



The Hills Group CPRE Wiltshire Best Kept Village Competition 2015

This judging of this year's **Hills Group CPRE Wiltshire Best Kept Village Competition**, sponsored by the **Hills Group**, is now complete. The First Round of the competition saw the expert judging teams from the Wiltshire Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England putting each village under the microscope. 45 villages throughout the county were tested against the competition criteria which look for tidiness, cleanliness, presentation and village community spirit. The parish councils and their volunteers had clearly been hard at work, achieving encouragingly high standards and making the judges' task that much more difficult. Each village is judged within the categories of 'Small', 'Medium' and 'Large' and in the First Round they are only judged within their own district: West Wiltshire, North Wiltshire, South Wiltshire and Kennet.

The winning villages in each district were then judged against each other in the County Round, using fresh judging teams including individual judges from Wiltshire Council. The final results were:

Large Village	Medium Village	Small Village
1 st Aldbourne	1 st Great Somerford	1 st Wilcot
2 nd Box	2 nd Shaw	2 nd Ansty
3 rd Whiteparish	(No entries from Kennet or	3 rd Hankerton
4 th Bowerhill	South Wilts)	4 th Bishopstrow

A quote from one of the judging teams reflects just how high the standard of this year's competition was:

"The overall standard of the villages was very good, and deciding on a winner was very difficult, only 6 points separated all the villages and the majority of category scores were 5 or 6 (better than good)"

Each winning village will be presented with, and keep, an eight foot standard with mounted shield for a year emplaced on their village green. Award ceremonies will be held sequentially at the three winning villages on Sunday 11th October when CPRE Wiltshire's President, the Lord-Lieutenant for Wiltshire, Mrs Sarah Troughton, will pull away the Union Flag surmounting the shield; a Hills Plaque will be presented by the CEO of The Hills Group, Mr Michael Hill and another plaque from Wiltshire Council will be presented, hopefully by the Chairman or the Leader of the Council. Cash prizes will be awarded by the High Sheriff for Wiltshire to each winning village and to 2nd and 3rd placed villages, which will also receive a certificate. All villages in the County Round will receive an additional certificate for coming top of their district in the First Round.

Laurence Kitching Award - Sponsored by NFU Mutual

The winning six villages from 2013 and 2014 were, as dictated by our rules, not allowed to compete in the main competition but were invited to enter the **Laurence Kitching Award**, sponsored by **NFU Mutual** and often called the 'Winner of Winners' competition. This year, All Cannings (2013 Best Medium Village), Burbage (2013 Best Large Village), Stapleford (2014 Best Small Village) and Blunsdon (2014 Best Large Village) all entered. The results were:

- 1st Stapleford
- 2nd All Cannings
- 3rd Burbage
- 4th Blunsdon

The award will be presented at Wilcot on 11th October in conjunction with Wilcot's receipt of the Best Kept Small Village prize.

Newcomers Award – Sponsored by Smiths Gore

For the second year running **Smiths Gore** sponsored an award to encourage villages which have not entered the Best Kept Village Competition for the previous five years to give it a go. It comes with a generous cash prize and CPRE Wiltshire hopes it will encourage even more villages to enter in 2016.

The results were:

- 1st Ansty
- 2nd Mildenhall

This prize will be presented at Stapleford on 11th October in conjunction with Stapleford's receipt of the Best Kept Small Village prize.

Making the Competition Work

Finally it is important to point out that this competition could not take place without the very generous contributions of our sponsors, the support of Wiltshire Council and of course the immense hard work put in by individual parish councils and villagers. It is a joint effort but one we feel benefits Wiltshire and in particular the participating villages.

26th August 2015

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