



## **Judges Reports – Spring 2017**

### **Small Village**

**Esholt**

**Gold Award**

#### **Overall Impression**

Esholt is a compact village of only about 70+ houses, but has about 28 members of Esholt in Bloom. It is a truly paper-less entry. It was the cleanest entry we think we have ever judged, but still is a working village with a heavy agricultural haulage depot in the village, the owners being most supportive of the community. Good village signs, and all bins and telephone box painted by volunteers. The play area is excellent and recently painted in colours of Tour de Yorkshire. Graveyard very well maintained, and planting sympathetic. The village had trouble with the car park, but now have a team of volunteers providing security, which has led to big improvements. Small house gardens and grounds of Highview House all very good. Planting a wildflower meadow. Esholt in Bloom are on Facebook.

#### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Use electronic pictures to create an actual display in the pub to show visitors what is being achieved all year round.

**Ledston**

**Silver Award**

#### **Overall Impression**

We visited Ledston on a perfect day, spring blossom from bulbs through to many cherry trees contributed to giving the village idyllic qualities. Whilst community involvement is limited, the villagers had ensured that their gardens were well maintained and usually included the verges adjacent to their properties, in their maintenance programmes.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- The planting density in areas of seasonal planting would have benefited from having more plants to improve the area covered and the display.
- There was a small amount of weed in some of the barrels.
- There was little evidence of environmental issues.
- When and if possible try to generate further help and support for Ledston in Bloom.

## **Village**

### **Birstwith**

### **Silver Award**

#### **Overall Impression**

Birstwith is a beautiful village in the heart of Nidderdale with the River Nidd and the Nidderdale Way passing through the village. The Birstwith in Bloom group has a wide age and gender mix all with overflowing enthusiasm for the in Bloom initiative which means that this is a village heading for gold in the future.

#### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Some attention to the condition of the street furniture could be helpful
- A wider diversity of planting may add to the attractions of the village.
- A medium and long-term plan of what Birstwith in Bloom hopes to achieve in the future would help focus attention on what needs to be achieved.
- Wider engagement with the local community by the use of advertising banners, posters etc., may be helpful.
- Engaging the involvement of local Harrogate Borough Council members may be advantageous.
- Attention to more composting, water harvesting and biodiversity could add useful marks to the entry.

### **Grassington**

### **Silver Gilt Award**

#### **Overall Impression**

Grassington is a village in the heart of the national park. It has an enthusiastic in Bloom team whose emphasis is to ensure they improve their village in way that fits in with the wonderful natural setting in which it is located. The judges were impressed with the large number of volunteers and the amount of fund raising the team are involved with. Many of the properties viewed from the roadside had impressive gardens - again working with the landscape to enhance rather than change it.

#### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Whilst the bulbs from Lubbe had gone over the images shown to the judges evidenced the lovely welcoming display they made to the entrance of the village. It was good to hear how the team hoped to improve the entry to the village on the road side with further bulbs It is worth considering planting further perennials such as 'alyssum, specie tulips, pulmonaria and bugle, to enhance your displays and save on the cost of annual planting.

- It may be worth considering placing some bug hotels in the walls or, if possible, engage the local school in doing so.
- Continue the maintenance programme for the barrels and planters etc.
- It may be worth consider using Oriental Acers in your planters. If you have the spare ground witch hazel may be considered. Both plants give good colour in autumn and winter.
- There were some weeds on the route which would have benefited from being removed prior to our visit

## **Kirkby Malzeard**

## **Gold Award**

### **Overall Impression**

Kirkby Malzeard is a well-established village going back 5000 years and has many fine and interesting features. It is a linear developed village with considerable green space. Kirkby Malzeard in bloom team are a well-established and well-oiled machine. Each member knows the plan for the future and having a vision of how they are going to get there.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Some of the street furniture is in need of attention
- Edging of some of the grass plots may improve the appearance of the village
- More composting and water harvesting could be helpful
- A larger variety of plant material use may add an improved appearance to the village
- Greater attention to biodiversity may be considered.

## **Upper Hopton**

## **Gold Award**

### **Overall Impression**

The Judges were very impressed with the community spirit and the number of volunteers involved with Upper Hopton in Bloom.

There were many bold decisions taken to improve parts of Upper Hopton including the tree survey and taking professional advice that now allows light to penetrate through the tree canopy.

The number of ongoing projects and recent achievements including new leaf bins , the cobbled entrance to the playing field and the wildlife friendly churchyard not to mention the regularly changed telephone box displays which have recently managed to attract press and TV coverage.

The hard work of group members bulb planting and splitting primulas, spreading Spring colour throughout the village and of course the lovely garden displays.

The Spring flower displays at the Upper Hopton Club and the Travellers Rest Public House were outstanding.

The judges were able to meet some children at the preschool group who showed us the Sweet Peas and Nasturtium plants they were growing to plant out when the time comes.

The funds raised at the garden trail in summer are spent on the numerous projects that include the purchase of self-watering barrels and planters.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Continue splitting primulas to plant up round the village and purchase daffodil bulbs for planting in the spaces left.
- Consider the possibility of taking ownership of the playing field from the local authority.
- Try to attract some younger volunteers to help with the ground work to keep up continuity.
- Continue to hold the village open days that encourages people to work together and helps raise funds to put back into the community.

## **Large Village**

**Barwick in Elmet**

**Gold Award**

### **Overall Impression**

This is a well-organised and very enthusiastic bloom group with huge support from residents and sponsors in the village. They also gave an impressive array of knowledge of the area along with its history.

Many of the spring formal bedding displays were exceptional with stunning colour combinations in strategic locations.

The monthly planning chart for the whole year ahead indicates the high level of activity and commitment by the many volunteers.

The list of sponsors and fundraising activities is impressive and enables the village to enhance many areas in different ways.

The range of activities of both workdays and social activities is impressive.

There was a great sense of pride in the village and their past achievements which they intend to further enhance.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- It is hoped that the village junior school will become involved again in enhancing the local environment in the near future.
- Beck Meadow Community orchard will require careful management of the tree canopy if it is not to adversely affect the cropping of the orchard
- Continue to enhance the Jubilee Garden with appropriate plantings and maintenance.
- One or two commercial premises rather 'let the side down' and might be encouraged to get more involved and enhance their attractive premises.
- Elmwood Lane Herb Garden appeared a little fussy and may require thinning leaving the good 'doers' to perform and be productive.
- Develop initiatives to build on the excellent work already carried out on the Community Allotment

**Boroughbridge**

**Silver Gilt Award**

### **Overall Impression**

Brighter Boroughbridge and District (BBD) is only four years old and great strides have been made. There was a complete absence of any litter, graffiti, dog-fouling etc. A

good tour and it was clear how committed people are to improving Boroughbridge. Historical side shown with butter market display at Hall Square. Good Spring planters in various locations.

The work at the Memorial Garden, Stump Cross Roundabout and Chatsworth Grove is excellent. Good liaison with schools and Jennyruth Workshops. Bio-diversity shown with bee houses, log piles and bug hotels and the work of Rick Heavisides at the allotments is outstanding. Construction of compost bins adds to this section. Year round fund raising is good.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Encourage further community payback usage
- Circulate newsletter to active and non-active, nominal charge to be on mailing list for updated information
- Leaflet for Town Trail could also promote BBD group
- The judges are looking forward to seeing the development of the High School gardening scheme.
- Consider the use of mulch in areas of dry beds and also the use of succulents eg sedums and (say) astrantia, grasses etc. which are drought tolerant.
- St James Square could be improved – is this an area for further community payback usage?
- It would be interesting for the judges to see any press clippings arising out of BBD activities promoting community awareness and maybe signage to make the public aware of the judging of the town for Yorkshire in Bloom.

## **Bramham**

## **Silver Gilt Award**

### **Overall Impression**

Bramham is a charming village of ancient origin dating back to Roman times and including Saxon, Norman and even having its own civil war battle at Bramham Moor.

In the village there were many well maintained beds/borders/troughs full of colour with very good plant quality and selection - themed throughout the village. This high standard was also evident in the resident's gardens and the numerous sponsors plaques, posters and promotion plaques showing that residents & local groups/businesses support BIB

and its aims. The work done on Carr Beck cattle slope, the Senior Citizens Centre garden and Gills garden demonstrate the all year-round planning and community commitment.

The judges were impressed with Brook Babes creative learning schemes about nature and the quality of the annual school poster competition.

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

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- The Churchyard conservation programme and grass recycling was very good, however the judges would suggest promotion and evidence for summer judging of more recycling schemes/ initiatives.
- With such a rich history of the area, and celebrating this with the successful Medieval Weekend in the Church grounds, consideration to exhibit or display information about this would be of interest. Also pointing out to judges on the tour items of historical and village heritage would further support your entry.
- The woodland area behind the senior citizens was a surprise in the centre of the village, suggest further sympathetic taming of the area and look at increasing havens for wildlife to thrive such as log piles, insect hotels, bird and bat boxes. Information to public in the form of interpretation board would increase environmental awareness.
- As was mentioned, the judges look forward to seeing the proposed 'Physic' bed - planting herbs and medicinal plants outside the medical centre, making this area a unique focal point.
- Suggest that a review for the schedule of weeding be considered as although most areas were well maintained there were some areas in need of attention.
- We commend the recent initiative of friends of BIB, it would strengthen your entry to provide more evidence of fund raising and promotional activities that you mentioned such as the Gala, plant stall etc. and demonstrate forward planning to show progression. In summer provide more evidence of 'In Bloom' group communication. Has the group engaged with the media? Demonstrate local press or media publicity.
- Continue supporting the exciting development of the school wildlife area, maybe there will be opportunities for interpretation boards.
- Look forward to seeing the progression and establishment of Gill's garden/rockery with the seating/perching area.

**Harthill with Woodall**

**Silver Gilt Award**

### **Overall Impression**

Upon arrival the judges were once again impressed by the well-maintained and extremely clean village.

It is pleasing for them to see and hear about the group acting on points raised by the judges in previous entries, and the judges look forward to seeing the new and ongoing

projects undertaken, in particularly the work already carried out on Woodhall Lane by the group coming to fruition.

Before judging started the group had gone to the trouble to run a slideshow presentation of completed and ongoing projects, which was much appreciated by the judges.

A 'stand out' was the village green, which looked superb, particularly the stunning new village sign. Other highlights were the green on Doctor Lane, and, of course, the well, which forms such a key feature of the village.

#### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- If possible and if resources can be found consider cleaning out/reinstating the school pond.
- Perhaps consider cleaning and re-treating the wooden benches in the village and re-painting the bench at the junction of Packman Lane and Thorpe Road
- If at all possible ask if the herbicide spraying of the grass plots done by Rotherham Council can be anyway improved.
- Maybe consider doubling up on the planting on the entrances to the village to create a bigger impact

#### **Scholes**

#### **Silver Gilt Award**

#### **Overall Impression**

An enthusiastic group with a love and knowledge of their village. The work carried out at the bowling club by removal of an overgrown Leylandii hedge created a new landscape area with a good selection of shrubs.

The group had involved the local school and scout group on litter picks and planting.

Some spring formal bedding areas were unusual with good dramatic effect, with a number of the beds being maintained by local residents. Notably there were an ingenious use of planters, tying them in with local businesses e.g.; the local pub. The sponsorship was impressive along with fundraising activities of open gardens and door to door collections every alternate year. The group are obviously encouraging community cohesion within the village.

#### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Scholes Lodge Farm is a good community recreational asset, with the potential to form significant and varied wildlife habitats. The group might consider how this might be achieved
- Memorial Bed – the density of seasonal bedding plants in the Local Authority beds were rather sparse in comparison to those planted by the group.
- More sustainable planting – perennial planting should be considered for the future.

- It would be good if the school and more young people could be involved in some practical aspects of enhancing their community.
- It will be interesting to see how the re-landscaping of the boundary hedge of the church evolves.

## **Urban Community**

### **Allerton Bywater**

### **Gold Award**

#### **Overall Impression**

Allerton Bywater is a former mining community, which has undergone great changes in recent years and now boasts the title of Millennium Village. Demonstrating and supporting this heritage with impressive sculptures, the most notable are 'The Cage' and the mine carts used as planters. The community has great potential and forward vision particularly with development like that of the Riverside Marina. The judges were impressed with the partnership working with the different groups all driven by a central cause to make this semi-rural village a better place to live.

It was a joy to have a warm welcome and tour round and see all the green spaces well maintained litter and graffiti free, and overall cleanliness was very good. Spring colour and design was evident at every corner with weed free troughs and beds/borders which were full of colour, with very good plant quality and selection - themed throughout to link it all together. All the signage and sponsors plaques were in good condition.

We congratulate all those involved for their warm welcome, commitment and dedication to the community and we look forward to the summer judging.

#### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Maybe re-consider the routes for Spring and Summer judging. Selecting only the best at each time of the year, thus being able to showcase 'wow' factors for both judging's.
- As mentioned it would be beneficial to provide your portfolio beforehand with a judge's route. Consider sending electronically to judges
- Consider where possible, emphasising and providing more information on the variety of wildlife and biodiversity, building on the work you have already done e.g. survey on the variety of animal/birds, photos, and maybe opportunities for interpretation boards. More information boards and notice points will highlight the work done and raise the profile of Allerton in Bloom.
- The water collection in The Cage is brilliant however the judges would suggest promotion and evidence of more recycling initiatives and biodiversity schemes.
- Perhaps consider a presentation of photos or power point with all year-round activities such as the 'Street Party' would help strengthen your entry.
- Look at differing ways of engaging with the community. In Summer provide more evidence of 'In Bloom' group communication and public involvement. Demonstrate engagement with media for publicity.
- It would be advantageous to get on board the gentleman from the allotments for horticultural support and advice.

## **Beeston**

## **Silver Gilt Award**

### **Overall Impression**

Beeston has a well-established bloom group who this year celebrates twenty years since being founded. In that time a range of projects has been undertaken, ranging in scale from barrier planters to the millennium garden along with many other improvements.

A key to the success of the group is involvement of a wide range of groups and companies to support their activities. They have also demonstrated success in fund raising from a wide range of sources.

The comprehensive portfolio demonstrates the impact the group has had and continues to have on the very urban area of Beeston.

The fine company office landscapes add to the overall environmental benefits of planting in the built environment.

The group takes care with plant selection to benefit wildlife when possible.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Continue with the ongoing work to remove damage that has been recently caused.
- The carpet style spring bedding was difficult to appreciate from ground level and may bear a re think in future.
- The rose beds have been re-planted recently and will develop but currently look a little lost in such a large open space.
- The offer of Park Run to sponsor a tree is a good way to encourage users to put something back into the park.
- Possibly due to weather the lower mark for A3 may be disappointing, but this is set at a high standard and you are mostly achieving high to very high standards.

## **Bramhope**

## **Gold Award**

### **Overall Impression**

This extremely good entrant abounds with knowledge, support, contribution and attention to detail.

The whole area was a pleasure to visit and enjoy. All its residents show pride in their homes and surroundings. The bond created by everyone is a wonderful tribute to their

founder member since its beginning in 2009. There is very good plant selection throughout with good evidence of consideration to the environment and the heritage.

It has encapsulated all the efforts of the community joining together.

The amount of planted spring bulbs everywhere and the totally transformed war memorial garden deserve the highest commendation.

It was pleasing to see the generous support from new businesses.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Looking forward to Bramhopes new sign outside the Puritan Chapel
- Is there any planned maintenance for the telephone and post boxes?
- Reaching these standards - attention to visible weeds is paramount.
- The In Blooms outstanding achievements have greatly encouraged the whole community to get involved.

**Calverley**

**Gold Award**

### **Overall Impression**

Calverley in Bloom are a very enthusiastic group who gave the YIB judges a warm welcome. The whole entry was litter free, weed free, clean and tidy and well maintained, an impressive feat given the very busy road through the village.

There are a number of lovely and individual spaces in the village, including St Wilfred's Church, whose grounds are managed in such an unusual way, with sheep and goats helping alongside the dedicated gardening team!

Given the financial pressures facing all Council parks departments, the well-used park continues to be maintained to a high standard.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Consider including the developments at Brookfield – tree planting, memorial and allotments – in future tours
- Keep looking at ways to encourage younger people to join in – not just scouts, but parents of scouts, recently retired residents etc.
- Consider including fruit bushes and trees in the community veg areas, either in the ground or in containers
- Consider conducting a wildlife survey, perhaps with the youth groups, to assess the use of the bird and bat boxes. Observations could be posted on the Creative Calverley social media platforms.
- Consider planting the 'Rotary' crocuses in a specific design, maybe 'Calverley' or C or something with local significance

- Consider how the seasonal beds in the park are planted. Currently, they seem a little sparsely planted, although it is appreciated that this might be a financial issue. Perennial plants could be included, so that the same number of bedding plants are planted closer together, which will mean less soil visible (and less weeding) creating a greater impact
- Try and encourage some of the allotmenters to be involved in the In Bloom initiative

## **Holbeck**

## **Silver Gilt Award**

### **Overall Impression**

An enthusiastic In Bloom group that is making a clear impression in Holbeck through its wide ranging environmental activities. The organisational abilities of its members and the extent of support from public and private partnerships are bringing new life to this community that is undergoing considerable changes due to a number of current and finished developments

The ongoing partnership with Keepmoat is very impressive with extensive replanting, mulching and high levels of maintenance.

The new Matthew Murray Trail is excellent with a great booklet wonderful information boards and new finger posts.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- The judges look forward to seeing the progress at the youth centre.
- The Wonderful mosaic around the Matthew Murray Monument would benefit from being pressure washed.
- Possible Overall Impression of Interpretation boards in the community raised beds at St Matthews Community Centre.
- Continue work on removing the shrubbery under the footbridge on Elland Road.
- Hopefully the level of maintenance in Cleveleys Court will be of a better standard by Summer judging.
- We look forward to possibly visiting the school in the summer and see your work with young people.

## **Swillington**

## **Silver Gilt Award**

### **Overall Impression**

As first time visitors to Swillington, both judges were very impressed by what has been achieved by the Swillington in Bloom team. The results of many years of committed endeavour can be seen with colourful displays of seasonal and perennial planting at strategic locations around Swillington. The splendid Mining Wheel displays at each village entrance is a reminder of the lost heritage of the area. With the ongoing work in the church grounds this year, and more bulb planting programmed for next Winter. It is easy to see how a very industrious team, who should be justifiably proud of all they have achieved, has made improvements year after year.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- A comprehensive review of all the containers maintained by the in bloom team needs to be made, to determine where a greater balance of perennials with foliage, flower and berry colour can be used as an alternative to seasonal planting. This will help reduce the volume of watering of seasonal planting requirement in the summer.
- The team clearly are very busy in the summer carrying out a substantial amount of watering. A more efficient method of watering needs to be considered, together with potential relocation of containers and/or more perennial bed planting.
- Increased use of mulch in planted displays, incorporation of "mowing strips" around containers in grass areas and selective thinning and removal of some larger specimens would support reduced maintenance requirements of a number of display areas.
- Although the team are very experienced at their yearly tasks, to give clarity to the yearly programme this should be expressed as a formal plan or statement. With activities and goals in a calendar of events to help with finding funds, seeking sponsors and potential grants. This could then be included in the portfolio sent to the judges to help them better understand the group's aims and activities.
- Recruitment of additional volunteers is needed and the group are very much aware how pressing this is. But it needs reinforcing here and seen as a priority to ensure sustainability of the group and its achievements

### **Woodlesford**

### **Gold Award**

### **Overall Impression**

The judges were impressed with the effort and commitment of the Woodlesford in Bloom team and their sponsors. The route selected was very good and reflected the diversity of natural and planted environments. The Green provided a good mix of planting, the Hesco bastion replacement wall was impressive as was the planting selected to cover this. The Langdales and Pymont Estate areas displayed good community effort and balance between seasonal and perennial planting. Volunteers and residents had done a good job with a number of containers and larger perennials giving better all year round colour.

The excellent wildlife consideration and varied planting at Woodlesford Lock has really lifted the area for both local residents and visitors. There were some nice personal touches with the involvement of the children from Jolly Giraffes and the memorial at 'Ron's Corner'. The judges would like to commend the very good comprehensive and detailed WIB portfolio. The whole team should be congratulated for their efforts in achieving an excellent standard at this time of year. We look forward to returning in July.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- The Woodlesford in Bloom team have incrementally achieved much during their years of endeavour, but now need to develop a strategy that will ensure their positive profile is sustained. A critical examination and review of each area of achievement needs to be carried out, this will help select priorities and support future plans.
- The portfolio outlined the groups' aims and some projects for 2017. In tandem with the review a timetable of future activities and events, quantified within a calendar over the coming year would help with resource planning and goals. It would also assist the judges if this was included in the portfolio.
- The enterprise of the Grey to Green project was admirable in an area which could be considered challenging. The herb and fruit areas were good. However, for greater impact, increasing the size of the beds may support increased interest and sustainability.
- So much success has been achieved by a relatively small team. Recruitment of more volunteers to join the team is essential if this success is to be maintained.

## **Town**

### **Elloughton cum Brough**

### **Silver Gilt Award**

#### **Overall Impression**

An established entry with many years of completed projects to be seen and admired around the town. The colourful displays sighted at strategic locations were well maintained and showed just what can be achieved by an enthusiastic and committed team of volunteers. The in Bloom Team with their successful levels of sponsorship, excellent web site and fund raising abilities have clearly become part of the fabric of the town, and should be justifiably proud of their achievements. The judges look forward to the Summer visit and the opportunity to meet more of the volunteers and young people who have contributed so much to the town.

#### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- The in bloom team have achieved much to progress to their current level, but now need to analyse what can be done to support reduced maintenance before developing further areas. A review of some elements of design, plant selection and increased mulch use must be made.
- Evidence needs to be shown of a programme for a year ahead. This would help with the allocation of resources and responsibilities for the many differing sites and projects as they develop. This could then be integrated into a three to five year project development plan within which to plan finance and possible grant applications.
- An improvement to the very useful portfolio would be the inclusion of a plan of the well-planned route taken to include the points of interest visited. If this could be provided before the judging day, it would help the judges during what can be a very interesting but hectic visit.
- The opportunity for the development of a statement design and planting scheme at the Loxley Way and Walton Road site would give a significant profile to the teams work and activities in the town.

### **Horsforth**

### **Silver Gilt Award**

#### **Overall Impression**

Situated on the outskirts of Leeds, Horsforth has a thriving community and is a pleasant village to live in. The Horsforth in Bloom group are actively involved around the village with good support from the local town council, civic society, parks and country side service as well as local businesses' and members of the public. Overall, a very colourful spring display throughout the village.

The judges were shown a very clean and thriving village with a lot of history and look forward to coming back to the village in summer. Good to see the lead taken at the local library using it not only as a library but also as a community source for all people within the village. Very good initiatives and pleased to see longer opening hours despite economic cutbacks.

### **Judges feedback on areas for consideration**

- Prune roses in Jubilee Gardens to improve vigour as discussed with judges.
- The recycling of leaves in Horsforth Park is a very good idea but needs a management plan so that compost can be created quickly and used around the village by the bloom group.
- Herbaceous beds in the park could be referred to as "pollinator's corners", as they are welcoming to birds, bees and other insects. Look forward to seeing it again in summer.
- Some weed control required on paved footways. Keep judges under control and do not let them be led to areas you don't want them to go.
- Would like to see more recycling across the area by the groups or individuals in summer.
- Allotment site visit may help.
- More organised composting area at bottom of graveyard would help.
- Include more social media if group can.
- Horsforth in Bloom's document is very good but could be reduced in size and made slightly more compact.
- The plant pots around bases of trees as strimmer guards is a very good and novel idea. Well done.