

## Barnstaple in Bloom recognises Young Offenders

Barnstaple in Bloom has reaped the benefits of working with young offenders this year who have helped the town prepare for its annual floral display. On behalf of the community, Barnstaple in Bloom organises floral displays throughout the town to raise the quality of life for all those who live, work or visit the town.



“I totally believe in restorative justice for young offenders as it gives them a chance to prove themselves, gives them a bit of responsibility and a chance to give something back to the community,” says Irene Hockin, Chairman, Barnstaple in Bloom. “We have recognised the good work that’s been done by presenting the young offenders team with our ‘Best Youth Contribution Award’.

Youth crime prevention work involves young people aged 10-17 years and is about involving them in something they understand which will make up for the harm they have caused and which means they can get something positive from the project.

“We look at the community the young person has affected and make their payback as relevant as possible to that community. It’s also important for young people to take responsibility for what they have done and to realise that the work they are doing makes a difference,” says Matt Wilcox, XXX Manager.

Under supervision, the young offenders painted black flower stands and the green troughs sited along North Walk. An equipment store was also given a new lick of paint and the pond area cleared on part of a new conservation site, to which Barnstaple in Bloom will have access.

“We haven’t got the manpower to maintain equipment so having the young offenders helping out has been of enormous benefit and we hope to continue this work,” says Irene Hockin, Chairman, Barnstaple in Bloom.

“Most enjoy the work and it gives them a chance to talk which wouldn’t be so easy in a group, as often they are supervised one to one.”