

## **Gardens Report – AGM May 2023**

The main focus towards the end of 2022 was to take a step back and have a very long, hard look at the financial position relating to the garden sites.

Over recent years donations were consistently around the £7,000 mark, with expenditure being similar or only slightly above.

However last year, despite my hope that they would increase, donations were down to c£5,500 – with expenditure by October already at £6,600 with further costs scheduled.

The Committee approved my proposals to address the situation in 2 ways:

Firstly – That we re-vamp our garden sites over a 2-3-year period with a change of emphasis – coming away from twice-yearly planting of annual bedding plants, towards a less water dependant, lower maintenance, sustainable planting. This should be more suited to our changing climate and reduce future costs.

Secondly – That we continue to keep the sites looking tidy, but only commit to the additional expenditure of new plants / landscaping when we are confident there are sufficient funds available.

Therefore, in October I asked Ferring Nurseries to cease all work on our site i.e. watering and twice-yearly planting. I thanked David Luscombe for all the hard work they had undertaken over the years.

At the same time the proprietor of the maintenance business, AC's Landscaping, advised me that due to ill health his company had ceased to trade. Again, I thanked him for all the work undertaken and wished him well.

Moving into 2023 I shall engage a gardener to keep the sites tidy for the time being, and then work with them to gradually implement out longer-term plans.

In closing I would like to thank those generous members who continue to contribute to the Garden Fund.

Simon Thompson  
Gardens Manager