

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED
www.kendaltowncouncil.gov.uk



Minutes of a meeting of the Kendal in Bloom Committee held on Tuesday, 22 July 2025, at 6.03 p.m. in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal.

Kendal Town Council Members

Cllr A Blackman (Chair)	Present	Cllr D Brown	Present
Cllr E Hennessy	Present	Cllr L Hendry	Present
Cllr R Sutton (Vice-Chair)	Absent		

Co-optees

J Cottam	Absent	C Stuart-Smith (Horticulture)	Present
A Yates (Kendal Civic Society)	Absent		

In attendance: Chris Bagshaw (Town Clerk), Inge Booth (Democratic Services Assistant), Janine Holt (Council Services Manager) and Pierre Labat (Townscape Officer).

B1/2025 Apologies

No apologies for absence had been submitted.

B2/2024 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were raised.

B3/2025 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

There were no excluded items on the agenda.

B4/2025 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved: To receive and accept the minutes of the previous meeting of the Kendal in Bloom Committee held on 25 March 2025 and to authorise the Chair to sign them as a true record.

B5/2025 Minute Action Sheet

The Committee considered a report on actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings.

In response to a query regarding progress around the appointment of an independent specialist to undertake a review of the civic planting in Kendal, the Town Clerk explained that the report had been commissioned and officers were currently scoping a proposal, including some radical solutions, to bring to the next meeting of the Committee.

As regards the Peace Garden, it was raised that this was looking good, although some renovation work had yet to be carried out on the flag pole. The Projects Officer had been asked to pass on the Council's thanks to those veterans involved in the work.

Resolved: To note the report.

B6/2025 Review of Spend against Budget 2025/26

The Council Services Officer presented a review of spend against budget 2024/25 as at 9 July 2025. She drew attention to the figure of £10,908 already committed for floral displays, explaining that the summer civic planting had been carried out in-house this year, although at a similar figure to the price which would have been charged by a contractor. Whilst spend on the flag pole at the Peace Garden had been anticipated, this had been paid for by the Mayoralty and Heritage Committee.

The Council Services Manager reported that just £2,017 had been spent to date on projects and grants, for the promenade planters outside the Town Hall. She explained, however, that the project work being carried out at Kirkland would result in draws from this budget. Plans with regard to Dowker Lane planting would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Town Clerk drew attention to an outstanding grant application for the sum of £500 for a school project which had not been received in time to come to this meeting and which would require consideration by the Chair and Vice-Chair outside of the meeting.

Resolved: To note the report.

B7/2025 Civic Planting Strategy

Resolved: To note that the Civic Planting Strategy will be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee.

B8/2025 Civic Planting Update Report and Winter Planting Proposal

It was reported that the 2025 civic planting had been successfully delivered, with all scheduled planting completed on time. The work undertaken in-house by Kendal Town Council officers had gone very well, with the team demonstrating strong co-ordination and attention to detail. Additional help with the planting had been provided by a local independent contractor.

While most aspects of the planting had run smoothly, there was some room for improvement with the hanging baskets. The process would be smoother if the installation contractor collected the baskets before installation, which would help prevent delays and confusion.

Feedback from the public had been positive, and the planting had enhanced the Town's appearance throughout key areas during the spring and summer months. As part of planning and resource evaluation, the Committee was asked to consider removing certain planters from the scheme to reduce the overall scope and allow more focused maintenance. Suggested areas for removal included:

- Blackhall Road
- Near the Asda roundabout
- Windermere Road (barrier baskets)
- Longpool
- Dowker Lane
- Nobles Rest

This selective reduction would help streamline planting efforts and potentially improve impact in higher-visibility areas.

As officers looked ahead to the winter season, a decision was required from the Committee regarding the next steps for planting, with the choices being either in-house winter planting or no winter planting.

The Committee discussed the matter at length. In response to a query regarding resources where in-house planting was carried out, the Town Clerk explained that some help had been required and that whilst extra work was involved, in-house planting meant that the Council had better control over design and on what was spent and where. In addition, he pointed out that Christmas Plus, who had the necessary highways and height licences, had been able to deal with the hanging baskets, which also allowed the Council more flexibility with regard to moving these around more easily.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair took the opportunity to thank those officers involved in the summer planting for their efforts in taking on work which had previously been carried out by contractors.

With regard to winter planting, it was felt strongly that not proceeding with this would reflect poorly on the Town. As regards planters, it was felt that a more creative view in terms of the actual containers could be considered in the longer term. Edible planters, such as the one at Nobles Rest, it was felt, were not used and became overgrown. Some of the planters listed, however, were felt to be attractive and worthwhile, particularly in places where people congregated.

Resolved: To proceed with the in-house winter planting.

Resolved: To approve the removal of the planters at Asda Roundabout, Dowker Lane and Nobles Rest.

B9/2025 Kendal in Bloom Kirkland Project

It was reported that the objectives of the project were:

- to develop a Cumbria in Bloom competition route through the Kirkland 'Triangle' Area, focussing on the area in and around Abbot Hall Park; and
- to encourage community involvement by engaging local groups and businesses to undertake their own projects within the area.

The Committee was provided with an update on progress with the project.

Over 250 letters had been delivered to the Kirkland area including businesses, residential and community and religious centres. From this, there had been only three contacts of interest; this had since grown a little through word of mouth and there were now six, with the following ideas having been presented, as outlined within the report. They remained, however, primarily interested in the areas surrounding their properties or buildings and not so much in the areas promoted in Year 1 by the Committee. To keep their interest, comply with the Committee's ideals and support their great ideas, officers could encourage the creation of a 'Friends of Kirkland' group and applications for Kendal in Bloom grants.

The Peace Garden had been rejuvenated with the help of Shelagh Todd's ideas and the Veteran's Working Group CIC. There was still some work to be done on installing an information sign and some extra plants. Officers were also awaiting predicted costs from the

veterans to guild the writing on the Peace Pole, fill the crack and place copper on the top to prevent further weather damage. The Peace Garden to date had cost £2,083 with £800 quoted for the sign. This budget had come from the Anniversaries Events budget which included VE Day, VJ Day and 450. There was budget remaining for the further proposed improvements.

With regard to Dowker Lane, a free planting plan has been drawn up by Cath's Plants of Heaves Hall (as the Council had purchased plant through them for the Peace Garden). The premise of this plan was that it added colour, particularly on the corner of Highgate, covered the brown areas of the fir trees, and was easily maintained. These plans had been created in consultation with Westmorland and Furness Council. Quotes for plants were being obtained. The planting report was included as an appendix to the main report. The Veterans Group had made a start at clearing the bed, but the roots of the weeds were too deep and difficult to remove. Officers were keen to investigate the cost of clearing these with mechanical tools, planting and putting in measures to reduce regrowth of the weeds. The building owner that bordered this bed was in support of the maintenance and officers were in contact.

The radial beds were well established and had good cover in the summer, but looked sparse in the winter. Having spoken to Westmorland and Furness Council, officers were proposing propose that the plants contained within these beds be moved to the edges of Abbot Hall Park and to return the radial beds area to grass. This would have multiple benefits, as outlined within the report.

Members welcomed the proposals, however, attention was drawn to the first of the objectives as listed, it being pointed out that this was not actually a prime objective but an outturn that would result from the project that was being undertaken.

Resolved: Officers to encourage the creation of a 'Friends of Kirkland' group to apply for grants.

Resolved: Officers to obtain a quote for clearance of Dowker Bed, re-planting and weed reduction with cover and mulch.

Resolved: Officers to obtain a quote for removal of the Radial Beds to re-plant on the edges of Abbot Hall and to return the area to turf.

Resolved: To note the report.

The meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.