


Hertfordshire Village of the Year Competition 2010

Organised by CPRE Hertfordshire

Sponsored by Hertfordshire Community Foundation,
in association with Hertfordshire County Council,
North Hertfordshire District Council and the Hertfordshire Mercury.

ENTRY FORM

Name of village	Hunsdon, East Herts		
Organiser name	David Gibbs		
Address	3 Dairy Mews, Nine Ashes, Acorn Street, Hunsdon		
	Herts	Postcode	SG12 8PL
Telephone no	01920 871433	Email	dggibbs@btinternet.com
Parish Council Clerk/Chair Signature		Date	26.04.10
Parish Council/ Parish Meeting email	hunsdonpc@btinternet.com	Population of village	1100

nb It is not necessary for the competition organiser to be the Parish Council (members of village organisations should be encouraged to lead/contribute), but authorisation should be obtained from the Parish Council to avoid any risk of duplication.

Please return your completed form, no later than 29 April 2010 to:

Jo Simson, CPRE – The Hertfordshire Society
31a Church Street, Welwyn, Herts AL6 9LW
Or email: jo@cpreherts.org.uk

INFORMATION FOR ENTRANTS

We are always trying to improve the Competition. **This year there are important changes to the conditions/guidelines, so please take a little time to read this page.**

There are four categories in the competition:

- 1 Environment**
- 2 Business**
- 3 People**
- 4 Communications**

The competition is in two parts.

- 1 Part A: Categories.** We hope villages will enter all categories, but this is not essential. You may enter as many or as few as you wish, using the forms provided. However, only villages which enter all categories are eligible for the Village of the Year East, North and West awards. **It is not necessary for the same person to complete all categories.**
- 2 Part B: 'What Makes My Village Special'.** All entering villages must include this. It consists of a statement in your own words (max. 500) about your village.

When looking for the Village of the Year the judges seek a well-balanced, pro-active caring, community. **SIZE IS IMMATERIAL providing the total population does not exceed 6,000 (nb: note changed upper limit): what counts most is the quality of life.** All entering villages will be visited once during the period 7-18 June, 2009. Information on the visit, including timings, will be sent to all entrants.

Please Include an A4 map with your entry, **indicating the village boundary**

PRIZES

- 1 East Herts North Herts and West Herts Winners - £250 plus commemorative plaque and village trophy (One of these will be selected as Hertfordshire Village of the Year 2010)**
- 2 Overall winner: commemorative framed certificate**
- 3 Environment winner: £100 plus commemorative plaque and Nazeing Glass Rosebowl**
- 4 People, Business and Communications Category winners: £100 plus commemorative plaque**
- 5 Small Village of the Year Winner (awarded to an outstanding village with a population of up to 1,000 (nb: note changed population limit) £100 plus commemorative plaque and Hertfordshire Mercury Rosebowl**
- 6 Peterkin Award for an individual making an outstanding contribution to village life: Rosebowl (see attached nomination form)**
- 7 Dorothy Abel Smith Award for a young person making an outstanding contribution to village life: Pewter Dish (see attached nomination form)**

(NB: Village of the Year East, North and West Trophies, Rosebowls, Peterkin and Dorothy Abel Smith Awards are held for one year)

TIMETABLE

- 1 April 29:** deadline for entries
- 2 June 7-18:** all entering villages visited once (*details of visit sent out week commencing 11 May*). **The length of time for the judges' visit will depend on the number of categories entered: maximum 1½ hours**
- 3 July 1:** Awards Evening at County Hall, Hertford
- 4 July 24:** Presentation Ceremonies in Villages of the Year East, North and West

*Please return the completed form (5 copies if possible) **by 29 April, 2010** to:* Jo Simson, CPRE
– The Hertfordshire Society, 31a Church Street, Welwyn, HERTS. AL6 9LW. **Or** you can email it
to jo@cpreherts.org.uk. For help/further information call Jo on 01438 717587

THANK YOU FOR ENTERING. GOOD LUCK!
(Acceptance of entries is at the judges' discretion)

PART ONE: CATEGORIES

Category 1. ENVIRONMENT

1. Do you have an environment conservation group? (if yes, please name) YES

The Hunsdon Local History and Preservation Society aims to encourage awareness of, and interest in, the history and environment of our village, honouring the heritage of Hunsdon and maintaining an archive of relevant material. The Society holds monthly talks on a variety of subjects both local and of a wider interest, yet all with a cultural theme. A programme of outings to various places of interest is arranged throughout each summer. An annual 'pilgrimage' to the WW2 airfield in the village to the memorial every February is carried out to commemorate the famous "Operation Jericho" in 1944.

The Parish Council (PC) is an active supporter of CPRE .

2. Do you have any horticultural/Gardening/Allotment societies? YES

If yes, please list :

Hunsdon Gardening Club(incorporating the Allotment Society) welcomes anyone interested in gardening, beginner or experienced, with the aim of sharing such experience between members. The club was formed on 21st May 1958, is affiliated to the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and holds an autumn show with a RHS judge. Hundreds of daffodils greet the eye each year, there is a " Best Spring Front Garden " and volunteers open their gardens for a chosen charity.

The PC appoints a parishioner each year who liaises with allotment holders, administers the allocation of plots, keeps an eye on maintenance, enforces tenancy agreements and collects annual rents. The club organises an annual competition amongst allotment tenants for the 'Peter Darnell Allotment Cup' ; Peter was an experienced and highly regarded ' man of the soil ' whose imparted knowledge helped many. The Cup is awarded for variety of produce and year round appearance.

3. Does your village school or any other organisations have active involvement in conservation activities? YES

If yes, please list:

The village school has a wild life garden which is both creative and a basis for learning about wildlife and conservation.

" Stop Harlow North " has developed a plan for Gilston Great Park which is a positive alternative to a proposed major housing development on green field land to the east of the village. It offers the long term management of the Green Belt and areas beyond for agriculture, forestry, leisure and conservation.

The village centre is a designated Conservation Area and the PC and residents act purposely to maintain and enhance this status. The village pump (a water source until 1952) is preserved and is the logo for the local JMI school.

The PC has designed, and is in the process of manufacturing, a traditional signpost

for the road junction in the village centre.

St. Dunstan Church is probably the oldest building in the parish and the Fabric Committee within the Parochial Church Council works actively to maintain the building. At regular intervals volunteers clear leaves, weeds and generally take care of the closed and active graveyards.

Several residents support as volunteers the running of the nearby Rye Meads Nature Reserve and the SSSI at Hunsdon Mead, owned by Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.

The cubs / scouts spend a morning sweeping car parks, cleaning memorials and generally keeping the village looking good.

A private householder has gained permission to alter a footpath direction and has planted a thousand flowering hedge saplings along the new path length.

At Fillets Farm in recent years there has been extensive regeneration of woodland, approximately 2000 new trees planted and old ones coppiced, and a new hedgerow is looking good along the B180 roadside.

4. Have you joined the County's Parish Paths partnership scheme? YES

A member since 1999 the village is fortunate in having one of the most active Parish Paths Partnership schemes in the County. In recent years our Parish Paths Warden (John Ashley MBE) has initiated programmes to publicise the network of local paths including link ups with paths of adjoining villages thereby establishing a much wider interest for walkers. The paths are supported by leaflets, maps and booklets which are on sale in the Village Store. Comfort to walkers is provided by 16 oak benches at spots *en route* strategically placed to provide splendid views. A circular walk is now in operation incorporating old hedgerows and vintage trees plus World War 11 defences. The Warden keeps a watchful eye on the condition of the paths and their signage and routinely reports problems to the County Council's Countryside Access Officer and to the PC.

5. Are steps taken to encourage villagers to recycle? YES

Villagers were invited to a pre-council meeting where Trevor Watkins from East Herts Waste Management explained in great detail the do's and don't's of recycling. His talk was backed by slides and a question and answer session. The village shop has a shoe recycle facility and if a person is about to visit the household amenity site in Harlow or Ware it is deemed quite normal for a neighbourly offer to be made to include their removal thus making one journey.

6. Are there any environmental projects planned or undertaken in the village? If yes, please list: YES

A traditional wood sign post is in the process of design and a professional carpenter has been engaged to complete the aesthetics. The PC is continuously improving the amenity and usage of the two public spaces the border of ' The Dell ' is scheduled for a rustic fence and planting of hedge saplings to add structure to the existing old hedgerow. Tree surgery is planned with playing fields in mind incorporating Health and Safety. The fenced children's play area is to have a seat, with back, for the benefit of mothers / carers whilst their children play. Following formation of the Parish

plan it was evident that the community is anxious to see traffic calming measures. This is being pursued with Herts C.C. Hunsdon has taken the lead in bringing neighbouring Parishes together to form Stop Harlow North - an organisation intended to thwart efforts by a major local land owner to build up to 25,000 units on nearby farmland.

7. Do you have any leaflets/maps/guides to support any of your initiatives? YES

If yes, please list:

A large detailed, weatherproof, colour map stands in the Village Hall car park showing the footpath network in Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston. Maps and handbooks produced by the Parish Path Partnership are available in the village shop. The Parish Paths Warden is active in improving footpaths in our region and displays the relevant information on notice boards and in the Village Magazine.

The Parish Plan summary document is now available.

8. Do you have Environmental Action Days? YES

If yes, how are these organised?

When it is considered necessary we call upon offenders who have been given a Community Service Punishment to assist e.g., clearing ditches and undergrowth.

Although not directly connected with the Village a parishioner is involved with the conservation of rare fruit trees, the experience of which is useful within the Village environment.

The Parrish Council employs two youths on litter picking for two hours each week. With roadside litter now at an unacceptable level a small team clear the Village approach roads equipped with "Keep Britian Tidy" bags and tabards as EHC cannot meet cleanliness standards.

The PCC organises regular churchyard clean up days to improve both upper (now closed) and low churchyards.

9. Do you have visual 'problem areas' within the village YES

If yes, mention briefly any steps are taken to tackle them?

As previously mentioned the village has a continual battle with Herts Highways to get the approach roads regularly cleared of litter.

10. Is the village involved in any carbon footprint reduction/green initiatives? YES

If 'yes', please give brief details

The Parish Plan identifies the need for the PC to develop a policy on solar panels and other measures to lower the carbon footprint. The plan is shortly to be submitted to East Herts DC as a reference document for development policies.

Bus services to nearby towns have improved immeasurably.

Parents are encouraged to allow their children to walk to school, under supervision,

instead of being driven in cars. They have also been given, funded by the Village, reflective jerkins for easy identification.

Residents and allotment tenants are encouraged to compost more thus making bonfires a rarity.

Category 2: Business

1. Do you have any of the following in your village (*don't forget to include mobile services/people working from home; please indicate how many as appropriate*)

	YES	Number	
Agri/Horticulture	Yes	4	
Commercial/Industrial	Yes	6	
Information Communication Technology	Yes	1	
Petrol station/Garage	Yes	1	
Post Office	Yes	1	
Pubs/Restaurants	Yes	2	
Shops	Yes	1	
Trades/Crafts people	Yes	17	
Other, please list			

2. How do local businesses support/how are they supported by the village (*tick as appropriate*)?

They have local employees	Yes
They have equipment for hire/use in the community	Yes
They are environmentally friendly	Yes
They have volunteer help or are community run	No
They help to support each other	No
They offer a local delivery service	Yes
They support local organisations	Yes
Other, please list	

The Village/ Parish Council attracts/encourages new businesses

Yes

(give brief details below)

The PC generally supports the establishment of new businesses in the Village but is mindful of the predominant need to maintain the residents quality of life. A waste transfer station has opened on the village outskirts and a company manufacturing exhibition stands has started. A mobile and in-house car valet service plus a new catering service show promise of becoming established.

3. Do any of the businesses cause environmental or other difficulties?

NO

If yes, please state briefly how these are dealt with:

Category 3. PEOPLE

1. Does the village have any of the following (*tick as appropriate*):

Crèche

Toddler Group

Playgroup

Pre-School

Nursery School

Pre/After School Club

Other children/young people's groups (*if yes, please list below*)

YES NO

	No
Yes	
Yes	
Yes	
	No
Yes	
Yes	

School Football, Badminton, Youth Club, Toddler Group, Scouts, Cubs and Beavers.
The school has a School Council

2. Are any of the groups in 1 and 2 run by volunteers/parents?

YES

If yes, please indicate which ones:

All above "Yes"

3. How are young people encouraged to be involved in decision making which affects their rôle in village life? (*please tick as appropriate*)

Youth representation on Community Hall Committee/Community org's

Youth consultation

Young volunteers

Representation on Parish Council

Other (*please give brief details*)

No
Yes
Yes
No

The "School Council" encourages youngsters to suggest improvements at school and for the wide community.

4. What opportunities are there for local people to take part in sport and other activities?

Please list

Hunsdon Badminton Club, Tennis Club, and after school coaching. Carpet Bowls Club, leagues and local matches. The recreation ground is too small for a full size football pitch, but a five a side pitch with regulation size goal posts has been erected. School is very active in district events and this year won the District Sports Prize at Wodson Park.

5. Which of the following services do you have? (please tick as appropriate)

Good Neighbour scheme	Yes
Local shop delivery scheme	Yes
Shoppers' Bus	No
Drop in centre	No
Gardening/Practical help	Yes
Health Centre	Yes
Housing to help people stay in the community	Yes
Library (mobile or fixed)	Yes
Lunch Club	No
Meals on Wheels	Yes
Neighbourhood watch/Community safety	Yes
Prescription collection	Yes
Sheltered Housing Scheme	Yes
Shopping help	Yes
Support groups	Yes
Transport scheme	Yes
Other, please list	

6. How is interaction between all age groups encouraged?

Through a common interest in the activities of many village organisations. As an example, pantomimes by Quintessence (the village amateur dramati group) include performances by players whose ages range from 7 to 78.

7. How do your Village Hall/Community facilities meet local needs (tick as appropriate)?

Car Parking	Yes
Consultation with residents on events/improvements	Yes
Disabled access	Yes
Hard paths to facilities on recreations grounds	Yes

Signposted/easy to find

Yes

Stage

Yes

Well-lit

Yes

8. Does the village put on events in which everybody can participate?

Yes

If yes, please list

The annual Hunsdon Village Fete is the highlight of community life when the whole Village comes together. The inaugural Hunsdon Charity Ball in 2007 was held in a marquee on one of the local farms. It was hugely enjoyed and widely regarded as an outstanding success and therefore repeated in 2008 and 2009. Both events are run by the Village Hall Mangement Committee and are well supported by the village and raise substantial funds.

As well as acting the annual village pantomime makes every effort to involve residents who might not otherwise become engaged by offering scenery building and painting, ticket sales, front of house etc.

The school Christmas Fayre and the Gardening Club show also call for participation by all ages.

9. How are people from surrounding areas encouraged to join in events (tick as appropriate)

Joint events

Yes

Shared activities/facilities

Yes

Shared community newsletter/magazine

No

Activities advertised outside the village

Yes

Other, please list

10. Is your Village Hall/community meeting place used by any of the following (please tick as appropriate)?

Baby/toddler group

Yes

Brownies/guides/cubs/scouts

Yes

Coffee/drop in

Yes

Craft fairs

Yes

Drama

Yes

Film Club

No

Hobbies

Yes

Keep fit/Exercise/Martial arts/Dance

No

Local History

Yes

Music/arts

No

Preschool

Yes

Private functions

Yes

Sport

Yes

WI/other women's group

Yes

Youth group

Yes

Other, please list

Yes

Scrabble Club and Gardening Club, Doctors Surgery, Dispensary, Child Care Clinic, Annual Service of Remembrance, PC (10 per year) and VH Management Committee (10 per year)

11. How do religious groups play an active rôle in village life?

A variety of regular service types are held, ranging from conventional Communion Service and Family Service in the Church to Chapel Praise in the small chapel more centrally located to the village. Services are held midweek as well as Sundays and a variety of house groups meet regularly throughout the year. Additionally the Church actively supports special services, such as the annual Remembrance Day Service and rededication of the Airfield Memorial to those who served their countries at RAF Hunsdon during WWII. The Rector visits the school to hold an assembly each week and otherwise engages extensively with everyday life in the Village. St. Dunstan's Church has an active regular congregation and has managed to involve some more young families, inspired largely by the arrival 4-years ago of a new Rector and his own young family.

12. Has your village carried out, or is it planning to carry out, any of the following community projects (tick as appropriate)?

Housing needs survey

Yes

Parish Plan

Yes

Transport survey

Yes

Village Design Statement

Yes

Other, please list -

A Parish Plan was approved by the PC in Feb 2009. The Plan incorporates all the elements listed above and was completed after extensive Village consultation. It is a Living Plan and will be kept under review through regular reporting to the PC. Each policy area is "owned" by an organisation or member of the Community to implement and report. With agreement of East Herts District Council Hunsdon PC have taken the initiative in inviting Hastoe Builders to discuss their plans for affordable housing.

Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes

Category 4. Communications

1. **Is there a village newsletter?** YES
- Do all residents receive it?** NO
- Is it free?** NO

2. **How are new people welcomed into the village? (Please tick as appropriate)**

Welcome pack	Yes	
Free copy of village/Parish Council newsletter		No
Visit		No
Newcomers event, e.g. coffee morning		No
Other, please list		

The newcomers' event will come to fruition once the Village Hall annexe is completed.

3. **How does the Parish Council communicate with residents (please tick as appropriate)**

Forums	No
Noticeboard (s)	Yes (3)
Parish Council Newsletter delivered to every household	No
Village Newsletter	Yes
Village website	Yes
Parish Council website	Yes
Email groups	No
Other, please list	

4. **Is there a village directory? If 'yes', is it (please tick as appropriate):**

Regularly updated	
Delivered to all households	
Accessible in a central outlet	Yes

5. **Do you have a village website?** YES

If yes, please give website address (judges will be visiting it)

www.hunston.org.uk

6. Does your village have a public Internet terminal?

NO

If yes, Location:

...but proposed in the completed Village Hall

7. Do you have any ICT/Internet training within the community?

YES

If yes, please give brief details

An IT support company is established in the village and provides IT training from basic to advanced. There are also those reasonably familiar with the latest IT and who are generally willing to help out those less able. This will be introduced as part of the new Village Hall annexe.

8. Do any of the local businesses offer a photocopying service?

NO

None at present but again the envisage terminal in the new annexe will have photocopying facility.

PART TWO:

'What Makes My Village Special' (please, no more than 500 words)

Hunsdon sits on a plateau of fertile land between the valleys of the Lee and Stort, and from pre-history has provided a safe and sustainable environment for its community. There is archaeological evidence of Roman occupation, the village is mentioned in Domesday Book and Henry VIII took ownership of the manor house in the C15th for his children to grow up in. The community flourished over hundreds of years resulting in a glorious variety of houses around the village centre - many now listed and incorporated into a Conservation Area. However the community was occasionally troubled by the outside world, such as during World War II when a large area of farmland was commandeered to build an airfield and from which several notable missions were flown, including Operation Jericho to release resistance fighters from Amiens Prison. The village community is now at the forefront of efforts to resist the extension of Harlow by up to 25,000 new homes on that same land.

Perhaps, today, Hunsdon has no particular claim to widespread claim, but its history and environment remain as particular reasons for residents' pride in and endearment for their community.

That appreciation of their community is manifest in the number of small businesses that still flourish in the village (even though – like so many others – many fewer residents actually work locally) and the many interest groups for all ages. The most current example of the community pulling together is in a major project to rebuild, and substantially improve, much of the C17th century Village Hall. Residents have been involved in planning its sympathetic refurbishment and in finding the £230K required, of which some £103K has been raised through numerous local fund-raising events and donations. The project is progressing well and is ahead of schedule.

Over the past two years another group has been preparing a Parish Plan, and the Parish Council is now actively working to implement proposals that arose from that exercise. The Parochial Church Council is faced with the continuing dilapidation of the chapel in the village centre (in contrast to the church $\frac{3}{4}$ mile outside the village) and plans are currently being prepared and discussed with the whole community to replace that with a new and much improved facility. Hunsdon JMI school is, similarly, seen as a vital and integral part of the village; many residents give their time and varying skills voluntarily to help the pupils and so, ultimately, for the future of the community.

Hunsdon Parish Council is pleased to make its entry into the 2010 Village of the Year competition. We are delighted to have been successful on a number of occasions before in the Business and Communications categories and in 2004 we were judged to be the overall winner for Hertfordshire; we subsequently went on to be awarded top prize in the Community section for the South and East region.

We think our village is special by nature of its environment, its history and its people which, together, make up its precious community.

Word count: 500

THE PETERKIN AWARD NOMINATION:

The Peterkin Award is a Rosebowl donated by a former Village of the Year Judge, Margaret Peterkin, and held for a year. The award is given, at the Judges' discretion, to an individual making an outstanding contribution to village life. If you wish to make a nomination this year, please complete the section below.

NB: It would also be most helpful if your nominee is able to be present when the Judges make their visit to the village.

Nominee:

.....

Nominee tel: Email:

.....

Nominee address:

.....

....

Nominated by:

.....

Nominator's tel:

Email:.....

Reason(s) for

nomination:.....

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THE DOROTHY ABEL SMITH AWARD NOMINATION:

The Dorothy Abel Smith Award is a Pewter dish donated by one of our Village of the Year Judges, Dorothy Abel Smith, MBE, and held for a year. The award is given, at the Judges' discretion, to a young person aged up to 18 who is making an outstanding contribution to village life. If you wish to make a nomination this year, please complete the section below.

NB: It would also be most helpful if your nominee is able to be present when the Judges make their visit to the village.

Nominee:
.....

Nominee tel: Email:

Nominee address:
.....
.....
.....

Nominated by:
.....

Nominator's tel:..... Email:
.....

Reason(s) for nomination:
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.....
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Map of Hunsdon showing Parish Boundary

