

Press Release

1st March 2019

Retford in Bloom Artwork for Town Centre

A crowd gathered on Carolgate in Retford last Thursday as a specially commissioned piece of artwork was unveiled by the Chairman of Bassetlaw District Council David Challinor, outside the HSBC Bank to mark the launch of the much-loved 'Retford in Bloom' campaign for 2019. The sculpture has been created by local Artist and Designer, Kenny Roach, together with ideas and metal work from local students Millie Cave, Arun Neilson and Liam Dawson, from the Inspire Learning Programme.

Vice Chairman of Retford Civic Society Bob Lamb, explained how the project had started to take shape when Retford Civic Society received a bequest from the late Laurie Hudson. Requests to support a community floral artwork project reflecting the colour and uplifting effect of floral displays from the Retford In Bloom campaign, were met with enthusiasm and funding from Notts County Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Inspire Learning, the Rotary Club of Retford and Retford Lions, and the kind permission of HSBC for the use of their premises.

Retford Civic Society needed to find a local artist who could lead the sculpture project with a community-centered approach and where local young people could play a significant creative role; benefit from time spent exploring ideas; experience collaboration with others and have a real sense of achievement and pride with the end result. Kenny Roach from West Street Galleries who has already made many contributions to the town, was a natural choice and he was very happy to accept their invitation.

Kenny said '... apart from the fact that I've had my eye on that space for some time (!), I welcome any opportunity where the community can come together and just 'create'. Being able to include students from the Inspire Learning Programme also makes me feel there's an investment in the future somehow. It's also inspired someone to write a poem which is just amazing – we're hoping to publish it in the very near future'.

It is hoped the sculpture will become a modest local landmark, something that catches the eye of new visitors to the town, capturing the imagination of children and maybe even become a talking point for local shoppers and artists.

The Retford in Bloom campaign is supported by North Notts Business Improvement District and Retford Civic Society. It helps to brighten our high streets with hanging baskets, flags and Christmas trees, it also leads the **Front Gardens Competition** and the **Best Pub Display** as well as the ever-popular schools potato growing competition. Many volunteers give their time to run these competitions and keep the town clean and tidy with voluntary litter picks taking place throughout the year. The Kings Park volunteers also support the parks department in maintaining our award-winning town centre park which continues to have superb floral displays every year. To find out more about any of these activities and to get involved, contact rcs@retfordcivicsociety.org.uk or visit www.retfordcivicsociety.org.uk.



Images: Students from the Inspire Learning Programme working on the Retford in Bloom sculpture at West Street Galleries, under the guidance of Artist & Designer, Kenny Roach.

For further information about the sculpture and Retford in Bloom, please contact Pam Barnsdale on 07790 896022 or Kenny Roach on 07880 728512.