

**WOLLATON & LENTON ABBEY AREA COMMITTEE - 28 NOVEMBER 2011**

<b>Title of paper:</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Bloom</b>	
<b>Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):</b>	Hugh White Director of Sport, Culture and Parks	<b>Wards affected: ALL</b>
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<b>Relevant Council Plan Strategic Priority:</b>		
World Class Nottingham		
Work in Nottingham		
Safer Nottingham		
Neighbourhood Nottingham		<b>x</b>
Family Nottingham		
Healthy Nottingham		
Leading Nottingham		
<b>Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):</b>		
<p>The Spectacolour budget will fund core floral displays for the area. Area Committee is asked to note the budget for 2012-13 and to agree on the displays required.</p> <p>The Committee is also asked to acknowledge the achievements of local groups who participated in the Britain in Bloom 'It's Your Neighbourhood' awards and supported other Parks initiatives.</p>		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		

1	That the Committee notes the level of displays to be provided from the Spectacolour budget and agrees on the displays required.
2	That the Committee acknowledges the achievements of local groups and encourages future involvement.

## 1. **BACKGROUND**

1.1 Nottingham in Bloom is a corporate initiative linking local communities, businesses and individuals through sustainable partnerships, working together to produce horticultural excellence and enhance the local landscape, the environment and character of Nottingham.

1.2 Proposals for 2011 fall into two categories – Neighbourhood Bloom displays and local participation in Bloom and Parks initiatives.

### **Neighbourhood Bloom displays**

1.3 The available budget for floral displays in the neighbourhoods is £5, 710 per Area for 2012-13.

1.4 Prices have increased due to rising plant costs over the past few years and a review of maintenance requirements in light of operational difficulties in some areas last summer, which was the driest for 30 years.

1.5 The £5,710 budgeted will provide 36 barrier baskets planted for the 2012 summer season, and ten floor planters with displays all year round. This compares with 40 barrier baskets and ten planters last year. A list of suggested sites in Area 7 for displays in 2012-13 within this budget appears in Appendix 1.

1.6 Should the Committee wish to continue with displays at the same levels as last year, individual unit prices are outlined in Appendix 1.

### **Participation in Bloom and Parks initiatives**

1.4 Forty seven Nottingham groups participated in the Royal Horticultural Society Britain in Bloom 'It's Your Neighbourhood' awards 2011, including four groups from Area 7. The awards recognise and reward gardening achievement, environmental responsibility and, most of all, community participation. Assessment results of the groups in Area 7 are outlined in Appendix 2.

1.5 In addition, the community in Area 7 played a valuable role in Nottingham's entry into the East Midlands in Bloom competition and contributed to Nottingham winning a Gold Medal Award. Judges talked to the Friends of Wollaton Local Nature Reserves at Martin's Pond and met Wollaton WI, who were involved in creating the summer displays at Wollaton Park flower gardens.

1.6 Two parks in West Area – Lenton Abbey Park and Martin's Pond - achieved Green Flag awards, which recognise the best parks and green spaces in England and Wales. In addition, Wollaton Park Community Centre garden achieved its third Green Flag Community Award (formerly Green Pennant).

1.7 It is planned to run a similar community engagement campaign in 2012-13 and the Committee is asked to encourage involvement.

**2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)**

2.1 To inform local people about floral displays in neighbourhoods

2.2 To encourage community involvement in Bloom and Parks initiatives

**3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 None

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY)**

4.1 This expenditure can be met from existing resources.

4.2 There is no entry fee for entering the RHS Britain in Bloom 'It's Your Neighbourhood' awards.

**5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS)**

5.1 None

**6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIAs)**

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out. The Equality Team comments that the Spectacolour budget supports work by local groups which brings communities together and helps promote good relations between groups. No adverse impact is identified in the EIA, based on the proposed incremental reduction which will allow the activities the budget supports to continue.

**7. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

7.1 Report to Area 7 Committee 11 January 2011

**8. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

8.1 None

## APPENDIX 1

### Suggested sites for Spectacolour displays 2012-13

<u>Location</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total no.</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Middleton Boulevard	barrier	18 (previously 20)		
Woodside Road	barrier	5		
Wollaton Road	barrier	13 (previously 15)	36	£3,164.76
Woodside Road	planter	2		
Bramcote Lane	planters	5		
Farndon Green	planters	3	10	£2,542.7
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£5,707.46</b>

### Prices for individual units in 2012-13

<b>Planter Type</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>	<b>Planting</b>	<b>Total</b>
Metre Square Planters (Summer)	£52.77	£85	<b>£137.77</b>
Metre Square Planters (Winter)	£31.50	£85	<b>£116.50</b>
Barrier Baskets	£39.16	£48.75	<b>£87.91</b>

**Cost of removal per 1m sq planter: £67.10**

## APPENDIX 2

### Summary assessment report for the RHS Britain in Bloom 'It's Your Neighbourhood' Awards

#### **Friends of Hawton Spinney – Level 2, Improving**

**Community Participation:** The Friends group came together in the middle of last summer after spending six years campaigning for change. Support from Nottingham City Council has been in evidence since then and has funded a noticeboard for the group to use. A big work day saw the planting of native bluebells and daffodils by the Friends group helped by students from Trent University, pupils from Bluecoat School and Nottingham City Council. The sub station was also screened with holly on this day. Future plans for the Spinney include the addition of bat boxes and possibly a wildflower meadow.

**Environmental Responsibility:** Bird boxes funded by Nottingham City Council and constructed by the Friends group were installed this year. Some, however, are not facing in the correct direction and this may need to be addressed when nesting season is over. Deadwood exists in sporadic places. Ideally it should be collated or added to in order to create an area for insects to thrive. The possible presence of badgers means maintenance is sensitive and consequently two full meadow cuts per year are carried out to minimise disturbance. An area has been left as long grasses, which is perfect for wildlife too. The acquisition of two bins is on the cards as littering is an ongoing problem that is regularly tackled by the Friends group.

**Gardening Achievement:** Sycamore trees are plentiful and sucker removal is a keen pastime of the friends group. The mature trees do cause some concern to residents but it is possible they date back to a time when the surrounding land was greener and wilder. For this reason they should be cherished.

**Overall Description:** The future of the site is intriguing now with such a determined Friends group in existence. It is a delight to see such an active, positive group who clearly adore and care about the future of the Spinney. It is hoped that the completed badger survey and the impending tree survey will allow the Spinney to develop in such a way that is harmonious for people and wildlife to co-exist.

#### **LAFFDA – Level 3, Developing**

**Community Participation:** LAFFDA have continued to cultivate the now established allotments and have benefited from 100 saplings donated from the National Trust as well as input from Community Payback to help define the current allotment areas and install benches on the site. There are six committee members, each of whom have one of the six allotments currently established by the group. The site has definite scope for the creation of additional allotments and although the Arrow has been used once to advertise the allotments, it would be good to see more active promotion of the site in order to open up the opportunity for allotment gardening to a wider number of local residents.

**Environmental Responsibility:** In clearing and establishing the site, areas have been left undisturbed for continued wildlife interest. This year has seen the introduction of composting to the site and there is a bird table and bird boxes. Water butts are dotted around the site to provide water, and a central irrigation feature is still a project being considered and awaiting the required funding and workforce resources. The site is deliberately hidden from view using natural boundaries and gate cover, which deters anti-social behaviour and the related negative issues.

**Gardening Achievement:** Each allotment is well maintained and nurtured. A variety of vegetables, herbs, fruit and flowers are being successfully grown, bulbs have been planted for Spring interest and colour, and natural secure boundaries are retained. It is a most attractive allotment site.

**Overall Description:** The allotments are well maintained and carefully planned and nurtured, resulting in a very attractive as well as productive site. Hidden in a dense residential area, it would be great to see wider community involvement and utilisation of this Grow Your Own haven.

#### **Team Aspinall Court – Level 4, Thriving**

**Community Participation:** The garden areas, hanging baskets and planted pots at Aspinall Court have continued to develop over the last year. Led predominantly by six residents, many residents help with the maintenance of the gardens and plants are well chosen for their locations. Consideration is given to the needs of each resident; for example raised beds have been introduced to enable residents with osteoporosis to help with the weeding and dead-heading of the plants. A savings scheme has been set up, which all residents have contributed towards, to fund the abundant purchase of new plants. The result of this hard work is a stunning area of colour, an interesting mix of plants, pots, hanging baskets and solar powered lights. Although the residents are reluctant to seek external help due to a bad experience when the gardens were vandalised, perhaps consideration could be given to asking a local school to help with some of the maintenance or planting; for example a spring bulb planting session could be educational for the children as well as offering additional colour and interest to the garden.

**Environmental Responsibility:** The use of solar lights around the complex is attractive as well as being much more environmentally friendly than electrically powered lighting. Work has begun to clear the overgrowth at the rear of the complex and it is suggested allowing the natural hedge to be nurtured to encourage bird and wildlife. It was also suggested that consideration could be given to using this area for the growth of wildflowers to encourage wildlife. It was lovely to see the bird table which residents report is used regularly by the local birdlife!

**Gardening Achievement:** Aspinall Court has continued to improve the green space with many new plantings this year including the introduction of a new border. Pretty annual and perennial plantings add wonderful colour to the area. The beds, pots and hanging baskets are all beautifully stocked and maintained, creating a stunning area which is enjoyed by all of the residents. The further planned work at the rear of the complex will enhance the area still further. Although the Court is already a beautiful, well managed and maintained area, if the residents wish to develop the project further, the roadside frontage of the court could be developed as another stage of the project; the Court offers enormous potential for continued enjoyment or further development.

**Overall Description:** Aspinall Court has continued to improve the green space with many new plantings this year including the introduction of a new border. Pretty annual and perennial plantings add wonderful colour to the area. The beds, pots and hanging baskets are all beautifully stocked and maintained, creating a stunning area which is enjoyed by all the residents. The community have created a beautiful, peaceful and immaculate garden area, which is enjoyed by all. The addition of a seating area is testament to the desire for residents to enjoy the area and it was an honour to be allowed to observe this delightful haven.

## **Wollaton Park Community Centre – Level 5, Outstanding**

**Community Participation:** The Wollaton Park Community Centre has continued to thrive with continued support from patients of the adjacent doctor's surgery and local residents who support the three committee members in maintaining this immaculate green space. Groups from Capital One and Siemens have given time to help maintain the site and the local Co-Op has donated £3,100. A fortnightly litter pick takes place with varying numbers participating and children are actively encouraged to enjoy the garden and help keep it tidy. A garden party was held this year, the proceeds of which were given to Teenage Cancer Care, and events like this can only help encourage further involvement and commitment from local residents and users of the Community Centre. The garden has benefited from the donation of many more plants, including those filling a beautiful fuchsia bed, as well as the proceeds from the doctor's ongoing second-hand book sale.

**Environmental Responsibility:** The front boundary of the gardens has this year been cleared to open up the site and afford better views to local residents and passers by. A bird box making event was arranged for children of the local school and an insect hotel has been created to attract insects and wildlife. A recycled bird table has been installed and children are encouraged to spend time in the garden to learn about the wildlife that exists there. Composting is evidenced and applauded. Keeping the site well maintained and adopting a welcoming attitude has deterred anti-social behaviour and teenagers have been spotted enjoying the gardens! Although the garden is designed to need as little watering as possible, using bark chip ground cover which offers texture as well as water retention, the only missing environmental element is recycling rain water, which due to the nature of the centre and the disabilities of some of the users, is proving difficult to achieve, but if further thought could be given to attaining this, it would be a very positive addition.

**Gardening Achievement:** The plants are planted with consideration to their individual requirements. An additional bed has been created and planted with plants grown from seeds and cuttings and the continued pride taken in maintaining the garden to such a high level is evident and commended. A willow tunnel, which would need planting between October and March, could make a positive contribution to the visual appeal of the garden as well as offering a point of interest for children.

**Overall Description:** The garden is clearly enjoyed by local residents and users of the Community Centre and Doctor's Surgery and is an asset to the local community. The hard work and dedication to maintaining and developing this site is evident and has resulted in a peaceful haven within a bustling neighbourhood and epitomises community spirit.