

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Housing and Environment
DATE	11 March 2014
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	Aberdeen in Bloom 2014
REPORT NUMBER	H&E/14/028

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Committee on Aberdeen's In Bloom campaign for the year ahead, this includes participation in Britain in Bloom 2014.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- (i) Notes the content of the report.
- (ii) Requests a further report to Committee at its meeting in Autumn 2014, with an update on Aberdeen in Bloom' campaigns 2014.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All In Bloom work is undertaken within existing budget levels.

There are no further financial implications as a result of this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Housing and Environment staff will undertake implementation of all works associated with the In Bloom programme.

There are several positive implications from participating in In Bloom – actively engaging with and getting direct participation of Aberdeen's citizens in the sustainability / environmental agenda in Aberdeen. In Bloom helps to deliver benefits across the City at very little cost to the Council. It helps to communicate and support grass roots actions and behaviour change towards a more sustainable city. It helps to meet our environmental objectives for a clean city and towards reducing carbon

emissions. Community pride. Community cohesion. Active citizenship. Participants see not only cleaner and greener environments, but also reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour, renewed economic activity and pride of place.

There are no other direct implications arising from this report in terms of any legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, and sustainability and environmental, health and safety and/or policy issues.

## 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

### **5.1 Aberdeen in Bloom 2013 – Growing Smarter**

The Beautiful Scotland Awards took place in Aberdeen at the Beach Ballroom on Friday 6 September 2013.

Aberdeen was very successful and gained a Silver Gilt award winning the City category.

Silver gilt is seen as a high standard entry which meets virtually all of the judging criteria and includes sections of exceptionally high standards. Exemplifies best practice in multiple areas and demonstrates very high potential for continuing development and sustainable effort.

The City was also awarded the Jim Murdie Trophy for Permanent Landscaping for the works at Duthie Park.

The Urban Community category was won by Dyce in Bloom who achieved a Silver Gilt award, with Culter in Bloom also gaining a Silver Gilt award. Cove In Bloom were entering the competition for the first time and did very well, being awarded a Silver award for their campaign.

The success of 2013's campaign for all groups is testament to all the hard work and dedication by staff, communities and local individuals in helping to keep Aberdeen looking good through enhancing our surroundings and creating a better environment in which to live.

Aberdeen has now been selected from more than 1,000 entrants to compete in the Britain in Bloom UK finals in 2014, nominated to represent Scotland in the City category.

### **5.2 RHS Britain in Bloom**

Organised by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), Britain in Bloom is one of Europe's largest horticultural campaigns, involving over a

thousand communities each year and creating lasting improvements to local environments for the benefit of residents, workers and visitors.

Since 1964 Britain in Bloom has been part of the UK's cultural and horticultural landscape, impacting millions of people. Last year alone the campaign involved more than 200,000 volunteers across the UK, donating 4.4 million hours to projects that benefitted the wider community.

The ongoing popularity of the Britain in Bloom campaign can be understood through the real and lasting benefits that it provides to those taking part. Participants see not only cleaner and greener environments, but also reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour, renewed economic activity and pride of place.

The RHS believes that Britain in Bloom, as a community-driven horticultural campaign, will continue to create lasting improvements which reach beyond the green spaces and in to the far corners of society. Despite the inevitably tough economic times ahead, the campaign is well placed to continue serving the UK's communities, and is an invaluable source of ideas-sharing and inspiration for all those taking part around the country.

The RHS Britain in Bloom UK Finals brings together the highest achievers from all of the 16 regions and nations participating in the campaign and, as a result, the expectations are high and the judging is rigorous. Put simply, the judges are looking for the best and they are seeing the best from other regions within each category.

### **5.3 Aberdeen Britain in Bloom 2014**

This year in particular is a special year to be a RHS Britain in Bloom finalist. This is the 50th anniversary of the campaign and Aberdeen will be doing everything it can to achieve success, and a gold medal in this golden anniversary year.

Aberdeen is one of the few local authorities to have been part of the competition since the beginning.

Aberdeen has a long and illustrious history with the competition, having won trophies on numerous occasions, first winning the Best Overall Trophy in 1965. It would be a fantastic achievement to repeat that triumph nearly 50 years later.

Aberdeen's campaign, 'Growing Smarter' is a 365 day campaign.

Everything the service is involved in day to day, from cutting grass, sweeping streets, planting bulbs, setting up a new friends group to

leading a group of volunteers in a weedathon contributes to the campaign.

Our campaign will involve In Bloom initiatives involving a wide range of people from within local communities. The overall aim is to ensure that the communities come together with the goal of enhancing their surroundings and creating a better environment.

The following list gives a sample of the partners / projects that will make up Aberdeen's In Bloom campaign for 2014:

- Duthie Park – Completed HLF project, Friends Group and Green Flag award.
- Aberdeen City Council Gardens Competition (involving schools).
- Garthdee Fields Allotments Association and partnership with RGU.
- Coronation Gardens, Great Southern Road – new planting regime.
- Core Paths project.
- Aberdeen Greenspace projects.
- Open Space Strategy.
- Gt Southern Road – school designed beds competition.
- Tree For Every Citizen Project.
- Rubislaw Terrace/ Queens Terrace Gardens – public art, business partnership and new crests.
- St Josephs School – school participation.
- Royal Court – Apprentice beds and school beds (Hamilton School).
- Union Terrace Gardens - crests and Friends Group.
- Aberdeen University - Cruickshank Botanic Gardens.
- Hazlehead Park – Climate Change/Friends Group/Hazlehead Primary/MacMillan Cancer Support/new café.
- Hazlehead Nursery – Partnership with social enterprise groups.
- Albert Terrace – resident's project.
- City Centre – baskets and planters – business partnership with Aberdeen Inspired and local businesses.
- Mounthooly Way – Community Orchard – Aberdeen Foyer.
- Seaton Backies – Community Project.
- Friends of Seation Park – park improvements with Aberdeen Greenspace.
- Waste Services initiatives.
- Powis Resident Group – Environmental Improvements
- Various Its Your Neighbourhood groups.
- In Bloom groups, Dyce, Culter and Cove.

There are many others and the campaign will continue to develop and grow throughout the year.

In Bloom will celebrate and promote all the fantastic and inspiring work carried out by the ever increasing bloom partners and friends.

Our 2014 campaign is already under way and we are very confident of success and many good news stories for Aberdeen throughout the year and in the Britain in Bloom competition later in 2014.

Britain in Bloom results will be announced during a ceremony in Bristol in October attended by representatives of all 74 finalists.

## 6. IMPACT

This report links generally to the Council's policy statement, Aberdeen: The Smarter City

Our Vision is for Aberdeen to be an ambitious, achieving, smart city. We will ensure all citizens are encouraged and supported appropriately to make their full contribution.

The report also links to the Council's Open Space Strategy.

## 7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

This report is seen as a benefit to all, the assessment of risk associated with this report is very low.

## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Aberdeen in Bloom Report October 2013

## 9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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