

Achievements Hopton in Bloom 2016

The Hopton in Bloom team have settled into a wonderful Wednesday morning rhythm of meeting together, then some going off to tend their specific sites around the village to ensure they are well maintained and as full of colour as we can make them, and at 11 a.m. gathering back together for coffee. Occasionally a particular site gets out of hand and then all the team are called into action to sort it out. All this is recorded in our weekly action book together with the important rota of who is bringing the cake for the next few weeks! The whole village has benefitted from the bright and colourful beds and borders and restoration projects which are now flourishing following our TLC over the last fourteen years.

Projects

Our major project this year has seen the completion of the beautiful oak gates and entrance to the Recreation Ground and the cobbled driveway. What superb workmanship has gone into this construction. Plans are in hand for a wrought iron recessed gateway at the small entrance to the Rec which will ensure that children can play safely without the risk on running directly out onto the busy road. We are grateful to Kirklees for awarding us a grant of £1000 to meet the costs.

The K6 telephone box, which is a major attraction with all its innovative seasonal displays, has this summer been completely restored and painted and a water pump, generously donated by Richard Haigh, has been restored to full working order and is in pride of place in front of Croft House.

The container, which houses all our equipment, has been completely cleared out and revamped with the addition a small shed at the side to house building materials. Two new mowers have been purchased a small light electric one to ensure the banking is relatively easy to mow and a larger Mountfield battery operated one for the more distant heavy duty grassy areas. Both have proved to be an asset to the mowing team.

Yorkshire in Boom

After an incredibly wet winter which saw the River Calder dramatically flood on Boxing Day, Yorkshire in Boom wrote to offer us the option of cancelling the Spring judging but the team voted to carry on as usual so we were delighted to gain Gold Awards for both the Spring Judging and Summer judging. The six members of the team who attended came away from the Awards Ceremony at York Racecourse full of enthusiasm particular as the opening view was of our begonias and hebes on the banking. However a vote is to be taken as to whether we enter next year.

Social and Community

For Christmas 2015 we decided on a 'Bring and Share' fuddle at the Club and this was such a great success we are planning to repeat it again this year. In May we planned a surprise 80th birthday party for John at the Club but had to let him in on the secret as he was planning to go off on a walking trip. A very convivial evening, together with his very special birthday cake, was enjoyed by all.

Most of our team wear several hats in the village so we support each other wherever possible.

The Carols round the tree was a great success, with Clifton and Lightcliffe Band providing the music and Revd Hugh Baker leading the Carols and an enthusiastic crowd enjoying mulled wine and mince pies, although at one point we had to hold tight on the ropes to stop the marquee from flying away.

We have also supported and assisted with:-

- Jumble sale
- A Gourmet Evening with Eric
- Casino Royale evening
- RNLI Race night at the Club,
- decorating St John's for Christmas and Easter,
- The Spring Craft Fair
- The Village Fete and Heritage Event
- Tea and Tiara
- Harvest Festival Auction
- The Autumn Coffee Morning

Our regular monthly activities with the preschool children have been most enjoyable for both children and adults. They have, among other things, planted potatoes, harvested them, cooked and eaten them. A deluxe bug hotel, constructed by two of our new members and filled with organic habitat by the children, is now resplendent in the Wild Life garden. Last week, the back of Croft House, the children planted crocus bulbs, donated by Mirfield Rotary

Club for the *End Polio Now Campaign*, in newly created beds, using our own leaf mould and compost. Hopefully in the Spring they will be able to see them through the windows as they meet in Croft House.

The upperhoptonvillage.co.uk website continues to be a valuable source of information and publicity for Hopton in Bloom, UHCA and all the Associations in our village

Fundraising

Apart from our very first Garden Trail, we have each year enjoyed a beautiful sunny day but not so this year. After so much hard work, by all the gardeners opening their gardens and the team, in preparation for the day, we woke up on July 9th to torrential rain. A few brave souls toured the gardens in the morning but more arrived in the afternoon when the skies cleared. We were down on numbers overall but those who came enjoyed extra time for chatting and found the experience more relaxing.

Following our photographic competition, which was extended to include Hopton and surrounding areas, we are fortunate this year that a member of our team volunteered to produce all the artwork for the sponsors for the HiB Calendar for 2017 which should reduce printing costs considerably.

Team News

A couple of our team were seconded to the Extension project at Croft House which is now complete and this will be a most useful facility for all who use Croft House and the surrounding area.

We were sorry to say good bye to two hard working members who have moved from the village with the prospect of carrying on the In Bloom initiatives in their new village.

Fortunately we have welcomed four new members so we have an unbelievable strong team of 22 members, all with valuable and very different skill mixes.

Thanks are due to each and every member of our consistent and hardworking team; to all in our village and beyond who support us in many different ways: to Malcolm Webster, Anne and Vince Seabourne, Simon, the Dedman's gardener, who all tend their local areas: to Knowle Park Nursery and Horticulture who supply us with valuable advice and healthy plants; to all who give us such generous donations and to all who sponsor our Calendar; to St John's church for hosting our coffee breaks and meetings.

We look forward to continuing to meet each Wednesday for gardening, friendship, fun and refreshments with an end result that benefits our whole community.

Chris Breare Oct 2016