

# NORTHUMBRIA IN BLOOM 2019

## HALTWHISTLE

CENTRE OF BRITAIN



# NORTHUMBRIA IN BLOOM 2019

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# NORTHUMBRIA IN BLOOM 2019

## INTRODUCTION

Haltwhistle has not entered this competition over the last few years. However, a number of improvements have been made and new projects started. The Town Council was approached by a number of residents and asked if the town could be entered this year.

Consequently, the council organised a meeting with volunteers and County Council representatives and agreed to enter.

The first main project to kick off the competition is to involve the town in the Great Spring Clean Up which was held the week commencing 30<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Three other projects have been identified this year and so will only just be in the early stages.

## POLICY & STRATEGY

The aim of entering the competition is not just for this year but to encourage participation from the community all year round. To begin with posters were put up and fliers handed out to encourage anyone with an interest to come along to an informal meeting. This resulted in a core group to take the idea forward, The Bloom Group. After much discussion the key target areas were highlighted and three projects identified.

### Local Volunteers

Volunteers have come from many different areas such as gardening groups, local businesses, Haltwhistle Partnership, The Haltwhistle Station Adoption Group, The Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership, Haltwhistle Academy, Chamber of Trade, Haltwhistle WI, Haltwhistle Town Council, Young & Sweet, Northumberland County Council, The Railway Football Club, The Jubilee Football Club, Haltwhistle Beavers and keen residents. The shopkeepers have decorated their frontages with a Haltwhistle in bloom feel for Carnival week.

The Bloom Steering Group is made up of councillors, volunteers and NCC employees:

Volunteers:

Libby Scott, Pam Bowman – Community Gardeners

Ayesha Jackson – Young & Sweet

Julie Gibbon – Haltwhistle Partnership

Julie Sullivan – Chamber of Trade

Betty Wilkie, Clare Jackson – Haltwhistle Women's Institute

Lorna Silverstein and Nicola Charlton

NCC Employees's: Sam Talbot and Chris Rogan.

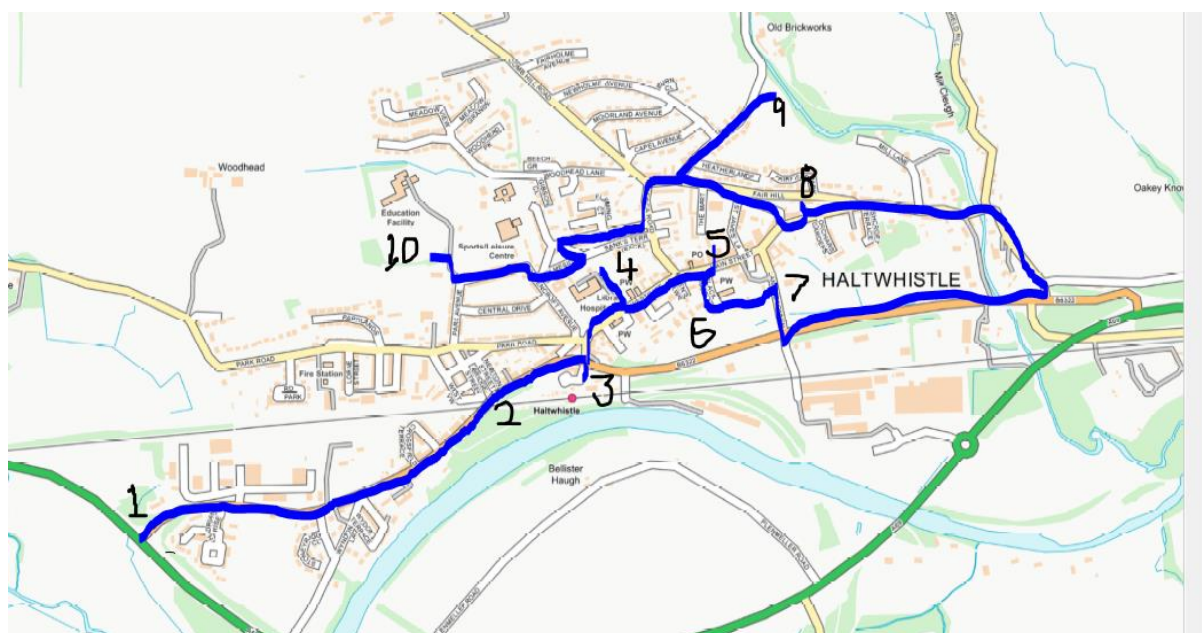
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Councillors: Alan Sharp, Katrina Johnson, David Cadwgan, Clerk - Susan Saunders, Cemetery Keeper - Michael Glenwright.

## Target Areas

These areas include the main street, community garden other small community areas, Young & Sweet and the village green. The volunteers have split into groups with each group undertaking specific areas to tidy, weed, plant up and maintain. It is hoped that they will continue long after the competition is over. The aim is to create areas which will encourage wildlife in order to preserve conservation and bio-diversity.

1	Start Point: Entrances at either end of Haltwhistle
2	Paved area near metal bridge
3	Railway station and crossroads
4	Memorial Garden NCC West Road NHS Garden Haltwhistle Bowling Green
5	Community Garden
6	Coronation Park
7	Lanty's Lonnen Ashcroft B&B
8	Wapping Garden
9	Burn Field Village Green wild flower area
10	Young & Sweet, Hillside



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## SPECIFIC PROJECTS

The Burn Field Village Green – there is an overgrown, underused area on the green that is owned by The Leisure Centre. The Village Green Working Group would like to create an environment of wild flowers to encourage wild life. They are keen to work with the school and to encourage children to help plant wild flowers. They will also be looking at introducing bird and bat boxes.

*The enhancement plan can be seen in Appendix 1*



Coronation Park – Coronation Park was originally the site of ten terraced houses off Black Bull lane which were demolished in 1950. They are shown on 19<sup>th</sup> Century Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photographs from 1925.

The family of John McClare Clark (1854-1937), the owner, gave the land in 1950 to Haltwhistle RDC on condition ‘the land is hereafter used as an open space for the benefit of the people of Haltwhistle’. It was ready for use by 1953, the year Queen Elizabeth II was crowned, and was named ‘Coronation Park’ in commemoration.

In 1973, the park was taken over by Tynedale DC and then Northumberland County Council, until it was transferred back to Haltwhistle Town Council in 2019.

The Town Council worked with the County Council, Women’s Institute and other smaller volunteer groups to improve the site with planting to benefit the habitat and wildlife. Visitors may sit peacefully and enjoy the view and historic atmosphere created by the 13<sup>th</sup> century church, 16<sup>th</sup> century bastles and the picturesque market place found in this lovely small market town

The garden is situated just off the market square, which is purported to be The Centre of Britain. It also backs onto a medieval 13<sup>th</sup> Century Church, The Holy Cross Church which has excellent Victorian glass; including a window designed by Edward Burne-Jones with the aide of Philip Webb and Ford Maddox Brown and produced by Morris & Co.

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The groups involved would like to introduce plants into the garden that reflect the surrounding area and to encourage butterflies and bees. Haltwhistle has a honey producing business so attracting bees is very appropriate!

The grassed area has been maintained and annual plants have been planted by the county council. However, the idea is to introduce perennials, shrubs and some seating. Although the garden will not be finished in time for the Northumbria in Bloom judging, it will be highlighted as a work in progress.

*The enhancement plan can be seen in Appendix 2*

Winter 2019: prior to the tidy up



Spring 2019



June 2019: Pictures taken after much hard work.

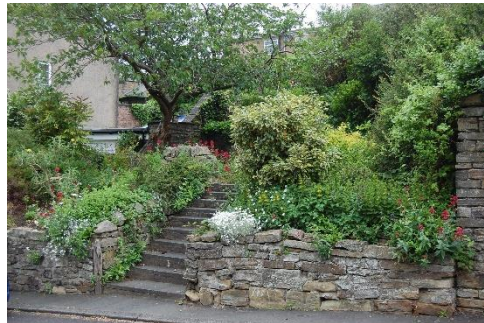


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Wapping Garden –The garden is situated on the hill rising from the (now underground) Wapping Beck (marsh/Norse – stream) This hill was the site of the earliest pre Roman settlement.

Once a wooded hillside, facing south, it was the site of a Salvation army building backing onto Fair Hill. It consists of a wild bankside (with nesting birds), two shrubberies bordering the steps and an open paved area on three levels. It also has very old drystone walls and a beautiful cherry tree. There is a stone trough recording a town twinning scheme in the past.

The project aims to have some of the woodland vegetation replanted, the paving cleaned up and a restful place for shoppers between the market place, Castle Hill and Town Foot created.





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## COMMUNITY GARDEN

### Introduction to the Community Garden

This project was started in 2004. Reclamation was the first job by a group of undaunted volunteers as it was very overgrown and digging revealed stone, metal, glass and much more besides. There appeared to be no worms at all!

We laid out the desired line of the path and used some of the rubble as a foundation, then put the rest down to green manure crops for a season. We had a one day course on making a willow arch which we still have today.

Construction of beds followed with planting of shrubs herbs and vegetables, and then once weed growth was under control, we planted herbaceous plants. Many of these have become stock plants for use in the town beds, and for many years we have had a stall at the Annual Haltwhistle Plant Festival in May to help towards costs of the project which is funded by the Haltwhistle Partnership. You will see many of these propagated plants in the garden ready to be sold.

Our aim is to make an eco-friendly area for anyone in the town who wants to help on a weekly basis, and we are very keen on growing organically and using plants that are insect friendly. We now have plenty of worms and regular frogs and birds!

### **1. Community Gardeners at work in a corner of the Memorial Gardens.**

We have concentrated on a spring display here as the site is in shadow from trees on Westgate later in the year. Additions of our own community garden produced compost helps maintain soil moisture levels and we have succeeded in maintaining a reasonable display through the season.

### **2. Production of leaf mulch and compost in the garden.**

We produce quantities of both materials from weeding and collecting fallen leaves around the town as we work on the beds we maintain. Both make excellent soil improvers either as a top mulch or as an aid to new planting.

### **3. Turning and storing the ready to use compost in the 2 plastic bins.**

### **4. Cornus "Midwinter Fire" in the Community Garden.**



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## THE GREAT SPRING CLEAN

A week of spring cleaning began on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March with various residents taking part from the volunteer gardeners to local footballers.

The Town Council were awarded a grant from NCC of £2500 to enable a High Street Clean up. The money was spent on bags, litter pickers gloves, a pressure washer and dog bag dispensers, amongst other items.

Each volunteer group chose a section of the town to litter pick. The plan is to continue with this again later in the year.

## FUNDING

The Town Council has budgeted £1000.

Kilfrost Plc has donated £100.

Tim Doody has donated £200

Grant from NCC of £2500 for High Street Clean Up Fund.

Local businesses such as Poltross Pet Shop, Potts Plant Hire, Just Flowers and Alan Scott have also made contributions.



# NORTHUMBRIA IN BLOOM 2019

## AWARD CATEGORIES

### HALTWHISTLE RAILWAY STATION (9)



**Three tubs donated by local businesses have been planted up and maintained by the Community Gardeners.**

We aim to plant up with shrubs and herbaceous /low ground covering perennials, and use bulbs to ring the seasonal changes. Four further tubs on platform 1 have been planted and are maintained by the Station Adoption Group.

The Haltwhistle Beavers have helped out with planting.



### **Station Cross roads bed**

This is a difficult area as it gets the full force of the west winds, and we have lost a few plants as a result. Use of wallflowers, spring bulbs and pansies helps to extend the season of colour.



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## HALTWHISTLE WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL (13)



The original Haltwhistle Memorial Hospital, built at a cost of approximately £7,000, was opened in August 1922 by Mrs Hope-Wallace. Placed in front of the hospital, to the south, Haltwhistle Memorial Cross was unveiled on 13 November 1926 by Brigadier General EPS Riddell CMG DSO and dedicated by the vicar, Reverend Canon EB Hicks. It was designed by the architectural firm of Messrs Hicks & Charlwood of Newcastle, with carvings by Robert Beall, architectural and monumental sculptor of Newcastle.

After the Second World War an inscription was added to the plinth and plaques to the side piers to commemorate those who fell in that conflict. The memorial underwent restoration in 1996. The old Memorial Hospital was demolished in 2010 and a new building, which is not listed, was erected on the same site, opening in 2014.

Northumberland County Council spent £45k on the site in 2014 to give year round floral colour, improved seating for visitors and enabled better paths and access. Whistle Arts Stop held workshops with residents to create a ceramic mosaic centrepiece on the theme of remembrance and memorial. Two listening posts were designed by the Klarty Kids Club with recordings by local people giving visitors information and can be found in the park and the market place.

Haltwhistle Memorial Cross stands in a garden to the south of the new Haltwhistle Memorial Hospital. Built of Greenlaw stone, 6m tall, the memorial comprises a Greek cross rising from a tapered shaft with a moulded foot, which stands on a tapering, square, plinth. That stands on a three-stepped, square base. The cross is flanked by two low side walls that finish in short, square piers.

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In November 2018, Haltwhistle Town Council commissioned a memorial stone to be built as part of the commemoration of 100 years since World War One. The purpose of the stone is to recognise those who have died in service to their country since the end of World War Two with a plaque.



It is for post 1945 veterans to see there is a remembrance stone honouring their service and in particular honouring those who lost their lives.

Northumbria Stone Ltd donated the stone and Haltwhistle Boardwalkers contributed towards the seat.

Thanks go to George Reed, Rob and Darren who maintain the garden around the hospital and keep it to the excellent standard it is.

## ASHCROFT GUESTHOUSE (7)



Owned by Geoff and Christine James, Ashcroft B&B Guest House is an elegant Victorian Vicarage with spacious guest rooms and high ceilings standing in 2 acres of award winning gardens on the southern edge of Haltwhistle in Northumberland.

## HALTWHISTLE BOWLING CLUB (14)

Haltwhistle bowling club is a friendly and welcoming club that actively promotes the game of bowls to provide exercise and enjoyment at this amenity of the town. The club originated in 1924 and is as much a social activity as a sporting one. We welcome visitors and prospective members to come and enjoy the amenities.



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## Haltwhistle Youth Club

Following intensive interior redevelopment thanks to grants and donations from a wide range of sources - our newly acquired premises, Hillside also comes with 1.5 acres of neglected land that we are responsible for. We would like to develop our newly acquired outside space which will be a place that everyone in our community can come to learn, interact and enjoy, please see attached plans. Staff and Young People have concentrated their efforts to the front of the building making it welcoming to members and visitors. The pictures below show what a difference we have made!



Our main objective, as well as supporting wildlife, is community. Although Haltwhistle is a close-knit community, there is not a lot of inter-generational activity taking place. There are specific groups of people within our community and we would like to try and bring them together with a common purpose. We would like to create a hub where everyone can come, enjoy the freedom of outside space, learn new things and meet new people within their community. We want to encourage young people to be outdoors and creating a fun, vibrant environment which will allow young people to see the outside with a different view. Once our poly tunnel is up and running, we already have offers from community members to come and show us how to get started which is brilliant; many of these offers have come from us being involved in Haltwhistle in Bloom. The girls enjoyed meeting Nicola Charlton, one of Haltwhistle's gardening volunteers, who explained what kind of plants they were and why they were planting them. Nicola showed the young people how to plant them to give them the best possible chance of coming good



*Sainsbury's staff helping Young & Sweet with hanging baskets*



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## MEDIA COVERAGE

The Hexham Courant ran the following story

Haltwhistle in Bloom volunteers Claire Jackson, Katrina Johnson, Pam Bowman, Coun. Alan Sharp, Michael Hall, Eddie Yarwood, Susan Losh, Libby Scott and Betty Wilkie outside Haltwhistle Memorial Hospital.

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***HALTWHISTLE is preparing for summer judging in its first Northumbria in Bloom competition.***

*Judges will visit the town on July 11, and several groups have been working hard in different locations to make sure everything is prepared.*

*Volunteers have been out in force at Haltwhistle War Memorial Hospital, the railway station and Coronation Park.*

*The town's efforts have been led by town council chairman, Coun. Alan Sharp.*

*Speaking at last week's Haltwhistle Town Council's meeting, Coun Sharp praised the efforts of those involved. He said: "I think this year's entry has helped the town and I'm really pleased with the working groups and their enthusiasm.*

*"There's six weeks to go, and hopefully by July 11 things will look even better. There's lots of work going on.*

*"I had a meeting after the grounds meeting with all of the groups who have been helping out. There's a really good buzz around the working groups and people are getting more involved.*

*"We're working very closely with the WI who made a really good job on Coronation Park, and the youth club Young and Sweet are doing a great job too."*

*The council made the decision to enter Northumbria in Bloom for the first time in years in 2018.*

*Judges also visited the town in April for spring judging, but will return in July for summer judging.*

*The town has entered four locations in the special awards category – the railway station, Haltwhistle Memorial Hospital Gardens, Ashcroft Guesthouse and the bowling green.*

*Haltwhistle Community Gardens also have a garden outside Haltwhistle Partnership's office, whilst a gardening club has also been hard at work in the town.*

*The winners of this year's competition will be announced at Lancastrian Suite in Gateshead on September 25.*

**NORTHUMBRIA IN BLOOM  
2019**

THIS PORTFOLIO WAS PRODUCED BY  
HALTWHISTLE TOWN COUNCIL  
WHO WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL  
THE VOLUNTEERS AND WORKERS  
WHO TOOK PART IN THE  
COMPETITION AND PRODUCED  
SOME FANTASTIC RESULTS AROUND  
THE TOWN.



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## 2019

Appendix 1

### Haltwhistle Burn Field Village Green Enhancement Plan

The Burn Field is in the custody of Haltwhistle Town Council and is managed by Haltwhistle Swimming and Leisure Centre. It was registered as a village green in 2011. In 2018 a working group was set up to ensure the equitable use of the Green for public recreation and to promote the Green's environmental health.

The colour-coded plan overleaf shows the main land-use areas of the Green, which has a total area of about 1.75 ha. Numbers on the plan show the areas where the working group hopes to enhance the Green as follows.

1. Meadow Project  
In the autumn, the grass will be cut, flowers planted and flower seeds sown. The objective is to encourage meadow plants to flourish at the expense of the dominant grass and weed species. This should encourage a greater number of pollinators and invertebrates generally, especially butterflies, as the base of a food chain leading to an increase in diversity of birds and small mammals. If the project is successful, the same approach will be applied to area 6.
2. Beeches  
An arboricultural survey will determine what action is needed to ensure the long term health of these trees which, particularly in autumn, are the Green's most spectacular feature. The possibility of fixing an owl-box is being considered.
3. BMX Track  
The track is a popular facility which needs minor improvements and on-going maintenance. The surrounding area is maintained as semi-rough.
4. Hedge  
It is desirable to strike a balance between encouraging growth of trees and other plants whilst maintaining an open aspect for the benefit and security of users. The "hedge" has grown in excess of expectations and needs to be thinned out and freed of undergrowth.
5. Woodland  
The trees should be monitored regularly. There is some ash dieback but on the other hand some elms have grown well above the size where Dutch Elm Disease often takes hold. Most of the trees are relatively mature and steps to encourage young growth are desirable.
6. Long Grass Areas  
The meadow project may be extended to these areas in future years.
7. Burnside  
Parts of the bank need stabilising. Planting of willow cuttings has been suggested.
8. Verges  
These need to be tidy but not manicured. Various approaches have been tried with limited success. Outside the 3-5 m safety zone of the football pitch, semi-rough mowing like the BMX track area would be preferable.
9. Mown area  
This is mown regularly and marked out for football during the season. Steps are taken to promote healthy grass growth.

#### Marker stone

It is hoped to erect some kind of marker stone and perhaps stone seats.

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## Haltwhistle Burn Field Village Green



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Appendix 2

### Coronation Park Enhancement Plan

