

Charmouth Parish Council

Charmouth in Bloom: notes of meeting held on Tuesday 18th October 2022

Present: Cllr Jane Bremner (Chair), Andy Peters (Morgans and St Andrews Hall), Cllr Martin Sayers, Dana Assinder (garden designer and River Char projects), Eden Thomson (library and Heritage Coast Centre), Linda Sayers (library), Angela Turner (library), Jan Coleman (Heritage Coast Centre), Ivor Clist (Environment Group), Diana Burn (Charmouth Gardeners), Ron Dampier (Charmouth Gardeners), Cllr Andrew Lightfoot.

1. **Welcome and introductions:** Jane welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.
2. **2022 entry in South West in Bloom:** Jane had attended the presentation event the previous week and was pleased to announce that Charmouth was awarded Silver Gilt and displayed the certificate. This is the second highest category in the Pennant class which is designed for first time entrants to the competition. The judges' feedback was reported (and is available in full on the Council's website): this included positive comments about the planters and hanging baskets, reed bed and lack of litter. The enthusiasm of the Councillors and within the community generally was recognized and the quality of the portfolio was commended (which is also available on the website under the tab 'Good for Charmouth').

It was noted that there had been relatively little time to prepare for this year's entry but it had proved useful to get to know the RHS system and to get a benchmark from which we can develop. Advice had been provided by a mentor (Lesley Jelleyman) and from the judges. Thanks were expressed to all who had responded to the call to meet the judges and to weed areas of the village prior to their visit.

3. **2023 project ideas:** the main purpose of this meeting was to start considering action to shape the 2023 entry. A number of possibilities were presented under the headings of a. information, b. horticulture, c. environment and d. community. Ideas which attracted some interest included:

Information: provision of more and refreshed information plaques, especially for the reed bed and meadow ants;

Use of the app and web site iNaturalist: this is a social network of naturalists, citizen scientists and biologists built on the concept of

mapping and sharing observations of biodiversity across the globe; over 115 million observations of plants, animals, fungi and other organisms are recorded and it is possible to plot what has been seen in local areas such as Charmouth.

Horticulture: more tree planting, including an orchard on the playing field and in planters on Lower Sea Lane and 'Tommy's garden'; inclusion of edible plants in displays could be a theme for the year.

Environment: installation of water butts at community buildings, use of seaweed as a mulch.

Community: change the distribution of benches around the village, improve footpath signage, distribute Hogchester wild flower seeds through the traders, encourage groups to participate through the It's Your Neighbourhood scheme.

4. **Future communication:** it was agreed that the Environment Group of the Parish Council would continue to co-ordinate the initiative, with the potential for more volunteers to be co-opted. Information and suggestions would be disseminated by e mail and the Council's web site and representatives of groups were encouraged to use their information systems to help engage their members.
Everyone was thanked for attending.