

Our 2024 AGM was held on October 3rd and was well attended, with an interesting talk by Scott Galloway from EDC on edible plants. Sandra Wilson Vice Chair left the committee and will be greatly missed. Sylvia Tate joined the committee. Janet Bowman, who is Hospitality Convenor agreed to become Vice Chair. The Gardening Group has been represented by a delegate at meetings, usually Ina Cameron.

The year finished with the usual Big Leaf Clean which is an important first stage in making an invaluable soil improver which we use to suppress weeds and feed our perennial plants.



The various stages of making leaf mould... Nov 24 to Sept 25.

The MiB calendar continues to be admired and a stall at Tesco's selling the 2025 calendar meant that all 450 copies were sold ahead of Christmas.

The annual Poppy Display outside the Fraser Centre was laid out in November. We took part in the Reindeer Parade at the Christmas Lights Festival on a cold and icy day. East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) organised a meeting of In Bloom groups at Mugdock Park centre which was attended by five groups.

The annual Winter Warmer was held at the beginning of February at St Andrew's Church Hall and was greatly enjoyed by volunteers and guests. This was followed by the Gardeners Meeting to plan the year's programme to which

Cleansweepers were also invited. Gardening activities resumed in February including the usual snowdrop appeal. Cleansweep continued all year with a very short winter break.

In March, we had a very useful walkabout with EDC staff led by Steven Egan, which identified areas of concern, many of which have subsequently been sorted.

The Big Spring Clean also took place in the March sunshine and was well supported.

Five trollies have now been supplied to volunteers, who find them very useful.



May was busy with summer planting, including the precinct planters and floral fountains. This year the Community Garden was designed and organised by Ina Cameron with the Fraser Centre Knitting Group supplying knitted animals for the theme of nature and biodiversity. The display has been greatly admired.



Milngavie week at the start of June saw the usual Plant Stall at the Classic Car event and floral tours using our informative leaflet, which is widely available in the town.

Two veteran Cleansweepers, Frankie Livingstone and Rachel Forbes received Volunteer Awards from Pam Gosal MSP at a ceremony outside the Fraser Centre.



Rachel Forbes (L) and Frankie Livingstone (R) with their Litterpicking trollies and receiving their much deserved Volunteer Awards from Pam Gosal MSP.

Later in June took place the Unveiling of the Roman Statue in the Antonine Garden, the culmination of over two years' work by a group led by Douglas Cameron. Heather Lindsay performed the unveiling on a glorious day attended by members of the Antonine guard in Roman costume and Primary3 pupils from Craigdu Primary School, with many guests including three MSPs and the Depute Provost. Refreshments were consumed at the Waitrose Community Room, where Douglas had laid out an exhibition about the project.



Above – the Roman Centurion Statue at the Antonine Garden.

Right - Heather Lindsay unveiling the Roman Centurion.

Bottom right - Members of the Antonine guard in Roman costume taking much needed shade under the tree.

Top right - Some of the team who worked on the garden transformation.

Top Middle – embroidered banner created by Pam Diffin – inspired by a similar banner at the original 1988 Garden Festival.



In August we had a visit from Bearsden in Bloom and a group went to Bearsden to see their impressive work. John MacLennan came from Beautiful Scotland to see the Allander Road Group, which is registered as part of the Its Your

Neighbourhood Scheme. In the afternoon, he was shown much of the rest of our work and he has sent a report with ideas and comments, which is receiving attention. He has suggested that MIB enters a competition next year, which we have not done since 2019.

We had our usual Afternoon Tea in the Fraser Centre to thank our volunteers for their hard work during the year.

The Telephone Box has had several seasonal displays by Ina Cameron and her team, and has recently been refurbished by Men's Shed including a new coat of PO red paint.



Our usual volunteers have been joined by young people doing the Duke of Edinburgh Award and scouts and brownies, plus several groups from Morgan Stanley as part of their Community Volunteering Programme. Our periods of dry weather have seen the invaluable work of our bowser operators, Jim and Stuart, to keep our plants in good health.

A review of our membership this year means that we now have 94 members who carried out at least 4000 hours of work. This figure is a considerable

under-estimate as many of our volunteers do not report the time they put in outside of scheduled workdays.

We have had two sad losses this year with the deaths of former treasurer Norman Macleod and stalwart volunteer Diane Black, both greatly missed.

We have had support from many partners, including EDC, the Community Development Trust and Milngavie Heritage Centre, with whom we have been cooperating on the improvement of Lennox Park. The local business community continue to support us through the BID and we enjoy the hospitality of various churches who host our meetings and the Fraser Centre who also provide periodic refreshments to volunteers. MIB continues to participate in the Milngavie Umbrella Group, which is organised by EDC to coordinate community activity in the town.

One big change for MIB this year follows the decision taken by members at a special meeting to change our legal status. We have set up a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation [SCIO] with a new constitution. The SCIO will take over all the assets, activities and members of the present unincorporated association, which with OSCR's consent and members' approval will be wound up following its AGM on 2 October. There will no change in how and what MIB does but it will improve the overall running of the organisation and give it greater legal protection. Thanks are due to our secretary Ian Mitchell and treasurer Robin Orr for the considerable detailed work, which should assist our future progress.

Finally, I would like to thank all committee members for their support this year and the wonderful efforts of our volunteers, whose work has made Milngavie a place to be proud of.

Tim Rhead

Milngavie in Bloom Chair