

## BISHOPS WOOD – BKV JUDGES COMMENTS 2009

BKV publicity was excellent with posters well distributed throughout the village and at entrances to the village. The additional measures taken to publicise BKV participation such as the circulation of the village magazine, the involvement of the school and the use of the village web site are to be commended.

There were excellent displays of children's posters at the school, village hall and at Old Weston Road, "great variety and good presentation".

The notice boards were generally in good condition, but the one at Old Weston Road needs some attention as damp is penetrating, making notices difficult to read in the rain. The board at the village hall was very good.

Local information was good, comprehensive, informative and up to date. Notices were reasonably neat and well displayed, but there was some overlapping.

Only one re-cycling notice was displayed but there was an excellent re-cycling centre at the village hall. Plenty of dog fouling notices were seen throughout the village, a few dog bins and no dog fouling.

In May and June the churchyard was well trimmed and tidy, but the paths were weedy as were some graves. In July judges found a very good standard of grass cutting, well trimmed headstones, a weed free gravel path with attractive planting alongside. The church notice board was neat and tidy and in good condition.

The village hall car park was clean and tidy, but it was felt that the grass and the hedge could be better maintained; and the June judges noted that the path to the skateboard facility was weedy.

The Royal Oak public house and its car park was clean and tidy, with no litter or cigarette ends.

The telephone box appeared unkempt with cobwebs and dirt inside, broken glass in June and long grass around it. The ownership issue was noted, but it was felt that more effort could be made to keep it looking neat.

The bus shelter was in excellent structural condition, with a good bench, and bus timetable on display. Whilst it was clean and tidy in May and June, litter had appeared in July and it needed a sweep out.

The roadside bench near the bus shelter was good but the benches in the play area were poor - with weeds and long grass under and around them. The picnic bench was very shaky.

The village signs were generally good, the "boulder" sign near the bus shelter particularly so; but the June judges found that the sign in Ivetsey Bank Road needed repair.

The playing field off Brookside Gardens was a bit "rough", more of a meadow than a playing field. There were weeds and long grass at the edges of the play area and the verges and areas of incidental open space throughout the village did not appear well maintained, despite the attractively planted tubs.

Private gardens were good on the whole, but let down by 3 or 4 poor frontages and by grass growing in road gutters and at the back of pavements. The row of Housing Association bungalows was excellent.

There was almost no litter and no dog fouling. There was a feeling of community spirit, with most areas clean and tidy.

The children's play equipment was interesting and in good condition and the skate park very good. However, the long grass and weeds along the fence detracted from the overall impression and the gate at the entrance to the play area needed attention.

The wood chip safety surfaces were generally good, although some weeds were starting to grow through. The rubber squares under the swings were starting to lift and will soon need attention.

The map was extremely accurate, very clear and easy to follow and to a good scale. Although the June judges found it more suitable for a desk top study, others found it easy to handle despite the several sheets. It had a good clear key, with a good use of colour.

Bishops Wood achieved a very good standard in many areas and showed clear signs of community involvement. The village is to be congratulated for coming second in the Small Village Category in South Staffordshire. More attention to verges, the playing field and the telephone kiosk could bring an even better result in 2010.

John Perry, MBE  
Chairman, BKV Working Group

October 2009