

Report on Annual Floral Bedding Plans for Spring 2025

Background

Minehead Town Council provides floral displays throughout Minehead and Alcombe during the autumn/spring months, this includes areas like Wellington Square, The Parade, Ellicombe, and various tub locations throughout the town. While MTC has been transitioning towards more sustainable, permanent bedding schemes, Minehead is renowned for its floral bedding, necessitating the continuation of some annual bedding.

In January 2024, MTC agreed to provide annual bedding plants for Blenheim Gardens after Somerset Council's decision to discontinue their annual bedding programme due to financial constraints. Council delegated the Clerk the authority to procure the summer bedding for Blenheim Gardens. Although more sustainable bedding schemes could be introduced in certain areas of Blenheim Gardens, a longer-term strategy is advisable due to the uncertainty around devolving the Gardens to MTC.

Needs

As MTC does not grow its annual bedding stock in-house, they rely on an external bedding provider. To ensure sufficient time for the nursery to prepare the bedding plants, an order needs to be placed as soon as possible for delivery in October. The Amenity Advisory group, comprising staff and councillors, continues to explore ways to make Minehead more environmentally friendly and sustainable by transitioning to more sustainable bedding schemes. The estimated cost for MTC's spring 2025 bedding is £1,250 + VAT, and for Blenheim Gardens is £1,792 + VAT. Historically, the planters along the harbour and the Quay did not contain spring bedding, and recent years' spring bedding displays were funded by Minehead BID. Given the level of exposure to winter conditions, it is advisable to keep these planters unoccupied until the arrival of the summer season in 2025, when the environment becomes more favourable for plant growth.

Finance

MTC has sufficiently budgeted for their annual bedding schemes under Floral Displays budget line - 4361. It would be appropriate to finance the Blenheim Gardens bedding schemes using the Devolution Costs budget line – 4900, which there is sufficient budget.

Recommendation

Approve the proposed annual bedding costs for MTC's bedding and Blenheim Gardens for Spring 2025, authorising the Clerk to place the order.

Ben Parker

Town Clerk

June 2024