

# CUMBRIA IN BLOOM

## Minutes of the Annual General meeting held on Monday, 11.00am, 22nd November, 2010, at Holehird Gardens, Holehird, Windermere.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** - See attached list

**1. CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION:** - Alan Heath introduced himself as the Chairman of CiB and welcomed everyone to the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting; he informed those present that David Haigh, who had recently been working closely with Judith Wilson of Cumbria County Council in organising the Children's Garden Competition, would be resigning from the position of Vice Chair, Executive Member and CiB Judge. David was asked to come forward and accept a souvenir framed painting, offered on behalf of CiB with grateful thanks for his many years of dedicated work and commitment to CiB. The Chair then informed the meeting that a framed 2010 entry painting was also being presented to June and Donald Walker in recognition of their many years of dedication and commitment to the Children's Painting Competition, the excellent work on the making of the certificate frames and commitment to CiB. It was requested that in their absence Peter Howarth accept the painting and convey the appreciation of all connected with CiB. The Chairman then went on to thank Peter for all the work that he had done over the years for CiB and also accept a souvenir framed 2010 painting as a token of thanks.

**2. APOLOGIES:** - Marjorie Dunbobbin, Ronnie Dunbobbin, Kirstan Mawby, Ruth Walsh, Iain Turnbull. Ronnie Holmes, Clare Watters, Toni Magean, June Walker, Donald Walker.

**3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING:** - The Minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2009 were agreed.

**4. MATTERS ARISING:** - Adrian Faulkner was not in anyway connected to Windermere in Bloom. Sandra Pascall attended the meeting.  
Item 9) contact has been made and the matter is ongoing.

**5. PATRON'S ADDRESS:** - Mr Peter Howarth gave the Patrons address and began by informing those present that as time was moving on he had made the decision that he would have less involvement with the concerns and groups that he had been happy to work and be involved with over the years. Peter offered his thanks to all with whom he had worked with for many years for the good of CiB. Over this time many friendships had been formed and wonderful times had been experienced, and he hoped it would be recognised that at all times he gave his best efforts. His ties with CiB would not be broken and he would always have an interest in the Children's Painting Competition and other CiB matters. Peter offered a big thank you to June and Donald Walker for the thousands of hours that they have put into the competition and he was firmly of the view that they would be difficult to replace.

Peter informed the meeting that over the last twenty five years or so he had been working closely with Mrs Clarke and the late Mrs Hensman, he was of the view that there were now many problems with running a concern such as CiB and that CiB was always grateful for the help that had been given over the years. Peter also said that he would like to thank Brian Hill for all his help over the years.

Peter went on to say that Lord Cavendish was a very busy man, a man of great wisdom and knowledge and he was looking forward to meeting him again.

He continued his address by making it known that he was aware that the Patrons of CiB were concerned about the existence of CiB and the uphill struggle to survive, due mainly to the lack of funding, but, hopefully the new rules and guidelines would be like a new broom, and, hoping for success, he would be happy to assist when ever he could. He had, for a long time been involved with taking groups around gardens and the bookings already taken for next year proved that there is still a lot of interest in gardening.

Peter's closing comments were that the Children's Painting Competition had started twenty odd years ago, schools were encouraged to participate and over the years it had been a wonderful experience for him to work with the schools. He himself would now no longer be involved with the competition and offered thanks to Rex Marsden, Leslie Johnson and Olive Clark for all their efforts and involvement and all the schools that had taken part. Thanks also the Brockhole, the Chair and Committee of CiB and CiB.

**6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** - The Chairman began his report by informing the meeting that the highlight of the year for himself was his attendance of the Britain in Bloom presentation to the finalists, held in Birmingham. Joining five hundred representatives of the thousands of In Bloom volunteers, he felt privilege to see the town of Keswick receive a Silver Medal and Whitehaven a Silver Gilt medal, and each of them to be nominated in a special category. He said it would be of interest for Cumbria's own contestants to note that most Gold Medals were awarded to the Village Sections. He went on to say that congratulations are due to Keswick and Whitehaven who, in the true spirit of Cumbria, had shone through the adversity and tragedy of the year.

The meeting was told that executive members, judges and volunteers had rallied round to help the newly appointed Administrator and had undertaken the many and varied duties of organising Cumbria in Bloom events following the Administrator resignation after a short time in post.

Alan went on to say that the first event of the year was the Seminar to celebrate 25 years of communities entering the environment competition. Some 60 participants had gathered at Rydal Hall to hear how the Britain in Bloom judges inspect the finalist representative entries and how successful villages involve everyone in the competition. The Royal Horticultural Society gave details of its initiative 'It's Your Neighbourhood' and how this could be the first introduction to the main competition.

It was suggested that the lack of finance is threatening the existence of Cumbria in Bloom. The Executive Committee members had spent many hours consulting with communities and authorities and evaluating the benefits of Cumbria in Bloom events. A business plan had been produced with the hope that the value of the competition could be better understood and given financial support. Executive members, judges and volunteers made no charge for their work in organising events but the coordination of entries, arrangements for judges, collating results and ensuring all was in place for the Awards Ceremony was time consuming and it was unreasonable to expect this work to be done for free. Additionally finance would need to be in place to pay for administrative and travelling expenses.

The meeting was informed that CiB had listened to the concerns that the criteria were becoming over complicated. A new criterion had been set up for the Villages and Hamlets and it would be called "Cumbria in Bloom Pride in Your Community". This would, in particular consider the unique virtues of the village/hamlet section and award marks according to the work done in the care of the local environment.

Thirty eight communities entered the CiB competition and fourteen the Its Your Neighbourhood, plus entries for Special Categories and Tourism. The standards of the competition were high with gold standards for Whitehaven and Kirkby Steven, who with Grange over Sands had been nominated for the Britain in Bloom finals.

This year was the last year for the Children's Painting Competition and as usual there was fierce competition and strong support from nearly 400 entrants. Alan offered his thanks to Peter Howarth, Donald and June Walker who he said had worked tirelessly for the painting competition.

The Chair suggested to those present that it was accepted that there had been a development in the interest of children's and school gardens and it was therefore the intention of CiB to develop that interest through a partnership with extended services of Cumbria County Council. Details of the scheme would soon be available.

The Chairs closing comments were to inform the meeting that the CiB competition had ended with the Awards Ceremony being held at the Wave Centre at Maryport, this occasion was very kindly sponsored by Allerdale Borough Council. The Mayor of Workington, Margaret Jones and Mayor of Maryport, Bill Pegram welcomed the guests and Lord Cavendish had presented the awards. CiB patrons Peter Howarth, Olive Clark and Lord Cavendish had made pleas to council authorities to continue giving financial contributions to support Cumbria in Bloom.

The Chair invited comments from Judith Wilson, Cumbria County Council, who had been invited to attend the meeting to talk about the proposed Children's Garden Scheme.

The meeting was told that it was now recognised that children were becoming more active in gardening matters outside of school hours and this involved parents and grand parents. Gardening Clubs had been established to engage families and encourage things such as reading. Over half the schools are now involved in gardening and there are now moves afoot to train teachers in gardening to help them with their Gardening Clubs and engage with the community in cookery, recording the gardening year on film, printing photos and painting. Gardening has proved to be important to schools and everyone is looking forward to encouraging further development.

**7. TREASURER'S REPORT:** - Adrian Faulkner circulated copies of his report, went through the figures and explained that they were over a period of eighteen months and therefore there might appear to be an increase in some of the figures shown. He said he was saddened by the fact that the larger of the Borough and District Councils had not yet made any financial contribution to CiB and various members had undertaken various tasks in the absence of an Administrator.

The overall deficit over income was £4,000.00 and CiB needs 6,000 to £7,000 to continue with expenses and administration, and judging expenses would increase if the number of entries increased.

There had been a promise of some money and with the reserve account standing at £4,700.00; CiB had sufficient funds to survive for the next twelve to eighteen months.

Adrian suggested that perhaps funding may be available through It's Your Neighbourhood providing such income was not ring fenced.

The meeting was informed that: -

- The CiB Web Site is now up and running
- Details of funding will be available on the CiB Web Site.
- There must be imaginative ways of seeking funding.
- The 'fixed assets' are the display boards used at Carlisle Spring Show.
- CiB should have a stand at the local shows.
- Anyone who has advertising material available should contact the Treasurer.

From the floor: -

- There needs to be promotional information available.
- There was sponsorship in kind and it needs to be shown on the accounts.
- Funding might be available from Parish Councils.
- Parish Councils that enter CiB might consider the entrant fee a sufficient contribution.
- CiB should advertise in Garden Centres.

**8. FORWARD PLAN FOR CUMBRIA IN BLOOM:** - The Chair informed the meeting that a Business Plan for Cumbria in Bloom had been compiled and was available on the Web Site. The plan, which had been approved by the Executive Committee, was a working plan that sets out the strategy for the next three years and was also a working plan for the CiB criteria.

It was proposed by Leslie Johnson and seconded by Henry Wormstrup, and accepted by the meeting, that the plan be accepted, modified and added to as and when required.

**9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS - 2010/2011:** -

The following nominations were unanimously agreed by the members present:-

Chairman	Alan Heath	Nominated by Leslie Johnson Seconded by David Haigh
Vice Chairman	Henry Wormstrup	Nominated by Adrian Faulkner Seconded by Lee Hodgson
Treasurer	Adrian Faulkner	Nominated by Alan Heath Seconded by Brian Hill
Minute Secretary	Bill Hoodless	Nominated by Leslie Johnson Seconded by Henry Wormstrup

The position of President is to remain open.

**10. ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:** -

The following nominations were unanimously agreed by the Members present:-

Leslie Johnson	Lakes P.C.
Eileen Kirby	Judge
Lee Hodgson	Whitehaven
Colin Cheyne	Judge
Brian Hill	Judge

**Local Authority Representatives:** - it was agreed that the undertaking of appointing Local Authority Town and Parish Representatives would be taken at a time to be decided.

**Administrator** – It was agreed that the position of salaried Administrator be placed on the agenda of a future Executive Committee.

**11. CLOSE OF MEETING:** - Mrs Olive Clarke accepted the invitation from the Chair to address the meeting and began by commending the good work that had been carried out by the members in the absence of an Administrator and asked the meeting to recognise that fact. Mrs Clarke also offered her thanks to Peter Howarth and June and Donald Walker for all their work and involvement with the Painting Competition, she was aware that it had been mentioned before but was of the opinion that all their efforts and hard work were worthy of further acknowledgement, she would miss the visits to Brockhole to view the paintings but wished the new Children's' Garden Competition every success.

Mrs Clarke went on to say that as Honorary President of Cumbria Westmorland Federation of Woman's Institutes and Patron of CiB she attended many Parish Council meetings and was always happy to advertise and spread the word about CiB. There had been some very trying times in the last twelve months but she said she was of the opinion that CiB had much to offer and though she wonders what might happen next she could speak with some understanding when she said that CiB would go from strength to strength because of what CiB does for the county of Cumbria.

Mrs Clarke offered her thanks the Officers, the Committee and all those members present for their support of CiB on what was not an easy job in the current financial climate.

The Chair thanked all those present for their attendance and the meeting was brought to a close at 12.50pm

Thanks to the Holehird Gardens for the provision of the room.

Minutes certified as correct \_\_\_\_\_ Cumbria in Bloom Chairman

Date \_\_\_\_\_