

Usk in Bloom News - Feb 2018

The new year brings new challenge for Usk in Bloom as we prepare for the summer and the Britain in Bloom Champion of Champions challenge against five much larger communities. Innovations and attention to detail were the advice given by the judges in the RHS seminar held in Birmingham in February.

This summer will see a significant change in plan for the flowers where the historic three colour scheme will be changed in favour of exciting multicoloured planting with more emphasis also on wildflowers and enhanced permanent beds.

There will be big challenges too. Concerns were voiced last year by judges over the condition of “showpiece” Twyn Square with the old brick planters around the clock and the loose and dangerous cobbles. Investment is required but there is little funding or desire to assess matters. The committee are seeking an innovative approach with potential sponsors or material suppliers. Could you help? Leaflets have been posted to households asking for residents to become “Friends of Usk in Bloom” and donate a small amount monthly.

The current gas pipeline renewal work is worrying for Usk businesses who so generously support donations to the annual auction and have had wonderful floral displays and hanging baskets. Bridge Street has been such a pivotal judging area and demonstration of community participation in the past, it would be a shame if the displays were to be badly affected in such an important summer.

On a more positive note, having won their class in the Britain in Bloom for 2017 the volunteers have been invited to participate in the 2018 Communities in Bloom International Challenge. This involves winners from different National Programs (Communities in Bloom, Britain in Bloom, America in Bloom, Tidy Towns of Ireland, Japan in Bloom, Communi Fioriti, Entente Florale and others) competing with each other based on population categories. The awards ceremony is to be held in Canada. Not bad for a little community in Wales!

It was a pleasure just before Christmas to plant a tree on The Conigar in memory of Dr John Davies who with his wife Cathy have been long-standing supporters of Usk in Bloom and Usk Open Gardens.



Litter picking continues via the thirty Minute Community Clear Up days which have gained momentum and demonstrate the community working together at its best.