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Dear Carol,

18<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Battle Town - South & South East in Bloom Competition 2017 and 2018

Beautiful Battle has analysed the Judges' scores, comments and recommendations for Battle Town under the SSEiB judging categories. Battle Town was awarded a Silver Gilt which is a very good result considering that the judges use RHS standards and the judging scope increases each year.

A considerable amount of effort by BB goes into providing a floral display throughout the central part of the town. BB buys thousands of plug plants each year, repots them at the greenhouse which BB rents, and plants them out— this is done three times a year for Spring, Summer and Autumn/Winter – as well as composting, weeding and pruning, and bulb planting. The SSEiB judges base their conclusions on a single day. Whilst a good number of villages and towns concentrate on that one day, BB plans for the year and this is appreciated by both residents and visitors.

BB Committee members discussed the judges' scores and comments at their December monthly meeting and created a spreadsheet (attached) to show where points were lost and what the judges expect. The town was awarded 140 points out of 200 which was 30 points short of gold. Looking at where points were lost, it is clear that a number of these areas would be difficult for BTC to influence, such as:

- Contact with English Heritage to convince the owners of The Abbey that they should be more involved to improve the frontage appearance and the square with seasonal displays.
- Encourage more businesses to get involve to produce more season displays.
- Further Investigation of the owners of the Market Square is required to aid financing and improving the area.
- Consider using wild flower turf rather than seed, quicker establishment and display.
- Develop walks and tours for interested parties during low visitor numbers, evenings and weekdays. Finances gained can be used towards the maintenance of the town. Investigate local stories, haunted? To raise awareness, can they be sponsored?

The spreadsheet shows all the SSEiB comments and BB's response. Any category that lost 3 points or over is highlighted.

In consideration of all the work BB puts into creating the floral displays in the town and the issues raised by SSEiB that would difficult to influence, the BB committee considered that BTC should consider not entering the town into the SSEiB 2018 competition. Should the council decide to enter SSEiB 2018 then they will have to decide how to address the issues raised by the judges if they want the town to win gold. In the opinion of BB, it would appear extremely difficult for the town to win gold under the current judging criteria.

Kind Regards,  
Alan Gavin  
Beautiful Battle