

Statement for release at N.V Parish Council meeting 6th September 2021

Newbold Verdon Garden Club

As chairman of the garden club, I'm speaking on behalf of the committee.

We have been engaged with the community at large and we believe that they have given us their full support.

With regards to the decision to withdraw the services of the Garden Club, this is a lamentable decision brought on entirely by the Parish Council.

Communication has been inexcusable and there has been considerable ill feeling from the club and the community regarding the decision.

Whilst I believe there are ways, we can ameliorate the problems; much remains in the hands of the Council to resolve.

Today's meeting agenda suggests several initiatives

The reduction in the number of planters in the village we find totally unacceptable and would be damaging to the aesthetics of the village.

The planters add colour and landscaping to an area which otherwise would represent an urban jungle.

Some of the planters are a tribute to the fallen as well as a resident who died prematurely.

The village planters offer a clear example of the 'Neighbourhood Effect' where the perceived quality of an area is inversely proportional to community provisions.

We need only look at surrounding villages such as Barwell, Desford, Earl Shilton and Market Bosworth who have invested heavily in their planting areas.

We believe we should actually be increasing investment in the village planted areas -not just in the containers but shrubs in some of the rather bare looking verges.

On Saturday, many of our committee met up with Josie Flavell where at least by communicating we feel that we have made some progress.

It was agreed that we would continue to look after the containers but that we should still have full control over the selection of plants.

Cost savings could be achieved by negotiating with the Borough / County Council for access to their wholesale stock and there is a possibility that some plants may be able to be grown by the allotment association.

We very much doubt that they would be able to supply plants of sufficient size, quantity and standard in a timely fashion twice a year however.

We also pointed out that over the last 3 years the garden club had actually taken on 8 additional planters [out of 17] with no sizeable increased

spend on plants and compost.

It is possible that savings could be made on the purchase of compost if bought in bulk but it would have to be of a good quality.

There is also a move nowadays to move to a peat free compost which unfortunately is of mixed quality and more expensive.

It was thought that the County Council may be able to supply their own produced compost?.

A major issue we find is in the ongoing maintenance of the containers which need regular watering.

Transporting water around in cars and lugging around heavy containers is a major issue and it was suggested that we require new volunteers, and it is on this basis that we will agree to continue our voluntary service.

Josie suggested a well-managed DOE community service programme could be initiated.

Whatever happens, we feel that the council should take the initiative and should maybe set up a working party to plan this important aspect of the village and not to side-line it as seems to have been the case.

We look forward to council cooperation on this matter.

Thank You

Andy MacGregor

Chairman

Newbold Verdon Garden Club