS IYN Level 5 Outstanding GOLD**

Bromley Farm in Bloom celebrated 10 years with a Level 5 Outstanding award from North West in Bloom. Over thirty volunteers are involved with the majority being young people, as part of our youth provisions. The group has more than 20 features across the whole neighbourhood. All our displays, including hanging baskets are sustainable. The group takes care of multiple planters, wildflower meadows, orchards, a floral boat for bees, an allotment plot, tree and hedge planting, plus projects to reduce litter and dog fouling.

### **Hillary Avenue Allotments RHS IYN Level 5 Outstanding GOLD**

Hillary Avenue Allotments- The association was set up 14 years ago to run the town allotments, providing 20 plots for local people and community groups to get involved. The group has an active committee that continues to develop new features, including: fruit orchard, wildflower area, storage facilities and introduction of trial plots for less mobile residents. Future plans include further activities within the new Poly tunnel.

### **Friends of Congleton Park – RHS IYN Level 5 GOLD**

A group of trustees who look after the activities and welfare of Congleton Park. They meet regularly to discuss plans, maintenance and future projects. In celebration of Congleton Park's 150th anniversary, Congleton In Bloom, with the Friends of Congleton Park team organised for the grassy entrance into the park by St. Stephen's Church to be re-planted with wildflowers. This project will encourage biodiversity and has created an attractive route into the Park. Funding was received from housing developers, a lottery scheme and a local charitable trust.

### **The Old Saw Mill RHS IYN Level 5 Outstanding GOLD**

Old Saw Mill Secret Garden- In April 2016 this was a derelict area and rescued for the Old Saw Mill's open day in May 2016. A group of volunteers have worked tirelessly to renovate the area. The garden was designed based loosely on Jekka McVik's Apothecary garden at Chelsea by the Old Saw Mill team members.

### **Vale Allotments - RHS IYN Level 4 Thriving**

Vale Allotments- Close to the Town Centre, but hidden away within the small Howty Valley, which connects the Town Centre with the open countryside. The entrance is off the historic Vale Walk which connects Priestly Fields & Moody Street with Waggs Road. It has been in use for growing food for as long as anyone can remember. Bought in 2016 to save from being built on, the area now has about 30 plots, a community orchard and pond... a haven for wildlife and people.

### **'Wednesday Club' Congleton Football Club – RHS IYN Level 4 Thriving**

The Wednesday Club is a group of volunteers who meet every 'Wednesday' they help to keep and maintain the Congleton Football grounds and surrounding area litter free, they have created their own garden, and recycle all of their waste as well as the introduction of a saving water scheme. This is the first time the Wednesday club have entered and we are all proud of their achievement

### **Friendly Faces Day Nursery - RHS IYN Level 4 Thriving**

December 2020 saw local children's nursery 'Friendly Faces' gain its first green flag. Friendly Faces have worked on many projects with the in bloom team over the years, and this year was the first year they entered their nursery in to the IYN category showing that you learn to garden and grown plants and vegetables at any age.

### **Businesses**

#### **Lion and Swan - RHS IYN Gold**

The Lion and Swan is a recently refurbished, family-run traditional coaching inn in Congleton town centre. This is the first time that the business has entered the competition and were delighted to be awarded a gold standard. The business had

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|                  | <p>created a wonderful sustainable gardening area, with its very own green wall which both the judges commented on and loved.</p> <p><b><u>Alexandra Court Hotel - RHS IYN Silver Gault</u></b></p> <p>A lot of new landscaping has taken place at the front of the hotel over the last couple of years. This has transformed the view of the hotel from the road making it much more inviting. The new covered area at the back of the hotel has expanded the usable all-weather entertaining area. There is a great view of the garden from the covered terrace. The containers around the edge of the canopy are a lovely way of connecting guests to the garden.</p> <p><b><u>Congleton In Bloom</u></b></p> <p><b>Congleton in Bloom celebrates Golden Awards from North West in Bloom</b></p> <p>Congleton in Bloom picked up four awards in the North West in Bloom award ceremony held in Bolton on the 20 October 2022, and were overall category winner for the Large Town in the North West.</p> <p>The Congleton town entry was awarded gold standard. This is the 12<sup>th</sup> consecutive year in which the town has received gold in the Large Town category and the 15<sup>th</sup> gold in its 24-year history. The group also received a North West In Bloom Discretionary Award 2022: Gardening in a Changing Climate</p> <p>The team was also awarded a gold in the Britain in Bloom national competition. The town has received gold three times (2014, 2016 and 2018)</p> <p>A celebration thank-you evening for those involved in the In Bloom efforts will be held in the Town Hall on Thursday 17 November 2022.</p> <p>The group are starting to seek ideas for the 2023 campaign.</p> |
| <b>PROPOSALS</b> | To note the update report.  |