

Yorkshire in Bloom

Judges Notes for spring 2015

Category 1A: Small Village

Esholt Shipley

Introduction

We received a very warm welcome from the Esholt in Bloom team and had a very enjoyable tour around the village, also affectionately known as "Emmerdale". Over five thousand visitors per annum still come to visit Esholt and see where this popular soap was once filmed.

The group is benefitting from a new influx of volunteers and they are very keen to improve and move forward. Given enough time, this entry has the potential to go further within the "In Bloom" competition.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The village had lovely pockets of daffodils throughout. None were better than the area at the end of Cunliffe Lane.

The front gardens were consistently good. Joan Ives' garden was one of the best - offering an amazing choice of appropriate plants in such a small space.

Both allotment sites were well used and generally in a good condition.

There has been a worthwhile attempt by the group to stop vehicles from driving onto the rec area by creating a new garden.

Areas for Improvement

The wall bottoms on Esholt Lane near the cricket ground were in need of weeding. This was a shame as much of the village was weed-free.

Would it be possible for the village pub to allow some planters at the front or even the rear to add some colour to this iconic location?

The ongoing work on the church garden is to be commended. This will further enhance the approach to the church.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Full marks to the Cricket club for their vision in helping to create the nature reserve area. This area can only go from strength to strength in the future, given that it is only two and a half years old.

The water pump on the village green was tasteful and the whole village green area is well-maintained.

The village was exceptionally tidy, clean and litter-free throughout our visit.

Areas for Improvement

Consider the creation of a small wildflower meadow in a selected corner of the nature reserve.

Consider leaving an unmown area at the nature reserve to allow grass and wild flowers to flourish and grow.

There is a need to see evidence of bird and bat boxes and other wildlife friendly stuff such as insect/bug hotels on the judging route to move the entry forward within this section.

Is there anywhere in the village where a small recycling facility such a book/clothing bank could be sited? We do appreciate it would need to be sensitively sited.

The seat near the bus stop in the village is in need of some maintenance and staining as it is in a particularly prominent location.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Including the Sunday school children in the church garden project is a great idea and who knows this may lead to new members of Esholt in Bloom in the future!

It was pleasing to note that a good percentage of the residents of Esholt were embracing the In Bloom concept and working together.

The group has an innovative online presence due to David and this is to be commended.

It was pleasing to see the excellent support given both to the village and the In Bloom group by Old Hall Farm and the cricket club.

Of note is the good relationship that the group has with Bradford Council.

Areas for Improvement

It would be nice to meet a few more helpers or indeed residents on the route.

Simple A4 posters advertising judging day and also the group itself, could be designed by schoolchildren. This would help to include them, while raising the profile of the group too.

Could a banner also be designed, perhaps with a logo for the group, to promote the group and judging day itself?

A hard copy portfolio would be useful to supplement the group's online presence. The portfolio doesn't need to be particularly large or onerous but it is useful as an all year round guide to the group's activities.

Ledston

Introduction

Ledston is an attractive small and substantially residential village with a mix of older (estate) and newer houses built in keeping with the former. The gardens of the homes and their road frontages were very well kept, with one house in particular having a magnificent display of tulips.

Planters with colourful spring bedding and verges with planted daffodils further enhanced the environment.

The in Bloom group consists of two enthusiastic and committed members who have also undertaken projects to enhance the village entrances and the lane leading to Ledston Hall.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Residents clearly have pride in their gardens and the village. In one 'cul de sac' that we visited they also maintained to a very high standard a verge and open area adjacent to the communal entrance lane.

With regard to spring colour, one garden in particular had a spectacular display of tulips.

The work of the in Bloom duo has greatly enhanced the village entrances where daffodils provided attractive spring colour and they continue to add to the plantings particularly on the north entrance.

Areas for Improvement

The tubs throughout the village were colourful but somewhat sparsely planted. Given the work involved in planting and maintaining tubs the group might like to give consideration to introducing some perennial plantings into the tubs. They might also like to take an overview of the necessity for tubs in some areas. For example Hall Lane leading to Ledston Hall has lovely grass verges with daffodil plantings. Further sympathetic planting of wild or appropriate herbaceous plants would enhance this area into summer without the need for further tubs.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Notwithstanding the introduction of Spanish bluebells (see below) the group are continuing to improve the wooded area at the northern entrance with the clearing of the ground and introduction of the native wood anemone. A well hidden compost bin in the area is used for cleared plant material.

An area of land adjacent to Hall Lane has been cleared of ivy allowing other plants, including daffodils the space to grow.

Areas for Improvement

The judges would like to respectfully point out that the bluebells admirably sourced from a local garden and planted at the northern entrance are not native, but unfortunately are Spanish bluebells which are not only somewhat invasive but can also hybridise with the native variety thus threatening its existence in the locality. The group might therefore like to consider their removal and replacement at some time.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Litter picks at the village entrances attract volunteers from the village and residents are encouraged to look after tubs near to their homes.

Areas for Improvement

With a membership of only two, it should be a priority of the group to attract new members. The current members are clearly very committed and give up substantial amounts of time. While this is, of course, to be highly commended, it may in fact be a factor putting off others who have less time available. Perhaps an approach allowing

people to feel free to give lesser amounts of time as fits their circumstances, might reap some success?

The village pub has new owners and given the window-boxes now planted with pansies, the signs are promising that the pub will be an active contributor to the local environment and to the work of the Bloom group.

Mill Bank Village

Introduction

It was nice to receive such a warm welcome at Mill Bank. Fine spring weather greeted our arrival at this 'picture postcard' village. The rural setting of the village is perfectly typified by the many small, charming cottages, uniformly built along the characteristic steep, narrow roads. Stunning views were to be had over the surrounding countryside. It certainly is a charming setting! It was impressive to see the pride which the group take in their village and the tremendous amount of support which they enjoy.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The community 'soft fruit' orchard is an excellent idea, along with the community herb tubs. As private garden space is at a premium, there's a real community effort on display, with many fine tubs, window boxes and planters adorning the front of people's properties. Where residents do have a garden, the terraced style has been used for full effect.

Clearly the village as a whole are supporting the Bloom effort.

Even though it is a difficult site plant quality was high.

Areas for Improvement

Grazing the embankment below the housing association complex would solve a difficult problem of having to cut if it eventually becomes overgrown. Providing permission was sought, inviting a local grazier to seasonally use conservation breeders would be both an effective management tool and added attraction to the village. It would possibly bring kudos to the landowner, too!

Consider scented planting in the graveyard area.

Encourage the use of window boxes along the top road.

Consider extending the use of raised beds for families in the village.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The complete lack of litter is a credit to all the community.

It was good to hear that the group are keeping an eye on local woodland.

The work done around the stream at the bottom of the village is very valuable.

The group work well with the local council to ensure that street furniture is well maintained.

Valuable research has been done on the history of the village.

Areas for Improvement

In the very few areas where council support has not been great, perhaps a co-ordinated sweep could be arranged. Possibly to tie in with something like a national Spring Clean-up Day.

The habitat along the already well-managed river bank by Lumb Clough could be improved further by removing brambles. Water Voles would really welcome this!

Consider a wildlife survey along the stream area, perhaps results could be put on a notice board as walkers might be interested.

Consider using the research on village history on an interpretation board or even in an art installation, perhaps in the stream area.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

It's clear that almost everyone in the village is 'singing from the same hymn sheet'! The group can be proud of the engagement they've done here.

The planned notice boards will be useful in keeping everyone aware of events.

We were glad to hear of work with the school and look forward to hearing more in summer.

Good work is being done to secure support and funding.

We are impressed that good work is being done throughout the year.

Clearly the group are listening to resident's concerns and suggestions.

Efforts have been made to obtain good publicity for the group

Areas for Improvement

The judges look forward to seeing the history and interpretation boards the group are aiming to provide in the near future. Funding may well be sought from the Heritage lottery Fund.

Perhaps families in the village could be encouraged to use the raised beds.

Consider a pruning programme for the community orchard which could involve local families.

Consider using the soft fruit and community orchard as a focus for village events, perhaps a harvest celebration or wassail the trees.

Perhaps consider an award for young gardeners in the village.

Welwick & Weeton

Introduction

Pretty little rural village, with some interesting original features and the surprising links to national heritage. You can see the impact of the groups work as you drive through the two hamlets...

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Entrances planters gave a colourful welcome, along the well maintained grass verges and roadside bulbs and planters.

Residential gardens throughout were well maintained and colourful.

The mixed planting bed at the Kelps maintained by Jenny was a lovely addition to the green space.

The "Green" at Weeton had an interesting mix of planters, spring bulbs and original old farming machinery which signified the village heritage, well maintained by Janet and Derek.

Areas for Improvement

Derek's plans for the green space at Weeton to include tree planting and fruit growing within the heart of the village will be an added bonus.

Judges look forward to seeing the improvements planned for the war memorial site, and the repair and replanting of the telephone box planters maybe on our return in the summer.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The use of Farm equipment and recycling of tyres for planters creates interest throughout the village. The links to the Gunpowder Plot is an interesting story and gives the potential for added interpretation for visitors.

The village was spotless and well maintained throughout.

The dyke at the entrance to the village with its mixed planting will encourage wildlife to the area as well as providing a colourful display later in the year.

Areas for Improvement

The wildflower planting planned for the "Gunpowder Plotters" sculpture, will be an "explosion" of colour for future.

Continue to work with Local Authority to address the issue of cars parking on the grassed area around the war memorial.

Potential within the church grounds to improve biodiversity, bird and bug boxes, wildflower planting?

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Judges were impressed with the work being carried by local residents, each taking pride in their own patch. Sue & Ricks plans to provide a community growing space for families and young people to learn new growing skills and bring about community cohesion.

Information being passed out through new letters and events being run throughout the year.

The plant swap idea and lending library at the old phone box is a great idea to get the village engaged.

Areas for Improvement

Community growing scheme will be an asset to the village, and potential to create "junior bloomers".

The bid to Eon for funding for a water bowser will be an added bonus to the group, if awarded.

Category 1B: Village

Grassington

Introduction

Grassington is a rural working village in the heart of the dales and a major visitor attraction. There was a tremendous commitment from the in bloom group who are quickly gaining the support of other groups who see the benefit bloom is bringing to the area. The group are doing work for the area, not necessarily for the competition, should be commended. After three years in the competition improvements are clear to see and the group are rightly proud of their achievements.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Planting outside the Royal Mail. Good display of daffs with sustainable planting to follow in summer.

Planting of narrow edges along lanes. Good mixtures of colourful plants in difficult areas.

Colourful banking and private gardens at the top of the village.

Well maintained church yard.

Areas for Improvement

Consider more variety of colours and textured plants required.

More impact needed at bottom of Main Street, although judges did agree a difficult area to plant due to its exposure to elements.

Electricity substation and grass area at the entrance owned by the housing association. Long term projects but this lets down the area as you enter Main Square from car park.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

A good clean colourful entry

Good to see the old tree in Main Street had been replaced with a young oak which should develop for many years to come.

The 'Welcome to Grassington' sign depicting Grassington's heritage is very good.

Areas for Improvement

Replace parish notice board in centre of village.

Improve benches around village, rub down and stain.

More evidence of composting and recycling in summer. However, judges are aware recycling is going on and the difficulties the group are having.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The Grassington in Bloom group have good links with other groups around village now and support is growing.

The group hold fundraising events throughout year, they are very creative and get involved with the community.

They have a good funding stream to keep group going and continue to carry out improvements

Areas for Improvement

More community awareness around village and gain further support from local businesses

Kirkby Malzeard

Introduction

The sun shone in Kirkby Malzeard giving us the opportunity to explore the village and meet many members of the community and 'In Bloomers' who were out and about in their gardens or sitting enjoying their neighbourhood, including the residents of Mowbray Crescent. The warmth of the day mirrored our welcome from Kirby Malzeard in Bloom. We would like to thank you all. It was demonstrated to us that Kirkby Malzeard in Bloom embraces the ethos of In Bloom with ongoing commitment from the village community who support the small but enthusiastic In Bloom committee. This was demonstrated by the colourful floral displays throughout Kirkby Malzeard, green open spaces and well-tended, clean, tidy residential and public areas. You have many years of experience in this competition which showed in the design of the spring route and that you are to be congratulated on your continuing and developing efforts. Thank you for your hospitality.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Throughout the village efforts are made by residents and the In Bloom committee to make the most of the space in the village whether public or residential. Floral planting was good, colourful and appropriate. Restoration and development of the Jubilee Garden is to be commended and this public space is used and appreciated by those living and visiting the village. The planting of the Green has lifted the appearance of this area and the plans for a seating area (in consultation with the local residents) will add to the enjoyment of the area. The clearance and development of the Ginnell demonstrates your commitment to improving the local environment for all. We look forward to seeing the progress and planting of the Ginnell. Throughout the village we saw benches with troughs and planters with colourful flowers for the enjoyment of those who use the seats to rest and 'stop and stare' at the village. They would not be disappointed by what they see.

Areas for Improvement

We look forward to seeing more business involvement during the summer to support this section of the judging criteria. We would also suggest consideration of increased sustainable planting in public areas and floral containers. The Ginnell could provide this opportunity perhaps planting a 'wild life border' using appropriate sustainable plants or herbs to promote natural habitat.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Kirkby Malzeard is a well maintained village with an absence of any litter, graffiti etc. Street furniture and signage is good and enhanced them by with your floral displays. Pam's effort with displays at the disused pub is an example that clearly illustrates this. Your village map together with your village tapestries and displays in the Mechanics Institute illustrates your local history and heritage. You are proud of your village and heritage. The village pump and Pinfold are enhanced by floral displays. The exchange and recycle of plants within the village is important to your efforts and is to be applauded.

Areas for Improvement

You have a wealth of information and knowledge about the history of your village and we believe a leaflet on heritage and wildlife walks would enhance your entry. This together with further information about conservation and biodiversity would strengthen your spring route and we look forward to hearing more about this in the summer.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

There is no doubt that In Bloom and community participation is at the heart of Kirkby Malzeard and continues to move forward. This is no mean feat and we appreciate and acknowledge that you have encouraged the whole village. During our visit it was clear that there is support from the local community, for example, the In Bloom posters produced by local school children and the planting of bulbs on the Green, Arnie's work at Mowbray Crescent, Paul at the Pinfold, the use of the Playing Fields and the Pavilion and the efforts of the residents of Kirkby Malzeard from pots to gardens. This is a living working village with committed residents. You have developed your work with the school and we look forward to our visit to see this in the summer. Information and publicity including press coverage is excellent. You have your own in bloom banner. Well done to you all and our thanks to all those (including Michael, Pippa, Gwyneth, Iain, Yvonne, Myra, and Malcolm) who showed us around.

Areas for Improvement

There is little we can add in this section. You may wish to consider developing a small 'supporting in bloom' sticker/poster based on your own in bloom banner. We look forward to meeting your younger members of the community in the summer to hear about their engagement with 'blooming' related activities to strengthen this area even further.

Upper Hopton

Introduction

It was good to receive such a warm welcome from Upper Hopton. After receiving a very comprehensive portfolio and knowing that in 2014 the village was an entrant in Britain in Bloom, both the Judges had very high expectations of this entry and were not dismayed. The high quality of planting, organisation. Care, and attention to detail abounded everywhere. Showing that very committed teamwork really pays off. Well done, congratulations to all in the community who made all this possible.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Visitors entering the village will be impressed by the complete tidiness and display of different floral containers, well planned and planted areas, the entrances of roads, adopted premises, the composting area, the new orchard, and the best kept telephone box in the area.

With a 5 year plan in place, and with a systematic job card in the Blooms tool room container, everything is always in hand.

The impact of the planting in the Rose Garden was impressive as were the circular beds in front of Croft House.

The drifts of daffodils planted around the village were very colourful.

All the plants around the village were in very good condition and we were pleased to hear how perennials are split and recycled.

We saw lots of lovely private gardens around the village.

Areas for Improvement

Continue planting native bulbs.

Consider planting pots of herbs around the bus stop to provide scent for people waiting and to bring in insects.

Develop a pruning programme for the community orchard.

Consider developing a soft fruit area to benefit residents.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Everywhere is under control, management of composting, wildlife, recycling, ongoing projects, the new village sign incorporating all materials that have been in the village for very many years. Again lots of projects are in the planning.

It was good to see the use of recycled stone in the path edging of the wildlife garden

It was good to see the importance placed on supporting wildlife.

The use of tenter posts in the village marker was a good idea.

Repair and development of drystone walling was impressive.

The village was impressively free of litter, graffiti and dog fouling.

Areas for Improvement

Continue researching the history of the village to find inspiration for features and interpretation boards.

Consider planting native shrubs in the recreation ground bed to encourage wildlife.

Continue to develop wildlife planting in the wildlife garden.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

With such a large committed Bloom group team and solid links with other organisations and members of the community the bond shows that it is really strong. The annual garden trail and village calendar combine to greatly help funding and support. To maintain such a high standard and represent the county in the Britain in Bloom competition speaks volumes. A true ambassador for Yorkshire. Congratulations once again.

Clearly tremendous efforts have been made to secure sponsors, funding and publicity.

Areas for Improvement

Continue the good work with young people.

Continue to work with the local cricket club.

Continue to maintain and develop the valuable links established with other community groups.

Category 1C: Large Village

Barwick

Introduction

Barwick lies in a green belt to the east of Leeds, this large village supports its rural agricultural background by displaying heritage farm machinery around the village.

One of the most notable landmarks is the 86 foot (26m) Maypole and the view from the village centre down the three converging roads was commendably clean and free of litter as was the village.

This well maintained village showed that the established In Bloom group and the residents had gone the extra mile as part of their on-going commitment to keeping Barwick an attractive place to reside.

The judges were greeted by the In Bloom team at the Methodist Church which has a very impressive floral display and wonderfully scented hyacinths. We were taken on a well thought out itinerary both by mini bus and on foot backed up with an informative portfolio.

We congratulate and thank all those involved for their warm welcome, commitment, hard work and effort and we look forward to the summer judging.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The flower beds were colour themed but not boring, the plants were of very high quality, had excellent impact, the effort put into maintaining such a high horticultural achievement is a credit to all involved in this entry. The private planting also well-coordinated with the In Bloom themes. The verges round the village well maintained with good choice of sustainable plants such as Hypericum. The village car park is very well cared for, neat & tidy and appropriate use of Bergenia's and addition of trees, the sports and play area were well maintained. Every entrance to the village looked good such as the long stretch of daffodils and hornbeams on Leeds Road.

Areas for Improvement

Looking forward to seeing the progress on the area near the bowling green when reseeded, Barwick in Bloom considering wildflowers trying again to get it back to its first year splendour.

Visiting the churchyard and grounds in more detail and seeing the challenging long perennial border with the dry shade aspect.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Excellent bug houses, nest boxes, bird feeders and wildlife area at the Jubilee gardens and The Boyle. Well planted war memorial. The Beck is a well maintained area with primroses naturalising along the Beck and there is a programme of re- gravelling paths. Dog fouling and litter are now under control with posters/signs reinforcing the message, especially like the poo bags available in the Jubilee garden next to the dog waste bin. Good composting areas in the Jubilee gardens and sale of plants. Rhubarb cart, reapers & plough etc. all showing Agricultural heritage and new WW1 poppy bed with quality signage. Centrally located recycling area in All Saints Church. The welfare of the Bees in the churchyard.

Areas for Improvement

Review the programme for re-staining barrels, some were in need of attention. Peartree Garden residents to review both weeding schedule and painting of planter. Consider having permanent Information boards in All Saints Church. Consider involving children e.g. scouts in undertaking a survey to see what insects are using the bug houses & checking out information at www.buglife.org.uk as Barwick is on the B-line network.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Well organised established sustainable In Bloom group, funding well managed and projects sensibly planned. Programme of fundraising activities and community support. Scouts planted up the Rhubarb cart and guides planting roses. Good posters and wooden signs giving good information coverage.

Areas for Improvement

Would help to have a map of the Judges route.

To show the judges signs to acknowledge sponsors for flowerbeds etc.

Bramham

Introduction

The Bramham in Bloom group is small in number but by securing a wide range of support has achieved a large amount for the community. An outstanding aspect is the consultation and communication with residents that is undertaken. Initially requests were for more flowers but over time wider environmental issues have come to the fore and been taken on by the bloom group, such as new bottle banks.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The entrance beds clearly show you are entering Bramham and were well planted showing a lot of colour at the time of our visit.

The group has undertaken small but significant planting at places such as the medical centre and Wetherby Road. The nature of the village means that most of the planting is in small beds but these are appropriate to the area and the planting is such that they have real impact.

Areas for Improvement

The group has the right approach to undertaking projects that they have the resource not only to carry out but to manage in a sustainable way in the future.

This is only an observation as it is appreciated how difficult winter baskets are but ones view is improved if empty or neglected ones are removed.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The churchyard is managed for both current use and as an area managed for biodiversity, within the centre of the village this is an excellent example of what can be achieved with good site management.

The history of the church, churchyard and many of the buildings. The restoration of the cattle ramp, to good order and as a village feature demonstrating former times.

Areas for Improvement

Illustrating the history of the area and the buildings on our route was essential to helping us understand the area. Without our attention being drawn to items not directly linked to bloom we would have missed a lot that make Bramham. So if you use that type of route for bloom please ensure you include the historic aspects.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The level of support from the community is excellent and shows in work carried out, sponsorship and the overall presentation of the village.

The ability to identify areas that need attention and then to resolve funding and co-operative working with others to complete projects

Areas for Improvement

Ensure your plan is within the resources you have available and continue the excellent work

Great & Little Preston

Introduction

Great and Little Preston are two individual villages approximately 1 mile apart. Both consist substantially of residential housing, with a few local businesses.

A warm welcome was received from members of the in Bloom team and a well organised tour of the villages showed the many aspects of their work in the area including the Jubilee Garden, the recently developed Wildlife Field with its access path through St Aidan's Wood, and the renovated Preston Corner.

Spring colour was in evidence in the many daffodils planted in verges and in the 50 plus well maintained tubs and planters throughout the parish with colourful spring bedding. A particular mention must go to the gardens of Bowers Row Mission Hall whose colourful frontage onto the road could be seen and appreciated by many passers-by as well as users of the facility.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

As highlighted in the introduction, Spring colour was in evidence throughout the parish with Bowers Mission Hall a site of particular achievement.

The border at Great Preston Corner in the centre of the village has been problematic for some time. The group have sought local opinion, worked with volunteers from a local bank to clear the area, and then implemented their plan for landscaping the site. Additional planting to take place later this year will further the enhancement of this key location.

Areas for Improvement

Plans to continue verge planting of daffodils in the lanes between the two villages, thereby providing a 'floral link', are to be commended.

As the group consolidate their work having initially focussed on the provision of tubs and planters in the area, they might like to give thought to some elements of perennial planting as a more sustainable approach which may also free up more time for the other projects with which they are involved.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The group have demonstrated a pro-active approach to the conservation and recognition of their local heritage and the provision of an interpretation board in the newly landscaped Great Preston Corner is indicative of this.

The Meadow Wood Walk created through St Aidan's wood not only provides access to the developing Wildflower Meadow but links to other paths in the area.

The Wildflower Meadow has been an area of considerable investment, both in terms of time and (funded) money. The judges look forward to seeing it again in the summer as the plantings start to establish.

Areas for Improvement

With the walk through St Aidan's Wood established, there is now the option to further enhance the area by the provision of nest boxes, bug homes and similar. This would also provide a good opportunity to involve local young people from the nearby primary school or from the Scout and Guide groups who already make use of the Jubilee garden area from where the walk commences.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Twice yearly litter picks have been used not only to improve the local environment, but have been successful in engaging the local community by turning these into a social occasion with the provision of a pie lunch.

A number of community noticeboards provided throughout the parish provide information not only on 'in Bloom' events but other matters of interest to the local community

The group hold fundraising events during the course of the year and seek further finance by way of various grants and sponsorship.

Areas for Improvement

The group have initiated contact with the local primary school and in the summer a class of Year 6 pupils will visit the Wildflower Meadow. It is hoped that this link will be developed so teachers can take advantage of the curriculum links to many aspects of the Jubilee Garden, Woodland Walk and the Wildflower Meadow. Staff may also be able to advice on development of interpretative material to support learning for their pupils.

Contact with residents of the Glencoe housing estate has resulted in the clearing and planting of a border adjacent to one of the properties, enhancing the entrance to the site. It was reported, however, that an invitation to join the in Bloom group has not been taken up. It is possible instead that the residents may prefer to have their own informal 'residents association' which could be guided and advised by the in Bloom Group – perhaps an approach that is worth suggesting?

Hutton Cranswick

Introduction

Hutton Cranswick is a joy to visit. We were delighted to meet so many keen and enthusiastic volunteers who clearly love their village and are dedicated to maintaining and enhancing it. Everywhere looked at its best in the spring sunshine from Centenary Wood to Cranswick Green and the Railway Station, to name but a few.

The village was spotlessly clean, again a testament to the In Bloom volunteers, and we heard about future plans to replant the war memorial bed, amongst others. We look forward to returning in summer and meeting Hutton Cranswick Bloomers once again.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Throughout the village the resident's gardens were immaculately presented. The Brightest and Best Gardens Competition obviously has a galvanising effect on getting local people out but generally we came away with the impression that resident's garden in Hutton Cranswick because they love their gardens and want to contribute to the overall effect in the village. From the pansies on the gate at Low Green Lodge to Gill Shipley's award winning mangers, to Glenholme Court and Pinfold Close, to name but a few all the residential gardens were of an excellent standard.

Throughout the village the plant barrels and containers are well maintained and beautifully planted with colour coordinated themes. It would be difficult to pick out one display over another as they all looked lovely but we were particularly taken with the dog cart on the main road which was nicely planted with beautifully blended colours.

The twin planters on the Hotham Road junction were also beautifully planted and it was nice to see before and after shots of work in progress on this particular project. There are obviously some very knowledgeable gardeners in Hutton Cranswick who use their skills and expertise to great effect.

The railway station was immaculately presented and the teams who work down here are to be commended for their enthusiasm and dedication. It was a delight to meet Bunny who is clearly a perfectionist and obviously works extremely hard to present Hutton Cranswick railway station as great first impression to visitors to the village.

The miniature recycled train and the sedum bed are wonderful additions to the burgeoning partnership the group has developed with Northern Rail.

Areas for Improvement

We understand the need for utility companies to dig up borders on occasion in order to facilitate progress, in this case laying fibre optic cables. Hopefully, the Bloom group can work with the company to reinstate a relatively small area of disturbed land.

Future plans for the War Memorial area with planting of flowers for remembrance will be interesting to watch develop.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Recycling was evident throughout the village and we would particularly commend the imaginative use of recycled materials in creating Crawford the Crane and the train at the railway station.

Centenary Wood looked magnificent in the afternoon sunshine with the carpet of celandines, cowslips, forget me nots and daffodils sparkling under the trees.

The dedicated team of Avice and Sonia are to be congratulated on their achievements. They are two ladies very passionate about their piece of paradise. The contributions made by the lifestylers, the nature watch signs, the bug's hotels and the information signs all contribute to making Centenary Woodland a wonderful asset for Hutton Cranswick.

The village pond looked good and was well stocked with wildlife, birds, fish and tadpoles.

Everywhere was spotlessly clean, a testament to the work parties that had taken place and that were advertised in the notice boards.

The tractors displayed throughout the village really displayed the local heritage and were also enhanced by strategically placed tasteful flower pots.

Areas for Improvement

Continue your excellent work at the wood and the pond

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The church notice boards were well maintained and up to date. The village was festooned with notices advertising the visit of the Yorkshire in Bloom judges .So much so that nobody could fail to be aware of the date and time of the visit.

The portfolio prepared for our visit was well produced and informative. Thank you.

There is clearly a lot of community spirit in Hutton Cranswick evidenced by the number of local businesses sponsoring and supporting the Bloom Group. Similarly, the number of partnerships formed is enviable.

Year round Bloom activities are clearly evidenced in the portfolio.

It was good to see the logo displayed in so many ways on posters, name badges, stationary etc.

Funding comes from a variety of sources much of it raised by the team. The lifestyles are very generous with their time and money.

Areas for Improvement

We look forward to our summer visit and the opportunity to meet more Hutton Cranswick Bloomers and especially the youngsters at the Nursery. Continue your good work in building partnerships with the primary school.

Leven

Introduction

Although Leven is relatively new to the in bloom family, the Group has lots of ideas for encouraging the community to get involved.

The village has bags of potential, and with the support and enthusiasm of the Team things will start to take sharp.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The works carried out at the Jubilee Garden are a credit to the group, the design, plant choice and features such as the timber sculpture enhance this well maintained site.

The residential gardens throughout the route are well maintained and colourful. The "Gorilla" gardeners are doing a great job on every street corner.

Orchard estate public spaces and road sides were well maintained and litter free.

The sport ground is an asset to village and well maintained. Spring bulbs at the entrance to the village gave a cheerful welcome.

Areas for Improvement

The awards programme for well-kept gardens would be a good idea to encourage residents to get involved in village activities.

The plans for the garage site, working with the local scout group will provide a welcome addition to the village.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The fact that Leven has a SSSI site right on its doorstep is an added bonus to the village.

The timber in the jubilee garden depicting Leven in the past is a lovely feature.

The village throughout was spotless and litter free.

Areas for Improvement

The Canal area has the potential to be an asset to the village, the conservation and biodiversity of the site is incredible, keep working on dialog with the land owner.

Potential for interpretation boards at Jubilee Gardens to tell the story.

The plans for the new Beverley to White Cross cycle lane will enhance Leven and encourage visitors to explore the village.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The involvement of young people helping to carryout improvements is commended. Great to hear that the school will be involved in the design of the planting for the new barrier baskets, along with projects such as bulb planting with the "Volunteers" from Voluntary Action Beverley, and the plans to work with the scouts.

The fact that the group have a village plan for improvements is a bonus and a focus for the group, setting out achievable goals.

Areas for Improvement

Potential to get children further involved in the publicity of In Bloom, maybe by holding a poster competition to promote Leven in Bloom.

Continue to explore ways of getting the community and businesses involved in the campaign.

Ripponden

Introduction

We enjoyed our visit to Ripponden. It was a lovely day and the daffodils were all in bloom. It was good to see people so committed to making their community a good place to live. When we next visit it would be nice to meet some more members of the team.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The war memorial area is a floral focal point for Ripponden.

The daffodils throughout the area had tremendous impact.

It was good to see planted tubs.

The area of the Jubilee Gardens managed by the Bloom group was well planted and maintained.

The beds set up around the substations really lifted the areas.

The snowdrop trail was a good idea and clearly appreciated.

The bowling green and banking behind were well maintained.

The area around the substation at School Close was very well maintained.

Areas for Improvement

Take action to control blackspot in some of the containers.

Consider further scented planting in seating areas to bring in insects.

Consider further insect friendly planting where possible.

Add shade tolerating plants under trees in the war memorial area.

If funds permit consider extending the use of planters and baskets.

Continue upgrading woodland edge planting in the snowdrop trail area.

Perhaps some soft fruit could be added to the Jubilee Gardens so that children can enjoy and learn by seeing it there.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

We were pleased to see the composting area and to hear that local residents are able to make use of it.

The area around the snowdrop trail is obviously a haven for wildlife.

The area was free of litter, graffiti and dog fouling.

Areas for Improvement

Consider insect friendly planting in some of the containers to bring butterflies into the town centre.

Perhaps areas like the gate leading to the Bowling Green would benefit from a little work.

Consider an interpretation board by the war memorial, perhaps giving details of the town's rich history.

Where possible consider more bird and bat boxes around the area.

If possible, ask BT to remove the out-of-date film promotion poster from the phone box on the main road just outside the Rishworth boundary sign.

Consider re-treating some of the benches, for example the one by the marker stone at Soyland.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

We were pleased to see the commitment shown to making Ripponden a pleasant place to live.

Clearly this work goes on year round.

We were pleased to hear that some businesses are accepting hanging baskets.

Successful initiative to obtain funding are taking place.

Areas for Improvement

Try to bring more businesses into the hanging basket scheme if possible.

Consider another publicity drive to increase the number of people actively involved.

Perhaps projects could be found which families would find attractive to help with.

Perhaps planting native bluebells or daffodils around the snowdrop trail is something schools would be interested in.

Shadwell

Introduction

Shadwell is a very large spread out village which makes it more difficult as there is no central point. The enthusiastic group have overcome this by having several focal points throughout the length, indeed they look after thirty areas! It was a lovely sunny day for judging and all the flower beds looked lovely. It has a very pleasant rural feel despite being so close to Leeds with some lovely views over open countryside. It was good to meet so many of the Shadwell in Bloom group who have spent many years working to make such a pleasurable place to live.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The raised edging at the front of the village hall beds have made a real improvement on such a difficult corner. The use of grasses within the beds is very eye-catching. The hard work on the long border edging shows and will improve with time-a very difficult dry border. There were many areas of excellent residential gardens and all the roads litter free. The rockery at the church looks good and will develop making a good frontage to the church garden. The planting at the Terminus along with the new Shad Well was good. The plans for the school area were good and the new stone planter at the front will be a good new focal point You are to be congratulated on the verge cutting and the many fencing and hedging replacements.

Areas for Improvement

Some of general maintenance needed a little more care, especially as the unusually dry weather had meant some of bedding was suffering. The planned reviews to change to more sustainable planting will maybe free up more time for caring for bedding? Some of existing sustainable plants could be divided to increase stock?

It will be good to see the Well planted out

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The newly created nature area at school was very promising with frogs, hedgehog, a vole and many birds already in position. Herb Beds and Pollen bed on Colliers Lane look well cared for -could we see them closer? Memorial garden is a delight and a credit to Richard and Celia and welcoming to birds and wildlife.

Composting at allotments very good system and use of grey water for allotments. The tree planting throughout is extensive and knowledgeable.

Areas for Improvement

Looking forward to visiting Dan Quarry and its historical links and to seeing children's efforts at school.

The watering regime maybe needs reviewing to extend season and to help with some awkward to reach areas.

The lovely banking of primroses could be extended by dividing of plants. It might be good to have a scheduled maintenance programme for care and staining of barrels and planters

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The school had completed a good survey of the children's 'wants', we hope to see the outcome in summer in their new vegetable patch.

An excellent map but the route numbers would have been clearer following the order of the route. The group seems well established and sustainable -could we have short breakdown of finances?

The website was clear and easy to access and many posters of support in houses along the route

Areas for Improvement

Maybe to help with timings two different routes could be used for summer and spring

Is it possible to see a Review of the year either with photos or PowerPoint at the end of the visit? More banners or posters of the judging day might help to raise awareness?

Thornton

Introduction

We were treated to an enthusiastic and enjoyable spring judging by the Thornton in Bloom group. Steve's new found drive and determination to take the entry forward was plain to see.

It was good to be introduced to supporters of the In Bloom cause along the judging route and to hear about the exciting plans the group has moving forward. We look forward to our return for summer judging when hopefully the sun will once again shine on the village made famous as the birthplace of the Bronte's.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The display of daffodils on both sides of Thornton Road is a joy.

The standard of the Railway Heritage Beds looked after by the Antiquarian Society is very high. The care and attention lavished by the group is plain to see.

The flower beds on West Lane, looked after by the Rotary group were looking good and have a lot of further potential.

The floral display at the Ring O Bells public house was very welcoming and is thriving, which is a tremendous feat given the fairly exposed location.

Areas for Improvement

If the new footpath scheme comes to fruition near the Railway Heritage beds it will further enhance the excellent work already being done there.

The plan to erect a plaque in memory of Valerie and extend the beds at West Lane is very appropriate and to be commended. Does the group have a timescale for this work?

Could a few additional tubs or planters be placed in the area near to the car park of the New Tyke to further enhance the work being done in that area?

The group needs to be careful not to place too much emphasis on residential gardens within the judging time.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The Bell Chapel continues to impress, with its theme on wildlife and the grounds are going from strength to strength. The Chapel is an inspiration to groups that may wish to undertake a similar scheme.

It was pleasing to see the two small recycling centres on the route.

The Thornton in Bloom group are very aware of the history of Thornton and are keen to maximize this moving forward.

The streets were generally clean and litter-free and it was pleasing to meet Anne who is one of the helpers who does litter-picking.

The picnic benches at the Ring O bells pub were in very good condition and complimented the garden area nicely.

Areas for Improvement

Could a small natural or wildlife garden be created in front of the sub-station on West Lane and also outside the sub-station near the New Tyke? These would complement the good work already taking place, in particular at West Lane.

Many of the litter bins were in respectable condition. However there is one particularly awful bin near the co-op and James Street gardens. Can the group work with the Council to facilitate a replacement bin, for what is such a prominent area?

Thornton cemetery is ideal for the provision of some bird and bat boxes the further enhance the already pleasant atmosphere there.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

It was refreshing and very pleasing to see the new efforts made by the In Bloom group to advertise themselves via banners and posters dotted around the route. And also the excellent initiative to gain publicity through the Thornton directory and Inspire magazine is to be commended.

The group is successful in integrating with other groups within the village such as the: Rotary club and Antiquarian Society.

The group is starting closely with local businesses such as: Gardenia's nursery and Abraham and Shaw and Persimmon which is very progressive moving forward.

Areas for Improvement

Can any funding streams be sourced by the group to help move the many schemes in the pipeline forward? If necessary the In Bloom group should consider working with other groups in a joint funding bid.

Although the group mentioned their plans to work with schools in the summer, it would be beneficial to include one of the schools, or have some young person involvement with the entry, in spring where possible.

It would have been useful to have seen the portfolio before judging day.

Category 2A: Urban Community

Allerton Bywater

Introduction

Allerton Bywater is a large ex mining community with plenty of evidence of their mining heritage. We were met with a lovely group of very enthusiastic bloomers who made us feel very welcome. The impact of the spring colours on the verges was lovely, a lot of careful thought and planning was evident, and their pride in the memorial to the miners was obvious. Different people throughout the community care for the planters near their homes. A quirky feature was the mine carts used as planters.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

As well as the lovely bulb planted verges, the tiered planters were very effective, well planted and very colourful. Both memorials were very eye-catching with good floral display.

The plants throughout the entry were of good quality and there were new hedges and thoughtfully placed rowan trees in addition to the huge amount of bulbs planted.

There were also good herbaceous beds which adds to continuity.

The residential gardens were generally in good order with some extremely good examples.

The Hollinshurst project of the new flower bed at the edge of the town has been created by members of the In Bloom group and shows great potential.

The Church looked lovely with the spring bulbs and good herbaceous borders at both sides of the drive. All plants were 'recycled'.

We were impressed by business involvement, in particular Papico, local pubs, and clubs.

Areas for Improvement

West wing area of Church yard would benefit from further improvement.

The Hollinshurst project could be improved by grouping plants and the introduction of taller species and sustainable planting.

Introduction of areas of impact along park lane verges, i.e. spring bulbs.

Re-introduction of wild flowers in the Allerton Staithes and Old Pottery Site.

Ticklecock Bridge, a very good start improving the whole area, but take care that planting avoids scattergun approach, try to plant in swathes.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Taking advice from a number of experts with regard to suitable wild life planting.

Recycling of water from the miner's memorial for watering the floral displays.

Street furniture was well maintained, as were the memorials.

There was obvious pride in their local heritage, which was enhanced by the display boards.

The area was generally litter free and recycling is encouraged.

Areas for Improvement

Encourage further water recycling.

The introduction of edging between the grass and the pathway at the Centenary garden would further enhance the area.

Introduction of bug hotels and bird boxes in the wild life areas, could be a good way to get school children further involved with projects.

Re-sowing of the wild flower garden in the Pottery Yard area.

Where there are gaps in the hedging, have you considered the introductions of other species to widen the variety for wild life.

Perhaps a display of your achievements could be put together to be shown at coffee mornings and other events.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

There is a wide range of clubs and organisations supporting the In Bloom group by both sponsorship and in kind involvement. Joint projects with businesses are improving this entry.

The High School helped to provide the planters and seats for elderly residents and the community pay back scheme has worked well for the Church yard.

Allotments were wheel chair friendly, with raised beds, bird tables and bird boxes, and people with learning difficulties were encouraged to come along and help. A good community spirit.

There is a lot of fund raising and support throughout the community, including the regular meetings in the Church.

Areas for Improvement

Better liaison and forward planning may support further School involvement. Could the schools do bug and wild flower surveys before new planting and when established.

Encourage further press coverage, perhaps inviting to some of the judging tour.

Beeston

Introduction

Beeston is an urban inner- city area of South Leeds with approximately 20,000 residents living in mixed housing accommodation from owner-occupied to short term lets. A number of the areas around Beeston suffer from high levels of deprivation, despite all the difficulties the In Bloom group have made significant positive impact on the area in many ways both floral and social.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The 75 hanging baskets of which 75 per cent are sponsored, the work undertaken on the community garden in Cross Flats Park and the raised beds with single colour schemes.

The substantial amount of bulbs planted at Red Hill and St Marys Churchyard.

Areas for Improvement

Consideration could be given to enter of some of the areas in Yorkshire in Bloom as individual entrants as well as the overall Beeston in Bloom entry

Beeston in Bloom should display all of their good work because it is clear that they are achieving a lot more than they are displaying to the judges.

Cross Flats Park while much improved could always benefit from further horticultural improvement work.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

It was pleasing that the in Bloom Group used organic materials for their horticultural maintenance and selected plants that were friendly to wildlife.

The proposals for a wild flower border around the community orchard should be commended further the encouragement of the children to develop conservation and biodiversity is to be applauded.

Areas for Improvement

Consideration could be given to some water harvesting from the buildings and other recycling than green waste. Encouragement could be given to the allotment holders to undertake more composting and recycling on their site at Clarksfield

Consideration could be given to further improvements to Beeston Cemetery should resources be available.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The judges were impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of the Beeston in Bloom team. Clearly the in Bloom team are good at fund-raising and sustaining a year round programme

The use of new technology i.e., Facebook and attracting younger volunteers to assist with the design of the in Bloom website is an achievement.

Areas for Improvement

The Beeston in Bloom team must not think that because of the difficulties in their local area that they cannot achieve a Gold award on the same criteria as all other groups in the category.

Whilst it is accepted that it may be very difficult it would be helpful if Beeston in Bloom could be more representative of the community and the diversity of the area.

Bramhope

Introduction

Daffodils bring a hope of spring and the bloom group of Bramhope have excelled in the quantity they have managed to plant or have planted. The main road planting introduces people to the community and gives it an identity and of course a wonderful display of colour. The group have and are undertaking a range of projects a recently completed one is the work at the Knoll along with the ongoing memorial garden project.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The effect of Tete-a-tete flowing in the verge of Breary Lane was very good, especially because of the number of bulbs that had been planted in what is a difficult roadside site.

The Parade beds offering a variety of planting types and styles, along with the timber cladding that has been used to hide decaying brick work.

Refurbishment of the beds and path at the Tredgold shop area, and the plan for further work to protect the verge.

Areas for Improvement

It is unfortunate that the planting of the native bed at the well has been disturbed and hopefully this can be resolved.

Planting at the Puritan Chapel and around the well are in areas of heavy shade making it difficult to establish plants, and it may be that some more thought on plant selection will be needed.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The work at the Knoll and the interpretation of the railway tunnel is excellent and sets a high standard for interpretation material that may be used in other places.

There is an ongoing program of seat maintenance

The area was litter free which given the volume of traffic that passes through is a great achievement.

Areas for Improvement

Whilst Bramhope is a built up area there is opportunity to point out conservation matters, we expect this will be clearer in summer when the school and its conservation area is in operation.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The group respond to issues raised by the community and ensure that the work and projects they undertake meet the desires and needs that have been expressed.

Community involvement such as the poster competition, levels of sponsorship, year round work program and ongoing projects makes this an excellent entry.

Areas for Improvement

As you are well aware it is important to ensure that your work and projects are within the resources available. Otherwise in this element the group sets an excellent example.

Calverley

Introduction

Calverley is a busy suburb of Leeds with high levels of traffic passing through, which makes keeping high standards of cleanliness difficult. The local community, through the Bloom group, try hard to do so and to make roadside areas attractive for the benefit of residents and others passing through.

Areas of Achievement

There is obviously a keen core group of local people, and Leeds City Council employees, who are driving the campaign in Caverley - this is shown in the high quality maintenance of the park, the churchyard and grounds of St Wilfrid's Church, the Methodist Church and the Brookleigh Housing areas to name but a few of the key areas. Large bulb plantings have been carried out and good use is made of the school to reuse bedding plants in community areas.

Areas for Improvement

Be careful in your choice of old containers - do they add to the scene?

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Various elements of conservation are being carried out in the churchyard and we liked the 'Calverley Angel'. They have revived the walking of the Bounds and this has proved very popular. Use of goats to manage the churchyard is good. Very simple, but impressive, war memorial.

Areas for Improvement

Possibly some interpretation of the war memorial area would be helpful.

Some of the park seats need cleaning.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

There were a good number of posters in windows. The committee are committed to seeking money for various project, and are being successful. Calverley Arms Hotel are very supportive.

Areas for Improvement

It would be good to evidence of press coverage. Also to include schools in the itinerary.

Holbeck

Introduction

Holbeck is an inner city suburb of Leeds City with a diverse mix of housing and residents with a history spanning back more than 300 years. While Holbeck may have some difficulties the community is making the best use of all they have with a positive attitude and a can-do approach which shows in the improvements that they have achieved in the area.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The work undertake on Holbeck Moor to create a green space that provides for all types of community activity from the elderly to the young people.

The Holbeck signed bedded out in flowers.

The high standard of maintenance to Holbeck Bowling Green and surrounding area. The work done by the younger bloomers to the entrance to St Luke's Church

The encouragement of local groups to grow fruit and vegetables around the community centre for residential consumption

Areas for Improvement

Planting of Ivy along the fence line between Holbeck Moor and the M621 may be considered an advantage.

The community Allotment with raised beds when completed may benefit from having a three-year growing plan paired in advance and displayed on site.

Consideration could be given to more horticultural development within St Luke's Churchyard such as further tree planting or the inclusion of herbaceous flowering borders.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The work done to secure the funding and creation of the Matthew Murray trail should be commended

Considering the high use of the Holbeck area by non-residents there were very low levels of litter, fly posting, graffiti and dog fouling which is a credit to all involved in keeping the area clean and tidy

Areas for Improvement

Water harvesting of the roofs of the many buildings could be considered.

Additional street furniture, art in the landscape could also be considered

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The work that Holbeck in Bloom is undertaking with instaplanta is at the forefront of business and resident development for the in bloom initiative.

Holbeck in Bloom are clearly good at securing funding including the benefits in kind from businesses and local groups including the police

Areas for Improvement

It would be helpful during the summer judging to see the involvement of schools in the in bloom initiative it is appreciated that the schools were on holiday during the spring judging

While it is understood that a significant part of the local community may be short stay in the area it may be helpful to try to get them to be involved in the in bloom initiative by say growing usual fruit and vegetables from their culture.

Kippax

Introduction

Kippax is a medium sized village, close to motorway links - in all directions- a community with numerous traders, businesses, three primary schools, library, clinics, dentist and public houses and clubs. The name "Kippax" indicates that the village was first established in a heavily wooded area of ash trees. A warm welcome awaited the judges from the Kippax in Bloom team and it was obvious that they had worked with diligence, sound horticultural knowledge and enthusiasm to improve their local environment, On our entry into Kippax, which is quite obviously an In Bloom entry, the judges were delighted to see the bright and vibrant colours of the tropical beds in front of a residential area. This provided a taster for the variety of colourful beds which adorn every available corner of this former mining urban village.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Considerable thought has been given in choosing plants which are appropriate to the site where they are to be planted and this together with an excellent variety of plants of good quality has provided spectacular displays in a variety of positions. Every spare piece of ground has been utilised to the maximum potential and the beds have been maintained to a high standard. Drought tolerant plants ensure low maintenance and provide colourful rockeries and planters in the more difficult areas. Particularly colourful were the rockeries at the library, Long Dyke Lane and Park Avenue. The planters on the high street with their tall, statuesque conifers complimented the wall baskets at the Co-op. The gardens at the Methodist Church have been transformed from bald lawned areas into well maintained beds with delightful and colourful planting.

Areas for Improvement

Encourage the young people to plant a greater variety of plants or to create a rockery around the entrance to the Community Centre.

The judges look forward to seeing how the colour will be maintained in the rockery gardens in summer.

Continue to support the gardeners at the Methodist church who are creating a new bed in memory of their late colleague Christine.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

With the assistance of the Art Club, the dilapidated toilet block at Cross Hills has been imaginatively converted into a country cottage complete with window boxes and a front

garden with seats for passers-by to enjoy the view. The new green signs and sponsorship boards blend ideally with the well planted beds throughout and provide an individual identity to the beds. The Kippax in Bloom group has encouraged use of local stone for edging opposite the library and in St Mary's church, and to rebuild the wall complete with seat next to the Shylty Balti restaurant. Kippax in Bloom are to be congratulated for having self-seeded cowslips in the Gibson Lane wildlife area.

Areas for Improvement

With assistance from the Parish Council, continue painting the litter bins and notice boards, particularly the ones at Cross Hill and the main village notice board, to co-ordinate with the environmental friendly green colourway with the signs and bins throughout Kippax.

Encourage wherever possible the use of water butts to harvest rain water to provide the water for tubs and planters. Try to find sites for more and larger composting areas.

Continue to liaise with Leeds City Council to improve the War Memorial garden. Consider providing (with grant funding) some art work or other memorials, such as sculptures in stone, wood or metal, to enhance the memorial garden but ensuring they do not detract from the very aesthetically pleasing memorial.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The group is attracting and encouraging younger members of the community such as the scouts and guides and the judges were pleased to meet two of the three young people who are continuing to volunteer after completing their work for their Duke of Edinburgh Award. Business and sponsorship support is clearly acknowledged on all the beds and planters. Good use is made of the Parish magazine to keep the community in touch with all ongoing projects and events.

The Kippax in Bloom group are supported by regular funding from their Parish Council.

Areas for Improvement

Continue to improve communications locally and with regular updates and blogs on the website.

A good link had been made with the youngsters working to achieve their Duke of Edinburgh Awards and in future it may be possible to encourage others.

Continue to improve links with the local schools

Scarborough Old Town

Introduction

The Old Town of Scarborough overlooked by the ancient castle is an eclectic mix of old and new. The area is rich in heritage and there are many fine buildings within.

The Daffodil Trail is very popular with tourist and much appreciated by the local residents.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The newly planted beds on Valley Road were very colourful. Many of the roundabouts have impressive themed floral displays forming an attractive feature.

The border beneath the Tram Mural was thoughtfully planted and well-maintained.

Areas for Improvement

Perhaps a little more support could be offered to the Primary School to develop their vegetable garden and include some herbs too. Raised beds could overcome the problem of poor soil.

Continue to encourage businesses and residents to provide colourful floral displays.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The 'heritage' street lighting is very impressive and really enhances many of the older houses with their historic links.

Given that the area is visited by vast numbers of tourists it was pleasing to note the absence of litter.

Signage is generally good and most of the street furniture maintained.

The school has insect houses and bird boxes.

Areas for Improvement

Some information/interpretation boards could be provided at various locations within the Old town.

You may consider creating a 'Blue Plaque' trail.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

There are many year-round activities in place to support the 'In Bloom' group.

Areas for Improvement

Perhaps include some Press/Media coverage to raise the 'In Bloom' group profile.

Starbeck

Introduction

The work of the community in Starbeck ensures that the area has its own identity and bloom contributes to the development of the community.

Starbeck is a good example of how co-operation with the Local Authority and Northern Rail demonstrates what can be achieved when people work with a common aim.

The Handprints workshop project supports bloom by producing signs and art work for bloom, again showing mutual support within the community.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The car wash bulb planting carried out by the owner illustrates the support enjoyed by bloom.

The boundary markers and the planting that had been carried out.

General bulb planting, and that at Cats Field demonstrate the good effect of earlier works.

The garden competition to encourage residents to improve the appearance of the area

Areas of Improvements

Not a comment on direct improvements as the work is being done, we feel that the bloom group was a little modest in promoting the number and type of groups that they have recruited to help.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas for Achievement

The environmental quality was very good and the area totally clean even though there is a lot of traffic.

The art in the landscape bicycle bed, celebrating the race along with the history trail and illustrated boards showing the area further back in time.

The co-operation on projects with the local Authority.

The shop project to encourage participation has a very high take up rate.

The nectar bed and conservation work carried out in a built up area.

Work carried out by Taylors both in supporting Starbeck and their own exceptional record of environmental work and recycling set an example that all companies should follow.

Areas for Improvement

Continue to influence programs such as the bus shelter cleaning and seat maintenance program continue to maintain the Pride of Place element that is so well done at the moment.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The inclusion of so many groups and extensive support from the community.

Securing funding and raising funds to carry out both regular work and new projects.

The Starbeck sponsors board, gains income and demonstrates the support that is given.

Areas for Improvements

This experienced group seeks to ensure that everything possible is done to cover all the elements of bloom and in this section they do very well

Swillington

Introduction

Swillington, once a mining village is dominated by St Mary's Church with its distinctive dark stone tower and contrasting creamy yellow stone nave and chancel is now home

to assorted industries and specialist agriculture which employs many of the population. While others commute to nearby towns such as Leeds and Wakefield.

While travelling through Swillington, it is evident that an enthusiastic In Bloom group has been active in the area for some time adding shrub beds, planting bulbs, installing wooden planters and planting trees making it a pleasure to travel along the main road.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The impact of the bulb planting, wooden planters, trees and shrub beds was there for all to see and shows the hard work which has taken place for the benefit of everyone. The choice of colour schemes had been planned carefully throughout the area.

On visiting the ancient church yard to the rear of the building the judges were amazed by the biodiversity and wild life and the astonishing display of wild flowers which have naturalised over the centuries and the information board pointing out the different species of birds.

The judges were pleased to see that the Indian restaurant had taken the trouble to enhance the frontage with flower boxes and solar powered lights and the local trailer company had provided a raised bed outside the premises to add interest for customers and passers-by.

Areas for Improvement

Some of the recently formed flower beds in the church yard were establishing well but perhaps needed some soil improvement to aid plant growth due to the dry and shady conditions. The beds at Ashley Way which had been reduced in height will benefit by having clearly defined edges.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The introduction of more perennials and grasses is a good idea for more sustainable planting with seasonal bedding plants at the front to provide splashes of colour.

It was good to see the old school house near the church was being renovated to a high standard and the nature conservation work around the church is being continued with the introduction of a Hibernaculum for the benefit of overwintering animals.

The introduction of a bench surrounded by flower beds at the top of the hill seems to be well used by travellers and local residents alike. The sponsorship signs for the beds, barrels and flower boxes were well designed and informative.

Areas for Improvement

In certain areas of the residential streets the judges noticed some weed growth on some of the pavements and gullies which need to be attended to for the benefit of the householders.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The in bloom group have clearly put a lot of work into a many sites, in some cases soil has been barrowed for over half a mile from one bed to another in order to re cycle it. Communication is good with the website and twitter and the involvement of young people from the local school and groups have helped out with the displays.

Year round involvement including the Snowdrop weekend in February would bring many visitors to the areas.

Much of the funding has come from local sponsorship and the local authority which has made a huge difference to the displays in the area. Many of the businesses had sponsored the beds and planters throughout the area, the income going towards the upkeep and re planting of all the areas.

The plant train with the easily replaceable planters is an ideal method to involve the school children.

Areas for Improvement

The judges were somewhat concerned about the age profile of the group as there is a great deal of hard work for a small number of people, new members and other community groups, should be encouraged to join where possible to continue the good work.

Category 2B: Small Town

Dunnington

Introduction

Dunnington is a village and civil parish in the City of York and is located 4 miles east of York City Centre. The village was an Anglo-Saxon settlement and was listed in the 1086 Domesday Book as Donniton. The fields around the village became the main area for growing chicory in the country. It currently has a population of 3194 (2001 census) and has an outstanding list of achievements in Yorkshire and Britain in Bloom and continues to set a very high standard in everything it carries out as witnessed during our visit.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The baskets and planters by Stuart were excellent with a good range of plants and colour and were well maintained. The transformation of the Eastfield Lane corner must be appreciated by the whole village. The quality of plants around the village was excellent and the move towards 50% sustainable planting is to be applauded and the work at the new cemetery must be appreciated. The 36 allotments were well tended and the waiting list indicates a secure future for these. Residential gardens are all well maintained as can be easily seen due to the predominance of open plan gardens. The grassed areas were well maintained and it is noted that 60% of the grass cutting is done by the In Bloom group with an impressive array of machinery owned by the group. The green at Dunnington Bowling Club was outstanding and we are told ranks in the top 10 in the country. The development of Julia's Garden from a neglected allotment into such a tranquil area is to be commended.

Areas for Improvement

The development of the route 66 cycle bed requires planting more suited to its shady location and the judges look forward to seeing this. Possibly plants of a trailing nature would soften the lines of the Hornshaw's cart.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The concept of reducing the extent of verge cutting to produce wild life corridors is appreciated. The restoration of the locally made Hornshaw's cart and the wicker horse reflect Dunnington's heritage as does the introduction of the growing of chicory into the school garden making the children more aware of the social history of Dunnington.

The work at Hassacar Nature Reserve by Terry and his team is outstanding, there are good information boards here and the creation of this from disused railway land/sewage works is to be admired. The visits by the school groups for pond dipping etc. can only increase interest in the area. The In Bloom group works to maintain quality of street furniture to a high standard and there is a complete lack of litter, graffiti etc.

Areas for Improvement

Good luck with your continuing provision of bins for dog fouling and the development of links with The Woodland Trust and Higgs Wood group. Hopefully the social events will achieve your aim of getting the next generation of "In Bloomers"

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The production of a 5 year strategic plan shows the group is looking to the future. Signs around the village publicised the judging and raised awareness as did the leaflet drop sponsored by Redmore, the latter will also hopefully augment funds. The coverage on Radio York can do nothing but good for Dunnington in Bloom as will the articles in the Parish magazine and the library public notice board. The regular visits of the In Bloom team to the school Gardening Club is to be applauded and it was nice to see the children's involvement at the church. The excellent working relationship with York City Council can also only be advantageous. The existence of a committee of 24 speaks volumes for the community involvement together with the ladies section led by Lita. The activity days at Hassacar with the Brownies, Cubs and schools show good involvement with the younger members of Dunnington. Your year round fund raising and profile means the group are able to continue the outstanding contribution to life in Dunnington.

Areas for Improvement

The judges look forward to visiting the school at the Summer judging and seeing the work with the Gardening Club there. Continue with the encouragement to partake in the RHS Young Gardeners competition.

Haworth

Introduction

Howarth village is located in the hilly Pennines and memorably seen by millions over the world as a key part of last years televised Tour de France. The enthusiastic in Bloom group members demonstrate what real commitment can achieve with limited resources and daunting challenges. Howarth School and its children show how raising

environmental awareness and pupil participation can reap rewards with better-informed and knowledgeable students. Meeting the children at the school was a highlight of the Spring visit. With a further visit planned in the Summer sure to be even more informative.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The Spring flowering bulbs and seasonal bedding plants seen in the many containers, troughs, verges and tubs as well as the bedding displays at Central Park, were a delight to see. The two gardening volunteers at the Parsonage are to be congratulated for their sterling work in maintaining and developing what is a much-visited attraction.

Areas for Improvement

At some sites visited weeding operations carried out now would help prevent increases later in the season. An example would be the War Memorial paving. The standardisation of the choice of containers purchased for future displays would help with the group's identity, presence and value to Haworth.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The raising of awareness of recycling and consideration for the environment is exemplified at the school, with the children having a genuine understanding and enthusiasm. Well done. The strategic development of the once run down allotment site is welcomed, particularly at its location close to the parsonage and visitor route.

Areas for Improvement

A strategic approach to the maintenance of signs and street furniture would support the entry. This is particularly evident at the War Memorial where the early cleaning and painting of the railings would immeasurably improve their appearance. The "rear garden" at the Parsonage would benefit from a thorough redevelopment and once refurbished would support improved visitor flow through the parsonage and front garden. Also the "wild meadow" to the rear of the Parsonage was poorly presented – signs were removed. More could be made of this large quiet area.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The group are to be congratulated on their close links with the community at the contact point, the use of the newsletter and local press to raise awareness of the group's activities, the posters and notices seen around Haworth, all steps to promote the profile of the group and encourage participation.

Areas for Improvement

Although in its early years the group needs to recruit increased support from the community and its organisations to ensure it continues to develop. The benefit of high levels of tourists to Haworth is an opportunity needing to be realised. With the potential to link with the tourist information office, promotion of a "Bronte Blooms" or other scheme to generate income from donations needs to be considered.

Hunmanby

Introduction

The delightful village of Hunmanby is situated on the edge of the Wolds amidst gently rolling farmland which gives way to some fine coastal views.

A large, enthusiastic group of Hunmanby in Bloom welcomed us at the Community Centre where an extensive presentation of photographs of their work in progress and finished projects was displayed.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Many areas of good visual impact in evidence; the Cottage Garden, Vi's Garden and the Bayley Gardens to name a few. Swathes of daffodils brightened up the roadsides and even the car park at the allotments had a bed planted up with spring flowers. Areas were well tended and planting was appropriate for locations with a good range of colourful spring plants interspersed with perennial planting. The teams even found solutions to challenges such as limitations to height of planting at the Garage and War Memorial.

Areas for Improvement

Continue with plans to introduce more sustainable planting to beds and containers. You may wish to forge greater links with local businesses particularly on the High Street with perhaps the introduction of winter/spring baskets planted with rosemary, thyme and spring flowering bulbs.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Streets and public spaces were clean, despite the gale force winds on judging day. The pond project is developing well and attracting diverse wildlife. Bee and butterfly attracting beds have been planted. Residents are assisting the Cornflower Trust and many bird and bat boxes have been erected. The gate at the entrance to the village marking the start of the Wolds is impressive as were other interesting features with reference to the history and culture of the village. The judges were particularly impressed with the absence of litter or dog fouling. Well done!

Areas for Improvement

A few of the benches, signs and street furniture may benefit from some maintenance.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The team were keen to share their plans and on-going projects. There is plenty of involvement across the community with regular In Bloom activities throughout the year. Sponsors are sought and found from both the local and wider communities. The In Bloom team meet on a monthly basis and their mutual support is very evident.

Areas for Improvement

Maintain this level of interest and assistance from the various and diverse groups in the neighbourhood. It may be useful to forge some links with local media in order to promote the In Bloom group

Menston

Introduction

A very warm welcome awaited us at Menston on the village's 10th anniversary of entering the Yorkshire in Bloom competition.

We were greeted by Quentin, Rosemary and Margaret in the bowling clubhouse at Kirkland's Community Centre. Quentin and Rosemary were our enthusiastic and comprehensive tour guides for the afternoon and they had previously compiled an informative portfolio of the village.

Outstanding areas of the tour included:

- St John's church featuring a steep incline planted with a large variety of alpines and bulbs to form an alpine rock garden.
- The railway garden which looked fantastic in spring with dogwoods under-planted with masses of wild primroses.
- Kirkland's Community Centre incorporating the well-maintained and well-used Bowling Green; and the memorial bed dedicated to local soldiers who served in the First World War.
- High Royds Memorial Garden is a real gem with the recent restoration of the chapel. It has so much potential for future projects and local history events dependent on budget constraints.

After our tour of the village we returned to Kirkland's, where we invited to meet other members of the committee and local community over afternoon cream tea.

Thank you for an organised and enjoyable visit to Menston, it will be a pleasure to return for the summer judging in July.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The planting around Kirkland's Community Centre provides a colourful display of spring bedding and bulbs. The large planters were particularly attractive with Narcissus, yellow Polyanthus and blue Chionodoxa.

An impressive rock garden at St John's church, known as Parish Room Bank, was planted with a lovely array of alpines, bulbs and hellebores. The Sloping Path Garden towards the church entrance has a well-stocked shrub border using plants donated by local parishioners. The church grounds are a credit to Chris and Kathy's dedication and commitment.

Much consideration had been given to appropriate plant choices in Buttersfield Park, especially by Gemma. The drifts of Narcissus were in full bloom at the time of our visit.

Areas for Improvement

Some of the beds and planters needed weeding for example The Jubilee Bed.

Suggest that more of the local businesses have planters especially the public houses which are a focal point on the Main Street.

Consider alternative and additional planting at the Railway Station and Railway Path as they are a huge focal point and well used.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The village is impeccably clean with no litter or graffiti.

Water butts are used at Cornerstone Café and Kirkland's to recycle rainwater. New composting bins have been installed behind Parish Room at St John's Church and a large recycling system at the rear of Kirkland's.

Areas for Improvement

Suggest more insect boxes/butterfly boxes/lacewing boxes and bird boxes around the village especially in the churchyard and Buttersfield Park. The children from Meadowlea had come up with a creative project of constructing ladybird boxes and planters to sell at the annual tea and plant sale. A fantastic idea of creating more revenue and involving the younger generation. The examples we were shown on the day of judging were very creative and of an extremely high standard.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Community involvement is extremely evident in Menston with all the different businesses and people pulling together to achieve a well-maintained and attractive village. From the local residents adopting individual planters to maintain to the large, well-maintained, green spaces such as Menston Park.

Areas for Improvement

To embrace the local history, heritage by displaying information boards about developing projects and projects achieved for visitors and residents. For example St John's Church (alpine garden), Buttersfield Park (history and development). Suggest other places of interest the visitor might like to visit for example High Royds Memorial Garden or The Railway Garden.

Consider drawing up a three year plan for the village to create a structured framework for achievable future projects and maintenance.

Stamford Bridge

Introduction

Stamford Bridge is clean and attractive. This cannot be easy to maintain with a busy road running through the village. The judges were impressed by the number of different groups involved and the enthusiasm of the Young Conservers. The Viking

ship planter and the unfolding railway station projects showed the dedication and hard work of the group.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Flood wall display

Only using the lower tier of the planters for winter planting

The Corn Mill Bed

Viking Ship

Railway rose bed

Areas for Improvement

The judges would like to see more of what is outlined in the extensive brochure e.g. allotments; church yard; school; business areas and premises

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Recycling and reuse of materials throughout the group's activities

Use of mulch to keep down weeds and "dress" the beds

Interpretation of local heritage

Removal of graffiti from the railway cutting

Train made of recycled pallet

Areas for Improvement

Bird boxes by the station will be a welcome addition

The judges are looking forward to seeing the new art work

We are hopeful that the Summer Judging route will take us to the picnic area by the viaduct

Future projects for painting could be the benches by the Viking memorial stone, and the litter bin in front of the old station

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

5 year plan and strategic thinking

Young conserver's commitment and knowledge

Very impressed with the breath and diversity of the groups involved in the campaign

Sponsorship in kind

Areas for Improvement

More evidence of the examples given in the report e.g. Guides and Scouts

The judges would like to visit the school

Use of the groups attractive logo around the village to promote the group and the in Bloom movement e.g. Banners as used by Starbeck in Bloom

Sponsorship from local business for particular activities

Upper and Nether Poppleton

Introduction

What a treat to see such a wealth of spring colour when we arrived in the village, the prolific displays of daffodils, Cherry blossom and some excellent Magnolia trees provided a well-balanced and sustainable landscape. The village and its grassed areas were litter free and maintained to a high standard. The "In Bloomers" should be proud of what they have achieved to date. The Judges were also impressed with the strong sense of willingness to retain the character of the village which is at the heart of any projects /developments.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Well balanced displays of spring annuals and permanent planting.

Hard and soft landscaped areas were maintained to a high standard, including grassed areas.

The railway station was very colourful and well maintained,

We saw some very colourful residential gardens,

Leisure / Sporting activities are to be commended along with some really dedicate grounds personnel, a credit to all concerned,

Some good examples of Allotments,

Areas for Improvement

Seek support from the business sector to support the overall objectives / criteria of the Yorkshire in Bloom competition.

Continue to make sure the judging route reflects the best of what the village has to showcase across the 2 judging periods, [April / July]

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Some excellent managed areas were highlighted during the visit, especially,

The woodland project at Warren Lea, Millennium Green project and St Everilda's and All Saints Churches.

The Tithe Barn project team are to be commended for their dedicated work and the judges look forward to seeing the garden area mature with a good mix of spring and summer annuals complimented with permanent planting.

The war memorial and the maypole are key focal point within the landscape.

Also very evident are new housing developments which are in keeping with the character to the village.

The village was very clean and tidy and all are to be congratulated on their efforts,

Interesting Pride of place features complement the landscape especially at the Millennium Green and the Maypole,

Areas for Improvement

Consider rolling out some interpretation panels at key strategic locations to compliment the ones already in situ at the Diamond Jubilee walk.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Some good evidence shown of ongoing projects / all year round initiatives such as the annual garden completion, School related projects, [Hope to visit and meet some of the school children during our summer visit. The encouragement of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards,

Continue to encourage young people in all aspects of the competition.

Great to see a good events programme being rolled out throughout the year,

Areas for Improvement

Consider a photo opportunity during the Judges visits to showcase the efforts of all within the Yorkshire in Bloom competition.

To widen the completion to a wider audience, consider entering any appropriate Discretionary Awards which the Judges will assess during the summer judging period,

Category 2C: Town

Horsforth

Introduction

A very attractive area, serving as a commuter base for Leeds businesses, but also a busy shopping zone. One part of the community stands back from the major roads, but the other section is divided by very heavy traffic flows. Leeds City Council and the Horsforth in Bloom Group have taken many opportunities to create a more passive atmosphere by management of the green spaces and the introduction of appropriate floral displays. Well done to all concerned.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Good naturalistic planting of bulbs - good colour range, and excellent use of polyanthus and other plants. Huge planted stone trough at the Museum. Quality of plants was excellent, with churches, Civic Society and others all playing their part. Verges and other grass areas all very well maintained giving an overall pleasing open aspect.

Areas for Improvement

We were disappointed not to see more individual house gardens - perhaps more of these could be included in the summer visit.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The team are very aware of their environmental responsibilities - there are many bird and bat boxes, and in some areas they have introduced leaf boxes to make leaf mould/compost. The Old Burial Ground has been well restored and is now well maintained. The whole of the town was very clean, and congratulations to Morrison's Supermarket for the part they play in both keeping their site clean and litter free. Heritage is well catered for in the local Museum - there is also an interpretive mosaic and special attention is drawn to their only Hornbeam tree in the park.

Areas for Improvement

The group scored highly on all the criteria for this section. However small improvements are still possible. These could be local heritage in the open spaces and the encouragement of more volunteers.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Obvious year round involvement by the ever increasing displays of naturalised bulbs, with good involvement of small children. The local Civic Society also take a lead in promoting the initiative. Good work is also being done in fundraising and raising the profile of the campaign. A positive number of people are also involved in litter picks.

Areas for Improvement

Continue encouraging more businesses to participate in the campaign, and develop civic pride.

Ilkley

Introduction

It was lovely to visit Ilkley on such a nice sunny day. It was good too to receive such a warm welcome and meet such a dedicated group of people. Clearly the Bloom group are making efforts year round to make Ilkley a nice place both to live and to visit.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The serpentine hedge was an unusual feature.

The beds along the parade of shops in the town centre was very colourful.

The children's path in the bandstand area was a good idea.

The daffodils around the town

Planting in the memorial garden was nice and the serpentine hedge was an unusual feature.

Riverside Gardens was a lovely green place to walk.

The work done at Spence's Garden was very impressive and a credit to all those involved.

Obviously lots of businesses around the town are supporting the Bloom initiative.

Areas for Improvement

Consider planting retaining shrubs and conifers on the steep bank by the flagpole.

Upgrade the planting in the beds belonging to the group on the main street.

Consider scented planting around seating areas, especially the bandstand, which will also bring in insects.

Perhaps pots of scented herbs might be a possible idea.

Keep developing bee friendly planting in the town.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

We were pleased to hear about work on the wildflower area.

We were pleased that the group's work is insecticide and chemical free.

Using spent hops from the brewery is a good idea.

The area was very clean with no litter or dog fouling and only one small item of graffiti.

The metalwork on the bridge over the river was treated last year.

Restoring the flagpole and historic lighting was a good idea.

Areas for Improvement

There were some dog fouling signs screwed to blossom trees in the town centre, if possible it might be an idea to display them in a different way, not on the trees.

The railings just before the bridge might benefit from a little attention.

Perhaps it might be possible to remove weeds from the paving round the flagpole.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The number of groups working together for the good of the community is impressive.

Clearly huge efforts have been made to obtain funding and support.

The amount of publicity which has been obtained is impressive.

We were pleased to see the amount of involvement of local children.

Obviously the group have gained the support of businesses and residents throughout the town.

Areas for Improvement

Keep growing the involvement of local children as obviously they are the group of the future.

Newby & Scalby

Introduction

The Parish of Newby & Scalby stretches from the edge of the picturesque North Yorkshire Moors through woodland and open farmland to the edges of coastal Scarborough.

The judges were delighted to meet the enthusiastic and very friendly 'In Bloom' team and listen to the interesting presentation of the history and culture of the area.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The residential gardens of spring floral displays at Tibby Butts and Ridge Green were very attractive and well-tended. The allotments were in the planning and sowing stages of development, much work in progress.

Areas for Improvement

You may consider the introduction of more permanent, sustainable planting in the public areas which will require much less maintenance and watering.

Encourage local businesses to provide some floral interest around their premises.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The Stony Lane project has provided a pleasant seating area and with the addition of some individually designed wooden planters the area has been greatly enhanced.

The Sea Cut, an impressive asset to the Parish, provides the opportunity for scenic walks and is a haven for wildlife. An attractively planted stone signals the start of the Yorkshire Moors.

Areas for Improvement

An information board would be useful at Throxenby Mere detailing the walks in the woods and interpreting wildlife nearby.

At St Laurence's church the inclusion of some bird nesting boxes in the many trees would attract more birds. The RHS website will provide you with some useful links to other sites to assist you in the development of your wildflower area.

You may consider the provision of a litter bin at the new Stony Lane project and some updating of the street sign.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The 'In Bloom' team are actively promoting the group through their very impressive fund-raising efforts from Carol's Quiz to Plant Sales and Raffles. Their efforts are nothing short of magnificent and deserve high praise. Meetings are held regularly and the community are encouraged to participate.

Areas for Improvement

Although there is much support from local businesses perhaps they could each display a notice endorsing the 'In Bloom' efforts. Aim to continue promoting the group with the provision of name badges. You could use a blackboard to advertise team activities when you are out and about completing tasks.

Otley

Introduction

It was a pleasure to visit Otley on such a lovely spring day to meet such an enthusiastic in bloom group who were obviously proud of their town and on keeping it looking so good for the enjoyment of all.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The introduction of colourful lamppost planters. instaplanta scheme working well around the town providing pockets of colour in appropriate places. The colourful daffodils at pool road gateway welcome you to the town. There is excellent Business participation with lots of shops restaurants and public houses having their own floral displays. Wharf Meadow Park was maintained to a good standard and it was good to meet the town's gardeners. The memorial garden is haven of peace and tranquillity in the heart of a busy town.

Areas for Improvement

Consider changing bulbs next year in lamppost baskets to Hyacinths for bright long lasting colour and fragrance. The age and size of some of the permanent planting in the barrier planters would benefit from changing consider using the plants replaced in other projects. Memorial garden permanent planting is a bit old and tired in places and would benefit from a revamp.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Corner of Bremner Street introduction of bird boxes .Allotment holders doing composting and collecting rain water .A very interesting visit to Otley wetlands and meeting with Neville Bowland. Lots of good heritage around the town with good display boards .A busy but well cared for town centre with little or no rubbish ,no obvious dog fouling or graffiti, everyone involved should be commended.

Areas for Improvement

Consider taking part in the RSPB big bird watch in the town .The group would benefit from a pre judging tour of the route to remove any last minute dropped litter.

It is such a shame Otley Wetlands is not more readily available to the general public even one day a month. The judges look forward to visit your other wildlife areas in the summer

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

A very strong group which is expanding with the help and support of Otley town council and the Otley BID. Community participation is very good with many groups involved .Press coverage is good and the use of modern media to get your message out is to be commended. The Judges were impressed with your idea of holding a lamppost planting demo and public planting workshop.

Areas for Improvement

Develop on your ideas of involving more of the public by having more events throughout the year similar to your workshop and possibly a bird count.

Pocklington

Introduction

The members of Pocklington in Bloom were very welcoming to the judges, and there is an obvious sense of pride in their town. The presentation in the Arts Centre gave a good overall impression of the achievements of the group, which was enhanced by the tour of the varied projects and places in the town including municipal plantings, the allotments, residential gardens and the lovely gardens at Burnby Hall.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

A lovely colour scheme throughout the seasonal planting, which was also very healthy.

The allotments are very well managed and maintained.

The WI bed at the entrance to Burnby Hall car park is a good mix of bulbs, shrubs and herbaceous plants.

The under planting of the street name signs, maintained by residents, adds splashes of colour.

The garden at Burnby Hall is very impressive, well maintained and has great variety, from the spring bulbs and tulip festival, through to mature trees.

Areas for Improvement

Some of the formal bedding schemes were a little sparsely planted. If cost is an issue, consider reducing the size of the beds.

The judges look forward to seeing the school in the summer.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Excellent scheme to provide affordable, large water butts at the allotments.

The community composting scheme is impressive.

The sculpture in the Stumpery in Burnby Hall.

The whole entry was very clean.

There were many posters placed throughout the town, evidence of the pride in the town and the achievements of the In Bloom group.

Areas for Improvement

The judges would like to see a more of the Primrose Wood and West Green projects.

The judges would like to see more examples of the conservation and biodiversity in the entry.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The lavender, donated by the local estate agent, makes a lovely edge to the churchyard.

The 'Fairtrade' circular bed display.

The Friends of Pocklington Green Spaces work well with the In Bloom group and other organisations.

Impressive community recycling projects.

Areas for Improvement

The judges would like to see the school in the summer, and see more evidence of involvement of youngsters.

The judges would like to see more evidence of press coverage and of funding and local business support.

Todmorden

Introduction

Todmorden is a bustling market town lying in a Pennine valley, built on the areas success in the cotton trade. The town has many interesting historical buildings, is surrounded by stunning scenery and overlooked by the prominent Stoodley Pike monument. Tod in Bloom have adopted some challenging areas and tackled environmental problems developing them for the benefit of the local community and visitors to the town.

We congratulate and thank all those involved for their warm welcome, commitment, hard work and effort and we look forward to our visit in the summer.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The barrier planting, baskets and planters had a good mix of colour and plants and were bright and cheery. The canal basin looked stunning with the metal artwork which was also seen in the Community Herb garden and other locations. The Box topiary in the six metal planters gave height and structure. Good show of daffodils along the canal side. The 'Todmorden' Rhododendron was in a suitable place overlooking the canal. Good choice of the two recently planted trees in the Secret garden as well as appropriate planting in this area. Central Vale park although undergoing environmental works is a scenic delight providing bowling areas, play area, outdoor gym, unique bandstand and a tranquil memorial garden.

Areas for Improvement

TIB is considering taking over two further planters in the canal basin and look forward to seeing headway with these. Friends of the Railway Station are newly formed and we look forward seeing their progress.

Encourage the various groups to implement an all year round planned maintenance programme including weeding, division of plants prior to mulching for the existing areas and some areas are in need of refreshing with new planting.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The living willow structure and the bee interpretation board for children to learn with play was good. The many excellent bug dwellings, especially the amazing shaped ones in the Butterfly garden. The recently restored memorial Railroad cart was abloom with colour and an added heritage attraction to the station. The reconstituted plastic green planters were attractive, high quality and locally sourced.

Areas for Improvement

Review the programme for re-staining/painting benches and barrels as some were in need of attention, much had been accomplished to control litter and dog fouling so to keep reinforcing the message consider using more posters, Keep Britain Tidy (www.keepbritaintidy.org) offer a good range of free material.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The very enthusiastic children at Castle Hill School welcomed the judges who were very impressed with their horticultural knowledge and use of the greenhouse made from recycled plastic bottles. The first 'open gardens' event in the summer. Forthcoming social themed events. Recruitment of new members. Good signage at the Community Herb garden. Working in partnership with groups such as Incredible Edible, Masonic movement, benefactor of Patmos memorial garden and supporting Friends of the Station. Business support by sponsoring & purchasing floral displays, The Weir factory car park was clean and tidy with beds and troughs of pansies.

Areas for Improvement

The school could check www.rhs.org.uk gardening-children-schools for further support. Could consider further information boards in more areas such as the Secret garden & Sensory garden. TIB may also like to consider more 'in bloom' and sponsors signage on their planters as it was unclear which ones were under TIB care. The

judges would welcome meeting some representatives of the other groups in the summer.

Category 2D: Large Town (12-35K)

Beverley

Introduction

Beverley is a popular, much visited Mediaeval Market town in East Yorkshire. It has some beautiful historic buildings many of which are enhanced by the efforts of "In Bloom"

The race course, and The Pastures add to the attractions of the town.

This year Beverley Town Council are responsible for co-ordinating The Yorkshire in Bloom entry and must be commended for their efforts in ensuring that the town is looking its best.

There are many activities celebrating the history, and also those to meet today's needs around sport and environmental issues etc.

We were given an excellent, enjoyable tour by Helen Watson, the Town Clerk and Cllr Jim Whitfield the Chairman of Beverley in Bloom...

It will be interesting to see the new development and its effect when we visit in the Summer. It will also be interesting to see the progress being made by many of the groups associated with Beverley in Bloom

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

There were many attractive planters, baskets and beds throughout the town enhancing the many beautiful, historic buildings.

The planters at the Beverley Minster were looking lovely and it was good to meet Mary Hutchinson who maintains them with such diligence.

The allotments were an excellent example of good practice.

The railway station project is excellent. A lot of work has already be done to clear, clean, plant and maintain the many neglected areas, The strategic planning is impressive. Peter Thomkys must be congratulated on his huge contribution to Beverly in Bloom.

There were many well maintained gardens, which can be demonstrated by the success of the garden competition.

Areas for Improvement

The barrier planters were all very eye catching in yellow and white but in future a few trailing plants would soften the effect.

It was good to see new areas being cleared, e.g. outside Tesco, and planted and we will look forward to seeing progress in the summer.

Consideration to sustainable planting is noticeable and is to be encouraged.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The work at the allotments with the new shed, the community allotment and wildlife area is to be commended, benefiting the whole community.

There are many events and features promoting the history and heritage of the town e.g. The Elwell Trail, The Town Trail and the Street Shrines which we hope to see in July.

The Pastures are a real asset to Beverley and well maintained by Pasture Masters, with work in the woods, being carried out by students from the nearby college.

Generally Beverley was very clean tidy and free of litter and kerb weeds.

Areas for Improvement

The maintenance of street furniture across the town is a little patchy. The new seats at Market Cross looked beautiful and in keeping with the situation .However there were other areas where the overall standard of good planting was let down by the poorly maintained street furniture.

We would like to see more evidence of conservation of wildlife, recycling and issues around the environment

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

There were some really good development projects taking place of particular note were those at Hengate Gardens working with the RAF, and the Railway station working with Network Rail and Network Rail.

It was good to see the planters looked after by the guides and to hear about their involvement

The local press were there for the start of our visit and the local radio at the end which is good publicity and helps to promote Yorkshire in Bloom and Beverley in Bloom.

The NGS Open day at the allotments is a good examples of community involvement.

The information boards at the allotment were very good. Well done to Lance for them.

There is obviously good support from businesses in the form of sponsorship and Floral displays.

Areas for Improvement

It would have been good to meet more people from the Beverley in Bloom Group and in the summer we will look forward to meeting some children and young people. We believe from the portfolio that they are involved but it is always good to hear from them first hand.

There was little evidence promoting judging day and the competition in general throughout the town so hope to see more on our next visit.

Pontefract

Introduction

On approach into Pontefract, passing the Racecourse and Pontefract Park it is evident for all to see that there is pride in this town. Our guides around the itinerary for the tour, Dave Mee and Brian Chappell, displayed their enthusiasm for the town in which they both live and work was most encouraging. So much they have achieved with so few members the town should be very proud of the work these gentlemen and their volunteer groups are doing and the impact that it has in the town.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The local authority planted Island shrub beds near to Haribo were a display of good sustainable planting giving all year round colour and interest requiring little maintenance. The drive up to Larks Hill School through the residential housing estate was of note showing a variety of spring displays and colour, and well maintained gardens, gave a good build up to the enthusiasm of the children of Mrs Halls Gardening Club and varied school gardens.

Areas for Improvement

The Town centre, precinct, Cornmarket, War Memorial could all benefit from more horticultural evidence. A great effort from the Lioness group but could be enhanced with more displays, planters etc. Where possible more encouragement from local businesses to participate in the floral efforts to contribute towards Pontefract in Bloom.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

What a jewel Pontefract Park is. Despite the Local Authority cuts the park excels in its ethos, of conservation, wildlife enhancement, and care of its open spaces, and what a variety of habitats.... Making this a wonderful asset for the town's residents. A town whose heritage is displayed in many ways, especially this year of the Magna Carta 800 and the Lacy shields placed around the town, and Buttercross which was a good clean environment despite being in the centre of pedestrian precinct with all its footfall.

Areas for Improvement

More evidence of resource management would assist the entry. In the Summer meeting the local authority recycling / environmental officer would aid the entry in explaining what steps are in place to reduce environmental impact within the town.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Well done to Jeannie and the other Lioness's for the commendable work they do within the community and work with the 'In Bloom' initiative. A number of projects are planned for the coming season which was good to hear about and the judges look forward to seeing these in the summer. Lark Hill School and the after school gardening groups planned planting will be a delight to revisit.

Areas for Improvement

To progress the 'In Bloom' initiative Pontefract would benefit from a dedicated group of 'In Bloom' volunteers. A larger group of members would spread the work load and bring in a different and varied set of skills... be it publicity, fund raising etc. to help develop the group further. Encouraging the community to participate, engaging more youth groups, advertising in bloom related events, and communicating the in bloom campaign would be a positive benefit to Pontefract as an entry in Yorkshire in Bloom.