

## **BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2015 - JUDGES' COMMENTS HILDERSTONE**

BKV awareness was tackled through regular articles in the parish magazine and the village website. There were a number of "special" BKV signs and BKV posters sited throughout the village.

There were also very good displays of children's posters, especially in the bus shelters. Judges felt that this was a very praise-worthy effort for a small village with no school and not many children.

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

There was a good range of up-to-date local information, including recent election results, Parish Council matters, (Judges accepted the point in the entry form about Parish Council minutes), village contact numbers, local activities, dog fouling, recycling, etc.

The church surrounds were very well-maintained, with well mown grass areas, good planting areas, neat and tidy paths and grave areas. The car park was very tidy.

The village hall surrounds and car park were tidy and free from litter, but there were areas of low growing weeds on parts of the car park on its edges.

The surrounds of The Roebuck were very clean and tidy and it looked altogether better than in the recent past. The car park was very tidy, with no litter or weeds. (The June judges praised the lunchtime menu!)

The telephone box was very clean inside and was well used as an information point. There was excellent planting at the side.

Both bus shelters were in excellent condition and very well used to display attractive children's posters and local information. There were no weeds or litter in the surrounds, which were very neat and tidy. They were both seen as excellent "entrance points" to the village.

All the seats and benches were sound, with very tidy surrounds and no litter or weeds. The June judges felt that the bench near the entrance to the village was being "invaded somewhat" by the hedge at the rear.

The village "gateway" features, with their colourful planting were excellent; but the map of the Hilderstone Walkway was affected by bird droppings and will soon need a coat of varnish.

The war memorial and its surrounds were very neat and tidy and the May judges accepted that the daffodils had been left to die back to encourage good flowering next year.

All the verges and small open spaces were well-maintained and judges again praised the Village Green, which was much improved following the sensible pruning and thinning out which has been carried out. There were no weeds or litter in this area or on the Daffodil Bank.

All private gardens were maintained to a very high standard.

The equipment and safety surfaces in the play area were in good condition. The grass was well cut and no litter was seen in the judging period.

The map was clear, accurate and colourful, with an excellent key and use of colour and symbols. The June judges said that it was “exemplary” and appreciated the lamination and multiple copies.

No significant litter and no dog mess were seen throughout the competition, and the judges felt that there was good evidence of community awareness and involvement in BKV.

Hilderstone is a “tidy, neat and well-kept village” and judges enjoyed their visits. There was good BKV awareness and involvement and a consistently high standard had been established in the village. Although missing out on the Area Finals this year by a very small margin the village really deserved its Highly Commended in 2015. Good luck in 2016!

John T Perry, MBE  
Chairman, BKV Working Group

September 2015