

BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2013 - JUDGES COMMENTS HILDERSTONE

BKV awareness was achieved through articles in the Parish newsletter and items on the noticeboards. There were BKV posters on noticeboards and at village entrances with “special” banners, at strategic locations.

There were excellent displays of children’s posters, of a very high standard, in both shelters. These were bold, colourful, eye catching, well presented and strategically placed. A fine effort for a village with few children and no school.

All the noticeboards were in excellent condition, with posters neatly displayed.

There was plenty of local information – all up to date. There were details of Parish Council business, recycling, dog fouling, bulky refuse collections, local events and activities.

The churchyard was very well maintained overall, with well cut grass, very few weeds, clean edges to the paths and base of the church building and neat and tidy gravestone surrounds. The carpark and it’s planted surrounds were immaculate and noticeboards and benches were very good. “An area to be really proud of” (May judges).

The village hall and surrounds were very neat and tidy generally and the gravel carpark was neatly maintained, although there were a few weeds around the edges (in July).

The Roebuck carpark was very clean and tidy, but the rear boules area was very weedy and unkempt. The frontage of the pub was, however, spoilt by many cigarette ends in the smoking area and the sitting area needed a good clean up.

The telephone box was excellent inside and out, and very well used as an information point, with plenty of local details. The surrounds were very tidy.

Both bus shelters were in excellent condition, with weed free surrounds. The one in Creswell Road had some windblown leaf debris inside and needed a sweep out in July; but this was more than made up for by the excellent display of children’s posters and local information.

All the seats and benches were in good condition, with no litter or weeds in their surrounds.

The village “gateway” features, with colourful planters were excellent. Perhaps the “Hilderstone Walkway” could be developed and promoted as a village feature?

The war memorial has been recently cleaned and its surrounds were well maintained and weed-free, with colourful planters on the steps.

All the small open spaces looked good. Although the entry form expressed some concern about it, “Daffodil Bank” looked very attractive (despite the dying daffodils in May) and the variety of spring/early summer flowers and a neatly maintained edge were a real feature in June and July. There were a few weeds at the Village Green and it might be worth some thinning out to the planting in places. The grass around the play area needed trimming in July.

The private gardens, with one exception, were excellent, showing community involvement at its best.

The children's play equipment was excellent, well maintained and colourful; with exemplary safety surfaces.

The map was clear, accurate, easy to follow and very helpful in locating BKV features.

Apart from small bits of litter near to the Hilderstone Road/ Sandon Road junction (understandable because of the busy through traffic) the village was very neat and tidy. No dog mess was seen during judging. There appeared to be plenty of community spirit and pride, with obvious evidence of BKV involvement.

Hilderstone was a very pleasant village to visit and judges were impressed by the way in which the community had dedicated itself to achieving a really high standard across all BKV feature. The "30 m.p.h." posters and warning signs were further indications of community concern and involvement. We hope that they prove to be effective. Congratulations on achieving Third place in the highly competitive Small Village category in Stafford District this year. Well done and good luck in 2014!

John T Perry, MBE
Chairman, BKV Working Group

September 2013