



EAST MIDLANDS

GOLD AWARD

2021

BLOOMING MILFORD

Village Category

Jeff Bates
President
East Midlands in Bloom

Sharon Sutton
Chairman
East Midlands in Bloom





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Judge's Award
Milford Community Green Space

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CATEGORY

VILLAGE

Blooming Milford

Award Gold

Judged on 12th July 2021

Judge: Jenni Oliver

Judges Award: Milford Community Green Space

Introduction

Milford is a small village in the Derwent Valley situated next to the river Derwent. It is a World Heritage site as has a rich industrial heritage due to the Strutt family for local millstone grit. The Strutt family built homes for their workers who work at the mills, giving the village unique character homes and gardens.

They first entered EMiB in 2011 winning a silver Award & in 2013 winning a Silver Gilt. In 2019 won an outstanding IYN award for the 'Triangle' on Chevin Road near to the A46. Milford Social Club won the Floral display Award. Over the last 18 months work began creating new projects. The Bloom committee, 12 in total remain enthusiastic and extremely busy under the guidance of David Moreton who arranged to meet me at the Milford Social Club where the tour commenced.

Areas of Achievement

Section A

The village was extremely tidy with high impact flora displays, well maintained streets and street furniture. No evidence of graffiti, litter, or dog fouling. New projects this year include the creation of the Community Spring Garden with total thoughts given to Special needs people. Wheelchair friendly and a clear pathway to guide you along the river side.

Milford Community Green Space was set up by a parent from Milford Primary school in 2020 and provided people with a sense of achievement during Covid Lockdown. This dense over-grown area was cleared in September and October 2020. The children and parents meeting through lockdown to clear a very overgrown allotment revealing a swing & a shed that they have recycled. The waste was taken down many steps to the main A6 to be collected by the council. This area has been transformed to a now working allotment to provide a green area for the school and community activities. The new addition of the "laying hens" has proven a great hit with the children, a fire pit so they can stay overnight albeit under the supervision of adults, varied vegetable beds and fruit trees all showing no evidence of pest disease. A grant from Belper town council was given to purchase the materials to make a sturdy ladder to access the site.

The Community Orchard follows on from the Spring Garden. This space has been well design and thought through for its use. Good selection of Fruit trees, healthy looking and free to pick. An information board is displayed to show the different kinds of trees and fruit.

Very recently, they have cleared an area near to the A6 that has be disused for many years. This is an ongoing project for next year and in my opinion would be a lovely seating area or a place to sell their plants and jams.

Section B Running through the village is the very busy A6 main road. Not deterred by this the street has a wonderful display of hanging baskets and post brackets supplied by the council, a colourful display and blend well into the natural environment.

MILFORD

The streets were clean and no litter/weeds to be found. No dog fouling en-route. Recycling initiatives evident along the route. It was bin day and every effort to get them out of the way before judging had been made. The floral display of wonderful planters and hanging baskets at the social club, nurtured by the owner and hand watered provided more than 20 containers of flora and stood well against this fascinating building. Many hours de-heading was apparent which will encourage new growth. The Triangle gave a wonderful show of a wildlife garden with sustainable herbs and fruit trees. All displayed in good condition and growing happily within their environment. Within this small area they have managed to include two new herb planters and a bug hotel to encourage insect fauna.

A grant from Belper Town Council funds the maintenance of this area.

Section C

All year round activity includes seed sowing, open days for selling healthy plants, seeds, and homemade jam from their established fruit trees, this is organised from the chairman's house creating a small income for the bloom. The village is sponsored by the local council for watering and planting.

Areas for Development

Section A

Continue with the high impact along the route and delivering excellent attention to detail. The planters/hanging baskets were of high standard and formed an excellent display along the main road, in turn helping the area become more carbon neutral.

Probably start from the public house where it has a suitable carpark for the judge to park and would give a wonderful display of flora if entered into the Bloom competition. This would be a suggestive way of persuading them to enter for best village pub as well.

Continue developing and increasing the range of wildlife friendly and perennial plants.

Continue working with the school on the community green space developed.

Consider showing before and after photographs, this is a great way to show visitors/residents what you have achieved so far.

Section B

Continue with the excellent community orchard program - story boards showing details of the protection of wildlife along the river and how they are conserving the natural environment. The Wildflowers amongst the fruit trees provides our insects and birds with a wide range of flora and fauna. Bird and bat boxes were evident along the route.

The addition of an information board to highlight the otters den on the opposite side of the river, perhaps near the weir.

Section C

The bloom committee have a great number of volunteers and are always forward planning with their next projects,

many of these can be extended and it would be good to see this included next year, for instance the green space, they have so many ideas they would like to bring to fruition, education within the community being one. They have introduced open days and advertised at the site, I have recommended re-siting the info-board to the main road, attaching bunting to catch the visitors eye. Funding and support through Belper Town Council, the green space allotment & Open days seems to work. I did notice that the church was vacant, and it would make a great place to meet, sell and integrate with Milford in Bloom, it has its own wildlife garden "another great project".