



ANNUAL REPORT

1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020

RHS Britain in Bloom Champion of Champions 2019!



Scottish Charity number SC 032395

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1 Introduction.

As a registered Scottish Charity (SC 032395), Beautiful Perth (BP) is required to prepare its accounts and an Annual Report of its endeavours and financial activity. This Annual Report summarises another year of considerable, very successful activity during the year 2019-20. The highlight was undoubtedly Britain in Bloom! We celebrated our 30th birthday in 2019, and there could have been no better way of celebrating this than winning the UK's most coveted community gardening prize – the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain In Bloom Champion of Champion's Award, which was announced in London on 25 October 2019. See section 4 for more details of this, our greatest ever achievement. Our other achievements, including our Riverside Park and Zero Waste Perth projects, are described in the following pages.

My sincere thanks to the Vice Chair, Jenny Williams, whose dedicated work has proved invaluable to the Chairman – a true driving force in Beautiful Perth's successes.

My thanks are also conveyed to both Monica Straughan and Elspeth Bruce for undertaking the roles of Treasurer and Secretary respectively. Both are important and key positions and we are also grateful to Monica for her duties on media promotion through press releases, the website and social media. Elspeth continues to approach her secretarial duties with enthusiasm and good humour and supporting volunteers has been a key part of her duties.

The efforts by all committee members as volunteers as well as Trustees, are really impressive including at community and action day events, judging duties and promotional activities. I would like to thank all our volunteers, partner organisations, sponsors and supporters for another fantastic year helping us make Perth a beautiful place to live, work and visit.

2 Covid-19

The last quarter of this financial year has fallen during the global pandemic of coronavirus Covid-19. At 31 March, Scotland was in 'lockdown' with government advice that people should stay at home and all non-essential work should be put on hold until further notice. This means that we have had to cancel all our usual activities until social distancing rules are lifted. Our committee meetings have been suspended, the AGM, normally held in May, has been cancelled and this Annual Report has been prepared without face-to-face contact, in line with the Government guidance. The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) has advised that key decisions may be made using 'digital solutions' so this report, along with the Annual Accounts, were circulated to Trustees by email for approval.

In terms of the 2020-21 financial situation, it is not known how long this situation will continue, or what the long term impacts may be, but it is clear that our normal patterns of activity are not going to apply for much of the coming year.

3 Governance

Structure, governance and management

Beautiful Perth's governing document is a Constitution, adopted in 2001 and most recently revised in 2019. The charitable objectives of Beautiful Perth are

- to improve the local environment and quality of life in Perth
- to enhance environmental education through environmental campaigns and projects
- to advance community development by fostering community spirit and public participation

Our governing body is a Committee of Trustees, drawn from the private sector, public sector, local residents and voluntary organisations. The current membership is listed in paragraph 3.2 below. The committee meets monthly (10 times in 2019-20). All committee members are volunteers and no remunerations are paid.

As required by the Constitution, the Trustees monitor the Association's financial position via monthly reports to the committee by the Treasurer. Audited accounts of the Income and Expenditure and of the Balance Sheet at the end of the financial year are normally presented to the Annual General Meeting but this year, due to Covid-19, they have been scrutinised and approved by the Trustees online.

We have a set of Policies and Procedures in place, covering Health & Safety, Finance, The Environment, Plastics, Volunteering, Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults, Equal Opportunities and Intergenerational Working.

AGM and Election of Office Bearers

Because of Covid-19 social distancing rules (see para 2 above) our Annual General Meeting had to be cancelled. The existing Trustees will continue to fulfil their roles until such time as normal circumstances can apply again:

Chairman: John Summers

Vice Chair: Jenny Williams

Secretary: Elspeth Bruce

Treasurer: Monica Straughan

Trustees: Alistair Chalmers, Fiona Hair, Graham Harbut, Tracey Hutton, Tom Lowdon, Barbara McDonald, Alison Morrison, Sylvia Stuart

Independent Examiner: We are very grateful to Hunter Hope, who carried out this important role for us for many years, and who has now retired, and to Lorna Sharp FCCA, who has agreed to become our new Independent Examiner.

Finance: Full details of the Association's finances are presented in the Accounts and Treasurer's Notes. The Association is in a satisfactory financial position and my thanks to those who support us for their continued contributions. Thank you to the Council for its continued financial support, to other funders and supporters including the Gannochy Trust and the Perthshire Advertiser, and to our generous sponsors Abelio Scotrail, Jelf Clark Thomson Insurance (now Marsh Corporation), Curves Fitness Gym, Earnside Energy, Holiday Inn Express Perth, Kilmac Ltd, Live Active Leisure, Morris Leslie Ltd, St Johnstone FC and St Leonard's in the Fields Church.

4 Key Projects 2019-20

RHS Britain in Bloom - Champion of Champions Award 2019

This prestigious and coveted award was presented to Beautiful Perth by Baroness Floella Benjamin at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Britain In Bloom Awards ceremony at the Royal Horticultural Halls in Vincent Square, London. The five finalists in this category, being Perth, Durham, St Helier, Castlecaulfield and Kingsbridge were hand-picked based on their exceptional past performance. This was the second time in the 30-year history of Beautiful Perth that Perth had been entered into this category, but the first time it has won this Award.

RHS judges had visited Perth on Tuesday 30 July 2019, and witnessed the culmination of months of planning, activity and community engagement. STV News and local media provided coverage of both the judging day and of the Champion of Champions award. Such was the civic pride and recognition of the efforts of Beautiful Perth in winning this award that Provost Dennis Melloy of Perth and Kinross Council later hosted a civic reception for the volunteers, supporters, and Trustees.

Zero Waste Perth project

The consortium of Zero Waste Perth namely Perth and Kinross Council, Perth College UHI and Beautiful Perth is extremely grateful to the two project Co-ordinators Fiona McBain and Sam Martens for the dedication they have given to this 3-year project. Special mention must also be given to our Treasurer Monica Straughan for managing and regularly reporting on the considerable funding of this project through the Beautiful Perth accounts.

The project formally ended on 31 March 2020, but the Co-ordinators will remain in post until the end of June to allow them to complete reporting and evaluation processes. The project has been a great success in building a culture of sustainable living in the City, particularly in areas with the highest levels of social and economic deprivation. The aim was to provide infrastructure and build the skills and capacity necessary for a greater level of waste to be reduced, reused and recycled in local communities and businesses.

Key successes have included the creation of a Zero Waste Space within a local social enterprise, the Bike Station; this new community hub is kitted out with tools and other equipment so it can be used by local community groups for training, meetings and workshops on things like sewing skills, furniture upcycling and woodworking. A Community Fridge has been provided in the Letham housing estate, cookery courses organised and a Food Sharing Network established; this has proved invaluable during the current Covid-19 crisis. A wide range of training sessions and workshops have been run for businesses on the circular economy and sustainable businesses practices. These and many other successes will have a long-lasting legacy in our Fair City.

Riverside Park

Strategically poised on the banks of the River Tay, Riverside Park in the heart of Perth encompasses the Heather Collection, Rodney Garden and Norie Miller Park. The Heather Collection has become the core of Beautiful Perth voluntary activity with sessions being held regularly. The collection was designed by PKC Landscape Architect, Sue Allen, and over 16,000 heather plants, from 550 varieties have been planted up and maintained by Beautiful Perth volunteers since 2012. The current aspiration is to further extend the number of beds and heather varieties in the collection and to work towards creating a national collection of the species "*Erica carnea*". At the time of reporting, funding bids are in place to further invest in the heather collection as a visitor destination, focussing on landscaping, information panels and improved directional signage.

Riverside Park also has built heritage of historical significance, such as the Kinnoull Graveyard and Aisle – a burial site for a number of notable characters such as the Victorian socialite Effie Gray. Recognising the historical significance and value of the site, Beautiful Perth volunteers are carrying out improvement works within the graveyard. This has included the removal of invasive and pernicious ivy, clearing of debris and the restoration and planting up of the graves of the eminent nurserymen, Dickson and Turnbull. Working in partnership with PKC, substantial stonework restoration has been commissioned to preserve this built heritage for the future.

Elements of Rodney Garden also continue to be maintained by Beautiful Perth volunteers which provided a beautiful display in the Summer of 2019. The parterre garden was refurbished by the Council's horticultural

trainees, and further sculptural elements were added by Beautiful Perth in the form of upcycled metal stylised plants.

The historic Perth Nursery was established in 1766 on the site of what is now part of Riverside Park. It became nationally important as one of the Dickson dynasty nurseries. As a qualified genealogist, one of our Beautiful Perth volunteers has researched the wills left by the partners, whilst our Secretary has researched the origins of the Perth Nursery and its contribution to horticulture, arboriculture and Art. This work was described as outstanding by RHS judges. Empty premises in Perth were used to display informational banners detailing the history of Perth Nursery and an information panel, detailing a timeline of over 200 years of Perth's horticultural history, has been installed at the Heather Collection. Discussions are currently being held with a local publisher regarding publishing the findings in an illustrated book format with a planned print run of 1000 copies.

Such is the beauty and uniqueness of this stretch of river bank and hinterland, that Riverside Park was awarded the discretionary RHS Britain In Bloom Parks and Green Spaces Award over two consecutive years, 2018 and 2019, a true testament to the invaluable and vital efforts of Beautiful Perth and the great value they bring to the community.

5 Horticultural Activities

We are extremely proud of the impressive floral displays, sustainable beds and hanging baskets that brighten up the City every summer. Massive thanks go to Perth and Kinross Council and its Westbank nursery for the provision of hanging baskets and plants for the City, and to the Community Greenspace team for their co-ordination and delivery of ideas and concepts. In 2019, 'parklets' with seating were installed at the Perth Concert Hall plaza adding a vibrant splash of colour to this cultural area. As well as our flagship Heather Collection in Riverside Park, our volunteers worked on a range of sites across Perth.

Our adopted bed at **Curfew Row** is now well established and is looked after by our volunteers in partnership with the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSGS). A bug hotel also now occupies the site, built with the assistance of Perth's Men's Shed. Planters at the historical Fair Maid's House are also now maintained by Beautiful Perth in partnership with the RSGS.

Beautiful Perth volunteers continue to enhance **local neighbourhood sites** such as Craigie Crossroads and continue to maintain colourful planters with seasonal bedding and bulbs to the delight of passers-by and residents alike.

The **Cherrybank Corner** site has again been enhanced with the planting up of 5 slate planters, providing colour in Spring and Summer. We also tend the nearby **Oakbank Place** corner site where a stone cairn acts as a 'bug hotel' to support wildlife.

Our volunteers continue to work in partnership with **St Leonard's in the Fields Church** to ensure a breath-taking show of non-stop begonias in their display beds in Summer and during Spring, a riot of mixed *Narcissi* (we source the plants and put them in the ground; we keep them weed free and the church pays for the plants and undertakes the watering – a great and equal partnership).

Snowdrop Peace Walk Project. Snowdrops previously planted 'in the green' alongside the River Tay have now established successfully and specimen snowdrops have been planted around the Millais frame and in Kinnoull Churchyard. This will link with the National Trust for Scotland's Branklyn Garden and will feature in the annual national Snowdrop Festival.

The Compassionate Friends Garden, Riverside Park. Planting continues at this site, which is dedicated to the Compassionate Friends group – a charity which supports bereaved parents and families. The Garden includes

native species and wildflowers and over 100 lilies; due to their success on this site we plan to add to the Lily collection, with a number having been donated by local Lily expert Madeleine Tinson who holds a National Collection of this local cultivated species.

Friarton Recycling Centre – The Web Walk: BP volunteers approached this area with great gusto, clearing the site and planting up to provide a riot of Summer colour. As well as planting up a car wreck with trailing bedding, they also planted the numerous receptacles at the site, to promote the Zero Waste message. An upcycled fish, sculpted from a defunct cattle feeder was installed conveying the message of plastic waste and its impact on river and ocean environments.

Bridgend Affiliate Group: We continue to look after beds at Camilla Bell Park, Dundee Road and the Queen's Bridge. These beds are now well established and offer a wonderful display all year round with a mixture of evergreen shrubs, spring bulbs, herbaceous planting and summer bedding for that extra splash of colour. The shrubbery at Back Wynd car park is also looking fantastic. The Parking Services team at the Council has given us on-going support, which helps make deliveries of extra bark and compost at our regular maintenance sessions run smoothly.

Perth Railway Station: Perth Station has been adopted via Abelio Scotrail's Adopt-A-Station scheme and we are very proud of our partnership with the Perth Station Gardening Club. Our regular joint action days ensure that the entrance to the station – and the platforms – are a horticultural delight. We also help out in Perth Station's Biodiversity garden, which won a Beautiful Scotland It's Your Neighbourhood Award in 2019.

Cross generational working has become an effective tool in reducing social isolation. This year, we launched a sunflower competition, bringing together nursery school children from Paint Pots Nursery with residents of Kincarrathie House Care Home. This was judged by BBC Scotland's Beechgrove Garden presenter, Brian Cunningham. We also hosted a 'Heather & Blether' session in Riverside Park, bringing Kincarrathie residents together with our volunteers and pupils from Kinnoull Primary School.

6. Community Engagement, Participation and Partnership Working

Partnerships are key to our success and we continue to have valuable working relationships with both long-standing supporters and new partners. Together, we really do make a difference and listed below are some of the people and groups who have made valuable contributions to our success. I am very grateful to all those involved – the full list of our 67 active partnerships can be found at Annex 1 on page 9. Key partnerships include:

Perth and Kinross Council: The positive and longstanding partnership with Perth and Kinross Council's Community Greenspace Team continues to help us deliver beneficial outcomes in horticultural excellence, environmental responsibility and community participation. We also have support from wider council teams (see list at the end of this document). Our collaborative working is beneficial and ensures positive outcomes in helping keep Perth beautiful. Jane Keith and Carolyn McKenzie of Perth and Kinross Council's Westbank operation, together with the Council's Horticultural Apprentices and Community Payback Team, provide invaluable advice and assistance across a number of sites.

Schools: Beautiful Perth continues to support the National Eco Schools programme with a total of 26 Nurseries, Primary and Secondary schools being part of the programme. A total of 16 hold the coveted Green Flags.

Our joint venture with Kinnoull Primary School, the £25,000 grant-funded front garden project, continues to flourish, whilst projects have also developed with the City of Perth Early Childhood Centre and Perth

High School.

Pupils from 6 schools joined our volunteers in June to create the floral display outside Perth Leisure Pool. This year's theme was Space Exploration, including the 50th Anniversary of Apollo 11's moon landing, the current role of satellites in determining areas of Carbon sinks and Co2 emissions, and the contribution of plants in carbon capture.

Trustees Fiona Hair and Alison Morrison continue to liaise with local schools and to establish the need for support and assistance from Beautiful Perth.

Our Inter-generational Working Policy sees our volunteers working side by side with young and older learners to plant up and tend new raised beds at Carpenter Court sheltered housing as well as creating and tending raised beds within the grounds of Perth High School.

In partnership with Turning Point Perth's social enterprise Rosie's Garden, we delivered colourful pots planted with spring and summer displays to business frontages in the Bridgend area of Perth. These were looked after by the businesses and taken back to Rosie's Garden for replanting at the end of the seasons. This provides a welcome addition to a neighbourhood marked for regeneration by Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust.

7. Environmental Responsibility

We are active supporters of the Clean Up Scotland Campaign and we work closely with Keep Scotland Beautiful. As well as our major Zero Waste Perth project (see para 4.2) we undertake a wide range of environmental projects, including:

The Blue Tay Project: initiated by our Zero Waste Perth colleagues, emphasis has been placed on undertaking litter picks by kayak on the River Tay and its banks. This is a Special Area of Conservation, and our aim is to help reduce the incidence of plastics and other litter making their way downstream. The project has been undertaken in partnership with Willowgate Outdoor Activity Centre

Litter picking: the 10th Perthshire Beaver Scouts undertake litterpicks with us every year, to help us keep Perth litter-free. Our volunteers also undertake regular litter picks in various hotspots in the City and we always encourage everyone in our Fair City to dispose of their rubbish responsibly.

We have moved away from large scale floral displays using annual bedding plants, and are taking a more sustainable approach to planting, including native species, pollinator plants and habitat creation wherever possible, to promote biodiversity.

We continue to support the Urban Butterfly Conservation Project through suitable management of an area of the heather garden and by one of our volunteers registering as a Recorder for a Biodiversity transect in the North Muirton area of the City. Species which are in decline have already been identified. Some of our volunteers attended a 1-day workshop in butterfly identification, whilst our Trustee Tracey Hutton continues to run the Perth Station Gardening Club and Biodiversity garden, with support from Abelio Scotrail.

The City Centre Project is run by the Council's Criminal Justice Team, involving those serving Community Payback Orders. The team normally works year-round to clean graffiti, chewing gum and other environmental problems from our city streets. We have worked in partnership with the team for a number of years but during the Covid-19 crisis these activities have been put on hold. We have therefore agreed with

our partners in the project to ringfence £3,000 in reserve to purchase equipment and supplies once the crisis is over, to allow a post Covid-19 clean-up to go ahead.

8. Local Awards

We judged and attended the Gannochy Trust's 2019 Gannochy Garden Awards, whilst restructuring our own local awards scheme in 2019.

9. Conclusion

The work of the volunteers and supporters of Beautiful Perth is truly impressive and requests for assistance with our activities are always met willingly. Our motivation is to make Perth a beautiful place to live, work and visit and it is really gratifying when positive comments are received about our work. Beautiful Perth enjoys a positive relationship with the two local newspapers namely the Courier and the Perthshire Advertiser. The Perthshire Advertiser was particularly supportive in 2019 by featuring regular free articles of Beautiful Perth activity to promote and encourage our efforts. Beautiful Perth is working in partnership with the local authority to tackle horticultural sites, where due to Council budgets pressures, resources are stretched and with the financial support from a local trust fund, this work is seeing results. The efforts of existing and new volunteers are making a real difference to the area.

The backing from Local Councillors and staff from Perth and Kinross Council is essential to the success of Beautiful Perth and is much appreciated. Continuing sponsorship support from private sector companies has allowed prominent floral displays to be maintained and extended during 2019-20 and efforts to attract new sponsors are ongoing.

We are extremely grateful and honoured for the efforts of Beautiful Perth to be recognised in the awarding of the Britain in Bloom Champion of Champions 2019 – the true pinnacle of our successes.

Beautiful Perth has continued to implement a strategy of increasing community engagement and more and more groups and individuals are taking part in our successful and worthwhile campaign.

As Chairman I must thank all the Executive Committee Members, Office Bearers and volunteers as the resounding successes of 2019-20 would not have been possible without them.

John Summers

John P Summers OBE, Chairman

11 May 2020



10. Annex 1: list of partnerships/

Schools and youth groups

EcoTecnic at Perth College UHI – Zero Waste Perth

Kinnoull Primary School

Perth High School

City of Perth Early Learning Centre

10th Perthshire Beaver Scouts (two groups at annual litter picks)

Plus - other nursery, primary, and secondary schools in Perth at Perth Leisure Pool planting, Zero Waste Perth activities and the Beautiful Perth Awards

Charities, voluntary groups & social enterprises

Beautiful Scotland

Branklyn Garden

Bridgend Affiliate Group

Butterfly Conservation East Scotland

Church of The Nazarene

Compassionate Friends Scotland

Heather Society

Men's Shed Perth

Moncreiffe Island allotment group

Oakbank Community Centre

Perth & District Beekeepers' Association

Perth Station Garden Club

Perthshire Wildlife

RHS of Perthshire

Royal Scottish Geographical Society

Salvation Army Skinnergate House

South Perth Greenspace Partnerships

Take A Pride in North Muirton

Take A Pride in P&K Association

Tayside Biodiversity Partnership

The Bike Station

Tulloch's Blooming Lade

Turning Point Scotland – Rosie's Garden Perth

Viewlands Venture

Businesses & agencies

AK Bell Library

Aviva

Balfour Beattie

Black Watch Museum

Community Safety Partnership

Craigie Cross businesses

Perth City Centre Management

Perth Concert Hall

Perth Racecourse

Perthshire Advertiser

Scottish Natural Heritage

SSE

Stagecoach Group

Perth & Kinross Council Teams

Community Greenspace

Criminal Justice (Community Payback)

Dog Control

Finance

Operations (Grounds Maintenance)

Parking Services

Regeneration

Roads

Street Lighting

Waste Services

Westbank Nursery