

Dear Bloomer

I am naturally very sad that in the interests of public safety and wishing to act responsibly that we have agreed to the postponement of the National and Regional Bloom Competitions in conjunction with the RHS but I am anxious that we try to keep in contact with you all.

In this regard I do know that some wonderful things will still take place throughout the 500 or so Communities that take place in the South West. If you have examples of ideas initiatives and Community developments that you are undertaking, please let us know and we will recognise them. We will still be sending out a Spring newsletter, so look out for it.

Perhaps this crisis can be turned round to demonstrate overcoming adversity and change and regenerate Bloom. Any project however small will be of interest, Let's all continue to promote the benefits of Horticulture and Gardening however small. Perhaps we can promote growing particularly edible crops and help improve the environment as well as people involvement.

As the **South West in Bloom main category** entries have been postponed , as most of you have paid your entrance fee, please let us know if you would prefer to receive a full refund at this time or be prepared for us to retain your payment in advance for the 2021 competition.

We had a tremendous response again this year for 'It's Your Neighbourhood' and we are proposing to delay any decision on its future in 2020. We are currently working with the RHS, and there may be a possibility for some communities to be assessed later in the year, perhaps August or September. Circumstances are changing so quickly, but we will inform you with plenty of time to see if this becomes possible, and if any group would like to still be assessed in 2020, either face to face or remotely. With all Schools being closed we have had to cancel any School IYN's for 2020, but we look forward to you returning in 2021.

With the Leisure and Tourism category, the recent government policy has made life very challenging for them, but if the opportunity presents itself, and the business still wants to be judged then we will oblige.

Take care ,be safe and don't forget ,The Power of Flowers and Plants

Jon Wheatley
Chairman