

Pill in Bloom Annual report 2020/21

I officially took over from Jo Smith to coordinate Pill in Bloom at our AGM in Nov 2020 with admin help from Pom Langton

At that point we had £870 left in our Budget to spend, we allocated funds for winter planting in the 11 Tubs we look after, gloves for volunteers, for the winter Hanging baskets, the boat at the fire station, new road planters & St Johns Ambulance beds/boat.

Due to Covid it has not been possible to do any group activities and many people opted not to spend much on their tubs over the winter, favouring more perennials & waiting till the spring to perk them up. Only 3 volunteers bought gloves which came from a small remaining petty cash pot. As a result we had a sizeable under spend.

We have 8 volunteers who look after 11 Tubs and the Firestation boat plus another 4 or 5 ? ad hoc working party volunteers. It is always our hope to attract more volunteers to help.

From memory of the year group tasks included:

Tidying up the firestation planting, sowing annual wildflowers, spreading bark mulch, planting some new plants (Firestation paid for the new plants) - liaising with the contractors who did some of the planting. Jo contacted the family who have the plaque on the boat who organised it's repainting.

Weeding and maintaining the plants and shrubs in the L bed behind the bottom co-op. Adding wood chip mulch to retain moisture. Also adding several donated wallflowers to this bed and other small drought tolerant plants (as there is no watering system for this border) Removing rubbish on a regular basis.

Weeding & pruning / trimming edges of the two beds on the Green, adding bark mulch & adding a few fill in plants to the perennial planting, with regular working parties.

New strimmer used to strim long grass below the planters on the green and help with the edging.

Planting a big sack of daffodil bulbs along the verge at Bridge road.

Individuals also maintained their own tubs around the village, topping up compost, replacing plants, adding a few bedding plants from Glendale in the summer and kept the tubs watered by hand (we now have a dedicated watering buddy per tub, so holidays can be covered) and are moving towards more perennial planting in the tubs.

Terri Bell did a great job with the Hanging baskets (£500 per year)
And Gale did a great job with the Fire station boat planting

We received a £90 donation towards new planting for a herb bed (possibly at the corner of new road) to thank all the Volunteers in the Village during the pandemic in particular. A new volunteer sub-group 'The Herb bed group' was formed to look after this bed, But Ellie Blaney has had to stand down from running this group and is looking to see if another volunteer will take her lead.

Most recently we have had a wooden sign made by a local handy man 'Thanks to Pill in Bloom' so people are aware of the work done by Pill in Bloom which we hope to site in the long flower beds on the green.

In 2021/22 with a £1500 budget it's our intention to

Ask Terri to continue to do the hanging baskets

Liaise with Alliance homes and the PC about new planters for New road and the Precinct and plant these up with the help of new volunteers.

Sow wildflower annual mixes in the new tubs on westward drive and at the fire station again. Liaising with the school if the children would like to plant herbs in the Autumn term & with locals to find willing volunteers to water these tubs.

Assist Sue Adamson and Jill Coleman from SPAD with some of the maintenance costs for the St Johns Ambulance boat and raised fruit beds.

Continue to keep the boat by the fire station well stocked with a year round display.

Plant more bulbs at various locations around the village

Ensure all volunteers are provided with a pair of gloves (upto £8 each)

Maintain the 11 tubs we look after, adding plants as necessary, watering in dry spells, feeding and mulching.

Consider plans for the bank opposite the Kings head - which I understand is NSC land.

We will also ask for help to secure our new sign in the beds on the green and maybe get another for the fire station beds.

It's our intention going forward to keep a better record of our receipts to be able to give a more detailed Financial account of our spending.

We are aware of the councils declaration of a climate & Ecological emergency and as such are moving towards more long lived perennials and edibles where possible to reduce plastic waste and mulching all beds to reduce high demand for water.