



Brixham Town Council

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Town Clerk: Mrs Tracy Hallett

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Report Type	Public	Meeting	Community & Environment
Contact Officer	Tracy Hallett Bryon Freer	Job Title	Town Clerk Lengthsmen Supervisor
Report Title	Watering Floral Display Review		

Summary

2021 saw the first time that Brixham Town Council invested in a floral display around the Town. To ensure that the display was maintained, the Lengthsmen carried out watering as listed below:

- Town Hall display
- Fore Street
- Telephone boxes (Great Rea, Pillar Avenue, Edinburgh Road)

In addition to this, the Town Council agreed to support Middle Street Traders with their displays, which included the large display bed in the main car park.

As this was the first time the Town Council had carried this level of service out, this report reviews the process and the level of staff time.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Town Council reduce the watering support in Middle Street, which can be done by:

- Allocating £1,500 - £2,000 from the Community Recovery Fund for the supply of a water harvesting scheme to support Middle Street Traders to be more self-sufficient
- Ask the Town Hall Regeneration Task and Finish Group to consider rain water harvesting as part of the regeneration project
- Continue watering displays in Fore Street, the Town Hall and the 3 telephone boxes
- Continue to research the market for a suitable rain water harvesting system for the telephone boxes

Supporting Information

Watering was carried out on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. As Fore Street is busy, this was watered first starting at 7.30am, to avoid busy vehicular and pedestrian movement.

When the weather was very hot it was found that the Town Hall displays required daily watering, including bank holidays.

In total:

- 40 individual containers were watered in each session.
- Each session consumed approx. 250-350 litres of water.

To support this level of watering, a bespoke 200ltr capacity bowser and bilge pump unit was purchased from Tank Services, Salisbury. Initially this was filled up from the Town Hall external tap. However, this was time consuming as this had a standard pressure supply. An agreement was reached with the Brixham Harbour Office, where water was being drawn from a high pressure supply.

With two people, watering took approximately 2½-3 hours to complete, this represented 20% of the Lengthsmen's working week. Whilst one person could be utilised for the watering, it would be more time consuming based on the start stop nature of having to move the vehicle, packing up the hose each time, getting in out of the vehicle. At times due to holidays, one person did carry out this role and it was noted that it took at least an hour longer.

Staff Time

Times and litres used varies dependant on traffic on Middle and Fore St and how dry / hot it has been since previous watering took place. The information in the table below shows the average time / litres.

Middle St	Fore St	Town Hall	Phone Boxes
100 ltrs	75-100 ltrs	100 ltrs	40-50 ltrs
45-60 mins	45 mins	60 mins	30-40 mins

Watering Middle Street

The Town Council agreed to water the displays on Middle Street. However, Middle Street Traders increased their display especially when the temporarily lights were installed. This had an impact on the Lengthsmen's programme and traders also became heavily reliant on the support from the Lengthsmen including the general upkeep of the displays ie dead heading.

During the season, Middle Street Traders raised their concerns that the Lengthsmen didn't fill up the reservoirs connected to the plant plots. However the watering wand connected to the hose didn't have the ability to fit into the display pot reservoir holes (the wand has a rose head fitting). Whilst the Council could have purchased a different connection, it was considered that the added time and the increase in litres would have a detrimental effect on the ability for the Lengthsmen to carry out other works within the community.

It could be observed that the impact was minimal as Middle Street awarded a gold award for their displays!

It is considered that the Town Council, should facilitate Middle Street Traders to support their need to harvest water.

Rain Water Harvesting

It is considered that rain water harvesting will assist with the watering programs moving forward. However, there are some factors to take into consideration:

- Location is a factor. As the Council only owns the Town Hall within the town centre, any other location would have to be approved by the landlord. If approval was granted, it is considered that the water butt would need to blend into the environment to ensure that it did not become a target for Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Water Butts could be connected to the Town Hall. However, unless there are a vast amount of water butts strategically placed around the Town Hall the supply would not be sufficient to supply water for the whole of the season.
- Unless each water butt was fitted with a high pressure jet pump (usually submersed into the water butt itself), decanting the water to the bowser will be a very slow and time consuming process.
- Water harvesting is dependent on rainfall so cannot be entirely relied upon as the overall solution to watering the towns displays.

The Town Hall has a vast expanse of roof space and it is felt that a rain water harvesting system should be considered within the overall Town Hall regeneration project.

Water Butts

Mentioning the word “water butt” usually means for the most of us the bulk standard green or black plastic variety, as shown in the picture below:



However, there are a number of decorative water butts that are now available on the market. Whilst they may cost more, it is considered that if suitable locations could be found along Middle Street, strategically placed decorative water butts would be more in keeping with the appearance that the street is achieving. It is considered that water harvesting may support any future applications for In Bloom Competitions.

Below are some ideas on what could be purchased, but it should be noted that the final decision will rest on location, size of space available and landlord permissions.

Design	Detail	Price indication
	<p>600L Antique Amphora Water Butt in Terracotta</p>	<p>£600</p>
	<p>500L Burgundy Wood Effect Water Butt Barrel</p>	<p>£318</p>
	<p>475L Evergreen Tree Trunk Water Butt</p>	<p>£307.50</p>

Legionella

It is noted that there are concerns regarding the Legionella bacteria which can be found in stagnant water. The bacteria thrives in stagnant water that's between 20c and 45c however, the use of rainwater for common gardening activities should not be discouraged.

The risk of Legionella bacteria can be minimised by positioning the water butt in shade so the stored water is at a significantly lower temperature than that exposed to direct sunlight. As people contract Legionnaires' disease by inhaling small droplets of water (aerosols), suspended in the air, containing the bacteria then watering cans should be used. Aerosolisation of Legionella when using a watering can is considered minimal as opposed to using a hose pipe with a fine spray.

It is considered that due to the short length of time any water will be stored in a water butt, noting that when the weather was very hot the floral displays needed watering daily, any risk of legionella bacteria spreading would be minimal.