



## PRESS RELEASE

7 February 2017 – for immediate publication

### **The End of the Road for Ayr Flower Show**

The Board of Ayrshire Horticultural Society the voluntary group which has organised Ayr Flower Show since 2001 has announced that there will be no Ayr Flower Show in 2017 and in subsequent years.

The Event which has been part of the fabric of Ayr since 1960 when it was organised by the Royal Burgh of Ayr Town Council will not be staged in 2017.

Citing the lack of financial support from South Ayrshire Council John Walker the Show Chairman said:

“Ayr Flower Show has a great success for the last 56 years with only one hiatus in 2000 when the then administration of South Ayrshire Council decided they could no longer afford to stage it – it was rescued by a dedicated group of enthusiasts under the leadership and direction of the late David T Roy assisted by a hundred volunteers and over a thousand patrons alongside many local and national sponsors. Over the years the volunteer group has grown to over three hundred and the Flower Show has contributed in the region of £1.5 million annually to the economy. We have survived the highs and lows of recessions and for the three years (2013, 2014 and 2015) out of the sixteen been supported financially by South Ayrshire Council. The Council decided in 2016 not to continue their financial support. A particularly bad weather day on the Sunday of the 2016 Show impacted our visitor numbers and income, and we have sought assistance from South Ayrshire Council – after 7 weeks of discussion we were advised on Friday of last week that financial help would not be reinstated now or in the future. This is a sad day for all involved but in retrospect what has been achieved has been about much success built out of an empty field and from empty pockets – congratulations and thanks are due to our many sponsors, patrons, contractors, societies, supporters, suppliers, exhibitors and volunteers over the years – but this sad outcome is a loss to community effort & spirit, the fabric of our town and its heritage as well as the contribution to the economy. Many thousands of people have attended Ayr Flower Show over the years and the Board are grateful for their input and support”

The volunteer group will now set about an orderly wind down of the operation and their charitable company.

In 2016 South Ayrshire Council has chosen to support the Scottish International Airshow by £120,000 and in 2017 by £200,000 by comparison the contribution to allow the Ayr Flower Show to survive and continue £20,000 per annum would have been required.

Ends