

The Beautiful Times



Issue 3 • SPRING 2007



John McLaren

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

With spring well underway, and no doubt, also, your group's hard work towards your entry into this year's campaign, I am delighted to introduce the third edition of the campaign newsletter. Winter may not be the most active time of the year outdoors, but indoors our new Advisory Group has been working energetically to make changes to the 2007 campaign as a result of, amongst others, your comments and suggestions at the annual seminars. Not least is the change of name to Beautiful Scotland, on 1st April 2007, which, we hope you will agree, reflects more accurately the different themes of

the campaign - please see the article opposite for further details.

We are very enthusiastic about these changes and are positive that the campaign can continue to build on its success to date and continue to give focus, support and recognition to groups working to improve their local environment. On behalf of the Advisory Group and our Judges, therefore, I should like to take this opportunity to wish all entrants a most enjoyable and successful year. Congratulations to all eight of the Scottish Finalists in Britain in Bloom, as well as Falkland, which represents the UK this year in the European campaign "Entente Florale". We look forward to visiting you all in August and seeing you once again at the annual seminar in November. In the meantime, happy reading and thanks for your continuing support for our campaign - we really appreciate that.

Sincerely,

John McLaren - Chairman, Beautiful Scotland

SAME CAMPAIGN - NEW NAME!

We are very excited to announce *Beautiful Scotland* - the new name for the Beautiful Scotland in Bloom campaign as of 1 April 2007.

We understand that this change may cause some confusion and that some may think the judging criteria are also changing. We wish to take this opportunity to reassure groups they are not. There is a very straightforward explanation for the change of name, and we want to ensure that all entrant groups and bodies understand the reason for it.

There was strong feeling and agreement within the campaign Advisory Group that while horticulture, seasonal and permanent planting are a key part of the judging criteria, the name 'Beautiful Scotland in Bloom' did not fully reflect the other important themes of biodiversity and sustainable development, and cleanliness and local environmental quality. These have been key elements of the marking sheet for some time now, yet the name of the campaign suggested, to those that didn't know, that it was primarily about flowers.

We believe that like all good campaigns, we need to move with the times. Our landfill sites are filling up fast - we should all be reducing, reusing and recycling our waste wherever possible. Replacing fences with hedges gives wildlife a place to shelter and nest. Floral displays certainly cheer the hearts of residents and visitors alike and help to show that an area is cared for, but isn't it sad if these wonderful displays are surrounded by litter and graffiti?

We do hope you will agree that the shortening of the name to *Beautiful Scotland* reflects the campaign criteria better, and we would certainly encourage groups to adopt a local version of the name.

Beautiful Scotland will continue to encourage groups that are improving and enhancing their local area to show that they and the wider community have thought about the impact of their activities in the important areas mentioned above - and that is nothing new this year!



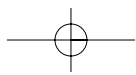
FALKLAND IN ENTENTE FLORALE

Falkland in Bloom celebrates its 20th anniversary in some style this year, having been the village invited to join with the town of Shrewsbury in representing UK in Europe's Entente Florale.

2006 saw the community awarded Best Large Village in East Fife and Fife Wide, followed by Best Large Village and Best Village in Scotland from Beautiful Scotland in Bloom in the national campaign. Having previously been awarded Silver, then Silver Gilt standard by Britain in Bloom, this improved to Gold last year, along with a Discretionary Award for Community Participation.

The European Campaign makes it a challenging year for Falkland as 12 judges from different countries will look for very high standards on arrival. Care of the local natural environment is very important and the village is fortunate to have a number of very industrious voluntary organisations backing up the work done by Falkland in Bloom. With the additional encouragement and support of local residents and businesses, the community certainly hopes to do well. We wish Falkland all the luck in the world, not just in Europe!





BSIB Seminar, Perth, November 2006

SHARING INFORMATION AND CELEBRATING SUCCESS

The 2006 annual BSIB seminar was held in the Salutation Hotel in Perth on 8 November. The day was opened by Provost Bob Scott of Perth and Kinross Council.

Over 170 delegates representing main campaign entrant groups and Neighbourhood Awards groups attended a day of presentations, networking and interactive sessions on horticulture, biodiversity, working with your local council and fundraising.

Feedback from the campaign showed that 96% of respondents felt that attending the seminar had informed and helped their community with future campaigns. Comments included "great help meeting other competitors and talking to the judges", "very interesting and informative workshops", but "allow more time for questions and answers". We will endeavour to incorporate as many of the comments as possible in future seminars.

Look out for further information on this year's seminar, which will be held at the beginning of November in either Aviemore or Inverness in support of the Highland 2007 campaign.

THANK YOU!

Many thanks to all those who took the time to complete and return the questionnaire sent out to 2006 entrants in January. Almost two thirds of entrants returned the questionnaire, which has enabled us to collect some very useful information on the impacts of your work supported by your involvement in the campaign. We hope to measure these impacts annually and will publish reports on the website.

UNANNOUNCED SPRING JUDGING UPDATE

The Advisory Group has agreed that unannounced spring judging in the main campaign will be introduced in 2008. This is to support the ethos that it is an all year round campaign and the same judges will judge the same categories in the spring and summer. In spring they will assess horticultural displays, biodiversity and sustainable development, and cleanliness. Groups will be notified of the four-week period during which the judges will visit, unaccompanied by the entrant.

Unannounced spring judging will be piloted in 2007 in the Medium Town category in order to be able to address any marking sheet or logistical issues. There will be a session on unannounced spring judging at the Annual Seminar in November.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AWARDS ON THE UP!

The Neighbourhood Awards initiative continued successfully in its second year, with 32 entries from across Scotland, compared to 23 in 2005. On 8 November 2006, the Neighbourhood Awards certificates were presented by John McLaren, Chairman of the Advisory Group, at the annual BSIB seminar in Perth to which all Neighbourhood Awards and main campaign entrants were invited. The following awards were presented:

Certificate of Outstanding Achievement

Hailesland Park Garden Club (Edinburgh)

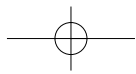
Certificate of Merit

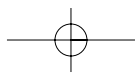
The Forrit Brae Gardeners (Aberdeenshire)
 Kinnesswood in Bloom (Perthshire)
 Kilchattan Bay Improvements Committee (Argyll and Bute)
 Ormlie Community Association (Highland)
 Inverurie Environmental Improvement Group (Aberdeenshire)
 Milnafua Residents Association (Highland)
 Scotlandwell in Bloom (Perthshire)
 Caol in Bloom (Highland)
 Ruthrieston Residents Association (Aberdeen)
 Culter in Bloom (Aberdeen)
 Friends of Corstorphine Hill (Edinburgh)
 Friends of Hopetoun Crescent Garden (Edinburgh)
 Catrine Environmental Group (East Ayrshire)
 Tinwald Parish Community Council (Dumfries and Galloway)
 Carllops Community Council (Scottish Borders)
 Whitsome Enhancement Group (Scottish Borders)
 Troon Community Council and Partners (South Ayrshire)
 The Blacket Association (Edinburgh)
 Stonehaven Horizon Project (Aberdeenshire)
 Auchinleck Community Development Initiative (East Ayrshire)
 Morebattle Community Council (Scottish Borders)

Certificate of Improvement

Westburn Village Neighbourhood Council (Edinburgh)
 International Historical Cultural and Geographical Agency (North Ayrshire)
 Friends of Muir Wood Park Group (Edinburgh)
 Menzieshill Greenfingerz (Dundee)
 Dunoon Community Council (Argyll and Bute)
 Kennedy Place Residents (Perthshire)
 Hanging Baskets at Walkers Wynd (Edinburgh)
 Dean Village Association (Edinburgh)
 Westford Action Group (Highland)
 High School Yards (Edinburgh)

Seventeen of these groups were returning entries and we hope many will enter again this year. Thank you very much to all judges who gave their time to assess the entries. The Neighbourhood Awards initiative is non-competitive, and is designed to give encouragement to neighbourhood groups who are beginners to making improvements in local areas, particularly in urban and regeneration areas. For further information please contact Rachel Kerr on 01479 811477.





POND ALERT!

Ponds are great for wildlife and are home to many attractive and colourful plant species.

Deciding which plants to use in your community pond is an important decision, not just for the other species in the pond, but also for the wider countryside. A number of species sold are non-native invasive species, which escape very easily to the wider countryside and can cause problems by out-competing native species in burns, lochans and rivers.

The Plantlife Scotland *Pond Alert!* project aims to raise awareness of this problem by highlighting the handful of species that can cause problems and advising on a range of alternative species appropriate to the climate and water conditions in different parts of Scotland.

Information on identifying and managing these plants is explained in Plantlife *Pond Alert!* leaflets, available from the Keep Scotland Beautiful office in Stirling or on the website. Advice on pond plant management is also available in person through telephone or email. We would also be happy to arrange a site visit to go through management options and plans for your pond.

Key species to avoid include New Zealand Pigmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*), Parrot's-feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) and Water fern (*Azolla filiculoides*). There are native alternatives for all areas of the pond such as submerged oxygenator Rigid Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*), floating leaved plant Broad-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*) and many attractive emergent and marginal species such as Water Forget-me-not and Purple Loosestrife.

Even if your query does not relate to plants we may be able to help. If, for example, you would like the Scottish perspective on creating amphibian habitats, we have also set up a network to help communities working on pond projects exchange advice and practical tips with each other.

Help us to help you!

The Labelling leaflet, published this spring, will help you decipher plant labels and make sure that you get the plant you were looking for. Attached to this is a Garden Centre Survey, where we ask people to look for 12 specified species, both native and non-native, and to answer some questions on the information available in the store. This will give us an idea of how widely available both native and non-native, invasive species are. To take part get in touch using the contact details below.

Plantlife is the leading charity working to protect wild plants and their habitats. For further information on any aspect of the *Pond Alert!* project please contact:

Su Cooper
Volunteers Co-ordinator
Plantlife Scotland
Balallan House
Allan Park, Stirling, FK8 2QG
Tel: 01786 479382
Email: suzanne.cooper@plantlife.org.uk

SPRING INTO ACTION AS SCOTLAND PREPARES TO CLEAN UP

There hasn't been an official Scottish litter pick for six years, but this April National Spring Clean is leaping back onto the event calendar.

Keep Scotland Beautiful is now calling for volunteers to come out in force and sign up to take part in the nation's biggest litter pick. Fresh air and exercise are just two of the benefits of the Spring Clean but the biggest and best result will be that you, and all visitors to our country, will be able to enjoy our towns, cities, parks and countryside in all their natural glory once again.

Spring Clean is a national campaign run by Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB), to encourage people to organise and/or take part in clean-up activities throughout the month of April. To further tempt people to get involved participants will be able to enter a prize draw to win £100 of B&Q vouchers. And for the more artistic participants a digital camera is up for grabs for the winner of the before-and-after photo competition.

Many groups already take part in voluntary clean-ups during the year, but Spring Clean provides an opportunity for schools, youth clubs, environmental organisations, voluntary groups, communities and businesses to play an important part in a bigger, co-ordinated campaign. It is an ideal occasion for anyone who cares about their local environment to venture down to their local woodland, beach, park or public garden and take action.

Everyone can participate in National Spring Clean by organising or taking part in an event between 1-30 April. Groups and individuals can register via the KSB website www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/springclean. A free, custom-made Clean-Up Kit with all the information and materials needed to get started will then be issued.

The website also highlights activities, case studies and fact sheets in the Youth Zone; providing extra ideas to help educate and involve any children who are involved in a clean up.

Chief Executive of Keep Scotland Beautiful, John Summers OBE, said, "*National Spring Clean is making a welcome comeback for the month of April. Not only will the involvement of the people of Scotland make a marked difference to the cleanliness and environmental standards of their neighbourhoods, but it will also help to kick start our summer tourist season by cleaning Scotland to a standard that our visitors deserve.*"



Galashiels



Plean

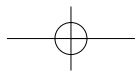


Stirling

Photos courtesy of 'Plantlife'



Cults, Aberdeen





Alness



Dundee



Forres



Pitlochry



North Berwick



Uddingston



Comrie

SCOTTISH BRITAIN IN BLOOM FINALISTS 2007

This year Scotland will be extremely well represented in the Britain in Bloom campaign by eight communities that were successful in Beautiful Scotland in Bloom last year. Category winners in Britain in Bloom must stand down the following year, with the exception of the Champion of Champions category.

The eight Scottish Finalists, and those from England, Wales and Northern Ireland they will hope to win against, are as follows:

ALNESS - Champion of Champions

Other Finalists in this category: Broughshane, Garstang, St Ives and Carbis Bay.

DUNDEE - City (electoral roll pop. 100,001 to 200,000)

Other Finalists in this category: London Borough of Brent, Stockton-on-Tees.

FORRES - Town (6,001 to 12,000)

Other Finalists in this category: City of London, Dungannon, Henley-on-Thames, Morpeth, Oakham, Todmorden.

PITLOCHRY - Small Town (2,501 to 6,000)

Other Finalists in this category: Alcester, Cricklade, Grouville, Wimborne Minster.

NORTH BERWICK - Coastal Resort

Other Finalists in this category: Bognor Regis, Cleethorpes, Criccieth, Great Yarmouth, Lytham, Saltburn-by-the-Sea, Sidmouth, St Helier, Westbourne, Whitby, Whitehead.

UDDINGSTON - Urban Community

Other Finalists in this category: Aldwick, Beeston, Hayle, Newton Heath, Rowlands Gill, Spondon.

COMRIE - Large Village (1,001 to 2,500)

Other Finalists in this category: Helmsley, Kirkby Stephen, Orsett, St Andrew's, Upton Upon Severn.

DUFFUS - Village (301 to 1,000)

Other Finalists in this category: Bramber, Darley, Earsdon, Instow, Raglan, Rosliston, Scarva.

Unannounced judging (for Small Town, Town, City, Coastal Resort and Champion of Champions categories) will take place between 21 April and 3 May 2007. The UK finalist judging tour will be from 30 July until 10 August 2007, and results announced on 26 September at an awards ceremony in Coventry Cathedral. We wish all Scottish finalists 'the best of British' and hope that you thoroughly enjoy your involvement in the prestigious Britain in Bloom campaign.



Duffus

NOMINATIONS INVITED TO THE BEAUTIFUL

SCOTLAND ADVISORY GROUP

This year, for the first time in the history of the campaign, entrant groups will be invited to nominate a representative to sit on the Advisory Group for a period of three years.

After the dissolution of the Beautiful Scotland in Bloom Executive Committee in October 2006, the campaign became a programme of the environmental charity Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB), which is funding the campaign in the 2007/8 financial year. The programme Advisory Group deals with practical matters regarding the campaign and reports back to the KSB Charity Trustees. This means that nominations from entrant groups for the Advisory Group can be made to KSB, whose Charity Trustees will decide who the group representatives will be. Within the Advisory Group is a Steering Group, which is working to secure sponsorship and long-term governance of the campaign.

Nine places on the Advisory Group have been allocated to entrant groups as follows:

Clachan/Wee/Small/Large Village: 2 positions
Small/Medium/Large Town: 1 position
Coastal Resort/Urban Community/Urban Regeneration/High Flat Village: 1 position
Local authorities (city): 5 positions

Members should be willing and able to attend quarterly Advisory Group meetings (usually in a central location such as Stirling), and to represent Beautiful Scotland at other meetings and events. Travel costs will be reimbursed. Nominations are limited to one per group, stating which entrant group they are representing as above, and must be supported by the signatures of two members of the same group (not the nominee) and accompanied by a précis of no more than 150 words to support the nomination. Nominations must be received no later than Friday 1st June 2007.

APOLOGY

In the Autumn 2006 newsletter we omitted to acknowledge that Perth was the winner of the Large Town/Small City category (12,001- 35,000) in Britain in Bloom 2006. Apologies to all involved in Perth in Bloom for this error.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on any of the articles in this newsletter, please contact:

Rachel Kerr
 Beautiful Scotland Co-ordinator
 Keep Scotland Beautiful
 Islay House
 Livilands Lane
 Stirling FK8 2BG
 Tel/fax: 01479 811477
 KSB office tel: 01786 471333
 Email: rachel.kerr@ksbscotland.org.uk

This newsletter can be provided in different formats. Please contact Rachel at the above address.