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Dear all,

I just wanted to get in touch with you once again regarding this year's hanging baskets.

As I shared with you earlier, Blaise Nursery informed us at the beginning of the year that they would no longer be providing this service. Since then, arranging the hanging baskets has proved to be far more challenging, exhausting, and stressful than I could ever have imagined.

The first company that agreed to supply the baskets withdrew at the last minute due to insurance issues. After that, I contacted countless potential suppliers, many of whom declined to take on our order because we were well past the usual ordering deadline. Fortunately, we eventually found a supplier willing to help. However, when the baskets were delivered, they were around two months behind in their development. We have been assured that, given time, they will become as full and colourful as the photographs we were shown. The next challenge was finding a contractor with the appropriate insurance to install and later remove the baskets. The cost of this service alone was significant.

After that came what has probably been the biggest challenge of all—finding a reliable company to water the baskets. This also proved extremely difficult. Of the five potential providers (primarily window cleaners) I approached, only one was initially able to help, and even then, only once a week. Thankfully, we have now managed to arrange watering twice a week with two window cleaners. However, with the recent unprecedented hot weather and the baskets still becoming established, this is far from ideal. Keeping them properly watered remains an ongoing challenge and, of course, comes with additional

...hope this gives you an idea of the amount of work that has gone into making this happen. As this was my first year managing the hanging baskets, I can honestly say it has been anything but straightforward. I never imagined how much work, planning, coordination, and specialist expertise goes into delivering this service

Despite all of the setbacks, we now have the baskets in place. Two weeks ago, we also replanted every basket to improve their appearance, and we'll continue to do everything we can to make sure they look their best throughout the season. We were determined not to let anyone down or leave the village without hanging baskets this year. Looking ahead to next year, it's clear that we need to secure a Bristol City Council-approved contractor who can provide a complete end-to-end service—from growing and supplying the baskets, to delivery, installation, watering, maintenance throughout the season, and finally their removal. This would provide a much more reliable and sustainable solution and help us avoid many of the difficulties we've experienced this year.

If any of you have any recommendations or know of any suitable contractors, I'd be very grateful if you could pass their details on. I've been researching potential suppliers continuously since January with limited success, so any suggestions would be very much appreciated. Thank you for your understanding, encouragement, and continued support. It really has meant a great deal throughout what has been a very challenging process.



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