



YORKSHIRE IN BLOOM CELEBRATES

50 YEARS
RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM



Yorkshire in Bloom - Judges Notes for Spring 2014

Category 1A: Small Village

Bradfield

Introduction

The Bradfield in Bloom group are obviously and rightly proud of their lovely village. Upon arrival the judges were immediately impressed by the very well kept environment around them. Although they were blessed by glorious spring weather for their visit, the Dark Peak location means splendid scenery abounds. The place is 'picturesque' in every sense of the word!

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The plans for the flowery French flag to celebrate the Tour de France initiative are an impressive idea. We were also impressed to hear of the research that went into the project. The daffodils along the steep road from High to Low Bradfield had obviously had a lot of impact as did those in other sites around the village. There were colourful planters throughout the village. The use of used tractor tyres as planters was in keeping with the rural atmosphere of the village. The bowling green area was obviously well kept. We saw some attractive gardens in the village, especially that at Town Gate. We were pleased to hear that members of the group have taken responsibility for mowing and strimming verges in the village.

Areas for Improvement

If watering is a problem at the village boundary planting, consider tough plants which will be able to cope well with possible drought to have colour for a greater part of the year. Perhaps it might be possible to be given some input in the Parish council garden. Consider taking on pruning in the community orchard. Perhaps some simple planting might be possible in the area above the wall by the village hall. If possible something scented would be nice.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Street cleansing was of a very high standard, and we were particularly impressed to hear of the regular litter collections the group carry out throughout the popular visitor periods. Much credit is due here. The village was free of graffiti and dog fouling. We were pleased to hear that no slug pellets or horticultural chemicals were used in most areas. It is good that composting is being undertaken.

Areas for Improvement

Use mulching where possible as a practical way of conserving water. If possible harvest rainwater for Bloom use. Consider insect friendly planting around the church so that church goers can enjoy butterflies around them. Some scented planting by the church door might also be nice. Consider if similar planting might be possible in other areas to bring the movement and colour of butterflies in the village. Perhaps nectar rich planting in the community orchard might help the bees at times when the trees are not in blossom. Consider celebrating the site of the old corn mill. The judges look forward to seeing the village hall car park improved with the funds the group have raised.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The group are making efforts to find funds to benefit the village. The 'Bog Fest' event which will target funds to re-open the local toilets was a novel idea! We were impressed by the group's work at the farmers markets. Purchasing aprons with the group name on them was a good idea. Sharing the village hall website is probably the best idea to get the group message out. Work on the Tour de France sounds exciting and we were pleased that the children were involved. We were pleased that you are involved in the RHS sunflower initiative.

Areas for Improvement

Consider planning projects to involve the school and playgroups during the coming year in planting and conservation projects. Consider using Facebook and Twitter to further spread the group message. Keep using the farmers markets as a method of getting the message out. Consider launching a determined campaign to get others involved in the group at other village events. Perhaps the church could get more closely involved with the group and encourage the congregation to help. Target parents of the children in the playgroups, perhaps they could help on weekends.

Esholt

Introduction

Esholt is a small picturesque village with many fine buildings and a notable public house the Wool Pack. The village has suffered from high levels of tourists visiting the area and in particular the Community Farm, the in bloom group seems to have overcome all the difficulties that are put before

them It would have been helpful if the judges could have been given a portfolio in advance of their arrival at the village.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The Allotments to the rear of the Wool Pack public house were well maintained and the area around the church where also in good order. Many of the private gardens were superb, particularly as some were being maintained by people well into their nineties.

Areas for Improvement

The Allotment gardens at the entrance to the village could do with improved management of vacant plots and under-used plots. Consideration could be given to the addition of horticultural features around the community hall bowling green

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

It was clear that sustainable planting was being used to good effect.

Areas for Improvement

More could be done on water harvesting, composting and resource management .There is potential for improving biodiversity wildlife areas and natural habitat. Consideration could be given to the introduction of more street furniture.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The support which the in bloom group receives from the local haulage company should be complemented as should support from other businesses and residents.

Areas for Improvement

The In Bloom Group could benefit from a wider range of people and businesses from the area being involved. There was no supporting information on the year round activity. No information was given with regard to communication, press coverage, publicity material and community awareness.

Ledston

Introduction

Ledston is a lovely small village which needs support in the competition. There are only two active bloom members who do everything and need support from the village. Unfortunately the only business in the village has closed. Would be a shame to lose it completely, it is hoped the village pub will re open bringing more people into the village which despite being small is very attractive especially on a bright spring day. There are very attractive private gardens on both sides of the main street as well as leading up to the hall which overlooks the whole village.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Good private gardens throughout the village, some still being developed. Single main road through village but entrances much improved over the years with overgrown vegetation removed.

Areas for Improvement

This is only a two man Bloom group. Both members are very enthusiastic for Ledston which judges can only praise but more volunteers are needed to give further support and assistance. The only public house in the village had closed but it could be a great asset to the village as it has very few businesses. More plants required in the half barrels along high street. Consider looking at more sustainable plants

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Good range of bulbs and wild flowers on verges going up to hall. Clean and litter free village. Good street furniture along route as well as welcome signs into village

Areas for Improvement

More information required in summer on recycling in village. Have you a recycling champion? Are the school involved in any projects? Worth including the school in summer

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Notices in windows supporting Ledston's bloom initiative. Getting support from local authority for initiatives like bulb planting and spring displays

Areas for Improvement

More community awareness required. Only two volunteers who need further support and assistance to move this entry forward. Does struggle due to lack of businesses in area. Small portfolio would help judges if someone in the village volunteered to do it

Mill Bank Village

Introduction

Although Millbank has no commercial outlets to support their efforts, this is more than made up for by the enthusiasm, interest and participation of its residents with well planned displays and numerous pots. The environmental and wildlife quality of the village is respected and cultivated especially by the stream side.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The abundant brightly coloured containers in every spare space and the high level of maintenance seen throughout the tour.

Areas for Improvement

Re consider the covering of the wheelie bins, perhaps try floral adhesive covering.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The stream side planting was excellent and the local heritage is very well respected

Areas for Improvement

Take care of rampant type plants in the graveyard as these require a high maintenance level to keep under control

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The local heritage book for the schoolchildren. The Friday afternoon club at the school encourages future guardians of the village green space. The shared growing area with the community.

Areas for Improvement

Consider making the heritage workbook available to all neighbouring schools on visits to Millbank.

Welwick & Weeton

Introduction

This is only the second time these villages have been judged and it is their first spring judging. It was clear to the judges that great progress has been made since last summer with a new In Bloom group full of ideas and enthusiasm. Entry into In Bloom is proven to strengthen community spirit and is a catalyst for bring the community together. Keep up the good work; we are looking forward to our visit in the summer.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The planting of the two boundary markers especially the east one were of a good quality with a good selection of plants been used. There is a good show of daffodils in various parts of the village with plans to plant more each year. Church graveyard maintained to a high standard. The planting in Weeton was of a good standard and the planting of the tree stump was very clever.

Areas for Improvement

It would be of great help to meet someone at Weeton during summer judging so they can show us around their village and show us what they have been doing. Although it was not the time yet for the youth club to plant up at the village hall, the car park and front steps would have benefited from tidying up and weeding. There was evidence of business in both villages especially a caravan park with fishing pond in Weeton. We feel further efforts need to be made to identify and contact these businesses. Consider the inclusion of an introductory presentation and visual display given by members of the In Bloom team at the commencement of judging.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

There has been a considerable effort to encourage and introduce wildflower areas particularly in the North Lane verge and Church Bank. The Judges look forward to seeing them at their best during our summer visit. It was good to see the planting of tree whips supplied by the Woodland Trust. The overall cleanliness of the village is a credit for all involved.

Areas for Improvement

Although the Gunpowder Plot statue was mentioned, the judges would like to see it properly in the Summer. The War Memorial in the centre of the village is an important part of the village history it was such a shame to see it in a poor state of repair. Therefore it was encouraging to hear of the plans to renovate it and we look forward to seeing it fully restored for our Summer visit. The church is also part of your local history and should be included on any tour around the village; It may be beneficial for the judges to meet someone at the church who could explain some of its history.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The purchase of the old phone box and its use as a book swap is inspired. We were pleased with the well prepared and informative portfolio. The holding of open gardens and scarecrow trail. The setting up of an in bloom group with more people willing to help and take on their areas is very encouraging. There is good evidence of ongoing projects throughout both villages keep up the good work.

Areas for Improvement

Think of running a 'friends of' group where people unable to help out for whatever reason show their support by making a small donation each year. Place a poster in the village notice board to tell everyone when the village is being judged and use it to keep residents informed as to what you are doing. Talk to Local Housing about them funding the planting of the new borders at Kelk Villas and War Memorial. If the committee were able to drive the judges around the route it would give the judges more opportunity to observe the villages.

Category 1B: Village

East Morton

Introduction

The judges received a very warm welcome from this friendly and dynamic group. The village, high up on the edge of the moors, looked superb in the warm sunshine. The use of re-cycled plants and bulbs from previous town displays is noted as an exceedingly good example of what can be done from an economic and environmental point of view. The portfolio was very well laid out, acting as a good "Aide Memoire" for the judges.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The Village Green looked splendid, with the newly planted azalea bed, replacing the old heathers. There was a good mulching and it was also good to see some permanent spring flowers. The newly planted bulbs along the wall of the recreation ground, which had obviously involved a lot of hard work.

Areas for Improvement

The verge outside the golf course could have been better maintained with additional bulbs.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The Village Green with the Waterwheel demonstrates horticultural achievement and the local heritage. The village looked clean, tidy and well maintained, with hardly any litter. The many planters made with recycled materials by the group, with the tasteful signage. The use of water butts and compost heaps. The re-cycling of polyanthus in the allotment and the use of plants and bulbs from displays in Keighley The very neat blackberries for community use.

Areas for Improvement

The judges will look forward to seeing the Heritage Boards. The benches beside the Golf Course entrance looked uncared for. Check the Otley Road for litter.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The monthly Saturday morning open gardening session this is well supported. The newly restructured group and longer term plans are very good.

Areas for Improvement

More evidence of working with the school and the judges will look forward to visiting the school in the summer. Evidence of publicity and press coverage is always helpful. There is obviously a lot going on in the village and hopefully the judges will be able to meet representatives of the many groups and organisations.

Grassington

Introduction

It is always a joy to visit this very popular Dales village and to be shown the many attractive features, most of them created, developed and maintained by members of this enthusiastic Bloom committee. As we missed out on a Spring visit last year it was good to see the displays at this time of year.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The troughs and tubs filled with colourful plants, crocuses, hyacinths and daffodil bulbs, at the 'Pig Pen' and throughout the village. Drifts of daffodils in many grass areas including Water Street. New plantings of snowdrops by the Sorting Office, along with care of the shrubs now look more attractive. Several excellent gardens all well maintained some with intricate topiary features. The Devonshire Hotel with many hanging baskets was very colourful though unfortunately all were artificial.

Areas for Improvement

We look forward to our summer visit and seeing how you celebrate the Tour de France through your 'Blooming Bikes' theme. Be careful with choosing your judging route, the walk through the garage site was rather unattractive. Perhaps Craven District Council and the National Parks might consider some additional appropriate tree planting to enhance their respective areas in the village. Some shrub planting in the limited spaces around the upper car park would enhance this area. The small planters either side of the benches are attractive but could be further enhanced by the planting of suitable shrubs which would give those sitting on the benches some shelter.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The provision and management of the large communal composting area at the top end of the village. The enhancement of many features in the Square, - the area around the Village pump and the new replacement tree which will be a feature for many years to come. Everywhere was very clean and tidy

Areas for Improvement

The paintwork on the exterior of the Devonshire Institute, railings etc., are in need of some TLC, as the building is in a very prominent position in the village. The judges suggest that the group seek expert advice on how to proceed with the proposed wildflower areas

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The Bloom group continue to develop and sustain the bloom initiatives with the help of its members. The events throughout the year help them to raise funds and attract visitors and which in turn supports the businesses in the village. The group work with other organisations and provide plants and bulbs which have often been donated by residents. Gardens Competitions are a highlight of the year. The annual newsletter encourages all residents and businesses to be involved in diverse ways.

Areas for Improvement

The judges felt that the District Council and the National Parks could encourage the bloom group by agreeing to allow the enhancement of some areas under their control. Suggest that the group seek out possible grants from various organisations to help implement their proposed schemes and projects (RHS - North of England Horticultural Society - Woodland Trust)

Kirkby Malzeard

Introduction

An enthusiastic welcome in the Mechanics Institute, with a small display of the new village approach sign. Situated in an AONB in Nidderdale, Kirkby Malzeard is a long linear village frequented by large farm vehicles and passing through lorries, with the resulting damage to grass verges. The judges were taken on a detailed and thorough itinerary of the village, the highlight of which was the time spent with children and their teacher from the Kirkby Malzeard Primary School - the school being closed for Easter. The children were extremely knowledgeable about their horticultural achievements and their future plans. The school's Wildlife Area was well explained, as were their thoughts for further improvements. What an asset for the school to have such a large playing field. The village should be congratulated on such well tended grass throughout, despite many places being on a slope. Kirkby Malzeard is celebrating its 25 years in the 'in Bloom' competition, and the small group of villagers continue to regularly meet throughout the year. Their 2014 plans for the Jubilee Gardens are exciting. The many older and historic local stone houses, many of which butt directly onto the

road, are an important feature that line either side of the High Street. The horticultural achievement is particularly to be complimented, and reflects the thought and effort given to this interesting entry. There is much potential to achieve a higher mark

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Being able to maintain such a large area of grass, in particular the large sports field and the 5 year old pavilion, catering for so many and varied sports, is most creditable. The many small well-tended floral strips so close to the through road is worthy of mention. The development of the village pinfold with the leasing out by the Parish Council as an allotment, is worthy of note.

Areas for Improvement

Whilst applauding the existing floral displays, further thought could be given to the careful positioning of one or two more features, such as a further addition of tubs grouped and planted to a common theme, or small highly visible borders.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Despite the traffic that invades the High Street, Kirkby Malzeard in Bloom is to be congratulated for the overall tidiness and an absence of litter throughout, plus the initiative to reduce dog-fouling. Though the school was closed, it was clearly apparent there is an excellent rapport between schoolchildren and villagers. Recycling is well organised with fortnightly collections by Harrogate Borough Council, and the use of the waste re-cycling point in Ripon, and also villagers making their own compost

Areas for Improvement

The explanation of environmental good practice when working with schoolchildren can be beneficial to all, and must be a large part of Kirkby Malzeard's Environmental Responsibility Plan.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The judges were able to meet the dedicated YIB group when being taken along the prepared route. Clearly there are many people who help care for and improve their village.

Areas for Improvement

Though the WI delivers leaflets to every house in the village, Kirkby Malzeard's preparation would be further improved by using children's colourful posters around the village and placing 'notice of judging day' posts in strategic places.

Spofforth in Bloom

Introduction

An excellent illustrated brochure was sent to the judges beforehand. A well-prepared route highlighted the many impressive features to be seen in Spofforth. Crossing the causeway, and passing the new road sign, the village from the start gave an aura of cleanliness and considerable pride. Though some of the daffodils were past their best, the view towards the colourful southerly approach sign lit up either side of the A661.

Many of the village team were present throughout, to talk to the judges, proudly explaining their own contribution. A delightful feature was the decorated red telephone box, depicting the seasons of the year. Leading to Ginny Greenholes, the hedges along the East Park Road were a credit to those who cut them. Ginny Greenholes remains a delight to walk through and to soak up this peaceful scene that attracts all ages. Little wonder that so many children and adults from nearby Wetherby and beyond come to spend time in such a treasure of a play area.

Congratulations to not only the grass maintenance team, but to all who also keep this incredible asset so well maintained. Information and interpretation boards add to the educational factor. The Church Warden waiting at All Saints Church gave a detailed history of the church's presence in Spofforth. The nearby poppy information board will emphasize the connection with WW1. Manor Garth Corner and the facing Camby Lane Corner are to be visited, as do the gardens along Castle Street. Buzzards circling above the ruins of Spofforth Castle must have also noted the remarkable care lavished by the same villager for the last so many years.

No tour of Spofforth would be complete without a stop at the Millennium Garden and a talk to those who spend so many hours of devotion there. Spofforth, even without the bright sunshine is worth an admiring visit. 'Well done' to so many of the 'In Bloom' team.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The effort put into maintaining such a high Horticultural Achievement is a credit to all involved in this entry. The judges noted several new features since last summer's visit. All green spaces are well tended with very good verging, and the Castle grounds require a special recognition for their excellent appearance.

Areas for Improvement

Perhaps the contribution from the business side of Spofforth's entry is not quite as apparent as last year.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Spofforth's Environmental Responsibility is obvious. Well positioned Information and Interpretation boards - some paid for by English Heritage - are educational for all ages. Both the 'bug hotel' and the reconstituted and recycled robust plastic seats and table tops in Ginny Greenholes, are a further proof of Spofforth's respect for the environment, and is well expressed as a 'space to enjoy'. The church warden of All Saints gave the judges a very competent description of Spofforth's historical past and its local heritage

Areas for Improvement

The Millennium Garden should not be missed, with its millennium sundial, manicured grass and further planting of Spofforth crocuses. Neither should ManorGarth Corner with Spofforth 'in Bloom' achievements be overlooked.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The two main tour guides and the several members of the dedicated 'in bloom' team, ably convinced the judges of the village's community participation, not only on judging days but throughout the year with a continuation of social and money-raising events.

Areas for Improvement

All those from Wetherby and nearby villages can only appreciate the community spirit, when spending time enjoying the memorable Ginny Greenholes.

Category 1C: Large Village

Barwick

Introduction

With entries like Barwick you see why this category is so strong. With excellent spring weather the judges were shown all around the village by enthusiastic bloom members and meeting groups all along the route. The judges were impressed by the overall standard of the village but especially the church yards and the quality of spring bedding throughout the village. It was good to see that new members were joining the group which all looks well for the future. Everyone involved should be proud of their achievements on the day and the judges look forward to coming back in summer. But how you can improve on your spring display will be hard to achieve. Well done everyone.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Colourful floral displays. Some good colour combinations Good standard of mowing throughout the village. Many well maintained private gardens throughout the village. Good sustainable planting now maturing which will give benefits to the village for years to come. Daffodils at all entrances to the village some still flowering and planted in 1964 when Barwick first entered competition.

Areas for Improvement

Minor point. As discussed pick up on polyanthus. Investigate why they have not done as well this year.

Try something else in 2015. Beds may need a rest from polyanthus

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

A very clean entry throughout. Good wildlife habitats. Loved Boot Hill very imaginative schemes. Good to see wildlife areas being developed in school.

Areas for Improvement

Develop banking by stream. May be worth putting Gabbions in to retain banking and stop erosion. Would then encourage wildlife and woodland habitats. Develop seating in church grounds. Would recommend large tree trunks as natural seats. Judges understand reservations on seating in this area but may be worth a try. Would make a peaceful setting where people can enjoy the tranquil natural garden.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Fund raising activities throughout the year. Good community involvement by all in village both young and old. Good to see new members getting on board and being encouraged. Bloom initiative has brought this village together and it shows by the enthusiasm of the people we have met.

Areas for Improvement

Continue as you are. Judges could not fault Barwicks initiatives and enthusiasm. Well done

Bramham

Introduction

Daffodils everywhere, as were the childrens' YiB posters. A warm welcome from the small committee, and their supportive helpers. A good informative brochure was sent to the judges beforehand. The village approach signs were excellent. Firbeck Road front gardens were almost without exception, colourful, very well tended and a credit to all involved. All Saints Church's Anglo-Saxon Churchyard and Lych-gate are the jewel in Bramham's crown, with the judges enjoying a short guided walk through the churchyard and then into the church. The Jubilee Garden is now well established, and among the sustainable shrubs, rosemary is very evident. The many flower beds in strategic locations are eye-catching. Several older villagers at the OAP Shelter, now renamed the Senior Citizens' Centre, were enjoying the warm sunshine, and their most attractive environment. The borders at the Clifford Road bungalow and the Medical Centre were a blaze of colour, and congratulations are due to those who maintain them, as are the many other floral frontages in Clifford Road. This is a well thought out and prepared entry, with an air of cleanliness and caring throughout.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Bramham believes there should be little or no further alteration to the character of the village. The aim is still to enhance the appearance of the village whenever and wherever needed.

Areas for Improvement

Though there appears little major significant improvement or change since the judge's visit in 2013, it is abundantly clear that the In Bloom group remain active and innovative.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Due to the impressive efforts of one person, the Wildlife Preservation Area has been much extended and further opened up. Well done. Litter and dog-fouling were not evident, thanks to the endeavours of the regular litter pickers.

Areas for Improvement

Currently, a shortage of manpower has prevented the In Bloom team from composting its own materials, annual plants, go to the local recycling plant.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The judges were able to meet the gardeners and volunteers who play an important role in Bramham in Bloom's success. Pride is most visible, and is the common attribute they all show. There were few houses or premises that lacked a children's YIB poster. Local businesses help with sponsorship, along with support from within Bramham.

Areas for Improvement

More Press coverage could be advantageous to promote their efforts and successful endeavours, which are there for all to see.

Burncross

Introduction

We got a warm welcome from the dedicated Bloom group. Burncross In Bloom is a classic example of 'The Community Spirit'. The judges were extremely impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of the Burncross Action Group. In the face of much reduced support by the local authority, the group took a year out and have now come back reinvigorated and focused, and the former previous high standards have certainly been upheld.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

It was a pleasure to see fruits of the group's labour on the highway verges on Penistone Road - members having taken on the maintenance of the grass and the provision of the spring bedding to create a certain 'wow' factor when you arrive in the village. The planting was well thought out and sustainable. The gateway planting blended well with the rural surroundings. We were impressed with

the quality of the planting throughout the village. There were many colourful beds and planters. We saw many lovely private gardens around the village

Areas for Improvement

As long as ways can be found to do it safely continue with daffodil planting on the main road. Continue working to encourage all the business areas to support the Bloom initiative, as so many others are doing. If Costcutter could be persuaded to take on the maintenance of their own shrubberies then this would make a major difference!

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The wildlife pond on the playing fields/recreation area is a valuable resource. It is good that you are managing as far as possible without pesticides and other chemicals. It is good that composting is being carried out. The village was very litter free and without visible graffiti or dog fouling. The tubs and planters were obviously kept carefully stained and we were impressed by the efforts of the group to paint and generally improve planting round the village entrances. The use of recycled materials was impressive.

We were very impressed by the name stones for the village which the group have installed. We also liked the interpretation panels installed in the flower beds. Without these, there would be very little to inform and engage visitors of the surprisingly rich industrial heritage of the area. We also look forward to seeing the group form an effective partnership with contractors Amy when they develop the old council depot. This facility should be a big help to the group's already impressive recycling efforts.

Areas for Improvement

Perhaps consider wildlife friendly planting around the wildlife pond. Consider leaving areas of the recreation area unmown to encourage wildlife, with signage as appropriate to let the public know why it is being left unmown. Such areas might be suitable for some art installations and perhaps local schools might be interested in being involved with this. Perhaps space might be found for planting wildlife shrubs around the edges of the recreation ground.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

You have worked hard to find a variety of sources for funding, which is impressive. We were pleased to hear about all the support you get from local pubs and other businesses. There is obviously a lot of local support for the group locally. It is nice to see a group with a good age range of members. We were glad to hear about all the events you enjoy with the community throughout the year. Your website is a real benefit to the group and the idea of thanking your many sponsors on the site is a good idea.

Areas for Improvement

Consider using Twitter to make even more people aware of events and activities. Consider using A-boards at work parties, inviting people to join the group and with joining details. Consider the possibility of a photo competition for residents, featuring gardens and public places in the village.

Cayton

Introduction

The Spring day was warm as was the welcome from the many members of the Cayton in Bloom group for the Spring visit. It was clear during the well-planned tour, that the group whole-heartedly commit their energies to enhancing the village with the many varied initiatives and projects. Cayton was full of colour from both public and private garden displays, bolstered by the increasing use of perennial plantings. An established group showing how commitment and good planning can achieve sound results, well done.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Although now well established the Mill Wheel, Boat and Hay Cart displays never fail to impress, sustaining this standard and type of display is never easy but Cayton pulls it off each year, very impressive. The maturing Bird Garden is a pleasant small but well maintained interest garden that deserves mention. The standard of maintenance of the many different display beds by the group's volunteers is very creditable and they should rightly feel proud of their sustained efforts.

Areas for Improvement

Whilst it is appreciated that the various businesses in Cayton sponsor a number of the initiatives for the group, few appeared to have participated in having spring displays at their premises. The judges felt this was an area which could be developed further.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The Killerby Wood project exemplifies what can be achieved in a relatively compact area. A wonderful learning resource which will continue to develop. The village was clean, tidy and litter free. It demonstrated what could be done with a community working together with a shared goal.

Areas for Improvement

More evidence of water recycling initiatives needs to be demonstrated in the tour.

The group is now well established and continuing with its many areas of development. However the judges would also like to see specific projects identified for the future development of the group and to support its continued success.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The calendar of events and fund raising initiatives gives a clear indication of the commitment and planning seen in the group. The involvement and encouragement of the school children is to be congratulated, the judges look forward to seeing the "Grande Depart" design in the summer visit. The amount of sponsorship and donations the group generate is evidence of what a positive profile the group give to Cayton. Sustaining this over the years is an achievement to be proud of.

Areas for Improvement

Persist with the efforts to increase membership and involvement with the group's activities from the wider community.

Great & Little Preston

Introduction

The enthusiasm of this group shines through. They are undertaking large improvement projects throughout the village and have interesting plans for the future.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Bowers Mission Church, and the work carried out by Ian and the "Ladies" provided a colourful spring display. The mixed planting bed and seasonal bedding display at the Sports and Social club. Sustainable planting area around the village, such as Whitehouse Crescent & Avenue, Glencoe Gardens, St Aiden's Road all maintained by local residents. The daffodils along the main entrance road to the village and goody cross junction provided a colourful display. The well maintained residential gardens across the route and those to note at the retired persons homes at Little Preston Hall. The well maintained and inviting entrance to the garden centre along the main road.

Areas for Improvement

The plans to link Great & Little Preston with a continuation of daffodil planting and the ideas for Preston Corner redevelopment with more manageable sustainable planting, will be welcome additions to this entry. Give consideration to renovation or replacement of some of the barrel planters across the route.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The hard work undertaken to open up and create the foot path link between the village hall, through the adjacent woodland to link with the nature reserve. The plans for the new meadow at the back of the village hall will help to increase bio-diversity within the entry as well as providing stunning visual display of wildflowers. Jims "Eco Garden" and the plans for the sundial. Good use of mulch in areas such as Bower Church. Consultation and consideration taken with local residents in implementing the height reduction of the hawthorn hedge on the busy Whitehouse Lane.

Areas for Improvement

The judges are looking forward to seeing the results in summer of the woodland footpath and the progress on the meadowland creation.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

70 local residents and children turned out for the last village litter pick - what an achievement! Its evident that there are many residents involved with the in bloom initiative, from looking after a small patch near their home to full on redevelopment of larger schemes to benefit the wider community. The group have secured substantial funding for the future creation of the meadow land as well as other projects, this is to be commended. Good to hear that the local scout group are involved in bloom activities. Publicity for the group was evident with the number of notice boards (made by James the local Joiner) around the village, publicising what was happening, and the display of past certificates in the village hall.

Areas for Improvement

Consideration is given to encouraging the school to get involved in the future. Continue to forge links with local businesses such as the Nursery/Garden centre.

Grenoside

Introduction

Grenoside is lucky in having dedicated residents who really care about the welfare of their village. Grenoside in Bloom is an excellent example of a 'cohesive' effort. Rather than a focused In Bloom group, several local organisations/groups pull their efforts and resources, where there is a wealth of local knowledge and expertise.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The war memorial is particularly outstanding and a credit to the brothers who have taken this on. Long may this continue! The communal plots planted by the residents in the new housing development are also worthy of mention. We look forward to meeting them in summer. The garden of the Reading Room has really begun to develop well. The future plans for ideas such as a school allotment were exciting. Millennium Green is a lovely place to sit and admire the views. We saw lots of lovely gardens on our tour of the village.

Areas for Improvement

Continue working with shops and other local businesses to build up planting around their sites. Consider using planting to bring in even more scent and colour round the seats on Millennium Green. Perhaps consideration could be given to planting at the village boundaries as a future project.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The Reading Rooms are a wonderful achievement and can rightfully take pride of place in the village. It will be interesting to watch this project develop over time, particularly the allotment area and orchard. The idea of converting the old tree into a birdfeeder is interesting. The village was free of litter, graffiti and dog fouling which was good to see. The art installations in the Green area were a good idea.

Areas for Improvement

If possible, the benches and notice boards would benefit markedly from a tidy up and application of wood treatment/paint. Some form of interpretation for the remnants of the air raid shelter would be particularly engaging. It might be a good idea to make people aware of the heritage of metal working in the village through interpretation boards. Perhaps more wildlife planting could be considered. Perhaps young people might enjoy making log, leaf and other animal habitats on the edges of the Green.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Obviously the various groups in the village are supporting each other well and have lots of ongoing projects, as well as providing lots of year round events and activities for residents. It was good to see the Norfolk Arms pub taking responsibility for the immediate green space. We were sorry that engagement with the local school is currently difficult due to unavoidable circumstances. It was pleasing to hear of the support the Peak Park has given the In Bloom initiative by providing nest boxes. The recent Fruit Tree Pruning training Sheffield Wildlife Trust was recognised as an excellent piece of public engagement.

Areas for Improvement

There could be an excellent opportunity for the school to be involved in the hopefully-not-too-distant future by encouraging them to run a poster/flyer competition. Keep working to involve local young people in the group's activities. Consider possible new initiatives to bring more members into the Bloom group itself. Perhaps local residents might be able to contribute spare plants to help with communal areas.

Hutton Cranswick

Introduction

Another year and another excellent entry from the Hutton Cranswick 'In Bloomers'. The warmth of the day mirrored our welcome from all of those involved in Hutton Cranswick In Bloom. We would like to thank you all. Hutton Cranswick In Bloom continues to demonstrate the ongoing commitment of the community to the ethos of In Bloom, building on individual and community strengths and enthusiasm. You have embraced your environment in all areas including increased sustainable planting demonstrated by the new floral baskets together with colourful and varied floral displays throughout Hutton Cranswick, green open spaces and well tended, clean, tidy residential and public areas. Your experience in this competition showed throughout the route and we were able to meet many members of the community who work on and support In Bloom. We congratulate you all on your continuing and developing efforts. It is plain to see that you do not intend to rest on 'your laurels'. Thank you for your hospitality. We can see why your baking fundraising was such a success.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Horticultural achievement is excellent and of a high standard. Throughout the visit the floral planting we saw was very good and appropriate, whether on the village green, in residential areas, at the station, in the Centenary Wood, or along the verges and other public spaces. You have embraced sustainability and we were pleased to see this reflected in the spring baskets and other planters. We would echo the judges' comments from last year that your variety of planters, including historic planters, and their diverse planting, including edible, and wildlife attractive planting are excellently maintained and placed in appropriate positions throughout the village. The 'beeline' border planting

by the church is developing well and we were pleased to hear that the bees are attracted to the planting. The upkeep of the churchyard by the volunteers clearly demonstrates pride of place within your community. The Centenary Wood continues to impress as does Sonia's commitment and desire to create the woodland of a childhood. The planting, displays and maintenance of the station goes from strength to strength and must delight all those passing through or arriving at the station. The Remembrance bed at the station with its fine display of red tulips provides an added focus for remembrance in 2014.

Areas for Improvement

Our brief stop at Paul Harrison Cars gave us a flavour of the involvement of businesses as part of In Bloom. We look forward to seeing more business involvement during the summer to support this section of the judging criteria.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

It was demonstrated throughout our visit that environmental responsibility is important within Hutton Cranswick with excellent work going on throughout the village to encourage wildlife and enhance and improve natural habitats. This is a well maintained village with an absence of any litter, graffiti etc. Your street furniture and signage is good and you have enhanced them with your floral displays. Your two village maps together with the village agricultural architecture, displays of tractors, the Way of the Roses cycle route displays and the 'recycled' train structure at the railway illustrates your local history and heritage. The wildlife display boards at the Centenary Wood which can be easily changed with information as to what to see in the wood are excellent.

Areas for Improvement

We look forward to a time when you can include areas such as the lake and butterfly garden into your In Bloom route in terms of conservation and biodiversity. We are pleased to hear that the village leaflet is under way and look forward to seeing it progress. Thank you for providing the additional information asked for by the judges last year about resource management including recycling.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Once again your entry clearly demonstrates that community participation is at the heart of Hutton Cranswick and continues to move forward. This is no mean feat and we appreciate and acknowledge that you know where you are going, what you want and part of this is to take careful consideration of our comments and suggestions, putting them into practice in a way that is relevant to Hutton Cranswick. This strengthens your entry. During our visit it was clear that support from the community is impressive in whatever part everyone plays. Well Done to you all and our thanks to all those (including Gina, Glynis, Maureen, Sandy, Yvonne, Anita, Sonia, and Bunny) who showed us round.

Areas for Improvement

Once again there is very little we can add. It was good to meet the young 'ladybird' planting team. We know that there is good work going on with seed planting and sunflower growing with younger members of the village. A visit to see the development of the new garden at the playgroup together with meeting more, younger, members of the community during the summer visit to hear about their engagement with 'blooming' related activities would serve to strengthen this area further.

Leven

Introduction

The village of Leven is situated in the East Riding of Yorkshire between the seaside town of Hornsea and the historic market town of Beverley. The newly formed 'In Bloom' team can be justly proud of their village which they seek to enhance. They have only just had their first meeting and have forged useful links with other community groups. The judges were impressed with the amount of research already undertaken in many diverse directions and the number of plans in place in the short and medium term. We look forward to our visit in the summer. Well done and good luck!

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Many well-kept residential gardens were observed on the tour. The village entrances are marked with attractive brick features displaying the village signs with some spring bedding. The allotment site, paths and plots were neat and tidy and well cultivated.

Areas for Improvement

Without doubt much work lies ahead. Verges could be improved and some weeding at the entrances to the village. You might consider enhancing the areas around the village signs and seats with shrubs to give all year round interest and concentrate your efforts on creating a central focal point.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The 'In Bloom' group are fully aware of the issues connected to environmental quality and have in place some excellent policies for the future. Good recycling management in the village. The village was clean and tidy. The tree sculpture is an attractive feature.

Areas for Improvement

The addition of an information board at the Canal detailing the flora and fauna would be of great interest to both adults and young people. There are many opportunities throughout the village where

some reference to the ancient historic links could be utilised with the inclusion of perhaps a sculpture or some redundant agricultural machinery

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Some evidence of the excellent community co-operation was provided. This is a wonderful project and the future plans are well-considered to involve all residents. Representatives of many of the village organisations have attended a public meeting and the task of enhancing the village is well under way.

Funding applications have already been submitted for several projects and we trust they will be successful.

Areas for Improvement

Perhaps consider setting up a 'hand-on' working party to implement the planting proposals. Continue to hold regular meetings to keep information flowing. As there are few businesses in the village it may be necessary to challenge community groups to organize fund raising events throughout the year.

Ripponden

Introduction

Ripponden really comes to life during the spring, with good colourful displays of seasonal bulbs with a 1000 planted by the In Bloom group this year. It was a pity to have missed the snowdrop trail but there were lots of other areas to see, one of the most memorable being the restored red telephone box which is being used as a mini library.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The use of Pachysandra sp. and Vinca sp. to cover difficult terrains. Anemones naturalised in a section of grassland is worth copying. The In Bloom containers and pick your own herb garden by the library. The work of the Trifold Guild at the church grounds

Areas for Improvement

Continue work with use of sustainable planting. Take care with some of the weeds in places. More shrub planting on the bank side will help appearances

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The woodland area with the start of the snowdrop trail is a very pleasant natural area. The vision to restore the telephone box for community use

Areas for Improvement

To think about increasing the size of the recycling area with perhaps another system of compost bins. The judges would like to see more wildlife areas

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Embracing the Tour de France which is due to pass through Ripponden. Preparation for the World War 1 centenary. The planned bulb plant

Areas for Improvement

Evidence of more community involvement Displaying in shop windows the excellent poster announcing the Yorkshire in Bloom judging may create more involvement by the community

Scholes

Introduction

A very well motivated 'In Bloom' group who take great pride in their village. On a fine but cool day the vibrancy of the bedding displays could be seen from a distance almost round every corner. Residents also seem to be contributing in a positive way by ensuring their gardens were looking good for judging day. All in all a most enjoyable visit with the group showcasing what Scholes does best!

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The quality and planting uniformity of the Polyanthus was noted by the judges giving visual impact to the numerous beds around Scholes. Daffodils were also in full flower brightening up the approach roads into the village. The use of various dwarf conifers added variety and structure to the flower beds. A good range of sustainable planting was evident around the car park at the bowling club and the reduction in height of some of the hedges has made a significant difference to the site. The setting of the 'Plough' underneath the weeping willow at Green Court works well, and the topiary work on the adjacent flower bed adds another horticultural element to the entry. Foresight and planning has obviously gone into the Japanese Garden which works well in the present location. There is a lot of good work going on within the school grounds which the judges are looking forward to seeing in the summer

Areas for Improvement

Consider using a variety of spring bedding in future entries so not becoming over reliant on Polyanthus.

The use of bark mulch or similar would help in keeping the weeds down around the bowling club car park especially during the early growing season. Attempt to talk to the housing association that looks after Green Court to extend the flower bed in front of the 'Plough' to mirror the opposite bed. The reduction in the hedges around the bowling green has made a vast difference, reducing the conifer hedge height around the toilets will further improve this well used facility. The length of grass in some areas of the school was not uniform and the sensory garden and wildflower garden require a little attention. Keep persevering with the wildflower meadow, seek advice from LCC if results are not forthcoming.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Good projects on-going within the school grounds in relation to bio-diversity. There are numerous bird/bat boxes located throughout the village. The horse drawn ploughs and the 'Spring Time' sculpture certainly add some local interest to the entry! The judges were also impressed with the cleanliness of the village and the overall sense of pride in their community and commitment shown by all the 'bloomers'!

Areas for Improvement

The grounds of St Philips Church could be enhanced and developed to compliment the modern 'feel' of the building. A future project maybe? A study may be beneficial by an ornithologist to gauge whether the numerous bird boxes are being used and are sited correctly. Carefully sited Interpretation Boards could be included in the entry to elaborate on the history of the village. Plenty of recycling of green waste was evident on both the allotment site and at the school but household recycling needs to be evidenced.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Sponsorship of the flower beds is well established and coupled with the coffee mornings and open gardens enables the group to plan ahead with initiatives. Plenty of 'in bloom' posters and signage were on show along the judging route. Engagement with the school is evident with lots of initiatives in place over the spring/summer months.

Areas for Improvement

Try attracting more volunteers to assist with the 'hands on' tasks around the village through letter drops/newsletters etc. An arrangement of pictures before and after, on going projects and general 'in bloom' information could be showcased on a display board to further enhance achievements

Shadwell

Introduction

We were met by a very enthusiastic group who were passionate about their entry and how it looked for residents and visitors. The portfolio was handed out to the judges on arrival and would have been better if it would have been sent in advance of the judging period. The group had been involved in a number of improvements throughout the Village with many beds in glorious colour from barrier baskets and floral features situated at prime locations around the village. The group showed examples of schemes which they have replanted and refurbished to provide additional interest and sustainment. The use of spring bulbs and raised herb beds was an interesting combination and has been appreciated by the local community. The involvement of the school within the village entry offer good potential for a summer visit to view the vegetable area and wildlife habitats within the school grounds. The group need to formulate a clear well planned route and ensure other members of the group are on hand at specific locations to outline the work or project to the judges Timing is essential to show case the full extent of the work of the group and local community support.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The judges were impressed by the choice of plant material and the impact of the spring colour around the village. The floral features many situated in difficult areas of narrow road side verges were well maintained. The bus terminus planting added both colour and structure planting it was good to see the restoration of boundary hedges. The garden of remembrance planting was very colourful and its sheltered location provides a peaceful refuge in the village. Numerous Bulbs had been planted throughout the village and provided a splash of colour throughout our village tour.

Areas for Improvement

Consider whether some of the earlier projects are ready for refreshing e.g. now that plants are mature do they need moving/pruning/removing, could new plants be included to add further interest and sustainability. The in Bloom group should work with the school to upgrade the plant containers in the school entrance. The area is ready for a replant and refresh we look forward to seeing the school vegetable beds in the Summer. Have a map of the village available on the day or in your portfolio with all the projects which the group have carried out even if they are not part of the judging tour. This would demonstrate the depth and diversity of work carried out by the group. There are a couple of areas where bulbs would benefit from lifting after flowering and re grouping around an area of the bus terminus road frontage. This would complement the existing floral displays and improve the quality of the feature.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The visit to the church yard demonstrated the hard work which the group have achieved to improve the grave spaces and grass maintenance. The village church yard graves are rich in local history.

The group have developed an important wildlife area in the village outside the school which is used by local children as part of the schools national curriculum a great place for wildlife and bees. The cleaning of the war memorial at the entrance to the church and the plans for poppy planting in the beds surrounding the church to commemorate the first world war looks like a great project and we look forward to seeing the results in our summer judging tour, The village was litter free and grass areas had been cut to compliment the floral displays.

Areas for Improvement

We would have liked to have seen some additional examples of the work the group have done to improve biodiversity and natural habitat conservation within the village and look forward to visiting the wildlife project in the quarry. We would suggest that the group consider more sustainable planting in the park in partnership with the local Authority. To offer more interest and colour for adult's whist their children play on the playground equipment and grassed areas. It would have been useful to have met members of the group at locations throughout the tour so they could outline the work and contribution they have made to the village entry. The restoration of the war memorial is superb but the judges noted the low branch of the tree could cause damage to the memorial in high winds and two small branches should be removed to avoid potential damage.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Continuity and development of the in Bloom Group is extremely good and well supported by the parish council and local residents. Fund raising and support is excellent, good range of support from significant grants and donations through help in kind, to residents adopting small area for upkeep and/or watering duties. The Shadwell in Bloom Logo on floral displays and street furniture and posters in numerous residential houses supporting the judging day.

Areas for Improvement

We think there is scope for the schools involvement in a future in bloom poster design which could be used for notice boards and residential property supporters. We would recommend developing a media, communication plan which would help with press coverage of the development of floral features around the village or fund raising events. It would have been good to have had press coverage of the judging day. We would have liked to see a map of the judging route and more photographs in the portfolio. Look at ways to Celebrate your many achievements by involving as many of the village residents as possible!

Thornton

Introduction

We were treated to a warm welcome by the Thornton in Bloom group. It was a delight to visit Thornton and see the fantastic projects that the group has been involved with. The quality of the spring planting was high throughout the village and the sheer number of daffodils was a joy. The

ongoing transformation of Bell Chapel was a particular highlight of the tour. We look forward to our return visit in summer.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

There was a stunning display of daffodils along Thornton Road. The transformation of the grounds of Bell Chapel spearheaded by Steve, is very commendable and a credit to all involved. The raised beds at the Railway Heritage Centre are tastefully planted and well cared for. The Kipping Gardens truly reflect the hard work done by the group. The number of hanging baskets dotted around the village is very impressive for spring judging.

Areas for Improvement

Eddie's corner although nicely planted, could do with a little more attention to weeding in that area. We look forward to the area outside the Bronte's birthplace being given some attention by the new owners in due course. Continue to look for new areas to plant up to further compliment the considerable hard work and improvements already made. Could some selected parts of the village be considered for mixed planting with colourful vegetables or herbs?

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

It was a delight to see the numerous bird and bat boxes and other attempts to encourage wildlife in Bell Chapel. The signage throughout the village was generally well maintained and appropriate. The group has highlighted the local heritage very well.

Areas for Improvement

Could a small composting area be discreetly introduced to Kipping Garden to further increase sustainability? It would be good to hear about any Council led recycling schemes. Could an audit be done of street furniture across the village to pinpoint any areas requiring attention?

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

There has clearly been a lot of funding obtained by the group to facilitate the improved planting areas across the village. The support given to the village by local businesses and residents is impressive. It is clear to see the group is moving forward in an organised manner. It is pleasing to note the group is a key part of the regeneration of Thornton.

Areas for Improvement

Valerie has been a tremendous driving force and organiser of the group. We hope the group can continue to thrive in the future when Valerie has retired to continue the good work. Some involvement from a school or a young persons group would further enhance the entry. It would be of benefit to the judges to have a portfolio which chronicles the efforts of the group across the year.

Wilberfoss

Introduction

Passing motorists cannot fail to notice the massed planting of bulbs at the entrances of the village which give an indication of the impact that entering Yorkshire in Bloom has had on Wilberfoss. As the judges were shown round it is clear that the enthusiasm is not just the In Bloom team but widespread throughout the community with local residents supporting and enjoying the noticeable results. All are to be commended. The many floral displays throughout the village are further supported by the attention to environmental quality and enhancement of wildlife areas. Also the varied and high quality residential and business gardens and the churchyard add to the overall effect of a wonderful village. The transformation at the teen recreation area by the schoolgirls who won the Humberside Lifestyle Challenge was sheer delight and the Duke of York Community Initiative Award is testimony of the achievements. We look forward to the return visit.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The bulb planting has been carefully considered by using a variety of bulbs so as one group start to fade a later flowering variety picks up resulting in a longer lasting impact of display. Throughout the entry there were good displays in residential gardens, planters, troughs and at business premises also the new improvements to areas such as the bus stop. The teenage recreation area has been transformed and further improvements at the Blacksmith Forge and the Diamond Jubilee gardens have been achieved with sustainable planting.

Areas for Improvement

The addition of a further planter in the Memorial garden would improve this area. Take care to remove any struggling plants such as the conifer in the trough by the butchers. Try to avoid a "dotted" planting at the new bed at the Beckside bus stop, use repetition or grouping or drifting to unify the scheme.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The mural celebrating Jubilee Year and the garden area with wildlife habitats is a remarkable achievement for the younger people who designed it. The new wall at Costcutters is more in keeping and the tidying and planting of 2 new beds at bus stops shows pride of place. Water butts placed throughout the area for ease of watering and composting sites are well used. Litter picking goes on throughout the year. The churchyard is managed with a wildlife area and the interpretation board encourages observation. The wildlife area across from the church is managed and a local entomologist has found rare insects in the area.

Areas for Improvement

The notice board at the Blacksmiths Forge would benefit from repainting. Replace white plastic railing with something more in keeping at the Forge area. Consider painting the railings on the bridges.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

It is clear that there is a lot of support for "In Bloom" throughout the community and good community participation from fund raising events to working with the local businesses. Individuals and groups are being encouraged to take responsibility for care of planters or areas. The Wilberfoss calendar, plant sale, business sponsorship and support of the Parish Council are commendable. There are ongoing plans for the future and many ideas for future projects.

Areas for Improvement

Try to draw in younger people into the core group.

Category 2A: Urban Community

Allerton Bywater

Introduction

Allerton Bywater has a proud and historic past with coal mining and its related industries, this was evident on the visit. Its good to see the celebration of the past as well as looking to the future.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Spring display on the entrance to St Mary's Church was welcoming and colourful, and generally well maintained. The Mine cars at the Millennium Village open space and Centenary gardens, planters at the sheltered housing and many tubs throughout the route brought colour to the area. The seasonal displays at Edward VII Working Men's Club, Anchor Inn & Victoria hotel. The colourful and well maintained general area and perennial planting at the Centenary gardens maintained by Ian & Peter.

Areas for Improvement

Attention to weeding in some areas, especially the Edward VII Working Men's Club and War Memorial. Consideration is given to using more sustainable plants within the tubs and planters, look to give a little height as well as softening edges of planters.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Letchmire Pastures Nature Reserve and Staithes old pottery site is an asset to the village. The development at "Ticklecock " bridge and the opening up of the cycle route through the village. Work carried out on the road side verges to create meadow planting is to be commended, the Judges look forward to seeing this in the summer. The memorial at the Millennium Village is a permanent reminder and celebration of Alperton's mining heritage. The two litter pickers employed by the parish are to be commended for keeping the area clean and tidy.

Areas for Improvement

The future development plans for Staithes pottery site and the river side will enhance this entry and we look forward to hearing of progress in the summer. A little graffiti on route, but generally very clean across the entry.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The enthusiasm of the two Steve's at the allotments has helped to provide a great community asset, offering opportunities for beginners as well as seasoned growers. Sponsorship and funding for projects such as the Park Lane verge, the Ticklecock bridge development

Areas for Improvement

Continue to work closely with other organisations to help bring in funding for the conservation projects within the village. It would be nice to meet more of the In Bloom team at key points on the route and meet or hear how local children are involved, in the summer.

Beeston

Introduction

'A voluntary group promoting community pride' – This is the motto of Beeston in Bloom and community pride is very much in evidence in this 16,000 strong population inner city urban community. Acting as a catalyst these 12 strong volunteers bring together a working relationship with many different groups and authorities from the district to manage or coordinate projects both small and larger undertakings. Their endeavours can be seen all over the district to make Beeston in Bloom a success.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The redevelopment taken place this year in the millennium garden at Cross Flats Park lifts the flower beds, making this open space more pleasing to wander around, together with the newly planted rose beds. The many spring hanging baskets on the main arterial routes through the district enhance the floral displays and abundance of spring bulbs and planters. The Evans Property company grounds and Crawford's Fish Shop is an asset within the district

Areas for Improvement

Continue with the rejuvenation of the more mature /overgrown shrubs within the millennium garden flower beds. Cutting back the hedgerow around the playground will open up the area to the park, making this less a litter trap and feel part of the surrounding environment. Continue with plans to use small shrubs and perennials in the planters to give all year round interest.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The 'Love Beeston – Clean Beeston' campaign has shown to be affective with a general absence of litter, helped by the new litter bins at each bus stop. Resource management that is evident in the park, allotments and churches. It was a pleasure to meet the young ladies at Clarkesfield Allotments manning the sales stand and to meet the managing group who are improving the facilities for allotment holders, who are representative of the multicultural area, while at the same time providing areas for wildlife habitat.

Areas for Improvement

The proposed Millennium Garden New notice / heritage boards will enhance the area. Use of the Beeston in Bloom logo on projects and flower beds that are maintained and developed by the group to lift the group's profile. Repainting of the planters and stain preservative on the wooden barrel will enhance their appearance within the projects and enhance the impact aimed for. The closed graveyard at St Mary's church could be further developed with areas of wild flowers and plants to attract pollinators.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The continued year round involvement of the group's activities is evidence of its strong community grounding and links within the district. Initiatives to continually secure funding and development of strategic projects are good.

Areas for Improvement

Continue to engage with the community, particularly the younger members, to actively encourage new members and educate residents of the aims of Beeston in Bloom and its environmental ethos.

Birstall

Introduction

Birthplace of the scientist Joseph Priestley and a former heavy woollen town, Birstall in Bloom, in such a short time, have managed to show and promote pride in their local environment. Since Birstall in Blooms inception in 2010 the BiB team have made a great difference in incorporating the help of all the local organisations, Chamber of Trade, Council, and the wide community in working and pulling together. Enabling the many unlit pockets and areas of this very condensed and busy area to be transformed. It was a great pleasure to Judge and meet a vast range of the community with such enormous enthusiasm.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Many areas have been uplifted with much thought given to these developments, and planted to encourage pride in their town and community. Examples like Janet's Garden (Library Garden) and Pat's infill site show how an area can be changed for the benefit of all passing, together with the personal havens that abound in the most unexpected places. Special mention should be given to Arthur Swales for his garden and allotment site, the newly renamed Windmill Junior School and especially St. Saviours Church.

Areas for Improvement

You already have plans to fulfil further challenges, to move forward which is very encouraging. Continue Spring Bulb planting to lighten verges and improving grassed areas. Reconsider the present planting scheme around the 'Welcome' stone since all the planting is obscured by the bulb placement. Consider a colour theme or design pattern to improve the impact and innovation.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The way forward shown at Windmill Junior School with Nigel Harrison and the children, especially their knowledge of biodiversity and wildlife. Followed up by a comprehensive control and pride everywhere. Maintaining a very high standard throughout. All the banners and signs continue to give the care and affection.

Areas for Improvement

Consider inviting the local authority Resource/Recycling Officer to summer judging, as recycling is moving forward to conform to legislation, however highlighting the resource management to judges in summer will aid the entry. The planned new notice Board and WW1 stone feature will be an asset.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

It was good to see the vast display of photographs showing all year round involvement, along with the commitment and support in moving forward with publicity, merchandise, and press coverage. The fact that some places are good enough to be judged independently shows just how things have improved. Plus all the categories and entries in the local garden competition

Areas for Improvement

Development of a web site or news letter to disseminate information to residents even further, would develop the Birstall in Bloom initiative. Continue to maintain the very close bond with everyone its warmth is showing.

Bramhope

Introduction

Bramhope is an interesting community, divided by a major road, and set on the side of a hill. It acts as a commuter base for the nearby cities of Leeds and Bradford, also being very near to Leeds/Bradford airport. However there is a very lively active In Bloom group, which takes in many of these factors, working with its heritage, its school, churches, and wider community to enhance the area.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Over the past winter the group have planted 6,000 crocus, 6,000 Tête-à-Tête, and many other daffodil bulbs - all to good effect. They have replanted the barrels and added new ones. At Tregold they have made stone planters, which are most attractive. Working well with local businesses and the school. The displays along the main Leeds road were most effective.

Areas for Improvement

The work of 'naturalising' the planting at the Well is a good idea, but the large flowered daffs do not meet that objective. The Tête-à-Tête border, with a row of large daffs behind, would look better if the edges were softened to merge the two a little.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The Puritan Chapel is a great piece of heritage, and the nearby Well with its steps also has a story to tell. The whole area was very clean and is a tribute to either local people being litter conscious, or a very good team of litter pickers.

Areas for Improvement

We feel that in Bramhope there must be more opportunities to show wildlife, encourage wild flowers and related vegetation - perhaps woodland? We felt perhaps a stronger, but discreet, interpretation board telling the history and use of the Chapel and Well would be helpful

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

14 volunteer litter pickers is quite a team - well done! The Bloom group are trying to pick up work the Council can no longer do, to ensure standards are kept as high as possible. Volunteers involved with the school, and shop-keepers look after their areas and help with fund raising.

Areas for Improvement

Consider further forms of publicity to try and engage people from all sections of the community

Calverley

Introduction

The interesting and attractive village of Calverley is situated just outside the Leeds ring road on the busy A657 and although it comprises of a number of new developments it has retained many of its historic features including ancient woodland and the water feature at Town Wells. A very impressive entry by the well organised and highly motivated Calverley in Bloom team which has made a clear impression on the village through its all year round in bloom activities. Excellent support is being given by a substantial number of organisations representing public, voluntary and private sectors.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Very good overall impact with Spring colour throughout the village sympathetically associated with the village's rural surroundings. The high quality of the grounds maintenance and seasonal floral displays in Victoria Park, the colourful barrier troughs on Carr Road and the mixed sustainable plantings in containers and public spaces. The very high standards of the early floral displays achieved in many private residential gardens, community buildings e.g. Library and the grounds of St Wilfred's Church and the good contribution made by local businesses. The contribution made by residents and volunteers to the wide range of mixed plantings at St Luke's Care Home and Brookleigh Sheltered Housing Accommodation. The roadside improvements on Carr Road to transform the overgrown verge into an attractive feature at the entrance to the village by exposing the natural rock formation. The very high standard and cleanliness of the Brookfield Allotments on Carr Road and provision of raised beds for use by people with disabilities.

Areas for Improvement

Consider the development of the prominent open space in the Towngate area and the adjacent Town Wells garden. Continue to maintain and enhance, where possible, the standards achieved throughout the village and particularly along the well-used Carr Road.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

There is clear evidence of the importance of the ancient Calverley Woods to the local community with the establishment of a “Friends” Group undertaking management and development projects. The grounds of St Wilfred’s Parish Church contain a number of interesting features and are a haven for wildlife and is managed sympathetically to encourage a range of habitats for both flora and fauna. The church has produced an excellent interpretation leaflet and is involved in a number of reuse and recycling schemes including sheep and goats to both keep the grass down and to fertilise it! An unusual artistic feature within the grounds is represented by a 200 year old beech tree trunk carved in the shape of an angel. Many examples of recycling practices throughout the village including rainwater collection, composting bins, re-use of plant material as well as Council recycling centre and household bins. Almost a total absence of litter, graffiti and dog fouling.

Areas for Improvement

There may be opportunity to add a further wildflower area on the southern boundary of the church grounds. Further development and possibly more interpretation may be needed at the Town Wells garden. Consider “refreshing” the excellent “Welcome to Calverley in Bloom” signage at the entrances to the village.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Clear evidence of all-year-round planning and involvement by the In Bloom Group, particularly evidenced by the excellent portfolio and well-presented visual display of achievements and proposed future projects. Active participation by the two churches, scouts, businesses and other local organisations, schoolchildren and individuals demonstrate good support for the competition and the working link with “Creative Calverley” aimed at bringing people together, has added even more support to the in-bloom group. Good generation of awareness through posters, fliers, twitter, Facebook and the local free magazine “The Squeaker” delivered to every household. The reliance on fundraising activities is reduced through the resourcefulness of the group – splitting and re-use of plants and other materials supported by personal financial donations. Grants for larger projects are sought from the various grant schemes operated by Leeds City Council.

Areas for Improvement

Maintain the excellent current levels of community participation and attempt to achieve wider press coverage of the group’s achievements.

Elland

Introduction

Elland is a town dating from the middle ages and having a mixed history – including stone, fire extinguishers, raincoats and the sweet ‘Yorkshire Mixture’ give the ingredients to make Elland an interesting place to visit. The Elland District Partnership continues to involve all aspects of the present community in very challenging and changing times and links to withhold its long standing proud well known firms associated with the town and its heritage.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Even on a difficult rainy day the large amount of spring flowers brightened up lots of different and interesting areas, with many places receiving personal care. With knowledge of much more to see at summer judging things again will greatly improve.

Areas for Improvement

An organised and dedicated Elland in Bloom group or committee will improve the entry. An understanding of the judge’s criteria and the horticultural, conservation and natural areas that Elland has will help the judges if shown these in the summer visit. Encouragement of more business and retail, as well as residential support to supplement the parks and open spaces shown.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Much has taken place to improve and maintain the changing environment in challenging times and a great deal has advanced. The work that has been done at Riverside Park, (However it would have been nice to have seen this first hand) the gateways into the town with the sustainable planting make a good start to the biodiversity that can be achieved.

Areas for Improvement

With the centenary memory of the 1914-18 war the commanding magnificent cenotaph in Hullen Edge Park demands the cutting down of a wide vista of self-seeded trees across the road in front. This is obstructing the wide open view of the surrounding landscape as it was originally intended. More evidence of the conservation and biodiversity work done in the Town together with the resource management can only improve the entry.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The Eland & District Partnership's efforts are to be applauded for the great improvement in bonding a changing and challenging area.

Areas for Improvement

It's difficult without a true 'in Bloom Group' and dedicated volunteers in the Yorkshire in Bloom competition. However if one was formed the judges are certain, the development and continuity of the work set by the EDP will soon grow from strength to strength with the amount of community support already shown.

Scarborough Old Town

Introduction

The judges were greeted enthusiastically in Scarborough Old Town by the in bloom group that had clearly booked the sun. The group's enthusiasm for the history and presence of being from the local area shone brighter than the sun on judging day. This, and coupled with some good tucked away floral features, made this entry a joy to judge.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Castle Gate corner beds very colourful and full of eye catching early spring colour. The planters in the central reservation were planted with a mixture of spring bulbs and seasonal planting. Fishermans Pride Garden was a good example of a sustainable urban garden. The Quaker burial ground garden was well maintained and an oasis of tranquillity given its proximity to the foreshore. Castle Dykes Park was well maintained with a good range of natural play equipment. The rockery aligned to the bay hotel was full of early spring colour which was very noticeable

Areas for Improvement

It would be good if the group could highlight some more of the seasonal floral planting around the town. Show more business premises along the route with floral features. Work with sea front businesses to sponsor or provide floral features along and around the foreshore area. The crescent gardens were pleasantly full of spring colour and it was good to hear that community payback had been involved in painting the fence.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Given the time of judging was the Easter holiday the town was remarkably free of litter. The recycling within the castle ward was very comprehensive. Some of the signage such as the entrance to Castle Dyke Park was very informative. The plans to replace the street lights have to be commended within the castle area. The tramway community garden was a good example of partnership working that is prevalent on the east coast.

Areas for Improvement

To reform the 7am group to litter pick the area. Some of the street furniture is in need of refurbishment. The plans for the seating area overlooking the harbour are promising and could include raised seating to realise the potential of the sea view.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The various funding activities during the year to support the local charities have to be commended. The presentation at the start of the tour from Liz was very informative and set the scene for the judging tour. The innovative way the community engage within itself, such as the knitting group getting involved with in bloom is ground breaking.

Areas for Improvement

Look into getting local shops/businesses involved on a local level with in bloom to sponsor barrels etc. Looking forward to see the school in summer and there continued contribution to the in bloom effort. It would be good to meet staff managing community payback in the summer to ascertain their commitment to the old town entry.

Starbeck

Introduction

Starbeck in Bloom was formed 16 years ago after a spate of vandalism left the community devoid of hope and now this thriving, enthusiastic and well organised team have transformed their locality and continue to achieve so much with the benefit of good support from the local community. The judges were impressed with the warm welcome they received not only from the team but also from passers-by who were obviously well acquainted with the group.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The spring planting in all areas was varied and excellent with between 2000-6,000 new bulbs planted each year, many in naturalised settings. Planting has been appropriate to the conditions with plants for shade being chosen for the Gate Post Garden. Old rose bushes have been replaced by more sustainable planting which will be colourful all year round. The nectar bed and deluxe bug hotels at Belmont Park are innovative ideas which will benefit wildlife whilst at the same time giving interest to residents

Areas for Improvement

Continue to monitor the two new beds, on one of which the group are trialling a new mulch feed, to see which bed gives the best results. We look forward to seeing the new bed outside the library on our return in summer.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The whole ethos of this group is to recycle every possible item to create items which are both useful to the group or sold, some of it at Hair Stop, to provide a further source of income. The two dedicated Street Scene staff ensures that Starbeck is kept clear of litter and graffiti which is no mean feat in this urban space with very busy roads running through it. When the Mr Beer sculpture was commissioned, the finish allowed for it to be regularly maintained with silver paint. The Notice boards and interpretation boards are both informative and up to date and include the lists of sponsors.

Areas for Improvement

Press ahead with plans for a compost heap at the allotment site and the rain water catchment scheme at St Andrew's church. Plans are in hand to repaint the wheels at the village maker and the signal box at the station

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The whole community benefits from the partnership and mutual support Starbeck in Bloom have established with Taylors of Harrogate, Harrogate Borough Council, Northern and Network Rail and Morrison's. The judges particularly enjoyed meeting the students at Handprints and seeing at first hand the wonderful artwork which is used to publicise many Starbeck in Bloom projects. All aspects of social media are used to promote Starbeck in Bloom and this encourages involvement of some 20 community groups all ages in diverse projects throughout the year.

Areas for Improvement

Follow up on the repair of the paths in the park and other areas. Continue with plans to celebrate the Grand Depart of the Tour de France.

Swillington

Introduction

On yet another sunny spring day the judges were met by a very enthusiastic bloom group who should be encouraged in what they do to improve the look of the village. Members work closely with the school and other organisations around the village as well as being supported by the local authority. There is a lot of hard work going on to improve the look of Swillington but the group does need guidance.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Good residential gardens throughout the route. Good to see small businesses giving their support to bloom initiative. Planters along Main Street are colourful. Continue with improvements around the church yard. I remember when you could not see the headstones ladies so you are doing a great job. Raised beds at the entrances are a big improvement. Please continue with this initiative

Areas for Improvement

Top up the raised beds in front of the school. Planting will then give bigger impact. Gaps are appearing in some of the shrub beds. Could do with further planting or removal. Planting outside Tesco is much improved but again there are some gaps. Re shape beds outside industrial estate as discussed. Can they provide the man power? Continue developing the sustainable beds

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Continue links with school and church grounds. Plenty of initiative for community pay back to help group. Continue to improve existing projects around the village. Do not move onto other initiatives until you are satisfied projects are complete. Not a critic but judges felt the group are spreading itself too thinly and taking on too much work.

Areas for Improvement

Develop wildlife habitats in the church yard and school, if allowed to do so. Remove/ replace old notice board in front of the school. Put in place an initiative to remove/ replace old red and white

signs coming into village. Judges need to see recycling area, initiatives in summer. Remove weeds from under street furniture.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Community involvement with church grounds. Good to see the link with the school, despite this only being half an hour per week, but this will develop in the long term. Good portfolio. Get other community groups in area to assist. litter picks site clearances, Developing planters etc.

Areas for Improvement

Continue to develop the group, publicise what you do and what you are about. Judges will continue to support this group and help its initiatives.

Woodlesford

Introduction

Woodlesford as a bloom entry continues to develop and has a very strong community spirit which showed all along the route. Initiatives are going on throughout the village but mention should be made for the excellent work carried out on the village green and the canal basin where community orchards have been developed along the canal side. posters everywhere through the village made you aware that judging was taking place. Planters all the way along the route were sponsored by either local businesses or individuals. People we spoke to were also very aware and appreciative of the work bloom volunteers do in the village.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Sustainable planting on village green. Never existed a few years ago. Sponsored planters throughout village very colourful. Sustainable planting all along route. The Maltings residential area well maintained by residents and cared for. Good residential gardens. Canal basin a colourful busy area used by many walkers and visitors.

Areas for Improvement

Change shrub bed in front of old church, it is now getting overgrown and needs replacing.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Good use of recycled benches on village green and around village. Village very clean. plenty of notices asking people to keep area clean. The development of the Canal Basin very good, Orchard areas, well signed, developing areas will also link in. There is good signage around Woodlesford

Areas for Improvement

Need to evidence recycling in area. Further evidence of wildlife habitats and initiatives to encourage wildlife. Wildflower areas when developed.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The community is well aware of what the bloom group do and assist wherever they can either financially or by assisting with projects. Work is on going all the time which is good and shows what community spirit there is in Woodlesford. All year round activities help raise funds for the group

Areas for Improvement

Continue to grow links with the community informing them of your initiatives as they occur. Support is there in the village well done

Category 2B: Small Town

Haworth

Introduction

This is a young, hard-working In Bloom group with plenty of potential to improve. The start of the tour showcased the school. The activities here, led by Steve Thorpe and supported by the Head and staff, were most impressive as was the interaction with a number of local schools.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The garden at the Parsonage was sympathetically planted and maintained by two volunteers, who used plants mentioned in the Bronte novels as much as possible. The Churchyard, cared for by volunteer Anthony Medd, has a succession of Spring bulbs among the gravestones and he aims to plant up the bed in front of the church with dark colours to complement the ambience. The school impressed us with its innovative projects, some of the businesses in the Main Street had produced charming displays, the cenotaph area has had poppies added and Margaret is to be commended for her weed-free front of shop area.

Areas for Improvement

The route would benefit from attention to weeding as would the inclusion of residential areas and the railway station. The Bronte Meadow project has potential with the addition of wild flowers.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

At the school, there was plenty of evidence of consideration for the environment and provision for wildlife, such as the pond and the compost heap. The park had recycled all its old plants and pruning's.

Areas for Improvement

Consider more wildlife features such as bird boxes in the park. With such a rich heritage, more features around the village to illustrate this, such as welcome signs, would be attractive. Signs, planters and street furniture would benefit from sprucing up.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

As a recently formed group, it is difficult to evidence year-round involvement. The school has linked with others in the neighbourhood to share greenhouse space and flower shows. The group has secured funding for various projects and has the support of local businesses.

Areas for Improvement

Consider enlisting the support of other local groups, such as scouts, WI and senior citizens. The route for the judges should be checked, timings tightened and better used. Publicity could be expanded upon. Evidence of more posters around the village would increase awareness of the In Bloom group.

Holmfirth

Introduction

Holmfirth is of course famously known as Last of the Summer Wine country. The town also had a fascinating history long before the TV cameras rolled into town. We were given a delightful tour of the town and it was good to see the creation of a new allotment site and community garden at Wooldale. The opening of the new tastefully built, Kings Head Garden will further enhance the town and prove to be a point of interest for visitors and locals alike. We look forward to returning again in summer.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

There were some nicely tended beds in the town. In particular; Holmside Gardens, The planting in front of the Civic Hall and the Fire Station. It was pleasing to see the lovely swathes of daffodils in Victoria Park.

The standard of the allotment side at Wooldale was good considering it is still a relatively new site.

Areas for Improvement

It would be beneficial for the entry to check the route carefully to try and eliminate any last minute problems that may occur prior to judging. It would greatly enhance the entry if more businesses could be encouraged to put out a floral display in spring in certain areas; in a similar way to what Ashley Jackson has done. The bus station area has some delightful bus shelters. Would it be possible to liaise with Metro to introduce several containers or baskets?

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The town was generally clean and tidy with a lack of dog fouling. The new Kings Head Heritage garden is particularly impressive and a big positive for the town. The blue plaque trail which highlights much of the history of the town is very appropriate and adds further interest.

Areas for Improvement

It would be nice to see a greater emphasis on wildflower plants in selected areas; in particular near the river in the sensory garden area. The recycling centre at the Co-op was clean and tidy and it really needs to be part of the judging route. It may even make a good starting point. Could some bird and bat boxes and bug houses be included in Victoria Park along with the sowing of wildflower seeds in late spring?

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

It was pleasing to hear about the local horticultural competitions. They are vital to keep the momentum going. The Wooldale allotment site is a wonderful resource for the local area. The Community garden is a wonderful resource for adults with special needs. There was good evidence of the Tour De France marketing, which should bring wider benefits to the town. The sunflowers growing in the library was a nice idea.

Areas for Improvement

Try to use the local horticultural competitions to gain new volunteers for Holmfirth in Bloom. It would be nice to see some posters advertising Holmfirth in Bloom in the Tourist Information Centre alongside the Tour De France. The entry needs to try to include a greater school and younger person element to the judging route. It would be nice to see a greater involvement from the Co-Op in the sensory garden area or perhaps a sponsored bed in another part of the town

Hunmanby

Introduction

Truly the gateway to the Wolds. Hunmanby in bloom's strength comes from the numbers of the community involved, improving the village environment and the pride for the village shown during the judge's short visit. The village has some outstanding historical and floral features that are further complimented by the group around the village and were backed up with a very comprehensive and informative presentation at the start of the judging route.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The planters/barrels(33) around the village were very thoughtfully planted with a good mixture of annual and sustainable planting. The many displays of daffodils around the village borders added spring impact to the village gateways with one of the best displays was on Filey Road, which also boosted new signage and gate. Malton Road beds are maintained by Paul, Brian and Sylvia and horticultural interest and a rural theme to the village entrance. The floral displays at Cross Hill and Market Cross were good for the time of year. The variation of planting at All Saints Church which included perennials and spring bulbs.

Areas for Improvement

Continue to challenge businesses to not only sponsor floral features around the village but provide floral features outside their premises.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

It was good to see the work done by the group to provide the many bee hotels/ bird/owl/insect living spaces around the village. The Cornflower Trust partnership with a local farmer shows the local commitment to bio-diversity. The plans to move to planters with reservoirs will save water and the group's time. The local heritage of Hunmanby and the residents/in bloom groups pride was self evident and has to be commended as one of the strong points of the village. The village's door step recycling was excellent. The interpretation signs around the village were excellent and very informative as were the many floral gardens.

Areas for Improvement

Consider linking up with more local farmers to develop a biodiversity and conservation policy which includes the countryside and the whole community. Some of the street furniture would benefit from some refurbishment.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The judges were impressed by the very comprehensive information sharing event about the Hunmanby in Blooms year round exploits explained before and after the judging tour. The many excellent information boards around the village and the posters for events and judging date around the village. Local press coverage of the in bloom group exploits was good to see and to engage the reporter over lunch. The year round presentation and explanation by many members of the group added some dimension to the in bloom groups tour. The funding and the in Bloom groups continuing support in maintaining the barrels around the village.

Areas for Improvement

It would have been good to see more of a youth presence during the judging route. Carry on with the fund raising for the orchid which we hope to see some of in summer.

Kirkbymoorside

Introduction

Kirkbymoorside is a small attractive market town brimming with ancient historic buildings situated in the Ryedale district of North Yorkshire. It is located on the southern edge of the North Yorks Moors National Park and is surrounded by spectacular scenery. The 'In Bloom' team led by Gaynor De Barr are very enthusiastic and this was reflected in the warm welcome the judges received. The group are justly proud of their town and work hard to provide attractive floral displays.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Many daffodils were in flower alongside the main A170, especially the large area adjacent to the Daisy Garden Centre providing a welcome to the town. Lots of colourful displays of spring flowers in the sponsored barrels and planters were noted throughout the town. The Brownie Garden at Tinley Garth and the perennial borders at Sturdy Court were both impressive with a good range of sustainable planting.

Areas for Improvement

Although all of the containers were colourful, there was little evidence of permanent planting and the plant range was limited. A move away from plug plants to more permanent planting could not only save time and energy but money too! The centre of the roundabout on the A170 (which is the main access into the town) was in great need of maintenance. The shrubs need some attention and much weeding is required to provide a more attractive entrance to the town.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

Well done to the team for their efforts to keep the town litter free. There are excellent recycling policies in place which are well supported by the local residents. The judges were shown a delightful wildlife, conservation area on the River Dove with a superb interpretation board depicting birds in the vicinity.

Shop and business premises in the town were generally in keeping with the local rural heritage and were well maintained.

Areas for Improvement

Much of the street seating is poorly maintained and could be vastly improved with a coat of paint. Large wire cages and bins containing waste materials to the rear of the Spar shop are very unattractive particularly since this is the entrance to the delightful Church and grounds with typical 'cottage garden' borders. Whilst the plants in the many barrels are attractive, the barrels do need some maintenance.

You may consider an awareness campaign regarding the large amount of discarded cigarette ends. The positioning of some suitable stub-it-out containers could be beneficial to the local environment.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The 'In Bloom' team are continually involved in fund-raising and regularly utilise a weekly market stall selling bric-a-brac and most recently, cakes. They have produced a fantastic Recipe Cookbook which has been reprinted several times in order to keep up with the huge demand. Each copy sold provides additional funds for the group. There is much support from most local businesses who sponsor floral displays in the containers throughout the town.

Areas for Improvement

You may consider a joint partnership with the local Scout Group to assist with maintenance of the barrels. They could also perhaps assist with some weeding at the sheltered accommodation, Sturdy Court.

Try to establish a link with a local council Environment Officer who may be able to help in securing some assistance to update the street furniture. Also, the Environment Officer may wish to inspect the positioning of the wire cages to the rear of the Spar supermarket.

Menston

Introduction

The Menston in Bloom group has now been working hard for nine years and has made significant improvements to the town over that time and continue to do so. It is pleasing to see so many people involved in the in bloom group from those involved in Buyerfield Park remodelling to the friends of High Royds Memorial Gardens to name only a few.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The splendid work carried out on the remodelling of Butterfields Park. The judges were impressed with the memorial bed and the memorial stone which are a permanent feature within the town. The work the in Bloom Group are carrying out on new schemes such as the railway pathway and new planters

Areas for Improvement

To continue with the good work and undertake more of the same should see the group progress

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

It was clear that a move had been made towards sustainable planting. There was good management of the local environment with no graffiti, fly-posting or dog fouling etc. All involved with the work carried out at High Royds Memorial Gardens should be complemented.

Areas for Improvement

More could be done on resource management, water harvesting, composting, conservation and biodiversity. Some of the benches particularly in the churchyard would benefit from a clean.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The group should be complimented on a wide and diverse interest of all the people that have become involved in the in bloom initiative.

The strawberry tea and plant sale continues to be a great success raising both the profile of the group and funds

Areas for Improvement

Consideration could be given to promoting similar events to the strawberry tea at different times of the year. It is noted that a lot has been under taken on publicity however it may be an area where further development could have been beneficial.

ShIPLEY

Introduction

It was a pleasure to judge Shipley on a showery and blustery spring day. The town has some wonderful gems such as Northcliffe Park, Victoria Mills and the Northcliffe Allotments. Considering how busy the town is, the streets were litter free and there were pleasing pockets of spring colour dotted around the town. We look forward to returning again in summer.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The standard of the bedding throughout Northcliffe Park, Crowgill Park and also the town centre was very good. The planting of the residential area - Cliffe Gardens was tastefully done. The Grass verges and open spaces were good and cared for and in particular the bowling green in Crowgill Park. The NEET training scheme is very impressive and is clearly very well run.

Areas for Improvement

Can Shipley in Bloom help to further progress the school garden forward in areas such as weeding and general maintenance? There are good pockets of colour throughout the town centre. To supplement this perhaps local businesses can be encouraged to sponsor or plant up additional beds to further increase floral impact in spring.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The Friends of Northcliffe Park are doing a good job in helping to care for some areas of the park in conjunction with the Council. It was pleasing to see the impressive Victoria Mills development and to note that much of the original mill has been retained. The judging route was largely litter free and there was an absence of dog fouling throughout. The street furniture is generally well maintained in the town centre

Areas for Improvement

We need to see a greater emphasis on recycling and sustainability on the route to move the entry forward.

We look forward to seeing the wildflower areas in Northcliffe Park in the summer. Can bird boxes be erected in some of the open spaces and parks?

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The NEET project successfully engages with disadvantaged adults and other community groups. The Council, despite suffering ever dwindling resources, is clearly very supportive of the In Bloom efforts. It is clear that Shipley n Bloom is a successful catalyst for securing additional funding into the town.

Areas for Improvement

Consider running a town wide best kept garden competition to supplement the wheelbarrow competition. This may attract new members to help with Shipley in Bloom. It would be nice in summer to meet a greater section of the local community and meet more members of the public who are involved with Shipley In Bloom.

Upper and Nether Poppleton

Introduction

Poppleton villages lie 4 miles west of York, originally 2 separate villages, Upper and Nether Poppleton, but development means these now merge into one. There is much pride in the long history of the villages and work to maintain links to the past is obvious. The group were formed in 2011 and are to be congratulated on the co-ordination of the various groups in the community. Many thanks to Mike Parker and Stuart Robson for acting as our hosts around this charming village.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Good colourful planting by Rachel at the railway station and daffodils through the village gave a feeling that Spring was here. Work at Poppleton Community Railway Nursery is to be commended with links to groups recovering from physical and mental health problems. Pollarding of the willows to retain the view from the War Memorial certainly has opened this up. Residential gardens were excellent with many outstanding specimens of magnolia and cherry trees in evidence and much Spring colour. Work of volunteers at the gardens at All Saints Church was appreciated. Businesses in the village were quite small but were doing their part with planters and donations to the "In Bloom" group. All green spaces were well tended.

Areas for Improvement

The judges look forward to the completion of the work on the war memorial and further development of the Poppleton Community Railway Nursery. The proposed further bulb planting by Vivien and Kathy will add to the Spring colour in future.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The work at the Tithe Barn with the pond area and good information board and the recent work at Warren Lea led by Edie Jones are commended with the tree audit and ecology check. Appreciation of the need to have "wild" areas and low level under planting was noted as was the use of bird boxes and the new path enables residents to enjoy this area. Recycling facilities were noted at the Poppleton Centre and at the car park on the football field. As regards heritage; the Tithe Barn at 450 years old has this a plenty. The work there supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund is excellent. There was no litter, graffiti, fly posting or any other defacing of the village and pride of place was very much evident and good community involvement to maintain this standard.

Areas for Improvement

The judges look forward to seeing further the work at the Tithe Barn, the Diamond Jubilee walk and Millfield Lane Allotments at the summer judging.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Interaction with the Parish Council works well and the stand at the annual sports day raised the profile of the "In Bloom" group as did the garden trail and donations from local businesses. Involvement of the Poppleton Cubs in bulb planting will give them a greater feeling of responsibility in the village. The enthusiasm of Jane and Sarah at Poppleton Ousebank Primary School is commended and Leilah is a garden expert in the making. Funding being pursued and the newsletter to parents was excellent and hopefully York Cares and parents will provide the necessary labour to get the ball rolling. Community participation is good with the Gardening Guild volunteers providing a source of fertilisers, potting composts etc., in the village and organising the annual flower show. Good year round work in organising events/activities to raise funds for "In Bloom" and the Poppleton Centre is well used for a variety of activities. The work by Jim Fergusson at Poppleton junior football club is outstanding with almost 350 juniors, male and female, training there. Fund raising events and selling power back to the National Grid (£750 pounds in the last 3 months) with it's wind turbine means all funds for this enterprise are raised by voluntary means.

Areas for Improvement

The judges look forward to seeing the development of the gardening and nature area at Poppleton Ousebank school and the evidence of community participation in the Tithe Barn and Millennium field areas

Category 2C: Town

Elloughton cum Brough

Introduction

We were met by a well organised and enthusiastic in Bloom group who were determined to show case their entry to the full. The group had taken up the offer of mentoring following last year's entry and have taken on board a number initiatives to balance the judging tour and meet all of the judging criteria There was a real sense of pride within the community and it was clear throughout the tour that all residents were aware of the work carried out by the group to improve the local area.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

There were numerous areas of spring bulb planting throughout the entry which provided the back drop for floral beds containing a range of herbaceous planting the entrance to the Spindlewood estate was particularly colourful and was a credit to the elderly Bob Craft who is responsible for the maintenance of the area. It was good to see that they were using RHS planting guides to plant flowers and shrubs which were beneficial to wildlife birds and butterflies. The group had some good support from local business throughout the entry and in bloom supporters were responsible for the maintenance and care of specific features helping to spread the workload. The raised planting beds outside the Half Moon Inn were well planted with a mix of Spring colour and sustainable planting. It was good to see the installation of mowing strips around the raised beds to make Grass cutting easier. Care had also been taken to ensure planting was carried out to minimise disruption to Local Authority maintenance operations Centurion Way /Welton Road Open Space was a good example of quality planting of the boundaries whilst retaining the open grassed areas for informal play. The Sensory Garden project carried out by the Adult Services Team offers future potential and we look forward to seeing progress in our summer judging. The boat planting provided a unique feature.

Areas for Improvement

Some of the Herbaceous planting was becoming dominant and will require careful thinning to stop them over whelming the beds. There were a number of conifers in the planting at Welton Road and Humber Crescent which will require removing in the future to allow other planting to develop. The group will need to plan now for the future. Some of the shrub beds could be mulched to help with weed suppression and water retention. Look to audit the bulb planting as one or two areas need digging up to thicken up and regroup the bulbs to get a better maximum effect. Some of the mulching at the beds in Brough Road was too thick and not suitable for primulas and spring bedding plants. The plants would have looked better if they had been closely planted in groups and the rest of the area mulched.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The Judging tour got off to a great start with the Spindlewood Nature Reserve and meadow tour. The Volunteers were very passionate and proud of their achievements to date. The extension to the woodland and development of a new meadow will compliment the conservation work in the woodland and provide new habitat for wildlife. The Roman Soldier in the planting beds opposite the cenotaph at Elloughton Road/ Welton Road cross roads is a striking feature and captures the history of the local area. The painted bus shelters are unique and the themes content compliments the history of the support the local area has given to the armed forces of our country. It was good to see the group had put in place a programme to ensure that street furniture was clean and well maintained. The concrete bollards outside of the Estate agents at Elloughton Road Cross roads had been given a new lease of life by School Children planting them to reflect trees and wildlife. These are now a further feature for the area and much appreciated by the local community. The group had made efforts to tackle dog fouling and we noted a poster during our tour. The use of an old builder's bulk bag to grow potatoes was a clever recycling idea.

Areas for Improvement

We look forward to seeing the restoration of the war memorial when it has been professionally cleaned as part of the town councils commitment to the first world war commemoration. We would like the group to work more closely with the local authority to tackle dog fouling and litter in the future. This could be part of the on going discussion to re instate the areas dedicated litter operative. The restoration of boundary hedging on the open space which was part of the Old Roman Road would be a good project for the autumn. Some of the hawthorn hedging could be laid and areas re planted. Removal of the old dead elderberry trees and thinning out set sets would open up the area and allow shrub and herbaceous planting towards the front of the bed. This would complement the planting near to the bus shelter. A great project for the group and British Aerospace Apprentices

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The portfolio which was presented to the judges is very good and provides some background to all the activities which the group are involved with. The Information in the Library and the displays on the TV screens showing the work of the group should help to attract new members. The traffic barrier banner outlining the in bloom group and judging day at the Elloughton Road cross roads. Working with schools to get children involved in the campaign. The group's social events programme to fund raise and involve the wider community including the 1940s Dance and Music event. The group's positive relationship with local business and financial supporters working to improve the wider local community for all

Areas for Improvement

Explore private business staff support to try to get companies to work with you on specific projects. Get them to provide staff to work with you as part of the business commitment to the local community. See if you can get bank staff, supermarkets or large scale employers to give you some staff time to tackle larger projects. Corporate volunteering linked to staff training days could be used

to get more people involved on the ground. Link schools to the RHS Schools gardening initiatives. Consider launching your own Facebook page it is a great way of advertising your work and attracting younger members. The entry was well balanced and started very well the judging should have ended on a high at the Cenotaph and not at the Lady Birds Play Group as there was not a lot to see. It would have been better to view the seeds and plants which the nursery children had grown in the summer and ended the tour on a very positive cenotaph project

Horsforth

Introduction

Horsforth in Bloom are very active and constantly looking at ways to improve the town and local environment. The judges were shown sites such as local parks, the old burial ground, allotments, private gardens, schools and the main shopping areas to demonstrate the hard work being undertaken by the group.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The Methodist Church is very well maintained with a wide variety of plants, the use of climbers against the wall demonstrates good horticultural knowledge and will no doubt add interest and colour to the garden. Special mention to 'Danny' who shows enthusiasm in taking the garden forward. The quality of maintenance at Horsforth Museum was also noted with a variety of sustainable planting on show. Ducklings Nursery offered a whole host of initiatives to involve young children in becoming involved in gardening, all done within a very limited area! It is good to see that the bloom group are improving the area in town used as a car park where old properties have been demolished and also the addition of new planters outside the shops on the main road. The large drifts of daffodils on the verges make an impressive spring display.

Areas for Improvement

Be mindful of keeping beds 'topped up' with bark chippings or a similar type of mulch to add to the aesthetic value and to keep down the weed growth. Consider devising a planting plan for the two new beds adjacent to the car park on 'Fink Hill', ensuring the daffodils are removed from the beds. Encourage Morrison's supermarket to monitor and water the hanging baskets in this very busy thoroughfare. Larger planters could be considered along New Road Side to offer more visual impact.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The work carried out by Freda and Peter in developing and maintaining the Burial Ground is to be commended, the presentation booklet was very informative and will become a valuable document in years to come. As well as looking attractive, the old Burial Ground is a valuable habitat for a range of

wild life. Given the judging route passed through two main shopping areas the judge's noticed that litter was well managed.

Areas for Improvement

Monitor condition of Street Furniture in relation to painting/staining, the QE11 clock tower structure was showing signs of a need for refurbishment. Keep going with the improvement to 'Crabtree Car Park', surfacing is obviously the next obstacle to somehow overcome? Consider adding seating within the Cenotaph garden. The addition of wildflowers within the Burial Ground would add to the bio-diversity of the site.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Good range of funding initiatives ranging from coffee mornings to plant sales. Engagement with both the Ducklings Nursery and Primary School is 'bearing fruit' and the judges are looking forward to the many projects the school has for the spring/summer term.

Areas for Improvement

It could be worthwhile approaching the vast array of 'chain' and independent retailers on Town Street and New Road to try and raise some additional funding and to engage local businesses. Actively look to recruit more 'Bloomers' to take the entry forward in what can be achieved.

Ilkley

Introduction

The dramatic dominance of the moor and river give Ilkley a wonderful setting. The developed town is enhanced by the work of the bloom group, working in conjunction with Bradford Council. This cooperation results in a well maintained thriving town popular with visitors and residents. The central recycling site is impressive and well used, an explanation of its performance would be helpful.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The geography of Ilkley means that the displays are often linear in nature and there are a great many of them. Areas of note are the Memorial Gardens, Regency Court and Brook Street corner. The park by the river was well maintained and very well used. Abbeydale nursing home was immaculate and a great credit to its gardener and owners. Glenwood garden is a new project and shows the bloom effect is spreading to new projects with local residents.

Areas for Improvement

The nature of the main car park makes it a challenging area for effective planting, and there is no easy solution. But to reduce the work involved it is worth putting the area on the what if list whilst looking for solutions. Some of the plant quality in the seasonal planting is variable, notably the pansy's in some areas had suffered from disease. The group were concerned that perennial planting should dominate in respect of bloom. We explained that it was a question of location and what impact was to be achieved. There are areas suitable for perennial planting but care needs to be taken with plant selection and some research should be done, a visit to Scampston walled garden in August may illustrate perennial planting in a helpful way.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The people involved in street cleaning are to be congratulated on how the entire (large) area was litter free with large numbers of people around. The ongoing project at St Margret's Park with good information boards will eventually provide a green corridor and walking path to the moor.

Areas for Improvement

This is going to be difficult to achieve, but to maintain the overall appearance of the town needs to be considered and thought about. The issue is the condition of litter bins and some street furniture, in general the seating was in good condition and well maintained. This is an issue for consideration and there is no easy instant solution but if opportunities arise the issue needs to be addressed. Including information about the friends of Ilkley moor was helpful in the portfolio. It would have been helpful if a member of the group could have given an outline of their work, it would have been beneficial to this area of the marking sheet. St Margret's Park offers Ilkley in Bloom a great opportunity to develop the woods into their own conservation area with the inclusion of bird, bat and owl boxes, the building of log piles and hedge hog houses. This type of work could attract new volunteers.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The portfolio presented was very good and provided background to all the activities in which the group are involved. The information in the library and the displays on the TV screens showing the work of the group should again support and new members. The traffic barrier banner outlining the bloom group and judging day was displayed in a prominent site gaining publicity as well as giving information. Working with schools to involve young people. The group's social events program to fund raise and involve the wider community includes the 1940s Dance and Music event. The group's positive relationship with local business and financial supporters working to improve the wider local community for all.

Areas for Improvement

Explore private business staff support projects that allow staff to work on community projects. This would be available from larger businesses such as banks, chain wine bars and so on. This would be through corporate volunteering. Develop the links with schools and young people, this could include linking schools to the RHS Schools garden program.

Newby and Scalby

Introduction

Newby and Scalby are located on the fringes of Scarborough with the North Yorkshire Moors National Park giving outstanding vistas to the West. The members of the bloom group show great pride in their surroundings, their enthusiasm is plain to see with a great number of activities and projects spanning the calendar year. The group's greatest challenge in 2014 will be the grass mowing policy change made by the local government organisation responsible for the highways verges. Both judges look forward to seeing how the group has progressed during the Summer visit.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The village green was a delight and well cared for as were many of the residential gardens seen. The allotments are exceptionally tidy and clearly popular. The balance between annual floral plantings and perennials is being successfully addressed. The daffodils planted everywhere add much colour to the street environment, and give a uniform and positive profile for the groups sustained efforts.

Areas for Improvement

An even greater contribution by the few local business sites to support the efforts of the group, with more containers or baskets over the winter/spring period. The judges would appreciate inclusion of a church site and a schools involvement with the group, within the summer visit.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

There was no major litter seen during the entire visit, which was a credit to the combined efforts of the residents, the local businesses, Council and bloom group members. All are to be congratulated. The improvement project at the island site in North Street, demonstrates how the group successfully works with several agencies to enhance the local environment.

Areas for Improvement

Consideration to the improvement and establishment, possibly with the involvement of the local schools, of more interpretation signage at a number of the wild life areas located in the area, such as the duck pond and the sea cut.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The year round calendar of events, the fund raising activities and sponsorship, a facebook page, the gardens competition, all demonstrating an all year round commitment from the groups members. Of particular interest were the projects involving school children and their participation in potato growing.

Areas for Improvement

The group is aware that there is a need for greater participation from the wider community in their many schemes and activities. The judges would encourage even greater efforts to recruit more members to ensure the successes achieved to date are sustained and developed further.

Otley

Introduction

Otley is a busy market town, with the well kept market place at its hub, but has to contend with a lot of heavy through traffic. However we found our visit well planned to show us the many contributions the Bloom Group, and its partners, are carrying through to enhance the town for the benefit of the community and its many visitors.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The Riverside Gardens looked most attractive, and we were impressed with the nectar bed and its interpretive board. Good attempts are made to keep the allotments well used, and the Bloom Group has one of their own. The Instaplanta Boxes are excellent. At Bremner Street corner there is now an effective small garden which is well maintained. The garden around the Chippendale statue is good. The landscaping at the new hospital site is most appropriate and attractive.

Areas for Improvement

Need to ensure the allotments that are not used are kept cultivated, so that new tenants can get on quickly and make best use of their plot, or half plot.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

There is good re-use of discarded bedding plants. The point of choosing plants to encourage bees is well illustrated with the nectar bed. Significant statue to emphasise the importance of Chippendale in the social history of the town, also the market area and the gateway dry stone walls. The wetlands area, with its trees and other cover for birds and other creatures, is a wonderful controlled 30 acre site, a real credit to those who secured it for the town, and who cares for it so successfully. Good house gardens at Wrenbeck and the Whartons.

Areas for Improvement

The old swimming bath buildings do distract for the overview of the park!

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

There is a good team of workers who have a good relationship with local businesses and other groups - good to see Waitrose so well involved. Grant from Town Council, but also good fundraising record.

Areas for Improvement

Good to hear that the Bloom group feel they have a voice in the town when major items are discussed - keep up this involvement.

Pocklington

Introduction

Pocklington is a classic market town and like many others a large number work away but it still retains the atmosphere of a quality country town. There are floral displays throughout and many volunteers who are making improvements throughout the town are supported by the Town Council. Banners and posters remind people of the competition and recycling is high on priorities. Burnby Hall Gardens are an asset and the flower bed in the care of the WI outside the gates sets the stage well.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Daffodils along the verges at entrance to the town give good display and the street planters are an asset especially as they contain trees giving height and structure to the town centre. The WI bed has a good range of colour with sustainable planting. The planting of hundreds of tulips by 4

volunteers to support the Burnby Hall tulip festival deserves mention. Betterton Court provides a lovely display of mixed planting and delights both residents and passers by and the church has both flower beds and sustainable planting. The allotment site is well managed and worth note. All involved should be proud of their efforts.

Areas for Improvement

The Balk roundabout needs attention to the sustainable planting. Although aiming to use only tulips will be effective when in flower the planting lacked colour and under planting would have given more impact over a longer period. Some “rogue bulbs” had been left in the beds. The quality of some tulip beds were disappointing and alternative planting should be considered. Further improvement by more business participation could be achieved and would benefit the overall entry. It is hoped that every effort can be made to improve this aspect for our visit in July. Ivy on the memorial needs attention.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The newly formed “Green Spaces” group are already being very active and laying new paths and improving public access. There is a positive attitude to recycling enhanced by the green waste voluntary collection service. The local heritage of Pocklington school adds to the entry.

Areas for Improvement

Consider replacing timber planters at the market place with brick ones to match the existing planters. Other timber planters are in need of maintenance. Perhaps young people could be involved with further wildlife projects in researching or providing habitats. Interpretation boards to increase awareness. Encourage the removal of dead planting from hay racks which detract. Is there opportunity for water collection butts in key areas?

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Liaison with the school gardening club and involving other groups such as WI and Rotary is commended.

Fund raising by plant stall will give publicity and funds. Generally good community involvement and liaison with different groups.

Areas for Improvement

Try to draw in younger people into the core group perhaps some could be encouraged to use skills on computers for publicity. Could further fund raising be linked to publicity or competitions/flower bed design?

Rothwell

Introduction

Rothwell in Bloom have worked hard over the years to make their town a clean and pleasant place to live and visit. The judges were shown many of the projects and areas within the town that they have created or are actively involved in. A small, but dedicated and enthusiastic team working for the community.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Good variety of planters containing bedding plants and perennials throughout the town, providing lots of seasonal interest. Very good design and planting at the Library Garden which creates an attractive and welcoming entrance to the building. The strategic positioning of the new wooden planters in Margaret's Garden to prevent car parking is a good idea and it is good to see more sustainable planting as part of the overall design. The Rothwell Methodist Church garden was particularly well maintained and continues to be improved.

Areas for Improvement

To add more height and structure to Margaret's Garden consider planting carefully selected trees to replace the Robinias - seek advice from LCC tree officer. It might also be worth asking LCC if they can mow the grass in this area. Planning ahead, give some thought to the overall design and planting of beds around the town, especially in areas where gaps need filling or when replacing old plants. It is important to follow a planting theme for consistency. Ask LCC if there are ways you can work together to help improve the shrub planting and containers around the One-stop office. Consider mulching some beds to reduce time spent hand weeding. The conifers bed on Marsh Street would benefit from some selective thinning before the plants become too overgrown.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The partnership working with LCC Environmental Officers and Conservation Volunteers and Rothwell Juniors at the beck is commendable and encourages the young people to take a vested interest in the environment. Likewise good work carried out on the pasture from LCC operatives managing and utilising the 'Crack Willow'. What was once the site of a local pit is evolving into an important wildlife area that can be appreciated by local residents. Good recycling initiative shown in the pilot scheme to recycle food waste. The route was largely clear of litter and dog waste.

Areas for Improvement

Consider including the Trinity Church in future entries. Some of the street benches are beginning to look a little 'tired' and would benefit from some attention. The recycling depot at Morrison's was easily

accessible but the compound was also being utilised by the construction company involved in the new build.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The partnership working between Rothwell Juniors and the in bloom is an excellent way of encouraging young people to become involved in the community. It is also good to see other groups such as the St Mary's gardeners and First Direct working together and to hear some of the plans for enhancing existing projects and new projects.

Areas for Improvement

Continue to look for alternative funding streams, especially from local businesses, to compliment existing funding. Encourage new members to join the group through letter drops/meetings to take the group forward. Seek assistance /advice from other community groups in the area to expand the working partnerships.

Skipton

Introduction

What a pleasure it was to be taken on a tour of this attractive market town and hear about the work of this very enthusiastic and committed Bloom group. There were features and projects at nearly every corner all provided and /or maintained by groups from all sections of the community, businesses, college, private individuals and voluntary organisations. Their fundraising is to be admired and a good example to other groups, there was no shortage of plans for the future.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The selection and variety of plants in many well stocked containers producing a colourful display over a long period, at the Bus station, Canal basin. Town Hall and other prominent locations. The excellent extensive roadside planting of daffodils on the long verge of The Bailey on one of the main entrances to this lovely market town. The grounds of Stepping Stones with a wide selection of interesting and educational features.

Areas for Improvement

We hope to see some gardens on private developments in the summer, and look forward to seeing the planned Basket Trees. We hope also that we can be shown evidence of what goes on in the Allotment community. The shrubs adjacent to the Cenotaph are in need of pruning. We look forward to viewing the completed unusual Herbs by the Kerbs project and the refurbishment of the seats

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The wild garden and biodiversity garden at Stepping Stones with its range of habitats, including a hedgehog sculpture, the ponds, and recycling practices. The Poppy bed by the cleaned Cenotaph, the Narrow boats features and the Sheep sculptures. The new display board at the Diamond Jubilee Garden giving detailed information about the area. The town was generally clean and tidy with a couple of exceptions.

Areas for Improvement

The Judges would like to see further evidence of managed wildlife areas and natural habitats. Some street furniture is in need of attention and weed and litter removed

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The list of supporters, sponsors and partner agencies is extensive and increasing in number an indication of the level of commitment from a very wide section of the community. It was good to meet several representatives, and to see recognition of their contribution in the Wall of Fame. The level of funding raised for the Bloom initiative is considerable, enabling the group to progress many of their projects for the next few years

Areas for Improvement

The judges would wish to see evidence of the interest in environmental issues by young people and schools

Todmorden

Introduction

We received a warm welcome at Todmorden from a group of people who obviously care very much about their Town. The group undertake a wide range of activities all year round. It was pleasing to discover the high level of support the group get from local residents and businesses. We found the well prepared portfolio very useful. We are sure the Town will continue to benefit from the group's efforts for a long time to come.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The variety of projects being undertaken by the group is impressive and obviously making a big difference to the town. The daffodils which were in bloom along the canal side really enhanced the area. The Rotary Garden provides a green oasis in the heart of the town. It was lovely to hear of people enjoying the fruit and vegetables grown there. We were particularly impressed by the well trained fruit trees. We were delighted to meet Mrs. Kerr at Roomfield House and to see the wonderful efforts she is making to provide planting for other residents to enjoy. We were delighted to meet the children of Castlehill School and to see the obvious pride they take in their gardening activities. Centre Vale Park was really well maintained and a lovely place to be even at this early time of year.

Areas for Improvement

Continue the good work with schools in the town. Continue building a relationship with St. Marys to develop the church grounds even further. Perhaps more bulbs might be an idea or even a collection of snowdrops if you plant them in the green next year. Replace the roses in a shady bed by the church with a range of hostas. Perhaps it might be a good idea to think a little further about the function of the secret garden. It might be possible to include some art installations for people to enjoy. Perhaps local schools might be interested in the idea. The sensory garden is a lovely quiet place but perhaps it might be a good idea to consider updating the planting to include year round scent and colour. A few shrubs providing early nectar might be possible, or even further wildlife friendly shrubs.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

We were pleased to hear of the emphasis placed on insect friendly planting throughout the town. There were lovely examples of insect hotels in several areas, especially on the canal side and Station Approach. We were pleased to hear about the use of bat and bird boxes. The Green Route is a lovely idea. Areas were well mulched and will conserve water. The idea of letting local people recycle used bedding plants to their own gardens is a great one. The whole town was very free of litter, graffiti and dog fouling. There was lots of good signage, especially that referring to wildlife planting. It was exciting to hear about the Tour de Todmorden project and also about the wooden poppies for the Peace Garden as part of the WW1 initiative. The fish mural at the canal was very striking.

Areas for Improvement

Perhaps it might be possible to set up some amino habitats in the park, leaf and stick and log piles for instance. Keep trying to use rainwater harvesting where possible. Perhaps it might be possible to compliment the insect hotels at Station Approach with birdfeeders. Add signage about the canal itself to make people aware of the horse tunnel and Guillotine lock. Consider commissioning young people to produce street art for any areas that might be in danger of graffiti. Some boxes and raised beds in the Canal area would benefit from a coat of preservative.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The group is very active and well established. We are confident it will go from strength to strength. The year round involvement of the group is very impressive and really involves local people. Putting articles about gardening in the local paper is a good idea. We were very impressed with the wide range of efforts the group have made to find their projects. Clearly they enjoy great support from the council, residents and local businesses.

Areas for Improvement

Perhaps local schools might help by creating posters to celebrate the Bloom event. Schools might even be interested in designing a logo for the group. Consider using a 'Yorkshire in Bloom , judging in progress' sticker in the back of the car on judging day'

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

Beverley

Introduction

Beverley is an attractive traditional market town, which has many historic buildings, and still retains its ancient character. However it is also a bustling modern centre - well liked for shopping, business, education, tourism and housing. The efforts of the Bloom group complement all these aspects, and do it in positive ways.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

There is a mix of providers from the County Council, East Riding Council through to the work done by volunteers, all of which play a part. The work being done at the Railway Station is quite outstanding. The Coronation Gardens, in the heart of the shopping area, is a most valuable and attractive site. Small gardens, well used areas for sitting and reflecting, are useful additions and are well managed. At the Minster the grounds are being opened up for public enjoyment - good.

Areas for Improvement

Whilst polyanthus, in mixed colours, may be effective, it is a pity when they are used to the exclusion of a wealth of other spring bedding plants. Need to view house gardens.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

What a wealth of heritage exists, and a town trail to enable it to be appreciated. The pastures, with the ancient woodland, are a unique feature of the town and obviously much appreciated by locals and visitors alike. The work on the statuary at the war memorial is much appreciated and art in the gardens, etc is an unusual and valuable contribution. We valued hearing of the work of the Civic Society. There is a programme of renovating street furniture and some excellent work on litter control is obvious - everywhere was very clean and no graffiti was seen.

Areas for Improvement

Watch for weeds coming through tree grills.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

Working with Civic Society. Art in the landscape. The work at the Railway Station on reclaiming flower beds and creating new features, litter picking. The relationship with Minster staff, Town Council, local traders, schools, local authority staff, etc.

Areas for Improvement

Will be good to meet schoolchildren, and also Environmental Health/Streetscene to hear about cleansing and recycling.

Goole

Introduction

Although Goole is situated almost 50 miles inland from the sea it has a rich maritime heritage. It is now a major container port and many local attractions are linked to the sea and canals. Once a central hub to the coal industry it is now a haven for wildlife lovers. Shoppers can enjoy shopping in traffic free areas enhanced with floral features. Close to town is the delightful newly refurbished West Park due to be officially opened in May 2014.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

Some delightful colourful clumps of polyanthus and daffodils in the Memorial Gardens which were well maintained. Formal colourful spring bedding at the entrance to Hook Road Cemetery. The judges were impressed with The Phoenix Garden Community Allotment and the Vegetable Bag Scheme. There were some very good private gardens particularly at West Parkside with innovative designs and quality displays. Beneath the Clock Tower were more colourful displays and the grass verges throughout were well maintained. The Seaman's Memorial was very well looked after and contained a variety of sustainable plantings.

Areas for Improvement

Though the frontage of Goole College is well maintained the plantings are looking 'tired' and would benefit from being refurbished, perhaps rationalizing the number of individual beds thereby reducing the costs of maintenance - perhaps a project for the Create Team? You might consider enhancing the floral beds with some structure permanent plantings to give all-year-round interest which could in turn reduce the cost of annual bedding.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

At Goole High School- the Green Generation Team headed by David Nicoline and his students who were hard at work in the Garden Project area even during their Easter holidays, Well done! The refurbishment of West Park, - the Entrance gates, the Bandstand and the now very attractive extended refurbished Pavilion. Street furniture and signage was generally good and the town was clean and tidy.

Areas for Improvement

Continue to develop wildlife areas and provide interesting and educational material. The judges would wish to see evidence of this in the summer. Try to ensure that the frontage of empty business premises are kept tidy and litter free.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The team have done well to secure support from local businesses by way of sponsorship for planting schemes. Your portfolio mentions the nature reserve at Oakhill which appears to be a splendid project with many pursuit activities, perhaps this could be included on the summer tour. Well done to the Create Team for their artificial flowers, it will be interesting to hear what you intend to do with them.

Areas for Improvement

Some publicity material in the portfolio dates back to 2012, you should try to get press coverage and produce publicity material for all your events in order to generate interest in the campaign to enhance your town. Develop joint projects and then seek sponsorship to implement them.

Knaresborough

Introduction

The historic market town of Knaresborough with its bustling commercial and retail sector has much to offer both its residents and the many visitors to the area. The work of the in bloom team in helping to pull together the many strands of community life is pivotal in helping to maintain many of the public open spaces to a very high standard. Their efforts alongside those of Harrogate Borough Council continue to help to enhance and improve the natural beauty of the town and prove how important partnership working is.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The floral displays at Knaresborough House were of a high standard as was the horticultural maintenance in Bebra Gardens. Daffodil planting alongside Knaresborough Castle add to the tranquil nature of the area. The careful and sympathetic sustainable planting at St James retail park and the recent establishment of the new eco store on the park all make for a well landscaped and vibrant commercial sector. The many examples of sustainable planting mentioned in the portfolio, including the Mediterranean Garden together with the new planting in Bebra Gardens highlight the Towns commitment to permanent planting.

Areas for Improvement

Although great strides have been made in replanting areas of overgrown shrubbery in Bebra Gardens it is recognised there are still areas requiring replanting. The establishment of the tree trail will be of great interest and will hopefully encourage a wider awareness of the importance of the Towns trees. The improvements at High Bridge Gardens have opened up the area considerably and although the planting is immature ensure adequate maintenance is in place to allow this area to maintain it's new open feel.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The considerable work at Conyningham Hall Farm to open up the area is to be commended, the well designed interpretation board is a huge asset to the scheme depicting just how the farm buildings would have looked. The Town was free of litter, fly posting and graffiti, street furniture on the whole was well presented and maintained. The abundance of yellow "Tour De France" cycles along the route added a bit of fun to the town and helps in raising awareness and momentum to this forthcoming prestigious event. The visit to the Knaresborough sculpture trail was both interesting and informative and adds another attraction to the town.

Areas for Improvement

One or two areas of tree planting shown to the judges on judging day were relatively older examples and although strategically important it would have been prudent to show more recent examples. It will be very interesting to see if the hydro generation scheme on the Nidd gets up and running, potentially a very exciting project, ensure that it blends in with the natural environment. It is very good to see in the portfolio what the schools are doing in regard to conservation projects, on future spring visits it may be worthwhile taking the judges to see first hand what the children are doing.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The contribution from the many volunteer groups around the town to the overall entry is to be commended, as is the many entries into the residential gardens competition. The support from the business and commercial sector is evident both at the retail park and throughout the town. The use of a Newsletter is a great way of disseminating information to the wider public. The display of photos at the end of the tour did allow the judges to see the depth of work being undertaken by the group.

Areas for Improvement

It would be good to see a copy of the accounts for the group to see how monies are raised and spent within the town. Perhaps consider providing a short presentation to the judges either at the start or end of the tour to show areas not visited on the day or events which took place at various times throughout the year.

Pontefract

Introduction

Pontefract is a historic town with many listed buildings and a magnificent church in the town centre, whilst it is known for its liquorice production this has long gone and been replaced by two large sweet factories which are the towns main employer.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The judges were most impressed with the gardens around the Prince of Wales Hospice. The enthusiasm of the teacher and children at Larks Hill Primary School for gardening was a pleasure to see. The commitment of the Lionesses in providing plants and maintenance for the horse watering troughs was a delight.

Areas for Improvement

The town centre did seem a little lacking in horticultural features of any type. The local businesses and the public did not seem to be involved in the in bloom initiative.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The judges were pleased to note that there was no graffiti, dog fouling and very little litter within the town. The work being undertaken on biodiversity at Pontefract Park and Racecourse was a credit to all concerned.

Areas for Improvement

Consideration could be given to water harvesting at the racecourse and the introduction of local composting areas. The introduction of more street furniture within the town centre could be considered and some of the existing street furniture could have benefited from a clean.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The number and commitment of the gardening volunteers at the Prince of Wales Hospice was impressive. The commitment of the staff and the children of Larks Hill School are encouraging for the future of horticulture. The work of the Lionesses on the old fashion horse troughs is commendable

Areas for Improvement

To promote Yorkshire in Bloom and widen participation of the public in the in bloom initiative. Increase awareness of Pontefract's entry in Yorkshire in Bloom with increased publicity, posters and leaflets.

Pudsey

Introduction

Pudsey is a busy town within the City of Leeds Metropolitan borough, with a strong sense of community, which the small but very enthusiastic In Bloom group are keen to embrace and develop. Pudsey in Bloom are starting to make a real difference to the centre of the town around the busy bus station and leisure centre with cheerful spring colour from both annual and perennial planting.

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Areas of Achievement

The newly completed garden at the leisure centre is well designed and planted, making good use of an awkward space and improving the area greatly. The Spring garden opposite the leisure centre is beautifully planted and maintained. It is very encouraging to see and hear that the group has a strong commitment to increasing the range of plants used in the areas they manage, including perennials,

shrubs and nectar rich species, both in current schemes and future planting. The residents of Greenside are making their gardens colourful and cheerful with spring bulbs, pots and shrubs.

Areas for Improvement

There is opportunity for more barrier troughs around the bus station, which could create a great deal of colour and impact around the centre of the town. Plans for the area under the tree adjacent to the new leisure centre garden will continue to improve the area. The judges would have liked the opportunity to see more residential gardens and also more of the two parks.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Areas of Achievement

The wildlife area in the park is already a well established area, with bird boxes in place, and the plans to improve it in the future can only be of benefit. The Tripe Baths are a real success! They are quite unusual, a piece of Pudsey history and make lovely planters. It is encouraging to hear of the plans to work with the Civic Society on their restoration.

Areas for Improvement

Consider recycling some of the bedding from the spring planting in the park schemes in other areas. For example, polyanthus can be moved and used under shrubs and trees for spring colour, and left in situ. This could work well in the Lowtown garden. Generally, a little more attention to detail throughout would greatly enhance the entry.

Section C: Community Participation

Areas of Achievement

The group is very well organised and has been very successful in getting funding from a wide variety of sources, and should be congratulated on the number of local businesses supporting the group through sponsorship of the barrier troughs. Getting involved with the local Allotment and Cottage Garden Society shows and the local carnival should help in raising the profile of the group and encouraging new members. The leaflet is good, giving people the opportunity to keep in touch with the group, and again together with the blog and proposed website should be a good way to raise awareness and encourage greater participation.

Areas for Improvement

Try and increase the number of volunteers in the group. You might like to consider having more flexible working days. If some of your activities took place at the weekend, (e.g. once a month during the summer) you might attract people who can't make Tuesday mornings! Are there scouts or guides groups in Pudsey who could help with specific projects? It may be helpful to contact one or two other groups who also enter the Yorkshire in Bloom competition; exchanging ideas is often very useful.