
Kirkbymoorside Town Council
Information for the meeting on Monday 15 September 2025

2025 Summer town flower displays

At a recent meeting of the Kirkbymoorside in Bloom committee, our members shared their thoughts on the areas of success and areas for improvement to take forward into the 2026 town flower displays planned, designed, organised and maintained by the In Bloom group.

The town council may not be aware that over the last two years the In Bloom group has added further wooden flower tubs around the town and significantly widened participation in the annual Open Gardens event. This has encouraged more visitors to the town from other parts of Ryedale and from other parts of the UK and mainland Europe.

We have been pleased to have received so many positive comments from visitors to the town about the extent and vibrancy of the flower displays and how the towns natural charms have been enhanced by the displays.

We have unfortunately, also been very dismayed to hear from some local residents and visitors that they were disappointed as they felt that the standards were falling in the areas where we were not maintaining the grass areas around the town signs and around some of the wooden circular flower tub displays, and that the rectangular wooden planters around the town centre were not being looked after. As you can imagine these comments came as a shock to the In Bloom Group as we have had no involvement in what we assume are the areas the town council has run as their wildflower grassland project for the last two years, and the rectangular planters around the town were installed and are meant to be maintained by the town council. Needless to say, we have ensured that such incorrect assumptions made to us have been immediately corrected so that the In Bloom group does not have the hard work and ongoing efforts of its small band of volunteers blighted. We have advised everyone who has made such comments that these areas are the responsibility of the town council.

In discussing this significant matter we have had the benefit of firsthand feedback from our volunteers who work throughout the year planting, clearing, weeding and watering our displays. The views of our volunteers are that;

1. The area around the stone town signs for the first half of the summer season was a very bad reflection on the town as the town signs were almost impossible to see due to the lack of grass cutting until you had almost passed the signs. One sign benefitted from the efforts of a resident who now cuts the verges outside his house in frustration at the mess and kindly supported us at the same time. The grass cutting from around late July was improved slightly so that the signs were more visible. The volunteers felt that as the In Bloom Group had taken the initiative to have stone walling laid at the base of both signs to enhance the visibility of the displays it seemed very strange that the town council then stopped / reduced the extent of grass cutting around them this year.
2. The wooden flower tub stack at the end of West Lund Lane was partially obscured when viewed from the East earlier in the summer due to lack of grass cutting around it. The views, or rather the lack of views, from the West has meant that the stack has been fully obscured throughout the period June to September. The volunteers also felt that the town council would have taken into account the

location of the stack when searching for such sites and kept the very tall grass area well away from the stack.

When the town council wrote to the Group at the start of the wilding project it provided details about exactly what was going to be planted and the extent of the grass areas no longer to be cut regularly around the stack and the town signs etc. These areas do not appear to correlate with the number and extent of patches that are now being left uncut. It has been noted that there is considerable spread of invasive weeds, such as nettles, brambles, docks, creeping thistles and buttercup, of particular concern as to the nature of its spread; ragwort. Unfortunately, this has crept up areas around the tubs, particularly West Lund.

3. Whilst fully appreciating the concept of creating “corridors” of wild life the reality of the situation is that we have islands; there is no continuity.

4. We were led to believe that these areas would be “managed”. Our volunteers are out and about quite considerably but have yet to see anyone actually doing anything. Who is responsible for this aspect of the project?

5. Many people have commented that we are so fortunate being surrounded by a rural environment; plenty of trees, hedges, fields and pasture where wilding is evident right on our boundaries, however they prefer to see some sense of neatness and order within the town itself, recognizing that our tubs are in fact doing a terrific job in attracting pollinators. Traveling along the A170 from Helmsley to Pickering Kirkbymoorside appears quite unkempt in comparison to our neighbouring market towns.

Regretfully, the Group does not feel that the wildflower project has added any visual or environmental benefit to the town and has unfortunately detracted from the appearance of the displays we work so hard to keep looking so colourful, especially over this last very hot summer.

The Kirkbymoorside In Bloom Group hopes that the above constructive comments will be taken fully into account by the town council and that it will review and modify its approach going forward so as not to adversely impact upon the work of the group and its volunteers. However, more importantly we hope the approach and scope of the project will be addressed urgently to ensure the negative comments we received from residents and visitors in 2025 are not repeated in 2026.

Should representatives of the town council wish to discuss the matter in more detail with the In Bloom Group we would be delighted to invite them to a future meeting.

Kind regards,

Gaynor

Chair of the Kirkbymoorside In Bloom Group