



BLEADON IN BLOOM

No Award this year so this is just for the village!

BLEADON IN BLOOM

2019 – 2020 Britain in Bloom entry by the Parish of
Bleadon in North Somerset

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For Bleadon Parish Council

Bleadon in Bloom

Pennant Award Entry 2019

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Introduction

Bleadon is a tucked in rural village on the border between Somerset and North Somerset. We are set along a river and criss crossed by a network of rhynes, footpaths and country roads. The village is small with some 1080 residents and a local holiday business which almost doubles our size in the summer. We have many footpaths and bridleways and country roads which encourage visitors either walking, cycling or on horseback. This would have been our second year in the competition.



Bleadon is situated between the coast and the Mendip Hills, in an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) and consequently can boast a wealth of flora and fauna. Purn Hill on our West boundary is an SSI and has a rare Rock Rose found only on Purn Hill and Brean Down.

Our community is vibrant and friendly, although it is said anecdotally that in the last few years we have not networked as well as we could have done, and we do not meet often as a community but rather in our groups such as the WI or the Horticultural Society. Some of our biggest local companies are not close to our community with a result that we can often be in conflict. Delivering Bleadon in Bloom has given us an opportunity to come together as a community and to work across groups and business. This has led to greater understanding and co-operation.

As part of our project, we have an eye on social isolation for some members of our community and seek to ensure that all parts of the Parish feel connected to the project and to the wide variety of resources that our parish has to offer. We know that everybody feels better when they are valued and sometimes the smallest contribution takes the most effort.

We have many rare and endangered plants and animals in our community. Part of our project has been about raising awareness of our environment for these animals and plants. We want to find ways to bring them to our attention and help them to thrive – or at least to raise awareness of not creating conditions that make it difficult for them to thrive.

Our parish is naturally beautiful, and we have chosen placements of flowers and herbs that enhance that natural beauty. We are grateful to the services that have supported us during the Pandemic and have tried to reflect that in our planting this year.

Review of the year

The Beginning

This was our second year in the competition following a Silver Gilt award and the South West award for the most effective use of the Blue Campaign. Our credentials as a group that know about wildlife was really enhanced when we were asked to support the rewilding of Weston project. The theme we chose initially for this year was the Olympic Eternal Flame and we were looking to do a fire themed set of tubs, torches for children to fill and Podiums of flowers around the village. We also planned to support the 75th Anniversary Celebrations in the village by filling all the tubs with Red, White and Blue bulbs to bloom early May.

Our plans changed for the main plant up when lockdown happened due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. We wanted to honour the essential workers that continue to look after us and to cheer up the village so we swapped to a scheme about the NHS Rainbow and went for maximum colour and impact.

Our projects

Our cut down version of an entry this year continued to be focussed on enhancing the beauty around us. We picked projects that would also link our community. These were:

1. Bleadon Mill
2. Our Rhynes
3. The Shop and Cafe
4. Our Community Celebrations
5. Our floral displays

Bleadon Mill

Bleadon Mill is an important part of the village and forms part of one of the main walks. We had noticed a patch of ground that looked like it was begging for a planting scheme. The ground belonged to North Somerset Council so after an enthusiastic response to our request for gardeners we approached them to use the land. We were all grateful to essential workers during the Pandemic and how can you get more essential than farmers? So, we had the great idea to use a tractor tyre which allowed us to pay our respects to the rural community we live in, to brighten up an unused area and bring together another part of our community. It also had the added bonus that it was a way of sourcing a large planter for nothing!



The result was wonderful and the whole area is being well looked after by the team.

The Rhynes

Our work in the rhynes has continued with the Internal Drainage board (IDB). The floating pennywort continues to try to choke much of the waterway. The IDB, led by ecologist Phil Brewin, continue this battle, and keep the community informed. They have taken to innovative cuts of the banks of the rhyne avoiding the wildflowers and the wildlife. Our relationship working together has been remarkably successful, but we will need to continue this for 5 years to get rid of the invasion.



One member of our Bleadon in Bloom team continues to litter pick along the banks and uses our recycling boxes provided by the council to dispose of most of the waste.

We got a grant from North Somerset council last year and bought some nets to stop recycling from local bins from blowing into the rhyne. This does seem to have helped to slow down the build-up of litter.

Its great to see our Water voles thriving in the Rhyne.



This area has been catalogued by our local wildlife photographer Bill Hewitt and he has encouraged ecologist Chris Sperring to support this initiative and help the community to understand the importance of our Water Voles. Between them they have educated the community with information about how this endangered species work with the Rhyne and how to protect them from predators. It's been great to see other photos by people in the community on In and Around Bleadon on Facebook.

The Shop and Cafe

The Bleadon shop and café have worked hard in 2020 to look after people in the village who are socially distancing or shielding others. In return we have created some lovely displays to show our appreciation and hung baskets around the café to add to its quaint, rural feel. We have moved and reused some of the troughs around that area, and we have a new team who will be looking after them going forward.



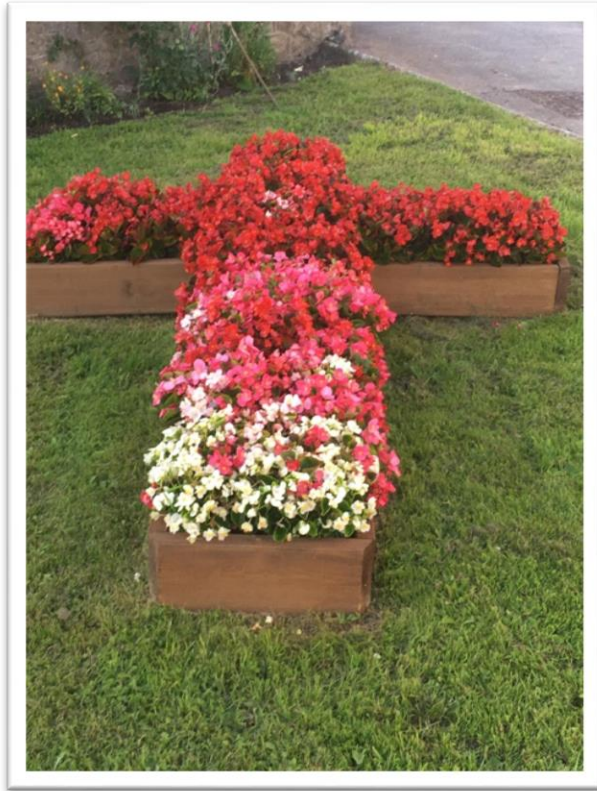


Our Community Celebrations

We celebrated the 75th anniversary of VE day this year with contributions by the Bloomers being wonderful displays of Red, White and Blue in the tubs.

We also created a raised planter at the Church as a symbol of our gratitude to the fallen in World War II.

Although the village were not able to celebrate together, we hope the floral displays brought cheer to people.



Floral Displays

We started the year with a plan to use the Olympic Torch as our theme and ended up with an NHS rainbow but we think the village looked lovely and we have got much better at filling the tubs.

Most of our professional growers were not able to supply us and we relied heavily on what we had grown ourselves – luckily we were able to complement this with a great supply of excellent plants

from West Croft Garden Centre. And the free plants from Greendales arrived just in time.



Our plant mix was:

1. Asters for Bees
2. Ten Week stocks for early flowers and perfume
3. Nicotiana for height and fragrance
4. Petunias for large flowers, ranging from pastels to strong blues
5. Lobelia for trailing colour in sun or partial shade
6. Cineraria for longevity, good height and contrast with bold colours
7. Marigolds for long-flowering, bright blooms. Good for pollinators
8. Geraniums for strong visual impact and drought tolerance
9. Canna Lilies for bold foliage and vibrant colours
10. Salvias for long lasting colour, heat tolerance

We had 45 tubs this year in the village, and we calculated that we could add around 5 displays to brighten up areas and join the theme together across the whole Parish.



Each planter or Tub has a “Tub Parent” these are people who tend the tub from when they are planted until all the plants are over. They may continue to support their tub as we go into next year. Each received a Branded High Viz Vest and Watering Can:

Zone	Location	Furniture	Tub Parents	Plants
1	Bleadon Road Junction with A370 – Huttons Garage Side	Raised beds over 1meter x 1 meter set back from Road with signage along bottom of flower Planter - Welcome to Bleadon in Bloom – donated by Marshalls – value £500	Huttons Garage and Newlands Owned by PC	Rainbow selection, hardy for wind
1	Bleadon Road Junction with A370	Opposite Huttons side – Add Wildflowers to Bank – added foxgloves	Bill Hewitt Owned by PC	foxgloves
1	Bus Stop	Map of Hill Planter – three levels – using packing crates (PC) – Plus two tubs (donated by Croquet)	Karen Orme Owned by PC	Rainbow selection
1	Banks of Rhyne	Wildflowers seeds, forget me knots and Foxgloves	Litter kept at bay, IDB spraying and strimming	Foxgloves
2	By Café and shop	5 Troughs of various sizes already on site	Jennie Coleman	Nicotiana

		2 hanging baskets (belonging to PC)	Shop and Café Emma Hanse	Rainbow selection Marigolds Trailing plants for baskets
2	Pedestrian entrance to croquet lawn	2 troughs	Jennie Coleman and Anna House	Marigold and geranium
3	Start of Footpath at end of Purn Way	Crate planter owned by PC	Pauline @ Southwold	Rainbow mix
3	Bank at end of Purn Way	Bank owned by Shalom but planted in Bloom colours as part of festival	Marion Dare	Rainbow mix
3	Mid Purn Way outside Rose Cottage	Tubs x 2 owned by PC	Rose cottage	Rainbow mix plus Ivy and Calibracoa
3	By Bench on West Mendip Way	Two tubs owned by Parish council Plus tub owned by Liz Scarisbrick outside garden gate	Marian and Nikki	Rainbow mix
3	At start of foot path	One square planter owned by PC	John Katouris	Red mix
4	None	Two tubs at end of road both together – Chestnut lane owned by PC	Vera	Rainbow mix
		One tub outside stables - Chestnut lane owned by Val and Roger Hart	Val	Blue Mix
		Two tubs at end of road both together - South Combe owned by PC	Rose	Rainbow Mix
		One planter west side of road entrance – Amesbury Drive Owned by PC	Betty	Hot Rainbow Mix – Dainty theme
		One Tub at east side of road entrance – Amesbury Drive owned by PC	This one needs a parent	Rainbow Mix
5	Bus stop	One Tub at Bus stop Tenterk close	Liz Butt	Rainbow Mix
5	Entrance to hall	Eight Tubs and one planter, plus one low small trough and one pot. Wheelbarrows and flower beds plus low troughs and pots of various sizes	Bev and Ben Marion and Jim Neighbours Jim Bill Hewitt	Rainbow mix plus lobelia. Re dug some flowerbeds this year that seemed neglected.

	Wishing Well area	6 troughs and planters belonging to the PC – four given new compost and plants this year -Two to do next year	Well cottage plus Bill Hewitt and Hall Waterers where necessary	Geraniums mainly and colour – Rainbow mix
6	Escape area	Matching planter from Marshals 1m x 1m Belongs to the PC	Escape – Garage sometimes	Rainbow Mix
6	Bleadon Mill	Terracotta pots belongs to the PC	Lisa Smith, Jeremy and the Bleadon Mill Gardeners	Rainbow mix but mainly geraniums
6	Bleadon Mill	Tractor Tyre donated by Dave Luff, belongs to the PC land belongs to NSC and permission was sought and obtained	Lisa Smith, Jeremy and the Bleadon Mill Gardeners	Rainbow mix and Canna Lilys – will be expanded on next year. Kept very tidy
7	Market Cross	One new planter by bench – 4 planters already in situ. Owned by PC	Neighbours as a team	Rainbow mix
7	Market Cross	Cross planter added in remembrance owned by PC	Neighbours as a team	Red, pink and white begonias
7	Church Yard	In beds in Church Yard – IYN entry	Church Team with Tim Erridge	Not done this year
7	bus stop and around the church room	Two planters owned by PC	Mikey (aged 7) and neighbours	Rainbow mix
*	Pub	Unable to join in this year. Much was distanced – however, added flowers later	Queens	Started late but looks lovely
8	Shiplate Road just passed the Veale	7 already in situ owned by PC	Libby Boucher	Rainbow mix
8	Top of the Veale by post box	2 Tubs owned by PC	Jackie HS	Rainbow Mix
	Birch Avenue	Two tubs at top of Birch Avenue owned by house on corner	House who owns land	Rainbow Mix
9	Hill top	Two tubs, flower area built into bus stop owned by PC	Georgina	Rainbow Mix
	Bus stop	Tub added at old Bus stop owned by PC	Nikki	Hostas
10	Roman Road	Viewpoint – 2 planters owned by PC	Dennis Perrett &	Rainbow Mix

			Bleadon Golf club	
11	Hill Cote	One new planter by bus stop. Owned by PC	Neighbours	Rainbow mix plus neighbour has added.

We also have added further Ox-eye Daisy, Forget Me Nots, Foxgloves and wildflowers to the bank on the entrance opposite the Anchor Inn to add colour to this wild area. .

Our Owls

As well as indirectly supporting the Water Vole we wanted to directly impact one other wildlife species in the area. Our ecologist and wildlife photographers picked owls as we had not been hearing so many of them and felt that there was a lack of spaces for owls to nest in the parish. We spoke to Kitto Construction who we know through a local carpenter, Steve Smith. We knew that Steve was a brilliant carpenter and we asked him if he would be able to make us some Owl Boxes. He was enthusiastic and spoke to Kitto who donated the wood immediately. Steve built 5 boxes, two little owl boxes, two tawny owl boxes and a Barn Owl box. This year we had one Little Owl box left and we were delighted to give it to Avon Wildlife Trust. Avon Wildlife Trust is committed to enabling wildlife to survive and thrive across the region. More than 18,000 members, 3,500 volunteers and a dedicated staff team work together to make our local area wilder and make nature part of life, for everyone. Avon Wildlife Trust is an independent charity. They have access to many habitats that will be great for this box and they happily received the donation



Chris Sperring came to the village and picked sites for the boxes last year and we are delighted to report that one of our Tawny Owl boxes was used over winter.

Bleadon Outdoor Festival

We really missed the opportunity to have an outdoor festival this year or to link to the schools but instead we held a socially distanced plant sale and raised money for our wildlife plans for next year. We are hoping to build swift boxes and dormouse boxes with the proceeds as well as buy more wildflower seeds.



Our Achievements:

Horticultural Achievements

As a team we have managed to grow our own plug plants as well as find a budget for our own planting scheme. Val grew all the Marigolds which were splendid. We think our displays are complementary to our village. The Bleadon Mill Tyre planter and the Cross raised bed were a huge achievement in terms of choosing planters which look appropriate for the site, reflecting our gratitude in various ways, not to mention the fantastic effort in building them.

Bleadon in Bloom also achieved our aim of physically planting on the Rhyne and Banks. Our planting scheme of NHS Rainbow has been achieved and we feel that we chose many of the right plants for the wildlife.

In September we planted bulbs in all our tubs and added snow drops to the banks to prepare for the 75th anniversary and these will come back year on year. We also added new bulbs in every planter in

September this year. For next year we are going to be more prescriptive in terms of more perennial plants that can be sustained.

Environmental Responsibility

Bleadon in Bloom are proud of the impact the project has had on the wildlife and environment. We have used recycled pots donated by the village and collected by the Polytunnel team. Our owl boxes will be a huge benefit to re-introducing and supporting the owls in our parish. We have made a significant difference to the Rhyne by supporting the removal of the invasive plants and allowing the banks to grow. All our planters and pots are recycled from other materials. We are avoiding the use of chemicals in the displays and have used aged horse manure from a local source as our main feed.

Community Participation

Bleadon in Bloom has brought our community together and allowed us to interact with local businesses in a positive and socially distanced way. The competition has allowed Bleadon Golf Club to get involved and to learn more about the community, which in turn has helped them to be a great neighbour.

Bleadon in Bloom has continued to develop the relationship with the Thatchers Cider Company. This year we hope to be successful as a team in securing 10 trees from them as part of their community initiative.

We have brought together many of the groups in our community and built a sense of purpose for the villagers and the groups. We use the “Bleadon Acting Together” and “In and Around Bleadon” Facebook pages and have finally created our own page. We use WhatsApp to WhatsApp to communicate and this has allowed us to stay in touch and keep motivated even when we could not meet in person during this difficult year.

Future Plans

Next year we have plans to work even closer with our community to help to tackle social isolation. We are interested in starting a men’s group of volunteers who will help us with the infrastructure but also this group will support social prescribing. The group will be akin to a “man in a shed” group – supporting men’s mental health. At the same time this will help us to support our footpaths with a team of volunteers.

Conclusion

This was an unprecedented year, and we are proud to have kept on blooming even through all the challenges we faced. Our innovative “tub parent” scheme kept the whole blooming thing alive!

The Bloomers have learned a lot about our village and how it works, and we are able to better understand the character. People are open to planting and lot of the residents have become involved.

We feel proud of what we have achieved and continue to achieve with this project.

Finances

COST / CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEC 2020					
Bleadon Parish Council					
Plants					
	Wheatley	£100.00			
	WestCroft	£350.00			
Tub Planters					
Cross Planter for Church		£180.00			
Compost		£180.00			
Sundry/ Vols		£10.01			
		£820.01		cash	£820.01
Plant Sale					
		£262.00			
				cash	£262.00
Volunteer time @ £12 per hour					
Task	hours	value			
<i>Building of Cross</i>	20	£240.00			
<i>First Planting (bulbs for Spring events)</i>	40	£480.00			
<i>tidy up</i>	40	£480.00			
<i>Tub prep inc hall renovate</i>	36	£432.00			
<i>Second Planting bought flowers</i>	40	£480.00			
<i>Third Planting Glendale</i>	40	£480.00			
<i>Infill planting 4 x 6hrs</i>	24	£288.00			
<i>2 meetings</i>	10	£120.00			
<i>Reports and press</i>	3	£36.00			
TOTAL	253	£2,796.00		GIK	£2,796.00
Company time @ £12 per hour					
Company	hours	value			
<i>Bleadon Golf Club</i>	7	£84.00			
<i>Marshalls CSR</i>	0	£0.00			
<i>Huttons Garage</i>	7	£84.00			
<i>Escape</i>	7	£84.00			
<i>Catherines Inn</i>	2	£24.00			
<i>Thatchers CSR</i>	0	£0.00			
TOTAL	0	£192.00		GIK	£192.00
DONATIONS					

<i>Item</i>		<i>Value</i>			
Tractor Tyre Planter		£77.25			
Plants Westcroft		£150.00			
Plants Wheatleys		£50.00			
Tubs Bill Hewitt		£20.00			
		£297.25		GIK	£297.25
				Total cash	£1,082.01
				Total gift in kind	£3,285.25
				TOTAL PROJECT VALUE	£4,367.26