



# USK IN BLOOM

## 2009 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends,

Once more it is time to wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year, to give you an update on what has taken place over the last year and to share our plans for the coming year.

The Usk in Bloom Committee have strived hard again this year to provide good floral appeal together with sustainability. Their enthusiasm and endeavour has been matched by our volunteers, partner organisations and gardeners. It is this sense of pride, community spirit and well-being which sets Usk apart from other communities. Long may it continue!

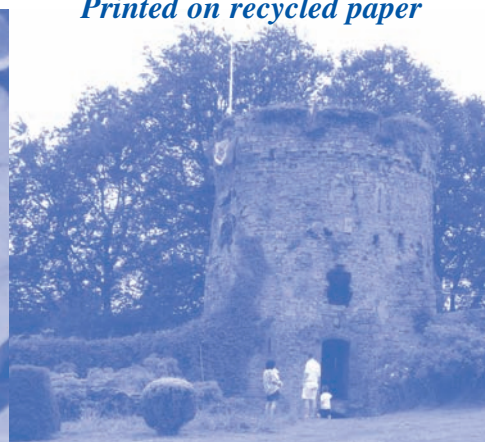
After a difficult early part to the growing season when wind and rain held healthy plant growth in check, displays improved in July and were in great shape for the visit of the Wales in Bloom judge on 21st July. The judge was impressed with the floral displays, permanent planting and the gardens that he saw during his visit, confirming that the wonderful displays in Usk again set the standard. I am absolutely delighted to tell you that Usk won its first ever gold award and crowned as champion in the Large Village Class in the national Wales in Bloom competition. A gold medal score is 170 points and above out of a possible score of 200 points. Usk recorded a score of 173 points. Also in the Wales in Bloom com-

petition, our congratulations go to The Nags Head public house who received a much deserved merit.

What's new? The main entrance into town is now adorned with fourteen new planters on the Olway road bridge. Also on the main town entrance is a new sign "Usk Town of Flowers", a title which is fully deserved and being well supported by "Usk Open Gardens". We further expanded our permanent planting program by creating, with the help of Monmouthshire County Council, seven new shrub beds on the main approach into town. Usk Conservation and Environment Group together with the young people from Usk Cricket Club and the Youth Club helped us to plant trees on the Cricket club ground and at the entrance to Castle Oaks.

The Usk in Bloom friends, like the Committee, give of their time freely in order that Usk is made a better place for all of us. The number of friends needs to be increased if Usk in Bloom is to continue and is open to all to join. If you like to meet people, make new friends, and enjoy fresh air and a little exercise arranged in one hour periods, this could be for you. One hour of your time a week or when you can help will make all the difference. We would be pleased to welcome you. Please call me on 01291 673141 or Christine Barnfield on 01291 671345.

*Printed on recycled paper*





Usk in Bloom is a totally voluntary organisation and as such is reliant on the generosity of those who live in the town for its funding. The whole town provides great support and our warmest thanks go to Usk Town Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Llanbadoc Community Council, Usk Open Gardens, the Glen-Yr-Afon House Hotel, Women's Institute Farmhouse Freedom Eggs and all the generous donations made by the businesses and townspeople of Usk. Our thanks go to Mike Keys & family at The Nags Head for hosting our meetings and our main fund raising activity, the Annual Auction.

Looking ahead, we shall be entering the Wales in Bloom Competition again in 2009 and Usk also has the privilege and honour of accepting nomination to enter the Britain in Bloom competition (only three competitors from the whole of Wales have been nominated). Preparation involves many organisations in the town and is supported by Usk Town Council and Monmouthshire County Council. We have identified areas which require either replacement or refurbishment and further steps will be taken on water conservation, sustainability and the environment. Winter planting consists of Tulips, Daffodils and Polyanthus.

This year our chosen colour theme is based upon Usk badge and recognition of our Wales in Bloom gold award, so we will be using reds, blues and golds (or yellows) with white. The carpet planter in Tywn Square will depict "Welcome to Usk 2009". We are pleased that the Willows Nursery will continue with their support and again be our main plant supplier.

The annual Usk in Bloom award presentation evening held in October is designed to recognise and award the gardening success of private individuals



and businesses alike. There are no entry fees or forms required in order to take part. The whole Town of Usk is initially surveyed by the Usk in Bloom Committee in order to draw up a short list of finalists, with the final judging being done in mid July by independent judges. Successful entries are awarded either Gold, Silver or Bronze certificates with group winners receiving a trophy. Two new classes were introduced in 2008 – one for displays in business windows, the other for allotments.

Usk and Monmouthshire in general, are excellent at recycling waste but we can always do better. Remember the 3 R's: Reduce (avoid creating waste); Re-use (use something again) and Recycle (use to make new materials). Home composting is a great way to recycle kitchen and garden waste and will improve the fertility of your soil. Larger household items such as furniture may also be recycled through Homemakers and Bric-a-Brac can be recycled through the "Red Shed" outlet in Usk.

Please keep up the good work and we look forward to enjoying the flowers and meeting visitors from all over the world. Remember that without your support, generosity and gardening skills, Usk would not be so "blooming beautiful".

With best wishes for a successful gardening year from all of us on the Usk in Bloom Committee.

*David Gale*

**David Gale  
(Chairman)**

Beech Tree Cottage,  
Trostrey,  
Usk.  
NP15 1JH

