

UiB AGM Thursday the 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2007-10-09  
Memorial Hall Upton

### **Chairman's report**

It has been an unusual year!

We started our year full of optimism and excitement. We had just been awarded a Gold in the Heart of England in Bloom competition and, been put forward into Britain in Bloom, the goal we had been working for.

It seems a long time ago but we started by holding a public meeting to ask our many supporters if they were willing to take on this new challenge and we got not only got a resounding YES, but also offers of help and sponsorship. The year has proved those supporters true to their word. A big thank you to you all.

We invited the National Judge Roger Bache to look the town over and give us his critical appraisal. The list was enormous and many of the things could only be done by the Local Authorities. So we prepared a Powerpoint presentation detailing these points and this was made to UTC, MHDC and WCC. No one was spared, we needed everybody's help. The result of these meetings, and many email follow-ups has brought about, to list a few, replacement litter bins, new signs at Hanley Road Carpark, the cleaning of the roadside of the bridge and painting of the street furniture along Waterside. We are very grateful for the very tangible support UiB and Upton have had from the LAs.

Our fundraising and social events over the Winter months did well, as they did throughout the year, probably boosted by that relentless publicity machine in the shape of Jackie Surtees! If we weren't in the Malvern Gazette we were in the Upton News, and if not there we were on the Upton webpage! You will see from the comments of the National Judges, a copy of which is here for you to read, were impressed at the high profile we had. So I would also like to say thank you to everybody who did their part in keeping us "in the news"!

We had some unusual and successful fundraising events. The Soiree was particularly memorable, and our Pudding Club evenings are even getting a Reputation! (next one 21<sup>st</sup> November in the Museum)

In Spring this year our Chairman, Eric White, and our Horticulturalist both resigned. They both felt they could not work with the committee.

This left us with no plants, only a couple of boats and just a few planters and this in our most important year.

Fortunately Earls Croome Nursery stepped in and we are extremely grateful to Brian Williams for the support he has given us, then and now.

We also benefited from the woodworking skills of one of our committee, Peter Taylor in securing some boats and making more planters.

None of the things that were achieved could have happened without the tireless work of the members of the committee, I would also like to publicly thank them.

The rest of our year is, as they say, history!

Flooding just before the HoE judging, but the day was superb and went without a hitch. We felt we had done the Town justice and we were correct, the judges thought so too. Not just a Gold, not just a Category winner, but entered into to BiB again, for 2008!

Then of course a record breaking flood, just 10 days before our BiB judging. Somehow, with the help of the Environment Services, our supporters, the committee managed to get some reasonable replacement displays, though nothing like they should have been. We even managed to 'entertain' BBC Gardener's World before and during the judging. (If you missed it it's on the screen after this AGM)

The result was a very commendable Silver Gilt, I personally think we were worth it!

Now we look forward to 2008 and as I have said we are in HoE and BiB once again! So be prepared, sponsors and supporters. We are going to be after your assistance and money again! And this time we want a Gold and to be Category winner in the National competition!

Friends

Not committee memberships but for those who are happy to give up a couple of hours every so often to help share the workload of the committee. Doing Watering, deadheading, and keeping the Town's floral features up to standard.