



Overall Winners 2008

2009 Chairman's Report

We have had another very successful year, achieving the Town's 7th Gold Award & 5th Category Winner in the Large Village Category.

This year we have achieved quite a lot:

In March, Matthew Wilson, from the RHS, came to view the large bed opposite Pane's Garage, following a request for advice about planting for drought & flooding. With help from the Town Council, friends and volunteers, the bed was cleared, dug over and the plants suggested by Matthew were planted.

Andrea Oliver the Town Clerk asked us if we could do something to tidy up a rose bed on the Severn Drive / Gardens Walk corner. With the help of our Friends, we did the necessary work, and added some new roses, and the old and new put on a lovely show. The Town Council has also established a new rose bed at the entrance to the Old Street car park.

The Better Welcome package, which is intended to offer visitors an alternative route via New Street to the Town centre, so that they can see that we have more to offer than the riverfront, is now underway. It includes a Wild Flower Walk along the back of the Recycling Centre, information board and benches. We have added to the existing wild flowers by planting several more varieties.

Mr Dave Semple made six bird boxes for us. Three of these were put in trees on the Sports Field, near the Old Road, and three in trees in the Parish Church grounds.

The 'growing' support from both primary & secondary schools is a real boost to our entry. Dave Semple also made four raised beds for Upton Primary School. These were received with great enthusiasm, and we heard a couple of weeks ago that the School now has a garden club. In addition, with a donation of a 'Can 'o Worms', and a basic kit, they have a wormery. With Welland Primary School's garden club, Hanley Swan & Longdon's allotments, it is great to hear that local children are being introduced to the wonderful world of gardening! In addition, students from Hanley Castle High School painted another mural, on the bridge support on this side of the river. In recognition of the commitment from the Hanley lunch time litter pickers, they were given a special award by the Heart of England judges.

The judges made special mention of our 'ongoing, energetic and innovative fundraising events held throughout the year', and I'm sure you will all agree we do hold a wide variety - and thank you to everyone who has supported the events, and also the Festival committees who let us fundraise at their events..

Sadly, we lost two Committee members this year – Pete Taylor because of work commitments, and Bill Fidoe for personal reasons. Earlier this year, we welcomed Amanda Dawson to the Committee.

Thank you to:

UTC & Andrea & Jo the Town Clerks

Brian Williams, for all his help and support

Friends & volunteers who have helped us with planting displays and new beds;
and John Hinton for looking after the hanging basket watering systems.

Barbara Hartley, who raised over £80 from donations by people looking at Mr Bill & Mrs Lizzie's garden in Dunns Lane.

I would also like to thank Geoff Stocker who very kindly engraves the trophies for us.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has helped, in whatever way – we couldn't have done it without you!