

A YEAR IN NORTON IN HALES



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



HEART OF
ENGLAND

WELCOME TO NORTON IN HALES

Norton In Hales is a picturesque village located in Shropshire, the county's most north-easterly village and parish with a population of around 600.

Despite being a small village, there is an incredible community spirit which resonates throughout local life and in the many voluntary groups, including the Bloom Group. Initially established in 2004 as a gardening club, the Bloom Group has grown to inspire positive change in the village through horticultural, environmental and community action.

Back in 2015, Norton In Hales became Britain in Bloom Champion of Champions, an accolade which is still proudly spoken about today. Along with many of the original members who helped achieve this award, the group has grown to embrace people of all ages and backgrounds, bringing our active members to 20.

The past 12 months have perhaps seen the most significant change; working as a team there is positive energy, commitment and shared goals in everything we do. The group is led with passion and this distils into every idea and project, so this year seemed like the perfect opportunity to once again enter the Heart of England in Bloom.



FLOREAT SALOPIA - MAY SHROPSHIRE FLOURISH

When looking at a theme for the year, we asked everyone to consider what was important to them as a member of the Bloom Group and then bring their ideas along to a meeting.

One of the stand-out ideas for everyone was 'Floreat Salopia'. Floreat means 'let it bloom' in Latin, and the motto 'Floreat Salopia' was originally used by the borough of Shrewsbury, it was then adopted by Salop (the old English name for Shropshire) in 1896. You can see the Shropshire flag flying above the church.

As a group we felt this was a nod to the heritage of our village; Norton in Hales first appeared in Christianity records in 669AD through Chad, the missionary Bishop of Lichfield at that time.

If there was one word to describe the Bloom Group today, we feel flourishing would be it; everything we do encompasses the themes of horticulture, the environment and our community. Flourishing for us included taking steps to become more sustainable, something which is reflected in our perennial planting scheme for 2023, aiming to reduce waste and choosing plants for pollinators.

The theme of flourishing also led us to think about the small community we have created within the Bloom Group and the close friendships that our voluntary work enabled us to build. Aside from the 20 core members of the group, there are many others that support the maintenance of beds and help us build the more significant projects, like the compost bays, the bird hide, dove cote and obelisks. Our relationships with funders, the local Council and local business has also blossomed and we work hard to develop these by demonstrating impact at every opportunity.



HORTICULTURAL ACHIEVEMENT





THE SEED EXCHANGE

To encourage villagers to grow from seed the exchange was set up in the bus shelter. It has proved very successful and is in constant use, allowing us to also add more perennials grown from local seed to add to the village planting scheme.



CHRISTMAS

Creating a festive feel in the centre of the village was important to us and we spent time foraging for every single natural element of the Christmas displays. The structures used on the barrels have been carefully stored so we can use them again this year.



ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY



BUG HOTEL

Our bird-friendly bug hotel was built collaboratively between the Bloom Group, the primary school and a local resident. Scrap wood was sourced from across the village to build the frame and children from the school worked together to create nooks and crannies for guests.



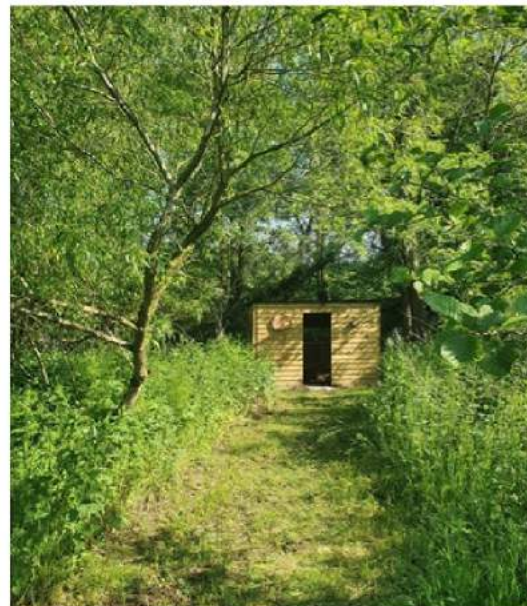
COMPOST BAYS

Our compost bays were built in 2022 and sit in a corner of the community sports field at the end of the village. Built using surplus pallets from a local farm, these are in constant use and allow us to increase the organic content of our beds.



BIRD HIDE

In January 2023 we were delighted to hear that the Bloom Group had been successful in the EnviroGrant application from Veolia and Shropshire Council to build a bird hide on the edge of the village, overlooking the River Tern. The grant of £963.00 paid for all the wood, fixtures and fittings, and the design and construction was completed by two local residents.



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION



EASTER EGG TRAIL

We were thrilled to have 49 children take part in our Easter Egg Trail this year. Winding their way around the village and following clues to find tasty treats, families in fancy dress and even pets joined in the fun. While some money was raised from the event, our primary objective was community focussed.



CORONATION CRAB APPLES

To mark the coronation of King Charles, we secured the support of local businesses Belford Homes Ltd and James Du Pavey to purchase seven Prairie Fire crab apples which were planted by school children on the edge of the car park.



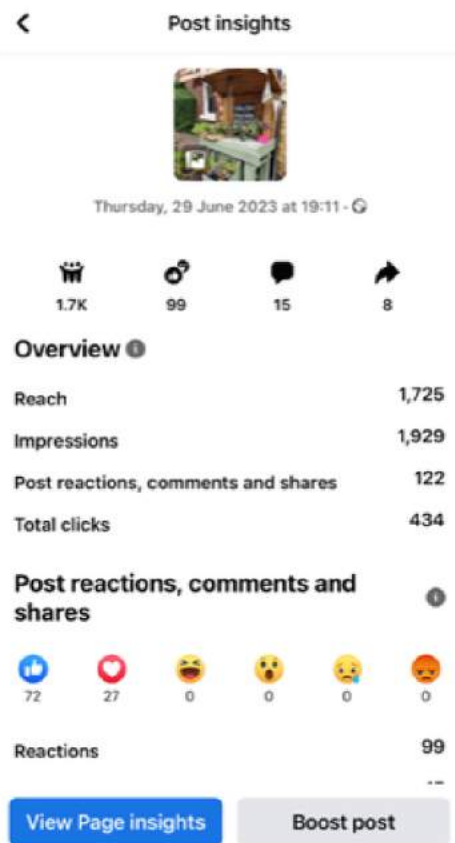
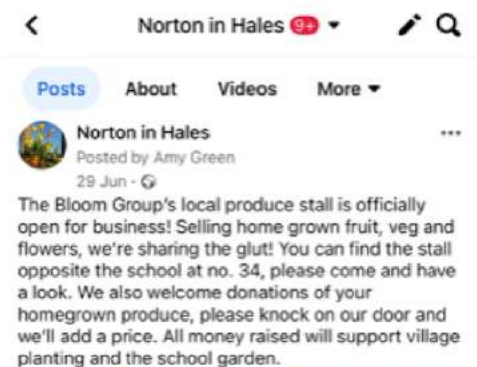
OPEN GARDENS

Organising our own Open Gardens event last summer enabled villagers to showcase their hard work and dedication. Attended by more than 100 people, 14 gardens were opened to members of the public. For some residents this was the first occasion that they were participating in a village event.



COMMUNICATION IS KEY

We regularly use the village magazine, Facebook and the village noticeboard to share plans of upcoming events and activities.



MEET THE TEAM



The Group meet once a month in the local pub, the Hind's Head. Always well attended, the meetings are led by an agenda to ensure we keep on top of projects and tasks, and minutes are circulated afterwards.

Chair - Sarah Moulson | **Vice Chair** - Una Cole

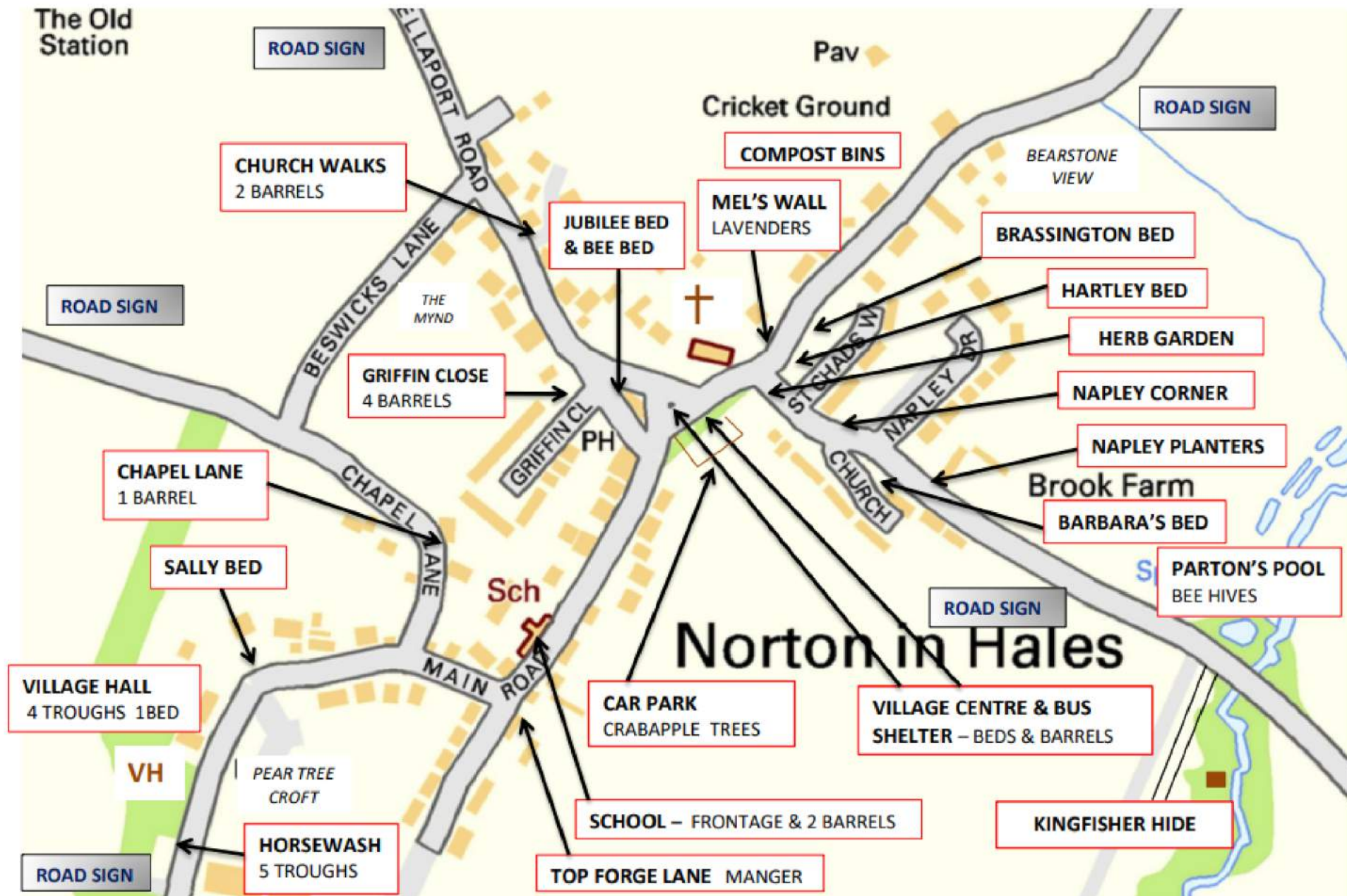
Secretary - Amy Green | **Treasurer** - Dilwyn Harris | **Committee** - Chris Green, Veronica Green, Laura Worton

Members - Julie Arkle, Julie Astall, Alison Edmonds, Paul and Audrey Greatbatch, Malcolm and Ann McDonald, Mike Norris, Vivienne Rochefort, John and Bev Stokes, Jill and Roger Taylor

Friends - John Astall, Andy Baldwin, Bob Cole, Alan and Cynthia Dutton, Alan Eardley, Matt Eardley, Peter Eardley, Sue Hackney, Karen and Kevin Hubbard, Carolyn Lee, Andrew McKay, Vicky and Dean Mullinder, Carmel Munnelly and Paul Whittaker, Sally Peake, Jemma and Ben Price, Mel Reece, Jeff and Gail Rutter, Dick, Sue and Ben Walton, Chris Worton

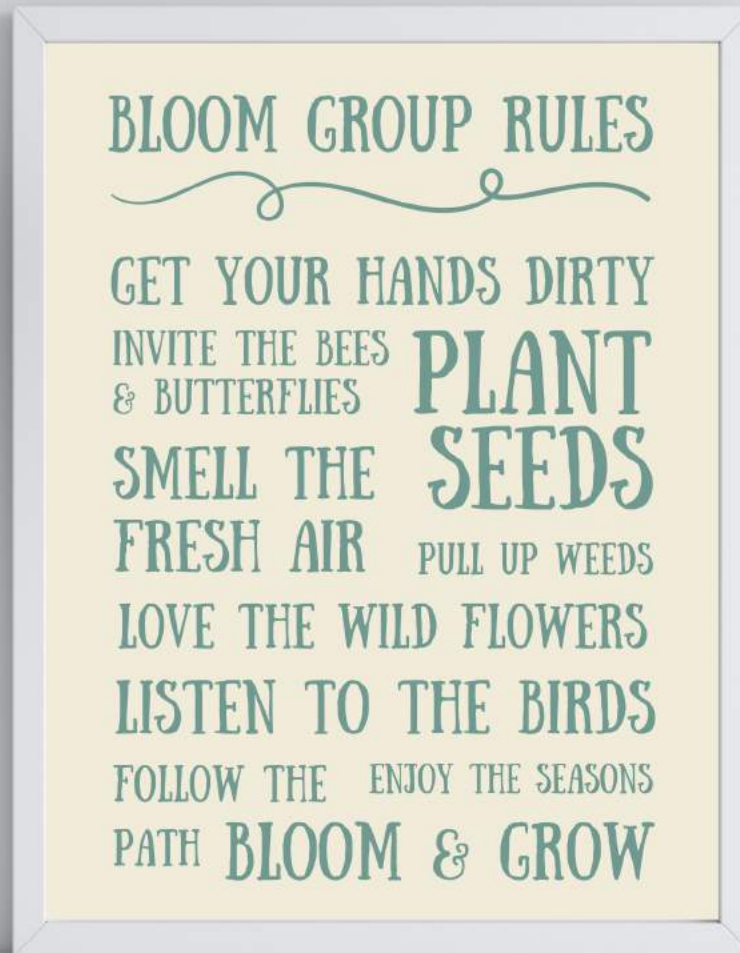
WE'RE COMMITTED TO OUR VILLAGE

This is a map of the areas cared for by the Bloom Group.



WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHOWING YOU AROUND

This portfolio is just a snip of what we've been up to in Norton In Hales, we can't wait to show you around our happy and flourishing Shropshire village when you visit us on the 19th July.



BLOOM GROUP RULES

GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY

INVITE THE BEES
& BUTTERFLIES

PLANT
SEEDS

SMELL THE

FRESH AIR

PULL UP WEEDS

LOVE THE WILD FLOWERS

LISTEN TO THE BIRDS

FOLLOW THE

ENJOY THE SEASONS

PATH BLOOM & GROW