



## Standard Marking Sheet

Name of Entry: Wistaston in Bloom

Judges: Sandra Crisp and Adrian Bullock

Date of Assessment: 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024

**Category:** Small Village/Village / Large Village / Small Town / **Town** / Large Town / Small City / City / Small Coastal / Large Coastal. (Indicate appropriate category).

**MAXIMUM OF 10 POINTS PER SUB SECTION**

									Total marks awarded in sections A, B & C	Medal level awarded in sections A, B & C
A Horticulture 40%	A1	9	A2	9	A3	10	A4	9	37	
B Environment 30%	B1	10	B2	10	B3	9			29	
C Community 30%	C1	10	C2	7	C3	7			24	

Total Score out of 100: 90

Overall Medal Awarded: Gold

**Medal Guide: Gold, Excellent 85-100 Points; Silver Gilt, Very Good 75-84 Points; Silver, Good 60-74 Points; Bronze, Satisfactory 50-59 Points. 49 Points and below – certificate of participation.**

**Introduction and Overall Impression:** (Please expand space as required to fit judging comments).

On arrival we were given a brief outline of what the Wistaston volunteer group do. Showing us newsletters, photographs of projects they have done over the last 12 months, and copies of the local community magazine published every quarter, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, delivered to residents homes.

We were introduced to Bob, Vice chairman of the Parish council. Wistaston do benefit from funding from the Parish council.

They have a facebook page, with approximately 450 followers

A community events group, 18 volunteers

Conservation Group headed up by David, a team of 28 volunteers

Litter picking group, 25 volunteers, meet up every 2 weeks, with at least 8 volunteers attending.

We met a small group of the volunteers, who made us most welcome and were shown around by volunteers Helen and Bob Heath.

We had a lovely afternoon. Keep up the excellent community work.

**Judges Feedback Section A – Horticulture:** *(Please expand space as required to fit judging comments).*

Excellent standard of planting and choice of plants throughout the town

The use of compact planting this year has reduced maintenance and suppressing the weed growth

A real effort has been shown to demonstrate sustainable planting schemes throughout the town, making the town more environmentally friendly and more bio-diverse, therefore not having to rely on the volunteers precious time constantly watering and it has helped cut down on plant costs

Overall, the horticulture, plant quality, flower displays, and maintenance was fantastic. Keep up the excellent work.

**Judges Feedback Section B – Environment:** *(Please expand space as required to fit judging comments).*

The natural environment has been considered across all of Wistaston town

The standards of cleanliness throughout the visit was first class. The roads, pavements and channels are clean and weed free. No litter was visible and there plenty of bins around the routes. Even the street furniture has been maintained to a high standard.

Good to see signage around the town by the “**dog wardens**” printed on the footpaths “**clean it up**”, a very subtle gentle reminder to the dog owners.

The volunteer work done by the team was highly commendable.

**Judges Feedback Section C – Community:** *(Please expand space as required to fit judging comments).*

Wistaston has excellent community involvement, but it is “missing out” on the younger community. Try to encourage them to join the volunteers group.

Try to engage with the local shops, encouraging them to have planter/containers/hanging baskets, the group could provide the plants if they would water and look after them?

Encourage the schools, local brownie, guides, and scouts group to involve the children and/or even form a volunteer group of their own

		10-9	8	7-6	5
A1	<p><b><u>Overall Impression</u></b></p> <p>Taking account of all relevant factors, how strong is the impact of the entry in creating a memorable impression? Are designs and materials used appropriate to their locations? Emphasis here is on coordination and overall quality.</p>	<p>High impact with <b>excellent</b> attention to detail delivering the desired results in an appropriate and consistent manner.</p>	<p>Most areas are high impact with <b>very good</b> attention to detail although some inconsistencies.</p>	<p><b>Good</b> overall impact although not always balanced. Some areas make an impact but others need to be more vibrant with better design.</p>	<p>Although generally <b>satisfactory</b>, more attention to detail is required in order to increase impact and improve consistency of design.</p>

<b>A2</b>	<b><u>Maintenance of Planted Areas</u></b>  Are the areas within the entry maintained to an appropriate standard, including cultivation, weeding, feeding, pruning, grass maintenance, tree management and maintenance? <i>(See B3 for maintenance techniques)</i>	<b>Excellent</b> standards of cultivation. Very consistent throughout. Horticultural maintenance and general care is outstanding.	Standards are <b>very good</b> with few exceptions. Horticultural maintenance is managed consistently.	Standards of horticultural maintenance are <b>good</b> and fairly consistent. A few exceptions where further attention is required.	Standards are generally <b>satisfactory</b> . However, the horticultural maintenance programme requires further attention to detail in some areas.
<b>A3</b>	<b><u>Plant Selection</u></b>  Are the plants or trees, used in the planting schemes, suited to their growing conditions, locations and purposes? Is there a diverse range of plant-species to attract a variety of insects and wildlife? Is there year-round interest, where appropriate?	<b>Excellent</b> plant selection with extensive year-round interest, and almost no exceptions.	Plant selection is <b>very good</b> overall with only a few exceptions and ample year-round interest.	Plant selection is generally <b>good</b> , but there is room for improvement in some areas in order to extend year-round interest.	Plant selection is generally <b>satisfactory</b> , however it requires further consideration in order to extend the season and maintain interest.
<b>A4</b>	<b><u>Plant Quality</u></b>  Are the plants or trees vibrant and grown to their full potential? Are they generally free of pests and diseases?	Plant quality is <b>excellent</b> , plants are very healthy, vigorous and grown to their full potential.	Plant quality is <b>very good</b> , plants are mostly healthy and vigorous, with only a few exceptions.	Plant quality and health is generally <b>good</b> , but not always consistent. Lack of vigour in some areas.	Plant quality and health is generally <b>satisfactory</b> , but could be improved.
		<b>10-9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7-6</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>B1</b>	<b><u>Local Identity &amp; Pride of Place</u></b>  Is there a sense of place, with appropriate acknowledgement of local heritage (including biodiversity) and its relevance for the community; e.g. art in the landscape, signage, interpretation, etc.	Extensive evidence of efforts to highlight/enhance local identity. An <b>excellent</b> impression made about what makes the area unique.	Considerable evidence of efforts to highlight/enhance local identity. A <b>very good</b> impression made about what makes the area unique.	Some evidence of efforts to highlight/enhance local identity. A <b>good</b> impression made about what makes the area unique.	Little evidence of efforts to highlight/enhance local identity. A <b>satisfactory</b> impression made about what makes the area unique.

	Consider the pride taken in hard landscape (including streets), open spaces (including grass areas, wild areas and beaches if appropriate), street furniture maintenance, etc. To include cleanliness, absence of litter, graffiti vandalism, flyposting/temporary signage, chewing gum, and effective dog fouling control measures.	Street furniture including litter bins and seating is in excellent condition.	Street furniture including litter bins and seating is in very good condition.	Street furniture including litter bins and seating is in good condition.	Street furniture including litter bins and seating is in variable condition.
<b>B2</b>	<p><b><u>Natural Environment</u></b></p> <p>Is there an understanding of what biodiversity means locally? Have efforts been made to create, restore or maintain appropriate habitats to support wildlife? What has been done to assess the effectiveness of any interventions? E.g. through surveys.</p> <p>Is nature being considered in all activities, rather than just restricting wildlife-friendly practices to a specific project or area?</p>	<p>The natural environment is managed to an <b>excellent</b> standard supporting an extensive range of flora and fauna, with little improvement required.</p> <p>Extensive effort to assess the impact of interventions.</p> <p>Nature is considered across all activities.</p>	<p>The natural environment is managed to a <b>very good</b> standard across the whole entry, supporting a considerable range of flora and fauna.</p> <p>Considerable effort to assess the impact of interventions.</p> <p>Nature is considered across most activities.</p> <p>Very little effort would lift it to excellent.</p>	<p>The natural environment is managed to a <b>good</b> standard supporting a range of flora and fauna.</p> <p>Some effort to assess the impact of interventions.</p> <p>Nature is considered across some activities.</p> <p>Requires further work to improve it in places.</p>	<p>The natural environment is managed to a generally <b>satisfactory</b> standard supporting some flora and fauna.</p> <p>Little effort to assess the impact of interventions.</p> <p>Nature is considered across very few activities.</p> <p>Needs significant improvement in places.</p>
<b>B3</b>	<p><b><u>Environmental Management</u></b></p> <p>Have steps been taken to employ sustainable or ecological gardening practices? E.g. Avoiding chemicals like pesticides and using other biological and physical controls like hand weeding or companion planting. Eliminating the use of peat, implementing solutions like composting, reducing the use of plastics</p>	<p><b>Excellent</b> evidence of sustainable gardening practices, including the conservation of resources and minimising negative impacts.</p> <p>Extensive use of plants or greening solutions to address local environmental issues.</p>	<p><b>Very good</b> evidence of sustainable gardening practices, including the conservation of resources and minimising negative impacts.</p> <p>Considerable use of plants or greening solutions to address</p>	<p><b>Good</b> evidence of sustainable gardening practices, including the conservation of resources and minimising negative impacts.</p> <p>Some use of plants or greening solutions to address local environmental issues.</p>	<p><b>Satisfactory</b> evidence of effort to garden sustainably, conserve resource and minimise negative impacts.</p> <p>Little use of plants or greening solutions to address local environmental issues.</p>

	and recycling those used. Taking measures to minimise the use of water. Where local environmental issues have been identified, have plants or greening solutions been considered, e.g. as rain gardens, green roofs/walls, or as barriers for pollution?		local environmental issues.		
		<b>10-9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7-6</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>C1</b>	<p><b><u>Year Round Activity and Future Commitment</u></b></p> <p>Evidence of forward planning and year-round activities, initiatives or events, highlighting where they are adding value and demonstrating the strengths or uniqueness of the entry.</p>	<p><b>Excellent</b> evidence of activities taking place throughout the year and of advanced planning. The annual programme of activities is exceptional.</p>	<p><b>Very good</b> evidence of activities taking place throughout the year and of advanced planning.</p>	<p><b>Good</b> evidence of activities taking place throughout the year and of advanced planning.</p>	<p><b>Satisfactory</b> evidence of activities taking place throughout the year and of advanced planning but some areas of improvement needed.</p>
<b>C2</b>	<p><b><u>Communication, Education, and Awareness</u></b></p> <p>Use of suitable interpretation, enabling learning and a greater understanding of purpose, and environmental importance. Engagement with schools, young people or other groups. Promotion within the immediate area through local and regional communications. Appropriate communications and media involvement evidenced.</p>	<p><b>Excellent</b> use of signage and interpretation, and evidence of involvement in public awareness and educational programmes. Communications and appropriate media involvement are extremely well evidenced.</p>	<p><b>Very good</b> use of signage and interpretation, and evidence of involvement in public awareness and educational programmes. Communications and appropriate media involvement are very well evidenced.</p>	<p><b>Good</b> use of signage and interpretation, and evidence of involvement in public awareness and educational programmes. Communications and appropriate media involvement are well evidenced. A few missed opportunities.</p>	<p><b>Satisfactory</b> use of signage and interpretation, and evidence of involvement in public awareness and educational programmes. Communications and appropriate media involvement are evidenced but limited and there is room for improvement.</p>
<b>C3</b>	<p><b><u>Support and Funding</u></b></p> <p>Has the entry made every effort to be inclusive, and engage the support of a wide variety of local groups and</p>	<p>The range of groups and organisations engaged are an <b>excellent</b> representation of the</p>	<p>The range of groups and organisations engaged are a <b>very good</b> representation of the wider community.</p>	<p>The range of groups and organisations engaged are a <b>good</b> representation of the wider community. Good</p>	<p>The range of groups and organisations engaged are a <b>satisfactory</b> representation of the</p>

	organisations? Participation should be representative of the local community. Evidence of fundraising and on-going support from a range of businesses and organisations appropriate to the size of the entry, making it viable and able to continue moving forward.	wider community. Excellent levels of funding to ensure the viability of the entry. Support in all areas is sustainable and outstanding.	Very good levels of funding to ensure the viability of the entry. Support in all areas is very good and will be sustainable over time.	levels of funding to ensure the viability of the entry. Support in all areas is good and, with effort, will be sustainable over time.	wider community. Satisfactory levels of funding to ensure the viability of the entry. Support in all areas is satisfactory and fairly sustainable over time.

**Judges/Entrants notes:**

- The form has expandable sections under overall impression and judges' feedback allowing the judges to provide comprehensive and meaningful comments as much as they deem necessary.
- **Maintenance of Planted Areas:** The maintenance schedule should take account of biodiversity needs through the seasons; these will vary depending upon setting and location. Examples could include avoiding hedge trimming in nesting season or leaving some grass longer at certain times of year etc.
- **Plant Selection:** Prioritising perennial or pollinator-friendly plants is encouraged where appropriate. If annual bedding is used, groups should carefully consider the provenance and buy from local nurseries that do not use peat, or, if possible, to grow their own.
- **Natural Environment:**
  - The use of sustainable practices and materials should be encouraged wherever possible.
  - When creating, restoring or maintaining habitats to support wildlife, any features should be appropriate to the particular place. They could be as varied as ponds, 'dead' hedges, or the connection of several habitats to make 'pollinator pathways'. When used inappropriately something as simple as a bug hotel can become a bird feeder.
  - Assessing the effectiveness of interventions is incredibly important and all groups should be encouraged to measure their impact. This can be through a simple survey, or through contributing to a broader citizen science project or national monitoring scheme.
- **Environmental Management:**
  - Groups should minimise their use of plastic, choosing alternative materials where possible, and where unavoidable switching to better plastics such as recycled, recyclable or compostable products. Groups should repeatedly re-use items like plant pots and trays.

- Groups are encouraged to identify local environmental issues, and tackle them, using plants. These can be very simple or low-cost interventions, e.g. adding a green roof to a bin store, or planting a hedge to reduce pollution near a main road.