

## **BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2014 - JUDGES' COMMENTS SALT**

Salt had achieved BKV awareness through the village website, the parish newsletter and meetings. There were BKV posers at the village entrances and on all noticeboards

Considering that there is no school in the village, there was a good display of individual children's posters on noticeboards, at the village hall and on the green.

All noticeboards were in good condition (brand new) and notices were displayed very neatly.

There was a very good range of local information on display, including parish council business and many village activities, as well as dog fouling and recycling awareness.

St James church surrounds were in very good order throughout the judging period, with well mown grass, neat paths and edges and very few weeds. There was some attractive planting at the front of the church, and good noticeboards and a sensible small conservation area. The burial ground was equally good, with neat grass, tidy gravestones, clear paths and a new seat.

The surrounds of the village hall and its small car park were extremely good, with no litter or weeds and a very attractive and well maintained planted area fronting the road. (The refurbished hall itself looked very good and the impeccably maintained surrounds set it off very well).

The Holly Bush car park was very clean and tidy throughout the competition, with no weeds or litter and a very clean recycling area. The beer garden was maintained to the highest standard, with well cut grass, beautiful planting and no litter of any kind. The frontage planting was exceptional – the hanging baskets and other planting was wonderful. Judges said "This was the best pub seen during judging" and "This pub is a real asset to the village".

The telephone box was very clean and litter free both inside and out. There was a nicely planted area at the side, a poem about dog fouling on the adjacent bin. Judges noted a BT "for sale" notice dated 2002 inside the box – although it was still operational.

The seats/benches were in good condition and the judges praised the bench on the village green; surrounds were weed and litter-free.

Although not shown on the entry form, the planted feature at the village green was noted.

All the verges were well maintained; and the refurbished village green looked very good indeed. The improvements have really enhanced this area and it looked very good throughout the competition.

With the odd exception private gardens were maintained to a very high standard indeed.

The map was simple but effective and easy to follow (There may be an error on the scale!).

No litter or dog mess was seen at any time; and there were clear signs of real community effort – the rota of volunteer duties (including watering of plants) and very neat verges were evidence of this.

Salt really sparkled this year and a good deal of effort had been put into BKV – the roadside verges, the churchyard and surrounds, the “new” village green and the pub surrounds were highlights of a really excellent all round performance. Congratulations on being the Best Small Village and Trophy Winner in the Stafford Area in 2014. Well done and good luck in 2015.

John T Perry, MBE  
Chairman, BKV Working Group

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