

**Present:** The Chairman, Councillor Miss Kellie Hinton  
The Vice Chairman, Councillor Dave Eggleton  
The Mayor, Councillor Julian Brookes  
Mr Tuc Ahmad  
Mrs Michaela Clarke  
Mrs Caroline Langler  
Ms Marisa Francini

**In Attendance:** Janet Wheeler – Town Clerk  
Gareth Bartle – Parks Manager  
Becky Walker – Minute Taker

**Also Present:** No members of the public

**59. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lorraine Hillier and Phil Simms, who has advised he has a number of ideas regarding working with community and would meet with the Chairman to discuss ideas.

Apologies for lateness were received from Marisa Francini.

**60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received.

**61. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

None.

**62. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee (HiB) held on 28 September 2016 were received, approved and adopted and were signed as a true record by the Chairman.

**63. REVIEW OF FLORAL/HORTICULTURAL DISPLAYS**

The Chairman handed over to the Parks Manager, who gave a presentation regarding the floral displays in the town in which he provided an overview of the review, followed by discussion on particular areas (see appendix below).

Marisa Francini arrived at 9.48 am.

After discussion the Sub Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that the following this first review the following recommendations are made and further investigation is undertaken as follows:-**

**a. Market Place**

- costs and feasibility of planting 3 male Ginko trees in the pavement bed nearest to the crossroads
  - 3 x quadruple planters – costs be sought to remove over the winter, plant and bring-on under glass and return to the Market Place with more advanced plants to provide a reliable and vibrant summer display
  - remove the 2 wooden barrel planters outside the Town Hall and re-use elsewhere if their condition permits eg Station Park or the Meadows
  - investigate alternatives to the speckled laurel eg sweet Box hedging, a water feature, colourful or monochromatic planting
- b. **Pavement Flowerbed by Henley Bridge**
- investigate costs/feasibility of planting at the bottom on the outside of the Buxus hedge which surrounds the bed to enhance the display (all year-round or seasonal)
- c. **Red Lion Lawn**
- seek costs/feasibility of double flowerboxes/troughs on the railings by the river at Red Lion Lawn
- d. **Fairmile Verges**
- investigate further re planting bluebells, snowdrops under the trees on the Fairmile
  - dispersing the daffodil bulbs on the Fairmile rather than blocks
- e. **Town Entry Sign planting**
- investigate renewed planting at the Fairmile and Reading Road town entrance signs following their refurbishment

that a list of suitable and available plants for floral displays be requested from the horticultural contractor to show the types of plants available

## **64. GARDENS OF HENLEY 2017**

Members received and considered a report regarding proposed changes to the Henley in Bloom Gardens of Henley competitions for 2017.

After discussion the Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

**that in order to encourage new entrants potential entrants/gardens are identified by members of the Sub Committee, Park Wardens etc and are then invited to enter. Invite forms are printed which can be delivered. Applications also to be available for residents to enter.**

**that only areas which the public can see are judged and therefore back gardens are not included in the competition**

**that a category is included for 2 or more adjacent gardens which are well cared for entitled the “Best Group of Gardens”**

**that the front garden category is widened to include areas which can be viewed and enjoyed by passers-by but may not be termed a “garden” eg a selection of containers, hanging baskets, window boxes or climbing plants at the front of a house, a driveway, wide pavement or**

a garden to the side but visible from the front - the name of the category to be changed accordingly

that the previous year's cup winners be invited to join the judging panel the following year

that the current categories continue eg the "On the Spot Award", the Pubs and Restaurants, Best Communal Gardens etc

## **65. BLOOM NOTICEBOARD**

Members considered the value of having a Henley in Bloom noticeboard (or part of a noticeboard). Members noted a review of noticeboards is currently being undertaken by the Town Manager.

After discussion the Sub Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that as part of the review of the town's noticeboards, the Town Manager be asked to consider including a section of a noticeboard to promote Henley in Bloom events, competition, ideas, judging days etc**

## **66. ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION**

Marisa Francini provided an update on the Henley Allotments Association (AA) as follows:-

- the AA would like to hold a "Gardeners' Question Time" in February/March 2017 and asked if Henley in Bloom would like to co-host the event.

It was agreed this would be a good networking opportunity and could offer an ideal opportunity to launch the Gardens of Henley 2017 competition. It was suggested the Town Manager could help promote the event with related businesses who may like to take part, attend or sit on the panel.

- seeds have been purchased via the AA's seed discount scheme for Schools in Bloom Growing Challenge – pumpkins, sunflowers and cut-flowers and accompanying instruction leaflets are being written
- at the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom seminar it was suggested Allotment Association competition winners meet the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom Judges on their tour

After discussion the Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

**that Henley in Bloom co-host the Gardeners' Question Time with the Henley Allotments Association in February/March 2017 and the Henley in Bloom Gardens of Henley 2017 be launched at the event**

## **67. WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY**

i. Members considered ways Henley in Bloom could work with groups within the community including:-

- Henley Scouts (Monday evening group) – who have contacted Henley in Bloom re working together on their "Community Award"
- Henley Brownies (Thursday evening group)
- Gillotts School and Henley College
- the Doctors' Surgeries

Suggested projects include art projects, designing the celebrations beds, planting an area near the library.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**

**that the Chairman investigate projects which can involve working with local community groups and report back to the next meeting**

- ii. The Chairman advised the Chelsea Fringe in Henley will once again be hosting events in 2017. It is proposed the Floral Flotilla take place on Sunday 4 June 2016 and members were asked if they would like to support this event.

Members felt this was an excellent event and involves a group of people who Henley in Bloom do not usually engage with.

After discussion members **RESOLVED**

**that Henley in Bloom support the Chelsea Fringe in Henley and the Floral Flotilla to be held on the afternoon of Sunday 4 June 2017**

The Mayor, Councillor Julian Brookes and Michaela Clarke left the meeting at 11.03 am.

## **68. PROGRESS**

Members received and considered the progress report and made the following comments:-

*The Wishing Tree at the Christmas Festival* – the Chairman will be manning the Wishing Tree and asked for volunteers to help.

*Christmas Tree Shredding* – the Parks Service and Henley in Bloom will once again provide a tree shredding service on Saturday 9 January 2017 at Mill Meadows between 10 am and 12 noon. A charge of £2 per tree.

Councillor Eggleton offered to collect trees for an additional £3 per tree (eg £5 per tree) and should be contacted directly.

*Remembrance Display in the window of Facy's of Henley* – the Chairman and Vice Chairman worked with primary schools in Henley to provide a window display.

*The Thames and Chilterns in Bloom Seminar* was hosted by Henley in Bloom at the Town Hall and was an informative and enjoyable day. It was attended by 14 Bloom/IYN Groups and Thames and Chilterns in Bloom Judges and Management Committee members.

*Celebration Beds 2017* – members are asked to bring ideas for a theme for 2017 to the next meeting.

*Obelisk Plaque* – the unveiling of the plaque will take place on Saturday 19 November 2016 at 11 am. Henley in Bloom contributed £150.

The Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

**that the Progress Report be noted**

**69. GARDENING BUDDIES UPDATE**

The Sub Committee noted the dates and on-going projects being undertaken by Gardening Buddies. Recent work and future projects as follows:-

- shrubs have been planted at the corner of Newtown Road and Reading Road
- bulb planting on the Reading Road and Lions Garden
- winter planting of tubs at Mill Meadows
- refurbishing the Rotary Beds at Mill Meadows will be undertaken in the spring. Both Rotary Clubs have donated £250 each. The work will be co-ordinated by Gardening Buddies assisted by the Rotary Clubs, the Parks Service and the Community Payback Team

**70. BUDGET UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received, considered and noted the budget to date.

**71. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Wednesday 1 February 2017 at 9.30 am.

Chairman

bw

**Minute 63 – Review of Floral/Horticultural Displays**

Presentation regarding the Floral Displays in Henley and comments made.

The Parks Manager provided an overview of the review followed by focusing on specific areas as follows:-

- due to the size of the project it is intended to break down the review into bite-sized pieces. This first section begins with areas owned by the Town Council
- although there is an abundance of choice in the plant world, in order to have a healthy and appropriate display the choice of plants is restricted by certain constraints eg:-
  - environmental conditions:- sun/shade; soil type; ground water/ moisture levels etc
  - choosing plants which are fit for purpose eg durability, height, colour, size etc
- the level of maintenance will be reflected in the display eg regular watering and feeding is key to a vibrant, healthy display particularly in planters, baskets etc

The following areas were discussed:-

**MARKET PLACE** consisting of:-

- 1 x built-in pavement bed (21 m x 1.5 m) which is planted with 4 deciduous male Ginko trees, speckled laurel and seasonal planting
- 1 x built-in pavement bed (16 m x 1.5 m) which is planted with speckled laurel and season planting
- 5 x male Ginko trees planted in tree grills in paved area

Considerations/Comments:-

**Pavement Beds**

- the Market Place has one of the heaviest footfalls in the town and therefore should be a priority
- the **speckled laurel** provides height within the centre of the beds and prevents pedestrians cutting across them. Any replacement planting would need to be:-
  - robust
  - have stature to prevent pedestrians walking across the beds
  - require medium/low-maintenance to be cost effective
  - all-year round interest
 or a completely different type of display eg a water feature could be considered
- scented planting eg Sweet Box hedging was suggested
- multi-coloured or monochromatic
- **Additional trees** - It was noted there were no trees in the bottom pavement bed (nearest the cross roads) and consideration could be given to planting a fastigate type tree (eg compact) in this area subject to further investigation/ necessary permissions. Although Ginkgos are not singled out for helping to reduce air pollution – any tree/vegetation will help reduce air pollution.

It was noted liaison is required with the Transport Strategy as their proposals may impact on this area.

**Quadruple planters x 3** – the quality of the displays can vary year to year.

Considerations/Comments:-

- remove planters in winter/spring, plant and bring-on in a greenhouses and place in the Market Place when they are more fully grown
- investigate different types of planting eg herbs, perennials and ivy
- remove or retain

**2 Wooden Barrels – these are past their best and stain the pavement**

Consideration/Comments:-

- remove and utilise elsewhere if fit or
- retain

**5 x 1.2 m long troughs on the apron of the Town Hall**

Considerations/comments:-

- the plants are provided by Toad Hall Garden Centre and are planted for free
- provide all-year round colour

**HENLEY BRIDGE FLOWER BED** by Red Lion Lawn (Anne Manning Bed)

- 1 tapered pavement bed 1m at one end, 3 m at other and 10 m long with Buxus hedging on the perimeter and the diagonal. Seasonal planting. Under shade of large London Plane tree.

Consideration/Options:-

- have taller plants to show over the hedging. Tulips were suggested but have a short life.
- the hedge prevents people cutting across the bed and channels pedestrians toward the crossing or along the pavement which is particularly important at busy times eg during Regatta
- low level planting on the outside of the hedge eg sedum

Members highlighted the planting outside the Red Lion Hotel and felt this could be greatly enhanced and could complement the planting in the Anne Manning Bed.

**STATION ROAD**

- 1 x 35m long and 1.5 m wide bed within the central reservation planted with hardy Palms and seasonal planting

Considerations/Comments:-

- brightly planted attractive display
- this area brings colour to the area and receives many compliments
- investigate trimming the Palm nearest to the traffic lights

**RED LION LAWN**

- 12 m x 500 mm pavement bed at base of wall planted with mixed perennials
- no 3 x 3 m x 500 mm wide planters
- spring bulbs under tree by Mermaid statue

Considerations/Comments:-

- double flower boxes/troughs on either side of the black railings on the riverside

**TOWN ENTRANCES**

- Reading Road roundabout – re-designed and planted in 2014/15 with all-year round seasonal colour and a central feature statue
- Fairmile Verges – wide grass verges with double-avenue of trees (Turkey Oak and Lime).

- arguably the best entrance to the town – a natural vista into town from the Chilterns (AONB) and difficult to improve on natural beauty
- the narcissi are planted in blocks and may benefit from spreading the bulbs into a more random, natural pattern
- snowdrops, bluebells under the trees
- Gravel Hill – eclectic bed with mixed planting.

Members felt this area was very attractive and supported continuing with this type of planting.

### **TOWN ENTRANCES SIGNS**

- flowerbeds by town entrance signs at Watermans Allotments and the Fairmile
- Marlow Road sign is higher and has wooden planter
- Henley Bridge and Gravel Hill

Consideration/Comments:-

- could plant a raised flowerbed – possibly made of brick and flint however would need to raise the town entrance signs
- planting must not obscure the signs
- signs are being refurbished and liaison should take place with the Town Manager

### **STATION PARK**

- no 3 x 4 m diameter circular beds within the pavement under shade of Liquid Amber (x 2) and 1 x large Lime
- grassed area with trees

Consideration/Comments:-

- under planting around trees nearest the river provides attractive splashes of colour

### **HANGING BASKETS**

- 129 Town Council baskets and in 2016 - 245 summer and 123 winter baskets

Considerations/Comments:-

- love them or hate them they bring colour to the town
- people like to see large, healthy displays
- regular feeding and watering ensures a vibrant display
- baskets could be the same (unify the town) or vary around the town (add interest)
- 2 colours look better than 3 – the pink and purple displays looked stunning

### **RECTORY HOUSE, THAMESIDE**

- the planting of these window boxes hung onto the railings gives a stunning, vibrant summer display which could be replicated elsewhere