

## Area Board Briefing Note

<b>Service:</b>	<b>WILTSHIRE BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION</b>
<b>Date prepared:</b>	<b>14 FEBRUARY 2024</b>
<b>Further enquiries to:</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@cprewiltshire.org.uk">admin@cprewiltshire.org.uk</a>
<b>Direct contact:</b>	<b>Mike Manson 01380 722157</b>

Wiltshire's Best Kept Village Competition has been running annually since 1959. It encourages village residents to work together, both to present their surroundings attractively as a contribution to enhancing the countryside and also to build a stronger community. We would welcome the Area Boards support in promoting and encouraging participation in the competition to keep Wiltshire looking beautiful.

The competition is based on the areas of the four old District Councils and is separated into 3 categories: small villages with populations of less than 300; medium villages with populations between 301 to 1,000 residents; and large villages with populations between 1,001 to 3,500 residents. Entries have to be submitted by mid-April and will be judged sometime during the period mid-May to mid-June to produce the first-round winners. The four District winners in each size category then compete against each other in July where they are judged by new pairs of judges to find the overall winners in each of the three size categories.

The overall winners from the previous two years are invited to enter a separate section of the Competition where the winner receives the Laurence Kitching Award. That village can truly be called the "Winner of Winners" in Wiltshire.

Judging is based on a written submission, viewing a village's website and a site visit which focuses primarily on external areas around communal buildings and public areas such as village greens, footpaths, car parks, noticeboards, bus shelters etc. The judges will be looking for evidence of a vibrant village which puts time and effort into its clubs and organisations and keeps litter and general untidiness to a minimum. However, it is emphasised that it is not a "chocolate box" competition. Judging is based upon how well a village is presented, not on how pretty it is. *Entries do not have to come from the parish council: a resident or group could prepare and submit it although the parish council should ensure that only one entry per village is submitted.*

Presentations of certificates and monetary prizes takes place from September onwards, ideally at village events. The main Presentation Day, in September, is led by The Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire (the President of CPRE Wiltshire), the Chairman of CPRE Wiltshire, the sponsors' representatives and senior members of Wiltshire Council. They visit each of the winning villages where they unveil a standard and present the other prizes. As well as the main winners' awards, there is a Best Newcomer Award and a Merit Prize for consistent high performance.

Further details including Guidelines can be found on the CPRE Wiltshire website at <https://www.cprewiltshire.org.uk/discover/wiltshire-best-kept-village-competition-documents/>.

We would welcome the Area Boards support in promoting the Best Kept Village competition.

We also welcome new offers from potential judges and also suggestions for sponsors both of the whole competition and of individual prizes.