



# Chorley in bloom 2021



**Working in partnership with Chorley Council  
and Community Groups to make Chorley the  
“Best Bloomin Town” in the North West.**



## ***Introduction***

The Chorley in Bloom Group which was formed in February 2015 is made up of community volunteers. We are an independent non profit-making group and work alongside our partner Chorley Council. Chorley in Bloom has been awarded the North West in Bloom RHS Gold Medal Award in the Small City Category since our inception for 2015 - 2019. Our aim is to continue with this success in our work to further enhance our much loved town of Chorley.

We are extremely fortunate that Chorley Council has the foresight to continue their upgrading of the town center and is aware of the benefits that are gained by the use of floral arrangements with strategic planting. The mix of wild flowers and perennials brings an added bonus to our pollinators and wild life in general. Many miles of wildflower corridors have been planted and other grass verges have been left uncut to encourage wildlife and pollinators in the more rural areas.

Despite the Covid Virus which restricted our group from working for nearly a year, Chorley in Bloom has continued to work behind the scenes. We have encouraged the community to split and share many of their perennials which we have used to keep our costs to a minimum.

I believe you will see a number of surprises in our town since the judges were here in 2019.

Since restarting our projects we have made a number of changes to our gardens: planting more perennials, a new green roof for our bug hotel, a pair of complimentary gardens on St Thomas's Square of a Stumpery and a Dry Garden, our Mayflower 400 celebration is a show stopper and you will notice the new signs for our gardens.

Chorley in Bloom took part in the BBC2 programme called Britain in Bloom in 2017, which was shown on 2nd May 2018 and continues to be shown periodically. Reviews from this programme were very encouraging with over 1,000,000 viewers. Since the programme was aired we have been approached for help from several newly forming "in Bloom" groups in the area for advice and information i.e. Leyland and Oswaldtwistle in Bloom Groups. These are now up and running. Entries into the R.H.S. In Your Neighborhood Competition have been encouraged and facilitated but has been less this year.

Thanks to our secretary in 2018 we were successful in gaining a £10,000 lottery bid for workshops which we are developing with pupils and parents of Astley Park Special School and have extended to other schools and community groups.

We are taking part again this year in the Chorley Flower Show, as this is one of our main fund raisers after grants and sponsorships. This year we are producing a show garden in conjunction with Chorley Council.

Our communications network is under constant review and expanding:

We now have a Web Page in use which is being updated regularly

We use Facebook (600+ members) to make everyone aware of our progress and to encourage more participation in projects and events e.g. growing for food, litter picking etc. Chorley FM has closed and we have lost fantastic ally in advertising our events etc. Chorley FM were excellent in their coverage and advertising of our events.

We still have excellent connections with BBC Radio Lancashire and Stephen Lowe has a twice yearly programme specific to Chorley and our In Bloom group.

Once the Covid restrictions allow I will continue to do presentations and talks to Community Groups that request it.

We have steadily been building up relationships with voluntary groups of all abilities and ages

Our Community Garden at Preston Brow has been hailed a success with local residents and the general public.

It has also been featured several times on the That's Lancashire TV programme and in the Local Press.

We faced considerable challenges with the construction/building works in the town center which are now complete. We are working to use these as opportunities not constraints. The planting schemes in the town center of perennials and grasses are bedding in nicely. We are still maintaining and enhancing Chorley Railway Station and the bus station which have been huge successes with commuters.

Unfortunately Ackhurst Lodge and our Wishing Well Garden there has been hit by a series of dreadful floods and is under consultations as to the best way forward. The Health and Safety of our members has prevented our group from working in this garden in Astley Park.

Due to Covid restrictions the Chorley Community of Crafters who gave their time to help us to achieve our "Flat Iron" Heritage project in 2019 are looking forward to our next project for 2022 which will be a wall hanging depicting the Seasons of the year.

We will continue to encourage/provide opportunities for volunteers to make a difference within the community of Chorley and to help build the kind of environment they can enjoy where they live, work and play.

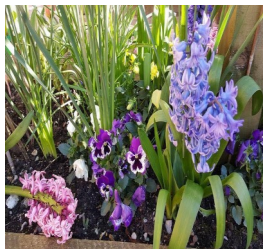
Chorley in Bloom has a thriving community base of volunteers which is still growing. The Committee give willingly of their time and talents. We could not achieve as much as we have without our volunteers. A big thank you goes to all of them.

**Iris E Smith - Chairman**

## Horticultural Achievements

### Spring planting

Each year we plant approximately 40,000 plants, consisting mainly of daffodil, tulips and polyanthus. As well as in the town centre, the beds in our parks, car parks, cemeteries and gateways create a positive vibe throughout Chorley, not only for local people but our many visitors.



### Summer planting

Around 35,000 summer bedding will be planted this year, however, there is a strong emphasis on sustainable planting, using perennials, shrubs and trees, as can be seen surrounding the new market Walk development.



Sustainable planting has reduced the annual planting by over 50% this year.



### Bringing nature to the town

We have continued to increase wildflower areas on the roundabouts, in our parks and the car parks. Many of the roadsides in and around Chorley have also been given wildflower beds, which reduces the amount of grass cutting necessary!

The visual impact of the flower mixtures is one of the benefits you can experience when you visit our town. And of equal importance is our commitment to our environmental responsibility:

Helping reduce our carbon footprint

Introducing more ecological practices

Adding value to the landscape and natural spaces

Bringing wildlife back into the town centre



## Wishing Well at Ackhurst Lodge, Astley Park.



Unfortunately due to the flooding at Ackhurst Lodge Earlier in the year, we have been unable to plant our beautiful begonias as we have done for the last few years. However, we are hopeful that next year we will once again enjoy the work of the Intrepid Explorers who working as a team and amid lots of laughter, will soon have the area looking sensational again.



Chorley in Bloom are grateful for the help from the groups who support them in creating the lovely areas for everyone to enjoy.



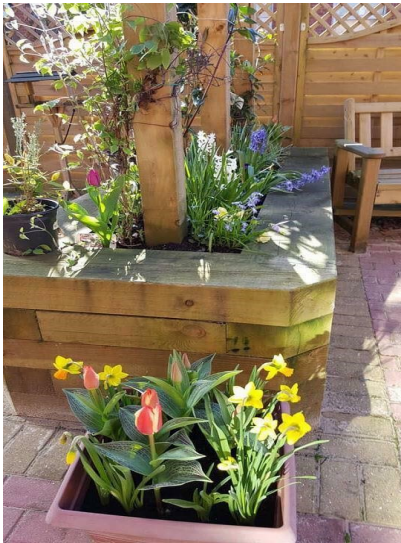
## St Georges' Quarter

The shops and bars have planted their areas with beautiful flowers and made the area very welcoming and colourful again this year



## Links with the Community.....

**Sensory Garden at Rookwood A Ward, Chorley Hospital**—specifically for the benefit of dementia and stroke patients. We continue to support the hospital with the help of the Girl Guides, who regularly plant, weed and tidy up the garden for the benefit of the patients.



Phil Cunliffe talking to Iris on Chorley Market about Chorley in Bloom's fantastic Volunteers

**Stephen Lowe** from BBC Radio Lancashire broadcast his programme from the Stumpery at St. Thomas Square Gardens. He planted a Winter Jasmine in memory of Carol Strickland one of our volunteers who helped make the garden and who sadly passed away. He also spoke to David Brown who gave his tips and advice on planting and Iris Smith on Chorley in Bloom's new projects for this year.



Our Chairman and Vice Chairman continue to give talks to community groups outlining the work that we do in the community and recruiting new volunteers whilst taking on board any ideas they have.

## Market Traders

Mike Bryan proprietor to Bees Country Kitchen on Chorley Market supports Chorley in Bloom and often contributes to our Facebook page.



He is a keen recycler and decorates his innovative planters with flowers and herbs. Everyone loves seeing what he will do next (and his food).

## Town Centre Redevelopment

Over the last few years the Town Centre has been redeveloped with new sustainable planting schemes. This is the first year that we have seen the impact they have had.



There is a definite increase in the amount of wild-life in these areas with Bees and butterflies making for the lavender and grasses. Altogether a much



Another supporter is Chris Ball on Longlands Farm fresh vegetable stall. He was pleased to be able to sponsor the bedding for the planters between the Covered Chorley Market and Market Walks.



# Our Third “Awards Presentation Evening”

We had our “Awards Presentation Evening” to reward our Volunteers, Sponsors and our Partner Chorley Council for their huge amount of support during the year. The event was compared by Stephen Lowe, from Radio Lancashire who did an excellent job of keeping us all in order. Prize and certificates were presented by Lady Catherine Hoyle, who congratulated the volunteers and the group for making Chorley “The Northern Flowerhouse” of which her husband Sir Lindsay Hoyle was very proud.. The Special Award of the year was presented to Brolyn Tshipamba from Oliver House Special School and presented by the late Bill Blackledge MBE ( Chairman of North West in Bloom).



## Chorley Flower Show 2019 -

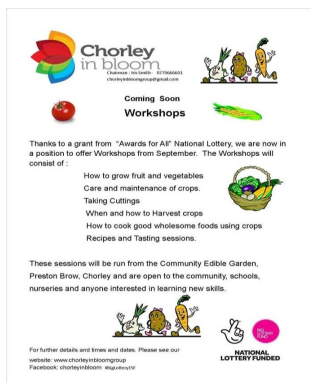


Unfortunately due to the very bad weather the Flower Show was only open for the one day. A huge disappointment for everyone concerned especially as so much work goes into the event.



## Workshops

Up until the recent Covid pandemic we have run a variety of workshops for the community and local schools and nurseries. Sometimes in their schools and sometimes at our Community Edible Garden. The Workshops consist of teaching how to grow fruit, vegetables and flowers and in the Autumn we teach how to cook good wholesome nourishing foods from the produce. We also run lessons for people with disabilities including mental illness. "These lessons have given them confidence, brought out the best in their abilities and enabled access to a wider range of clubs that they just couldn't face or enjoy before coming to Chorley in Bloom" is one of the many quotes we have had from carers. These workshops are very well attended and we have been inundated with requests to restart them.



## Working within the Community

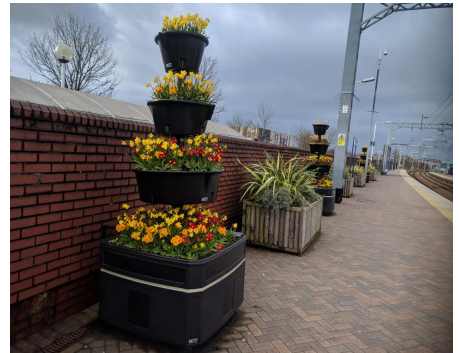
Making a real difference to communities and schools. We have helped local schools and other community groups who have wanted to set up their own community or school gardens and provided help and advice throughout the pandemic. Once we are able to continue to work with the local schools we will reintroduce our workshops and continue with our litter picking activities





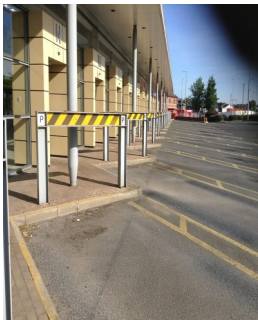
## Chorley Train Station

The railway station continues to be upgraded and with seasonal and sustainable planting. Commuters are amazed at the change and enjoy the scents and aromas as they alight from the trains.

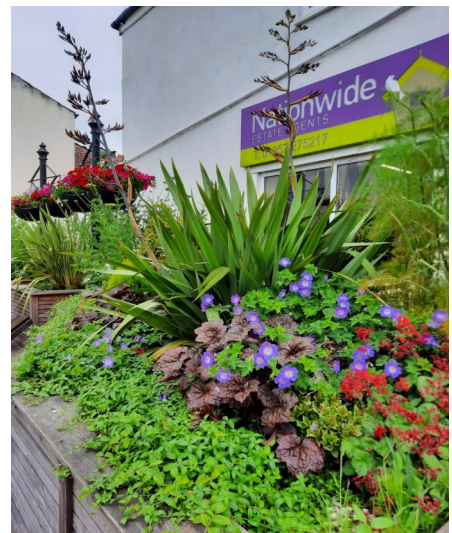


## Chorley Bus Station

We have given Chorley Bus Station a makeover. It is hoped that this will encourage bus users to explore the town and see the difference the planting has made. The site is more cheerful and welcoming and enhances the new Youth Zone and the walkway into St. Georges Quarter



We have changed some of the gardens to more sustainable planting and this year have been rewarded by some beautiful displays.



we

## Appealing to the senses

You'll see on your visit to our glorious Astley Park the result of a labour of love on the new Sensory Garden. This will delight your senses with its range of plants designed especially to heighten all the senses of smell, sound, touch, sight and taste.



We continue to update and restore the sensory garden



## Allotments

Chorley is working hard to find allotment plots in the borough because demand far outstrips supply with 420 people on the waiting list. This is being done by finding new allotment sites, splitting large plots and extending existing sites. There are eight existing allotment sites, two new sites are proposed and a planning application in to provide 30 plots at one of them. Also sites in Euxton, Adlington and Croston have been identified and allocated for allotment provision following a recent open space study done by the Council.



## Roundabouts

We've certainly more than our fair share of roundabouts on the roads of Chorley! So we thought why not make them a feature of our "In Bloom" entry?

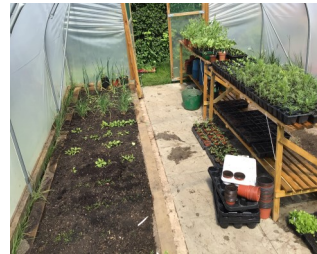
So, the roundabouts on the town centre bypass have, where possible, a theme to celebrate and highlight the history of the town.

Help and advice was sought from the internationally renowned Professor Wood who designed the wildflower park for the Olympics in 2012 to ensure that we came up with a mix of wildflowers to give the best effect and most sustainable for the environment.



## Working with Chorley Schools

Unfortunately due to the covid pandemic, we have been unable to work with schools this year, but previously we have been working with local primary, secondary and special schools to encourage pupils to take an active part in growing foods and looking after the environment, helping them to get funding for equipment and new raised beds. Together with a local primary school we launched a "lets get Growing " Event which was a huge success and is now going to be an annual event, encouraging more schools to get active in the gardens.



Chorley in Bloom works with the pupils and uniformed organisations throughout the year, in all weathers and throughout the borough.



## Still 'growing' strong

### Chorley and District Gardening Society.

The society plays an important role in Chorley helping with various planting and flower projects around the town . With around 75 plus people attending the monthly meetings, with a variety of speakers, an annual plant sale in spring and a flower show in late summer, the Society aims to cater for everyone in the area with an interest in any type of gardening.

Visitors are welcome at any of the meetings, and the website and Facebook page allows regular contact with the gardening community.

Each year the Chorley & District Gardening Society plants up barrels in Chorley Town Centre offering a colourful display over the summer months. Also helping the In Bloom group with other planting projects.



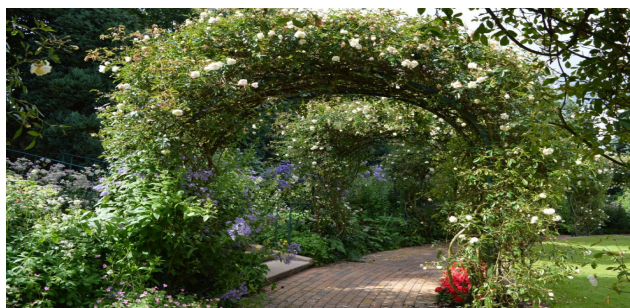
Since the first Chorley Flower Show at Astley Park, the council asked the society to organise the Amateur Flower, fruit and vegetable competition. This year for the first time, the show is being held over 3 days, on the 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> July and 1<sup>st</sup> August.



## Working with members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Days Saints:



No one can miss the Preston Temple as they approach Chorley via the M61 at junction 8. It's the largest Mormon temple outside Utah and plays host to people from all over the world. We are really fortunate to have such great links with the Temple and as a result we regularly work with visiting groups of young people who travel to study at the Temple and take part in a service project as part of their Helping Hands initiative. .



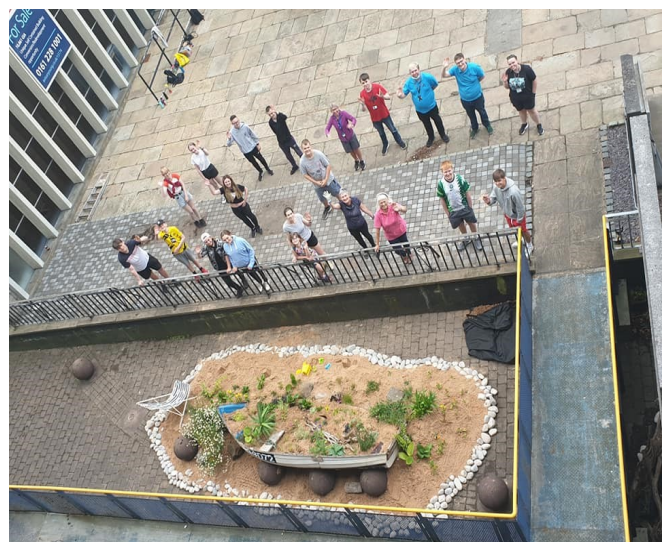
The young people accompanied by leaders take part in litter picks, allotment spring cleans with allotment holders and community food growing/gardening projects



# St Thomas Square

There has been a disused and unsightly area beneath the Police Station for many years. It was full of litter and rubbish and our Chairman Iris Smith decided it was time to do something about it.

With the help of the Intrepid Explorers and the Police Cadets the area has been transformed into two wonderful wildlife and seascape areas.



# History and Art In the Landscape

## Chorley Pals

When War broke out in early August 1914 Captain James Milton from Chorley took steps to form a 'Pals' battalion in Chorley and district.

By the 3rd September, thirty men had signed up and they were eventually formed into a Company to join a newly raised battalion at Accrington. By the end of September the Chorley Pals Company as they became known was up to full strength, with some 212 men and 3 Officers.

The Chorley Pals were held in reserve and would not see the front line trenches for a while yet.

However, as early as the 29th March 1916, the Pals were told they were to attack the small village of Serre, in the French Department of the Somme.

As a result of the attack on the morning of the 1st July 1916, the Chorley Pals (Y Company) had 31 men killed and three died within a month of their wounds received on that day. 21 have no known graves their names are transcribed on the Thiepval memorial to the Missing on the Somme battlefield. This Garden of Remembrance was commissioned by the Chorley Pals Memorial charity

### Commemoration.

To celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the Chorley Pals leaving the town to go to war, soldier willow figures had been incorporated in the floral displays adjacent to the memorial statue. Last year we added a Wildflower area surrounding the Pals garden. The mix is prominently Cornflowers and Poppies. The Cornflower is the flower for Chorley as seen on its crest

There is also an environmental factor of having the Wildflowers

- : it helps to reduce our carbon footprint
- : introduces more ecological practices
- : brings wildlife back into the towns
- : adds value to the landscape and natural spaces



# Armed Forces Commemoration

## Celebrate and Be Inspired

This year we wanted to celebrate the achievements of the of our Armed Forces.

The plants chosen are Ornamental shrubs, colourful perennials and annual bedding. With all these combined with the Spitfire features it will definitely catch the public's attention as they go by.



This display will evolve in years to come just like the RAF



Chorley in Bloom paid there respects by sewing 100 knitted poppies onto a cargo net to commemorate 100 years on Remembrance Day.

This year we are creating a special Armed Forces Garden at the Chorley Flower Show which I am sure will be a fantastic tribute to show our appreciation of their work.

## Chorley in Bloom Partners

### Authorities

Chorley Council  
Lancashire County Council

### Local groups

Inspire Youth Zone.  
Chorley & District Gardening Society  
Astley Walled Gardeners  
Friends of Astley Park  
Friends of Yarrow Valley Country Park  
Allotment Society  
Lancashire Wildlife Trust  
Chorley Community of Crafters

### Other supporters

Pub Watch  
Galloways Society for the Blind  
Chorley Historical & Archaeological Society  
Chorley Heritage Support Group  
Spice Time Credits  
and many individuals who have  
contributed to the Chorley in Bloom Partnership

### Businesses / Sponsors

Anise  
Amberol  
B&Q DIY Store  
Birkacre Garden Centre  
Bdp Creative Solutions  
Everglades  
Glenroyde Nurseries  
Groundwork—One Stop Shop  
Hayloft Plants  
Growing Solutions Ltd-Peter Benson  
Midstream  
Prince's Trust  
W Robinson & Son (Seeds and Plants)  
SM Sheet Metal  
Smithtech Engineering Ltd  
Woodpecker Garden Products  
Walker Oakfield

## Suppliers

Year after year – and this year is no exception – we get praise from members of the public, residents, visitors and people who work in Chorley for our Amazing hanging baskets, hay racks, lamp post baskets and long barrier and half circle planters. This praise is really only to be expected considering the quality of the plants they contain and a lot of that is down to our fantastic suppliers.

Giving more than a helping hand **Midstream (West Lancs.)** is a social enterprise providing work for people with learning difficulties, physical disabilities and sensory impairment and horticulture is one of its core activities.



The whole focus of **Midstream** is to give these young people and adults the opportunity for progression and social interaction in their working life through the acquisition of skills, experience and accreditations towards nationally recognised qualifications according to their individual needs.



We've also had the help and support from local garden centres and nurseries with 100 planted hanging baskets from **Pole Green Nurseries**, plus plants supplied by **Birkacre Garden Centre** who we've also partnered with for the Best Kept Garden competition.