

## Suffolk Village of the Year 2014

**Name of village .. HAWSTEAD**

**Number on electoral roll 262**

**Sponsor Hawstead Parish Council**

(e.g. Parish Council, Community Council, Village Hall Committee)

**Contact Name Jayne Robertson (Cllr)**

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- This form may be filled in by hand or electronically. An electronic version can be obtained from [www.salc.onesuffolk.net](http://www.salc.onesuffolk.net) or by contacting SALC through 01473 833713 or [adminsalc@btconnect.com](mailto:adminsalc@btconnect.com).
- Please complete the form, using additional sheets if necessary and **return it by post or email to Kirsty Downes, St Edmundsbury Borough Council by Friday 17 May 2014.**
- Villages up to and including 500 with local government electors on Electoral Roll are eligible to enter
- **Any organisation within your community may enter a village for the awards.**
- Prize money of **£500** will be paid to the parish/town council in the St Edmundsbury Borough for use for community benefit.
- Stage one (the District Round) will be judged in June and your district council organiser will contact you to make arrangements for the judging date.
- Stage Two, the County Round will be taking place on 14 and 15 July 2014.  
**The special awards from Suffolk Wildlife Trust (Conservation) and Suffolk County Council (Open Space) will be judged during the Stage 2 County Round.**
- Stage Three, the Final Round will be judged on 9<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> August 2014.
- Contact SALC if you have any questions and we will help you or point you to the right person who can assist.

### What to include with the application form

Quantity is not always best when making an application. Clear and succinct information might have a greater impact on the judges. Below is information about the criteria and an opportunity for you to explain how your village meets those criteria. However, you must include with your application:

- A clear map/diagram of the village showing specific places of interest/projects.
- A copy of your newsletter or magazine
- Any information produced to welcome newcomers
- A list of village organisations and their contact details
- A list of recent village events

#### Marks will be awarded under the following categories:

Community Spirit	10
General upkeep of the village	10
Special achievements that impress the judges	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

#### COMMUNITY SPIRIT (10 marks)

Some suggested areas for inclusion when completing this section are:

- How do you keep people **informed** about what is happening?
- How are newcomers **welcomed**?
- How do you try to ensure **everyone** can be involved in village activities?
- How many people help out or **volunteer** for community projects and activities?
- Do you have any success in getting support from local **businesses**?
- How many **village organisations** do you have and what do they do?

Provide your information on how you fulfil this criterion here:

*Hawstead Village Hall is the hub of community activity within Hawstead. As you will see from the 'List of Recent Village Events' a great many of the clubs and events held within the village and by the village are held here.*

*The two main organisations within Hawstead are the Community Council and the Parish Council, and both actively try to promote the community spirit within the village by encouraging as many residents as possible to attend events and volunteer for different projects.*

*The villagers of Hawstead are kept informed in village events primarily by way of the Hawstead Journal, our full colour village magazine which is delivered to every household in the village. The Hawstead Journal is produced every two months with listings of all events taking place in the village and how to obtain tickets, parish council and community council news, and many other interesting and amusing items submitted by villagers.*

*The Parish Council also runs a 'Village mailing list' and sends regular email bulletins about Parish Council news, and other items of interest to villagers.*

*The Parish Council have three noticeboards situated around the village which displays current Parish Council information and also advertises events.*

*Hawstead has an excellent village website ([www.hawstead-parish-council.co.uk](http://www.hawstead-parish-council.co.uk)), which is full of information for residents and visitors. It holds all issues of the Hawstead Journal, all Parish Council information plus many other items of local interest. The content of the website is being expanded all the time to include articles about the history of the village, plus initiatives that might be interesting to villagers from the wider community.*

*Hawstead Village Hall also has its own website [www.hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk) which primarily concerned with the provision of information about the hall as a venue for parties and other events.*

*Although there is no official 'Welcome Pack' for new residents of Hawstead, members of the Community Council often make a point of introducing themselves to new residents to welcome them to the village, particularly around the times of major events, and encourage them to take part or attend.*

*A list of events that are organised by Hawstead village during the year is attached. The main events that successfully encourage new residents to come along and meet other villagers are the annual Fete, Summer BBQ and the Village Christmas Party. These events are either free to villagers or heavily subsidised by the Community Council in order that all villagers can participate.*

*The Village Fete requires many volunteers to make it successful, and this is a good way for the Community Council to encourage new residents to take part in village activities. Every year there are new residents helping out in the tea tent or with the barbeque.*

*As well as committee members of the Parish Council and Community Council, many people help with village activities. These volunteers are often recruited by their neighbours. The Hawstead Journal also actively recruits volunteers through its pages. Currently the Parish Council are putting together a team of volunteers to help with various initiatives within the village including footpath clearing, road gritting, erecting and decorating the Christmas Tree, leaflet dropping and many others.*

*For a small village Hawstead has a large and diverse selection of village organisations, all of which are well supported and thriving. A full list of these is attached.*

## **GENERAL UPKEEP OF THE VILLAGE (10 marks)**

Judges are not looking for a naturally 'pretty' village but at how you care for your village. Some suggested areas for inclusion when completing this section are:

- How do you care for your **public buildings**? (Church and churchyard, village hall etc)
- Do you have any special initiatives to **improve facilities or tidy up** the village?
- Do you have any **problem areas** and how do you address these problems?
- How do you care for your **open spaces/footpaths** etc?

Provide your information on how you fulfil this criterion here:

*Hawstead Village Hall is administered by the Community Council. It was designed and built for the benefit of the residents of Hawstead, and is also available for use by the surrounding community (see [www.hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.hawsteadvillagehall.co.uk)).*

*The Community Council employs a Housekeeper who keeps the hall clean & tidy and reports any repair or maintenance issues that she can not cope with to the executive committee who will attend to them either by voluntary or paid labour.*

*Hawstead Village Green and the other green areas within the village are administered by the Parish Council. Hawstead Village Green is the largest area of unimproved grassland in West Suffolk, and is considered to be one of the finest areas of flower rich grassland in the region.*

*So unusual is the Green that the Parish Council are awarded an annual grant by the Rural Payments Agency – a division of DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to manage the Green and maintain the biodiversity of this unusual habitat. It is extremely unusual for a village green to be awarded a grant of this type and the Parish Council works hard to ensure that the Green is managed in a traditional way to specified guidelines.*

*As well as an important Natural area, the Village Green provides a valuable and well used recreational area for village residents. A path way for dog walkers, joggers and horse riders is mown around the perimeter of the green. An area adjacent to the village hall is also mown for use for events at the hall. An area is also mown as a football pitch. The Parish Council have recently agreed to provide two new small sized football goals on this area for local children to use.*

*The Village Green also houses two play areas. A fenced wooden framed play area for children up to the age of 14, and some larger swings. The maintenance of the play area is undertaken by the Community Council and working parties of volunteers are held to maintain and tidy the play area as necessary, usually followed by a complimentary lunch.*

*The mowing of verges, green areas, and areas of the village green is undertaken by St Edmundsbury Borough Council under contract with the Parish Council. The Parish Council have also joined forces with the Parochial Church Council and the grass mowing contract also includes the Church Yard.*

*The Parish Council owns a small meadow next to the Church known as the Millennium Field. This meadow has been designated a quiet recreation and picnic area for use by*

*residents and villagers. The meadow is mown regularly and the Parish Council have provided a picnic bench for general use.*

*The Parish Council have a programme of supplying new outdoor benches and new noticeboards around the village. A new teak bench has been placed on Pound Green, and shortly two more benches will be placed on the green areas in Bull Lane and Whepstead Road (by kind permission of the Havebury Housing Association). These are for general use by walkers and residents. A new oak noticeboard has recently been erected outside the Village Hall and another will be erected on Pound Green this summer.*

*The verges and green areas around the village are kept free of litter by the tireless work of one villager. This is a voluntary role, but the Parish Council provide him with bin bags, and litter picker and a high visibility jacket. The full bin bags are collected by St Edmundsbury BC when the dog bin bags are collected. This volunteer has been undertaking this role of litter picker for several years. The Parish Council give him a Christmas present as a token of their gratitude.*

*Hawstead has three footpaths, as shown on the village map. The Parish Council has recruited a Footpath Warden who regularly patrols the footpaths to ensure they are passable and in good condition. Regular summer working parties are organised by the Parish Council when a team of volunteers armed with strimmers and hedge shears work to clear any overgrown areas of footpath. This is usually followed by a barbeque.*

#### **SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS (10 marks)**

Tell us about any special initiatives/events being planned or held recently which are special to your village and might impress the judges.

Provide your information on how you fulfil this criterion here:

*Two special initiatives of particular note within Hawstead this year are the Hawstead Open Gardens event, and Community Speed Watch.*

*Speeding traffic through Hawstead is a real concern to many residents of the village.. Hawstead Parish Council is currently starting an initiative known as Community Speed Watch. A team of volunteers is currently being recruited. Volunteers will be trained in the use of speed indicator devises and will monitor the speed of vehicles through the village, reporting any speeding motorists to the police, who will follow this information up with car owners.*

*The intended result is to reduce, by education the number of excessively speeding cars through the village. This will safeguard walkers, cyclists and horseback riders and will have a benefit to all village residents by reducing the noise made by speeding cars.*

*The Hidden Gardens of Hawstead is an initiative being organised by the Community Council. On the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2014 over 20 villagers will open their gardens to the public to raise money for the St. Nicholas Hospice.. This event is exciting for residents, but will hopefully also attract many visitors from outside the village.*

*The Village Hall will be the focal point for afternoon teas, book and plant sales, but many of the Hidden Gardens will also be offering 'alternative' refreshments, art and photographic exhibitions, music, the occasional history lesson and many other surprises.*

*The Hidden Gardens of Hawstead is a special initiative that brings villagers together, either as exhibitors or visitors, plus raises funds for local good causes. To have such a large number of gardens open in such a small village is quite exceptional.*

**Completed application forms to be sent to  
Kirsty Downes  
Families and Communities Admin Officer  
St Edmundsbury Borough Council  
West Suffolk House  
Western Way  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP33 3YU  
Email: [Kirsty.downes@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Kirsty.downes@westsuffolk.gov.uk)**

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