

LARGE VILLAGE

Barrow in Bloom

Silver Gilt, 151 points

Judged on 4th July

Judges: Richard Stephen & Andrew Boyton

Judges Award: to Carolyn and helpers for grass cutting and attractive planting of the College Road junction.

Another busy year where the Barrow in Bloom group has been working very hard to maintain the standard of entry accomplished last year. There have been some real challenges to overcome but the 'bloom' group met them head on and as a result the judges enjoyed an interesting tour around the village. 'The Better Barrow Community Project' which keeps the villagers informed about local Community projects in their area has been very successful. Support from local businesses and volunteers has continued to increase and the quality of the work that is being undertaken by the Bloom Group is of a very high standard. Congratulations Barrow in Bloom.

Areas of Achievement. Section A: Horticultural Achievement

The colourful street planters, ground displays and lamp-post baskets throughout the village are well looked after and are of a good standard, e.g. junction of Ferry Road & Barton Lane, College Road corner, Green Lane, Barton Gateway. The Barrow Beck Pump & flower display is quite a feature in the village and is being well maintained. The feature planting of the compass located in the centre of the Market Place is very attractive. A number of residential properties were looking good as well as St Martins Close retirement bungalows which were being well kept. Throughout the village the grass cutting was generally good. Midby Park was a lovely site to visit; it is potentially a huge asset for the village and is undergoing an improvement programme which can only be good for both residents and visitors.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Throughout the judges tour it was evident that the village was weed and litter free, the street furniture is well-kept and there was no evidence of dog fouling or graffiti. There was some good 'art in the landscape' and it was good to see that the village was making the most of its heritage links, e.g. Clock Making & Tranby Oaks. The recladding of the Barton road planters is a good way of tidying an older planter. Children from The John Harrison Primary School had been busy designing the dog fouling and litter free posters.

Section C: Community Participation

Across the village it is obvious that there is great enthusiasm for Bloom, particularly by members of the bloom group itself and with the volunteers the judges met on the day. Good communications by way of the village 'Better Barrow project update' leaflet is a good way of setting out future plans for the village. It was good to see businesses are supporting your 'bloom' campaign e.g. Six Bells, Harrison's Past & Present and The Cherries. The judges were impressed to see the good level of support from volunteers and other organisations e.g. Madam Marmalades WI group. It was noted that the 'Missing Link' publication was a good way to promote the village's efforts to improve the look of the village and instil good community cohesion.

Areas for Development. Section A: Horticultural Achievement

If possible a visit to a local school and an allotment would enhance your entry. In some areas of the village some of the planting schemes would be improved if the density of plants were increased to enhance colour and impact. Consider trying to provide more floral displays in and around the Market Place. Consider altering the judging route to include more residential gardens. A tour of the church grounds should be considered as part of a future route.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

The village obviously has strong heritage links; could a heritage trail be considered to highlight the rich and diverse history of the village. The judges will be keen to hear about the latest progress relating the proposed John Harrison statue and additional interpretation boards. The judges would be interested to see evidence of any recycling activities that are taking place within the group. The new benches proposed for the Market Place can only improve the look of the already charming public open space.

Section C: Community Participation

The judges would enjoy a visit to a school to see how the younger generation are getting involved with the your 'bloom' effort. Consider using your time (extra 15mins) for a more formal presentation to the judges outlining what had been happening over the last 12 months. Try to gain more press coverage and also if possible use of any notice boards to inform the village of the up and coming judging day. The portfolio could be further enhanced with additional photographs of the work carried out with appropriate names for locations and people / volunteers participating.

A: 80 B: 36 C: 35 Total: 151