

Present: Sue Harrison (Co-Ordinator),
Carol Grice (Secretary),
Rev Jane Lucas (Treasurer),
Marcus Alexander, Sheila Farrant, David Worden, Marie Lodge.
Apologies: Tonia Noto, Miki King, Andy Brookes.

New Volunteer: Sue Muggleton

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Minutes of the last meeting: emailed by Carol and read by all. Agreed.

Proposed by Jane, Seconded by Marie.

Coordinator's Report:

HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL THE TEAM ... This year has been the best year ever, as the group has worked so hard as a brilliant team ..in my opinion the town has looked the best ever since 2020, as not only have we made our impact in the centre of town but also have in the other areas such as Sainsburys, The Memorial, Sheep Pen Car Park and The Hospital Beds, Livarot Walk and The Gateway Path are so impactful now, it is amazing. Furthermore Tonia has achieved so much with the entrance to the park and church steps and thanks to her the entrance has, fingers crossed, not been trashed for the first time ever.

Furthermore we have Lady Carol on board doing a super job with the minutes and the stump and linking us with the WI.

Then thank goodness we have had the superb Marcus join us and thanks to him not only are the North Road beds looking the best ever but the website and the posters are amazing. He has worked so hard on the website and it would not have been possible without his skills and he has had to put up with my nagging and constant messages, bless him !!!!!

Then what has also made the difference is the whole community are working with us ..the schools, the churches, the businesses, the council, Stephen Huxtable, Adam from the market and his staff, the knitters, the charities, the WI, the firemen, SM Wombles, The Twinning Association and Eastleigh Care Homes.

We have had an email thanking us from Andrew Coates and I would like to thank Paul Henderson for pushing the water bowser idea as although not a bowser, the watering tank and hose and the work of Stephen has made such a difference and made our life slightly easier in this extreme heat.

Judging seemed to go OK although I have no idea and no hints from Ian the judge as to how well we have done and we will not hear until October, but fingers crossed.

Vandalism has been a lot less this year.

We must continue to work as a team to keep the town looking great as obviously it is not just about judging and we have Saturday August 8th Summer Festival looming!

We must also start pushing and selling tickets for the country night on Saturday November 28th.

TREASURER'S REPORT

There is £386.31 in the account after such a big spend for getting it right for judging and the bike race but we have £40 in credit at Exmoor Hardware and Sue has just paid in £20 cash given from Car Care Service Centre and huge thanks to David Walker who has got us a cheque which Sue has paid in today of £1300.

David Worden asked why the Community Garden was not visited? We explained that unfortunately we were only given 2 hours with the judge (as opposed to the whole day like

the last time), so there were a few places that got missed out and no time to visit. We gave our apologies. He will explain this to them.

Around Town there are a few dead plants which will need replacing.

We can now concentrate on selling tickets for our Concert on the 28 November with Lars Pluto. We need to sell 36 tickets minimum at a cost of £15. The hall is costing £140 and Lars £400. The bar is being looked after by Natasha.

Janet Pollard (who did the knitting for our Bloom Competition) is not well at the moment, but has indicated she would like to join us at a later date.

Day Lewis has said they will keep the display in their windows until the end of August. When we take the display down we can organise a competition for the kids. We will number each item and there will be a form to state where the item was and in whose shop. The forms to be collected and the items distributed to the child whose name is drawn. Apparently there is also a competition running with numbered ducks.

We will tell Adam we would like a table at the Festival on the 8 August 8.30-11.00. This coincides with David Worden's lunch so we will then go to that.

Marie said she will find out the costs of more t-shirts as David would like one and Sue would like another.

In the Market we have 3 new display boards that we are using for a limited time. Upon speaking to Adam it appears our previous boards have been used by other people and now been taken down.. Sue pointed out Bloom had paid £1100 for these and Bloom would like them back.

(1) Proposal by Sue that we ask for them back and sell them on or find somewhere else to hang them unless the market put them back up for us.

Yes - unanimously. Proposed by Marcus and Seconded by Sheila.

Andrew Coates entered the meeting and will take up the Proposal on our behalf.

He sent an email to Sue thanking us for all our hard work around the town, and he had received great thanks from the Bike Race for setting an amazing scene, especially the bikes in the square.

We thanked Andrew for arranging the water bowser truck, and also thanks to Matthew and Steve for going around watering the plants. Such a fabulous asset for Bloom.

Marcus showed David a planter in North Road asking who it belongs to and can we look after it. David will investigate.

In New Road, Sue and Marcus cleared high weeds from a small parking plot. Andrew will look into this, as he believes it belongs to the Council and should be cleared when necessary. There may be other areas that NDDC and Devon County Council should look after but don't.

Sue mentioned the bindweed around the Memorial. (2) Proposal by Sue. We ask the RBL/Council if they would replace the ground with either concrete or tarmac. Anything that would eliminate the bindweed. We would still look after plants there as they will be transferred to pots and planters or larger ones to our other areas.

Agreed by Carol, Marcus, Sue, Sheila and Marie. Proviso from David that he and Andrew seek permission and advice from the RBL/Council. A further discussion will take place in the future when answers are received. Sue and Jane advised him that this alternative groundwork would save time, money, effort and strangled plants in the future. Otherwise we give up looking after the Memorial altogether.

Sue mentioned having a music event in 2027 to raise money for Bloom. Steve Parr had been popular in the past. He will sing Neil Diamond and a selection of 80s music. (3) Sue's proposa. IAgreed unanimously.

On Wednesday the 29 July in the morning, Jack Woolfendon from North Devon UNESCO Biosphere, is giving a presentation at The Gateway on what plants and why and how to look after them to help us with Bloom. Members to attend with Sue if possible. Sue to find out exact time.

Next Meeting **TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER AT 2.00 PM in the AMORY CENTRE (FOC).**