



Cumbria
in *Bloom*
growing neighbourhoods



Part of RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM

Name of entry: Silloth	Judging Date: 15 th July 2014
Category: Coastal	Judges: C Cheyne & S Todd

Introduction (*introductory remarks from the judges*):

This was the first year Cumbria in Bloom had received Coastal entries and it was gratifying to find at the start of our visit that the organisers at Silloth had researched the criteria and were able to show us how their efforts were aimed at meeting the criteria. Before we ventured forth the presentation was thorough without being over-professional and supported by some of the decision-makers which helped set the visit off to very positive start. – Much appreciated.

SECTION A – Horticultural Achievement

Assessing year-round horticultural achievement including conservation and natural areas.

		MAX	ACT.
A1.	Impact – <i>design, colours, appropriate choice of plants, special features, presentation, innovation</i>	20	15
A2.	Horticultural practice – <i>cultivation and maintenance, quality of plants, sustainability, new planting</i>	20	16
A3.	Residential and Community Gardening – <i>residential, communal areas, allotments, public buildings (grounds of churches, schools etc.), car parks</i>	20	15
A4.	Business Areas and Premises – <i>retail and shopping areas, leisure sites, transport terminals, car parks, farms, rural businesses, pubs, post offices, tourist areas/attractions, offices, estate agents etc.</i>	20	14
A5.	Green Spaces – <i>verges, parks and open public spaces</i>	20	19
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION A <i>50% of maximum points</i>		100	79

Areas of Achievement: The WI ladies showed a beautiful herbaceous border at the entrance to the TIC/Library. The scale of the green and open space, c. 45 acres, the quality of upkeep and the various leisure activity sites make a most impressive impact for Silloth – its USP.

Areas for Improvement: The layout of Silloth with wide streets in a grid pattern mean that it is difficult for residential gardens to create a significant impact; however, some were very good and in future visits the judging tour would benefit from having them incorporated more

strategically. There was not much reference to or evidence of commercial premises contributing to visual impact – something to develop. These additions could add colour to what is, by the nature of it, a predominantly green appearance. It was felt the Arcade’s appearance could be more sympathetic to the heritage theme whilst utilising some contemporary design to promote it for today’s market.

SECTION B – Environmental Responsibility

Assessing year-round activities improving environmental responsibility.

		MAX	ACT.
B1.	Conservation and biodiversity – <i>wildlife areas, natural habitat</i>	10	7
B2.	Resource management – <i>recycling, minimising demand placed on natural resources and any harmful impact on the environment</i>	10	7
B3.	Local heritage – <i>management and development of local heritage and/or identity, inclusive of natural heritage</i>	10	9
B4.	Local environmental quality – <i>management of vacant premises and plots, litter, graffiti, fly-posting, dog fouling etc.</i>	10	8
B5.	Pride of place – <i>management of street furniture, signage, art in the landscape and hard landscaping</i>	10	9
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION B <i>25% of maximum points</i>		50	40

Areas of Achievement: Very good especially in portraying local heritage and pride of place. It was obvious that the group have recognised the benefits of these aspects and focused on practical initiatives such as the Edwardian toilets and recreating traditional Cumberland County Council road signs, all of which adds to image and heritage that will help Silloth stand out in future years. Given the scale of what we saw it was remarkable how little litter was seen.

Areas for Improvement: We felt more information about biodiversity and active conservation would be helpful. Also, resource management could be explained more. With such a large area to look after there must be a considerable cost incurred. It would be good to know what is done to minimise this and what methods and applications are used to promote and maintain healthy grass, trees, plants etc.

Reference was made to the loss of the railway in 1964. Consider if portraying some of the Carlisle and Silloth Railway’s memorabilia or creating a “railway garden” might be a worthwhile addition.

SECTION C – Community Participation			
Assessing year-round community participation			
		MAX	ACT.
C1.	Development and continuity - <i>Development and sustainability of the local bloom initiative and evidence of on-going projects</i>	10	8
C2.	Communication and education – <i>community awareness and understanding, engagement with schools and young people and/or other community groups, press coverage, publicity materials</i>	10	8
C3.	Community participation – <i>community involvement is representative of the community's size and diversity</i>	10	8
C4.	Year-round involvement – <i>schedules of events and supporting evidence of year-round activity (primary evidence to be presented in 15 minute presentation)</i>	10	8
C5.	Funding and Support – <i>initiatives to secure on-going support for the local bloom campaign including local business support</i>	10	9
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION C <i>25% of maximum points</i>		50	41
<p>Areas of Achievement: It was obvious that there is real drive to keep moving forward and ensuring there are funds to support this. The vision of how enhancing the appearance of Silloth is fundamental to its future as a vibrant community and visitor destination is strong and is underpinning everything that is being done.</p>			
<p>Areas for Improvement: As suggested before more evidence of business support and involvement would be welcomed. This is important as if businesses show enthusiasm and can see benefits the whole population is likely to be affected similarly.</p>			
GRAND TOTAL POINTS AWARDED		200 <i>(max.)</i>	160
MEDAL AWARDED		Silver-Gilt	