

BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2014 - JUDGES' COMMENTS HILDERSTONE

BKV awareness was achieved through regular articles in the parish magazine and on the village website. There were BKV posters on noticeboards and at the village entrances, in addition to special BKV banners at strategic locations.

There were again excellent displays of children's posters in both bus shelters. They were colourful, eye catching and very well presented. Judges were pleased to see a "thank you" to the children of the village (which has no school of its own) for their efforts to produce the posters.

All the noticeboards were in very good condition, with neatly displayed notices.

There was a good range of up-to-date, relevant local information on dog fouling and recycling awareness, local activities and events, but the June judges felt that there was not much on Parish Council business.

The church surrounds were well maintained throughout the judging period, with well-mown grass, attractive planting at the front, clean path edges, tidy grave areas and few weeds. The car park and its surrounding areas were very good again. The May judges felt that some of the seats/benches might soon need painting/varnishing.

The village hall surrounds and car park were very tidy and the weeds had been sprayed out. There was just a bit of litter on the edge of the car park in May and judges felt that the plant containers at the front of the hall would benefit from a coat of paint.

Judges were pleased to see that the new tenants at The Roebuck had brought about significant improvements to the appearance of the surrounds and car park of the pub. Everywhere was neat and tidy, there were some good plant tubs at the front and "it all looked very welcoming".

The telephone box was in very good condition and well used as an information point. It was clean inside and there was an excellent planted area at the side. It was good enough to be considered as a village feature.

Both bus shelters were in excellent condition and were very well used to display children's posters and local information. The Eastholme shelter needed a sweep out in May to remove wind-blown leaves, but there were no weeds.

The seat/benches were in good condition, with very tidy surrounds.

The village "gateway" features, with their colourful planting were excellent. Judges also noted the planters near the village hall noticeboard which had been filled with various vegetables. They said that this was really original and something of a feature in itself!

The war memorial was in very good condition and its surrounds were neat and tidy, except in May when dying daffodils damaged its appearance.

All verges and small open spaces were well manicured and the judges praised the Village Green in particular – “a lovely area, very well maintained and litter-free”. The Daffodil Bank again looked attractive and was a real feature on the entrance to the village.

Private gardens in general were very well kept, but there were a couple in Sandon Road and in Dingle Lane which were rather weedy (judges wondered if the residents of these bungalows might be rather old/infirm and not able to keep on top of their garden maintenance?)

The equipment in the play area was in good condition and the safety surfaces were excellent. No litter was seen, but the grass was rather long in May.

The map was clear, accurate and easy to follow, with a good use of colour and symbols to identify BKV features.

Almost no litter was seen during the judging period and no dog mess. The absence of litter along the busy main through roads was a really commendable achievement – and a good indication of the commitment of residents to keep Hilderstone clean and tidy. The “30mph” children’s posters and warning sign demonstrated how all age groups in the village had contributed to the community effort.

Judges said that they found Hilderstone “a lovely village to judge because of the community involvement which showed through”, and that they thought this year’s effort was “a good show all round”. Although just missing out on top awards in 2014, a very good standard was achieved overall and the village really deserved its Highly Commended award. Well done this year and good luck in 2015!

John T Perry, MBE
Chairman, BKV Working Group

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