

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 17th NOVEMBER, 2009

BRITAIN IN BLOOM COMPETITION : NORTHUMBRIA IN BLOOM

LINK TO WORK PROGRAMME: POLICY DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW

Report of the Chief Executive

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP1: Prosperous City; P5: Attractive and Inclusive City

CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focused Services, CIO4: Improving Partnership Working to Deliver 'One City'.

1. Why has this report come to committee?

- 1.1 The report provides members with an overview of the Northumbria in Bloom competition its links to the Britain in Bloom initiative and the important part the competition plays in Sunderland.

2. Background

- 2.1 Britain in Bloom is one of the largest horticultural campaigns in Europe working year-round to create a cleaner and greener Britain through community action. Participants can earn top marks in horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation. The 'in Bloom' journey starts in the regional/national campaigns from which communities are nominated for the finals.
- 2.2 There are categories in Britain in Bloom to suit every type of community, from small villages to cities end everything in between. Many entries are directed by community groups, some are led by their local authority and others are formed from people power! The key to success is forming a partnership between residents, community groups, local business and the local authority.
- 2.3 Northumbria in Bloom is the voluntary regional organisation that administers the Britain in Bloom competition in Northumberland, Durham, Tyne and Wear and Teesside.

3. Current Position - Northumbria in Bloom

- 3.1 Northumbria in Bloom is linked to the "bigger picture" in terms of local environmental quality and the "safer, greener and cleaner agenda"; Core pillars of judging are - Horticultural Achievement (50%), Environmental Responsibility (25%) and Community Participation 25%.
- 3.2 Horticultural Achievement - Floral displays are an important element of the campaign, displays will typically be located in:
 - Publicly owned areas, including parks, publicly owned buildings, roadside areas and roundabouts.
 - Housing and residential areas, residential homes, schools, allotments etc.

- Shopping areas, business areas and premises, commercial premises, public houses, hotels, garages, and transport terminals such as bus and train stations.

Northumbria in Bloom has environmental responsibility at its core and the judges will wish to see permanent/sustainable planting initiatives as well.

- 3.3 Environmental Responsibility – Northumbria in Bloom encourages environmentally responsible activities/projects designed to improve the areas where people live, work and spend our leisure time. Looking after the environment has become a very important community concern and everyone is being encouraged to recycle and use environmentally responsible products and practices wherever and whenever possible. It is the expectation that Northumbria in Bloom participants will strive to provide a co-ordinated approach so that environmental issues are resolved in harmony with each other.
- 3.4 Community Participation - Crucial to the success and continuity of the Bloom campaigns is community participation and this is considered in all appropriate areas of local campaign initiatives. For example consideration is given to whether the local campaign has engaged the community in responsible resource management or educated them about the important issue or whether they have tried to educate and engage the community with regard to local heritage sites.
- 3.5 Small and large villages, towns and cities in the region are judged for floral displays both in Spring and Summer. Special awards are also made for schools, conservation projects, business parks, hospitals, parks etc. The competition contributes to the regeneration of towns and cities and helps to provide an attractive environment for both visitors and the local community. Appendix 1 of the report highlights the 2009 awards success achieved by Sunderland's towns, schools, neighbourhoods and community projects.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 Northumbria in Bloom plays an important part within the city and its local communities. The show of flowers in otherwise drab grey streets, the landscaping of derelict and marginal land, the enhancement of towns and pride in villages is the aim and success of the competition.
- 4.2 The Northumbria in Bloom competition could not be achieved without the enthusiasm of the whole community working together to improve their local environment and the recognition that involvement in Britain in Bloom can bring is an important factor and often the catalyst for action.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 That members note the information contained in the report.

Background Papers

- Northumbria in Bloom & Britain in Bloom- Websites

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Northumbria in Bloom Awards 2009

Sunderland Winners

Entry Description	Trophy Award	Medal Award.
Major Awards		
Houghton le Spring - Large Town Class		Silver
Hetton le Hole - Large Town Class		Silver
Sunderland - Best Large City Class	North East CO-OP Trophy	Gold
Washington - Small City Class		Silver
Washington Village - Best Village Class		Silver -Gilt
Special Awards		
Holley Park School Best School Horticultural project	Rod Leyburn Memorial Trophy	Gold
Dubmire Primary School Best School Horticultural project		Gold
Broadway Junior School Best School Horticultural project		Gold
St Marys and St Peters Church Community Project Best Voluntary project in support of Northumbria In Bloom		Gold
Houghton Community Access Point Garden Best Voluntary project in support of Northumbria In Bloom		Gold
Bob Wooley Award - Peter Tate from Houghton le Spring Outstanding contribution by a salaried individual in support of Northumbria In Bloom	Bob Wooley Award	N/A
Concord Bus Station Best Railway, Bus or Metro Station Class		Gold
St Benedicts Hospice Garden Hospitals, Hospices and Medical Centres Class	Newcastle Building Society Trophy	Gold
Billy Hardy Sports Complex Best Sports Ground		Silver - Gilt
Rainton Bridge Business Park Best Business Park Class	Gateshead MBC Trophy	Gold
Doxford International Business Park Best Business Park Class		Gold
Hetton Lyons Country Park Hetton le Hole		Gold

Best Conservation Project

Hylton Dene
Best Conservation Project

Silver

Holmlands Park
Best Combined Efforts of the Residents of a
Community

Silver - Gilt

Warwick Drive and Windsor Drive - Houghton le
Spring
Best Combined Efforts of the Residents of a
Community

Silver - Gilt

RHS Neighbourhood Awards.

Whitby Rise Care Home - Houghton le Spring

Award of
Merit

Millbeck Grove Residents - Houghton le Spring

Award of
Merit

Barley Mow Sensory Garden
Sunderland and North Durham Royal Society for the Blind
in partnership with environmental services and
Barclays.

Award of
Merit