

Judges Notes for Summer 2026



Category Cat B5 Golden Hop Awards

Blind Jack's

Five Hops

Overall Impression

1. Part of a terrace of shops, this venue jumps out to the passer by whichever direction they approach from as the planters/window boxes and hanging baskets have an abundance of flowers which draw the eye. All planting looks healthy and integrates with the wider location
2. From the front aspect two Trompe L'oeil windows provide additional interest alongside the planters/window boxes and classical window style. The higher Trompe L'oeil references Blind Jack.
3. The front outside space is modest, but clean and well presented, providing a welcoming space from which to observe the market square the venue sits on.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

The front aspect is a delight to look at, but the following could be considered:

1. The planter over the front left window has obscured one of the figures in the Trompe L'oeil – consideration should be given to how that planter is planted next year to prevent this
2. How long the trailing plant over the left hand door should be allowed to 'trail', there is certainly room for greater length (if this is the aim) but to long strands may be off-putting to some potential customers

The White Horse Upper Poppleton

Five Hops

Overall Impression

It was lovely to see the planted baskets on the front of the White Horse. They were well planted, full of colour and offered a great floral welcome to customers. In the yard at the rear of the building the colourful baskets enhanced the sitting area and were very impressive. This is now a lovely outdoor sitting area.

Well done!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Perhaps some thought could be given to the 5 planters in the corner of the back yard , 3 of which have conifers in. These seem to be struggling now and may need to be replaced when budgets allow. This would bring this corner up to the high standard found elsewhere .

The Fox and Hounds Langthorpe

Five Hops

Overall Impression

A very good first impression as you approach the Fox and Hounds. Well maintained baskets and boxes of summer colour greet you with a warm welcome. There is definitely a sense of place here. Taken together, the pub signs, advertising boards and Mr Fox at the door, you know you are at the Fox and Hounds Langthorpe! The addition of water bowls for thirsty dogs was a nice touch. Altogether a tidy, welcoming and inviting place to spend an afternoon in the sunshine!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The bamboo plant in the small pot was clearly struggling to get enough water in the hot dry conditions. Consequently, it was shedding its leaves and beginning to look unhappy. Perhaps some thought could be given to replacing the bamboo with something smaller and more drought tolerant.

The Bluebell Inn Arkendale

Five Hops

Overall Impression

The Bluebell Inn certainly created an excellent first impression. Floral boxes and baskets adorn 3 sides of the building with good quality plants well maintained with the help of automatic irrigation - much needed in this hot weather.

The wicker baskets around the building and especially at the main entrance added a touch of country style and the conifers looked remarkably healthy. Everywhere was clean and tidy. Altogether a lovely warm floral welcome and a lovely spot to stop for a drink or a bite to eat. Congratulations to all concerned.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The only plants that seemed to be burning up in the heat were the begonias. The petunias were loving the sunshine. As we are likely to have more extremes of summer heat in future years it may be prudent to start planning your designs with a substitute for begonias which may cope better.

The Sun, Lepton

**Five Hops and Joint
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

The Sun public house is at the top of the hill and sited by a busy roundabout. When you are approaching it you are immediately drawn to a wall of colour and full baskets of various flowers all healthily tumbling over the sides. The planters are extremely well maintained with the planting scheme being well thought through. There were no gaps in any of the baskets or pots that cover all sides of the establishment. A new well planted boarder has been created at the side of the car park. There is an irrigation system in place for the barrier and hanging baskets attached to the building with 4 water butts for use in the planters and pots.

The area was spotlessly clean with excellent outdoor seating. There is the community food share cupboard, community library and notice board. Everything is to a very high standard.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The standards of planting and displays is impressive, it is hard to suggest any improvement.

The Rowley, Lepton

Four Hops

Overall Impression

The Rowley is tucked away in the middle of lovely terrace cottages. The Rowley used to be the Lepton Working Man's Pub and is now a community public house with the seating area being identified as The Rowley Community Garden.

The garden is maintained to a high standard. The outdoor seating area is across a small road. There are two sides to the outdoor space, both match each other in the colours and planting schemes. The baskets are extremely well planted and of a high quality. The seating areas are very clean and tidy and of a good standard.

Wooden planters blend well with the tables and benches and contain both annual and perennial plants.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider following through with the use of potted shrubs on the other seating area though this is a slightly smaller space it may not be a viable option.

Arthurs Café

**Five Hops and Joint
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

What a wonderful setting for this unique cafe. The beautiful well maintained grounds, with clipped hedges, well thought out beds planted with again well maintained evergreen shrubs, clipped to enhance the appearance of the drought tolerant perennials they were planted alongside of. The herb garden, with signage, planted alongside the seating area and the stunning display of white Hydrangea's along the front of the cafe.

Every area, the car park, paths were weed and litter free. The furniture is beautifully maintained with chairs under parasols and the unique seating pods adding a distinct flair. There is the added attraction of a dog ice cream station too. Not only is there a large car park but also a 'Horse Park', thereby catering for another mode of transportation for their customers to arrive by.

There was a lovely sound of a nearby train passing by, and the sound of customers enjoying and savoring the atmosphere.

A lovely place to visit and one that the owners should be very proud of.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. The judge appreciates that this year has been exceptional with the hot weather and maintaining the grassed areas has been particularly difficult. When the weather permits consider using a lawn treatment to help maintain the strong roots of the grass, especially if we are to endure further dry summers.
2. Look particularly at which plants have flourished in this hot summer. Replacing the ones which have not 'done so well' with those that have. This will help with the overall appearance of the grounds, the maintenance and in the end be more cost effective.

Old Colonial

Five Hops

Overall Impression

Under new management in 2025 the car park planting area is obviously constantly being improved with the sight of a number of new plants being evident alongside some more established ones. There is an impressive memorial stone as you enter the car park and this has been newly planted with a variety of bedding and perennials and has a good amount of bark mulching, proving useful in this warm summer and helpfully suppressing the weeds.

The small seating area has a number of well maintained wooden planters with a variety of plants ie bedding and perennial. There are a number of attractive small hanging baskets around the outside of the pub, thus making the building attractive on arrival. The owner is obviously making strides to improve the appearance of the pub. The judge wishes her well.

The car park was weed, litter and graffiti free and all the outdoor furniture was in very good condition.

Well done to the new owner, your hard work is obviously paying off. A big welcome to the 'In Bloom' community.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. Carry on filling the gaps in the planting around the car park area. Consider using evergreen shrubs such as the smaller varieties of Hebe's.
2. It was evident that some of the wooden planters around the seating area had been planted with perennial plants, which is an excellent idea for continuity. Bulbs could be used in these planters and elsewhere on the site for a seasonal burst of colour throughout the year. The purchase of bulbs could be year on year, therefore building on the colour and eventually being very cost effective.

Saville Arms

Two Hops

Overall Impression

The Saville Arms has obviously struggled this year with the extreme weather we have had this summer. What is evident, is that there are planters for example; the lovely painted sage green barrels in the car park and the baskets, lacking in colour this year, hanging outside of this lovely little public house.

To the far side of the car park are a few wooden planters, painted in the same attractive sage green as the barrels. These have a few Cordylines planted in them and they have survived really well in this hot weather we have been experiencing. The customers of the pub have obviously had the chance to celebrate the fabulous summer of football, which is evident with the lovely colourful England flags scattered around the outside of the building. The car park was clean, litter and graffiti clear. The furniture at the far side of the car park was in a fairly good condition.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. It has been extreme with the heat this year, and the judge can fully understand the complexities of keeping plants alive alongside running a successful business. Therefore can I suggest the proprietors look at possibly replacing plants

with a more drought tolerant variety. Look at placing good organic matter in the planters, water retaining gels are also useful especially when time is precious.

2. Is it possible to put a self watering container in the barrels? Look at how far down the barrels the actual compost is. Pelargoniums appear to have performed well in baskets this year. These may be an idea for next year.

3. Overall - do not worry! Every year in this wonderful country of ours brings some new and amazing surprises with the weather each year.

The Dusty Miller (Mirfield)

Five Hops

Overall Impression

On arriving at The Dusty Miller it is hard not to be impressed by the sheer abundance of flowers in the planters and hanging baskets at the entrance to the premises. The side entrance again has a number of beautifully maintained hanging baskets and a well maintained seating area. To the rear of the pub is a lovely pergola with hanging baskets and wooden baskets, drawing the customer in to a very pleasant garden area, which in turn has wooden planters filled with an array of colourful plants.

This establishment is welcoming to all, adults and children are all catered for along with plenty of drinking bowls placed around for the customers dogs. The car park is surrounded with a bed of evergreen and perennial planting, all of which were coping well with the dry summer. All hard surfaces were well maintained, the furniture is to a really good standard.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. Consider placing a few small evergreen shrubs into the wooden planters for all year round interest. This would also be more cost effective in the long run by using less bedding plants in the summer months, but still giving the WOW factor.

The Flowerpot

Five Hops

Overall Impression

The Flowerpot has a welcoming feel to it on entering from the roadside, with hanging baskets and an area planted with perennials to the front of the property. The seating area to the front of the pub is separated from the pavement by the clever use of an array of barrels.

To the rear of the property are planters full of a colourful display of bedding plants and the lovely sight of the bird feeders in place.

The car park was weed free with relatively no litter and no graffiti and all the paving to the front and rear was clean.

Well done to the owners, a nice place to sit and have a drink.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. The outdoor furniture to the rear would benefit from a coat of wood stain to enhance the appearance.
2. When the budget allows, consider a mulch of bark chipping to the planted area at the front of the premises. This would help to maintain the appearance of the area.

The Pear Tree Inn

Five Hops

Overall Impression

The entrance to the Pear Tree Inn is on a main Road, with lovely colourful hanging baskets and two matching planters on either side of the front door, all of which encourage the pub's customers to enter the establishment. To the side of the property on the car park side of the building there are tubs planted with evergreen conifers, ensuring year round colour.

To the rear of the building is where the customers have the opportunity to take their refreshments at the side of the River Calder. A truly lovely view and one of which the pubs owners have taken full advantage of. With what appears to be a newly planted area with evergreen shrubs along with the evergreens planted in containers, the overall sense of this part of the outside space is of peace and tranquility - even though it is so near to the main road.

The outdoor furniture is in good condition, the car park is weed and graffiti free. Well done to everyone! A lovely place to visit in Mirfield.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. Because of the hot weather and possibly the hot winds we have had this year the conifers to the side of the pub have suffered slightly. Keep an eye on them for further damage and once the budget allows consider replacing with a drought tolerant shrub. The Hebe varieties along with Choisya Ternata all appear to have coped quite well to the dry conditions this year. Something for future consideration perhaps.

The Dusty Miller (Brighthouse)

Five Hops

Overall Impression

1. The Dusty Miller fronts onto a busy main road where its colourful floral displays draw the attention of passers by with hanging and lots of planted containers on the edge of a decked area which invites customers to enjoy a rest and a drink. The planters are mainly bedding plants with a few evergreen shrubs. The decking area is covered with artificial grass which creates a more restful space.
2. There are bright parasols in all the tables which are of good conditions, there is no litter or graffiti. There is a bug hotel in one corner of the car park.
3. My overall impression is that the Dusty Miller is a cheerful and welcoming establishment, had it been open when I visited I may have ventured inside for refreshments.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. It is clear that the plants have been well watered throughout the hot weather we have had as they looked fantastic, however with the changing climate conditions you might want to consider incorporating further drought tolerant plants to your containers.
2. Try and keep on top of the weeds that grow along the front of the building between the entrance door and the bench.
3. The outdoor furniture is beginning to look like it could do with a coat of stain to bring it back to life, perhaps consider this for Spring.

Liversedge Cricket Club

Five Hops

Overall Impression

1. The entrance to the car park is marked by two colourful half Barrells and to the left of the gates n the roadside is a cricket themed bed which includes recycled stumps, bats, pads and a variety of colourfully planted containers. There is a gravelled path through the bed to allow for weeding and watering which leads to a hidden area where there is a potting bench. There was also a log pile and a bird box and a bowl of water. Along the car park and in front of the clubhouse were more colourful planters and hanging baskets.
2. The car park was clean, tidy and weed free, the outdoor furniture is in good condition and well maintained. There is an InPost locker on the car park and there are banners supporting local businesses. Parking spaces were allocated for disabled visitors.

3. Well done for maintaining these displays through the hot weather that we are experiencing. Thank you for supporting Roberttown in Bloom.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. Continue to introduce drought tolerant perennial plants to your displays, to reduce the amount of watering needed to keep them looking great. You could try some Lavender.
2. Continue to use mulch and ground covering plants such as sedums, in the roadside bed to help with water retention.
3. Try and keep the gravel path through the roadside bed weed free.

Zucchini's Restaurant

Four Hops

Overall Impression

1. It is clear that Zucchini's are trying very hard to make their frontage appealing with containers and window boxes planted with colourful bedding and evergreen shrubs.
2. The outdoor furniture is appropriate for the setting and is of good condition and well maintained and the bright blue parasols draw attention. There is also a large car park with disabled parking which could do with a little attention.
3. Overall this establishment feels like it's owners care and is welcoming and inviting.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. The plants in the wall planters had struggled in the heat, perhaps you could consider some ways to help with water retention if these are not already being used – a piece of plastic in the bottom of the wall planter, use of water retention crystals/gel, incorporating some drought tolerant plants.
2. The judge visited on a Sunday morning, no doubt after a busy Saturday evening but it was noted that there was litter on the car park. Try and keep on top of this so that it isn't off putting to customers.
3. There are a number of areas on the car park where grasses/weeds are growing, could these be removed and replaced with evergreen perennials, wildflowers or gravel if looking after further plants is not practical. This would just help to tidy up the car park. Could you consider finding a better way to draw attention to the Disabled Spaces rather than using 3 old chairs. Whilst there is a sign for disabled parking, perhaps it is in the wrong place or is too small.

