

MINUTES OF THE SMIB MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 9TH AUGUST AT 11am in the Amory Centre Garden room.

PRESENT

Sue Harrison
Mary McMonnies
Julie Vaughan
Anne Beagley
Sue Sewell
Anne Dockerty
Margaret Chester
Elaine Symons
Gail Mcleod
Helen Waller
Bridget Simmons
Jane Lucas
New Members
Darrelyn Gunzburg
Linda Mitchell

APOLOGIES from

Cllrs. David Wordon, Paul Henderson & Mervyn Way.
Will Locke
Verity Hanson
Kirsty Halls
Penny Grigg
Christine Goddard
Glenys Laws
New Member
Andy Brookesy

Sue Harrison welcomed everyone and particularly 2 of the new members of SMIB, Darrelyn and Linda. Four members have left the group Mandy and Rob Ostler to help with the Bowling Club activities & Ruth Taylor Jones & Andrea Hutchings who now have full time jobs.

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 5th July were approved with no matters arising

Coordinator's report

Sue thanked everyone who has worked so hard for SMIB to get to the Judging Day and in particular Elaine for all the last minute art work displays around the town (she has been nominated for a North Devon Volunteer Award to be presented on 20th September, so fingers crossed) and 2 members who were unable to be there on the 13th of July ie. Julie especially for the tree trunk displays, water butt & Kirsty for the last minute weeding, as well as everything else they did .. such a shame they could not join us on the day for reasons beyond their control. The Town Council were thanked for their support, particularly the Mayor Mervyn Way and Clerk Andrew Coates. Mayor M. Way says he

is still working on getting us a shed to be sited at the YMCA and Sue stressed that his personal generosity has been incredible.

The North Devon Journal full page article in the paper and a fuller version on-line were very good.

Treasurer's report

Mary McMonnies handed out a copy of the summary to all present. A copy will be sent out with the minutes.

Mary also said that although the bank balance looked healthy .. £750 from Jeremy Yabsley was already earmarked for the autumn/winter planting and that when we buy the water butts and self watering planters that are on order and needed, we will need to do some fundraising.

A 'Christmas Sale' stall in the Pannier Market has been booked for Saturday 11th of December 2021.

The Library Gardens

Sue Harrison outlined the problem of the maintenance of the Library Garden in relation to Glenys Laws' complaint about SMIB to the Town Council. The decision of the Town Council is that Glenys/ Friends of the Library are to maintain the garden to the standard that the group kept it this year and it will be monitored until February 2022. It will return to being the responsibility of the Town Council, if it is not kept up to a satisfactory standard. Conditions were also attached in that no plants are to be removed from there and no repainting of the bin area, as the colour matches the logo of the Amory Centre. The council will then meet with SMIB and The Friends of the Library in February to agree a way forward to plant and present the Library Gardens for judging next July. It was agreed that we would not let a complaint sour the good humour of the group and a vote was taken as to whether the group would continue to maintain the Mural Gardens beside the Library Gardens leading to the Library Entrance. All present voted and agreed with one abstention.

The Council Courtyard Garden at the Amory Centre is to be taken on by SMIB in partnership with the local Dementia Group as it is their meeting place, with the aim to make it a sensory garden for the benefit of those who attend the group meetings; this is supported by the Town Council. Sue Sewell stressed that it had to be to a safe standard before it is taken on for this next year, so it was agreed that the council needed to clear it of brambles and weeds; also Sue Harrison said it could only happen if a water butt could be installed there and the Amory Centre staff helped to water. It was also hoped that the Council would assist in the financing of it but SMIB would also pay for plants etc Liability insurance to be investigated. Also by doing this work it was hoped in exchange, we could use the room for our meetings hopefully for free. A vote to do this was carried. **ACTION Sue H to discuss with Andrew Coates and get an email from Andrew agreeing conditions.**

Council Responsibilities regarding street cleaning, repairs etc A question was asked about painting the black litter bins. Sue S replied that the 3 authorities, ie the South Molton Town Council, North Devon District Council and Devon County Council need to be joined up, so that SMIB know for example, what is to happen with the bins, when and where the lengths-men come in South Molton, and that each authority has a named representative who can liaise with SMIB and provide a maintenance program. For example if there is a 'no-mow May' or for asking for landowners to cut hedges back that overgrow pavements, clearing gutters etc. It was not realised by the group that all the roads that the judge takes by foot or car, will be looked at for weeds and neatness in judging in Bloom. Some in the group stressed how difficult and hard work it was clearing the gutters prior to

judging. It was agreed that members Margaret C & Sue S to compose a letter to send to all three authorities and to agree a suitable way forward for the future. All agreed. **Action: Sue S and Margaret C**

SH asked for **comments on Judging Day**. Each member present commented and all very positive about the day and the judge.

Front Garden Competition

Julie Vaughan – Thanked the first judges Natalie and Mandy for their work in judging the first round, also Lady Arran, who suggested that she does this so that she had only three finalists in each section to judge. There were lessons to be learnt from this competition: There needs to be a clear criteria of entry, a closing entry date for the competition and a date for the judging day/days announced well in advance. A dedicated phone number and email address for entries and queries. Extra things to think about: Postal votes in a box at the Amory centre. Theme around Platinum Jubilee and general farming theme of the group. This then developed to wellies and tiaras so all to be decided by sub group **Action: SH suggested that Margaret C and Julie V work together on this and they agreed.**

Next year's plans for 2022 judging.

It had been suggested that the theme for next year was 'farming'. As it is the Platinum Jubilee of the Queen's accession to the throne, it was suggested that it could be incorporated with the farming theme. Suggestions of galvanised buckets, spraying farm machinery, silver leafed plants etc were discussed. It was suggested that 'Sheep' could be the following year 2023.

SH went on to speak about her meeting with Mike Jones from Estates at NDDC and potential new projects for SMIB ie 2 tree areas by the livestock market and opposite and also the small area by the Library gardens in the Sheep-pen car park; the two areas off South Street on Southley Road near the Market Vets. Mike has offered that NDDC would clear and rotovate the beds first before we take them on, plus trim the trees. These beds are yet to be confirmed and agreed by Mike Jones and he is arranging another meeting to discuss Liverot and Bridget was asked to join that meeting when it is arranged. Mike is on holiday at the moment. **Action: Sue H AND Bridget S**

Sue H also suggested that SMIB pulls back a little from the responsibility of Central Park in that, we will not do any more developments there and will not enter it for Pride in Parks, due to vandalism of beds, especially since Henry's succulent bed has also had its plants taken, plus the watering there is a complete nightmare and Julie has born the brunt of it. A discussion ensued about Facebook images and the safeguarding of children. The litter problem was discussed and Andrew Coates added that 2 more waste bins are to be placed near Sainsbury's and the skate park. It was agreed that we would review the plants in the tyres and pop in ferns, non-flowering plants and ones that would be more suitable for drier conditions and less likely to be vandalised. Also we would ensure that the rest there in the planters and beds were suitable and sustainable. Eddy is watering the beds on the entrance to Central park at the Sainsbury's end.

AD suggested that the beds are looked at, plants split and some are put in more suitable places. Liverot Walk will be self-sustaining next year with no seasonal planting.

JL mentioned the Stags area by New Rd that is full of Ragwort .. agreed we couldn't take this on but very untidy and maybe Andrew could liaise with Stags as if we are to be taking on areas by Stags, the judges would walk down there.. **Action : Sue to discuss with Andrew**

3 water storage tanks are on order thanks to Elaine, it was suggested that one be in the Courtyard Garden at the Amory centre, one to be placed either at the back of the Pannier market and or at the Lorry Wash. They will cost in the region of £40-£60 each. Also look to see if one can be placed at Gateway Pathway or Liverot Walk. Julie and hubbie are installing water butts for us, some on order from Mole Valley to be installed at The Medical Centre. Water bowsers were discussed and also the problem of filling water tanks. Fire service was mentioned. **Action: Sue H to ask neighbour**

Self watering planters and water butts were discussed and it was agreed that we must sort the watering issues out as that was the hardest work. **Action: Sue H to get prices for self watering planters**

Art work

Elaine, Bridget (not part of the group but helping out) and Linda: Looking for storage of flowers (tissue), frames etc because of Chanters Fire. Suggestions were made of Assembly rooms cupboard or to share with the British Legion at the Chapel (Mill Street). Flowers needn't be tissue paper but of flame resistant thin foam. Workshops to be planned through the winter months to make 'flowers' & 'wellies'. Flowery wallpaper required from anyone going to DIY stalls ..long wall length strips! Suggested we also get old wellies to plant. **ACTION: ES & LM and EVERYONE. SH to discuss storage with Andrew.**

Fund raising

Plant stalls next year **Action: Anne B and Debbie T** . Christmas stall arranged on 11/12/21 in the market. To ask Coaching Inn about Quiz and Bingo Nights **ACTION: SH**
DG suggested a Welly and Tiaras theme sponsored laps around South Molton or Square! Spring 2022. Also welly throwing was discussed.

Roles

SH suggested that Gail and Darrelyn take on the role of fundraising as a sub committee with suggestions for the group. SH to continue fundraising with businesses. GM and DG and everyone agreed.

Tea for Sponsors

Date suggested after award day ? Thursday 14th of October 2021 as an Open Day for Sponsors to thank them for their support with tea and scones. Various places were suggested. To be called 'MEET THE BLOOMERS'. **Action: SH to investigate**

AOB

SH gave Dawn's suggestion of socialising....Christmas Evening out Sat 11th December – venue to be arranged. **Action: SH**

Helen would like a plan of the town with the various beds – already on the website.

www.southmoltoninbloom.co.uk

New areas to be added to the plan.

Also Helen asked if people could be responsible for certain areas and this was to be looked at and confirmed by next meeting, when hopefully we will know about all the areas. **Action : SH**

Margaret expressed being upset about Henry's bed in Central Park. Sue H asked everyone's opinions about putting more CCTV around the town and asked for a vote so that she could put it forward to the Council again. **Unanimous vote although Anne D and Sue S had left.** Also said she was going to look at more communications with the police to take the vandalism incidents more seriously. It was stressed that the police need CCTV evidence in order to pursue action. **Action: Sue H to discuss with Andrew and Paul H**

Sue H also said how Verity H had suggested crowdfunding to raise money for Henry's bed and other plants .. asked group if good idea and it was agreed, as long as we also mention his sister and mention that if monies were in excess of what was needed then we would use for replacing anything else that was vandalised. **Action: SH**

Next Meeting:

Tuesday 7th September 2021 11am Amory centre Courtyard Room.