



## South & South East in Bloom - Parishes 2023

### Cliffsend Parish Council

#### Section A - Community Involvement (40% or 40 points)

The Parish is working towards things such as:

- Being inclusive of local people, including Local ownership
- Making a difference to local people & Involving local people in decision-making, communication & implementation
- Representative of the wider local community
- Planning for the future
- Working in partnership with local groups and local organisations (i.e. police, environmental groups etc).
- Working towards access for all.

Total Points Assessed (Out of 40)	<b>30</b>
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#### Section B - Environmental Responsibility (30% or 30 points)

The Parish is engaged in environmental activities such as:

- Conserving local habitats & heritage (wildlife, natural landscapes & built environment)
- Home or community composting, Green Recycling
- Creating, maintaining or improving green spaces (Village Greens, parks & pocket parks, verges, woodlands, churchyards etc.).
- The Parish is engaged in addressing environmental issues such as the control of Fly-tipping, Fly-posting, Litter, Graffiti & Dog fouling.

Total Points Assessed (Out of 30)	<b>24</b>
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#### Section C - Gardening/Horticulture/Conservation Achievement (30% or 30 points)

- The Parish Council is employing good gardening, horticultural and tree management practices.
- The Parish Council encourages residents to care for their gardens, allotments etc.
- That residential gardens are generally well maintained and mostly enhance the parishes appearance.

Total Points Assessed (Out of 30)	<b>20</b>
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<b>GRAND TOTAL POINTS ASSESSED</b>	<b>74</b>	
<b>LEVEL ACHIEVED</b>		<b>Silver-Gilt</b>

## Areas of Achievement

What a change from my last visit. Things are happening in Cliffsend. We started at the Village Hall where there is a lovely yarn bombing of the letter box with a Wimbledon themed scene. I was impressed by Cllr Judith Fricker and Alison Willoughby-Browne detailing how they are trying to the elderly in the village to interact with the younger children and help transfer skills and knowledge to the next generation. Tuesday morning coffee sessions are used to update residents on new initiatives which include hedgehogs and the Rewilding scheme. A new sign board greeted us as we entered the Recreation Ground. There is now a very effective wild walk around the tree and shrub perimeter which was mentioned last year but this was my first time walking it. What a brilliant idea and with the odd bird box and old slate signage, together with habitat piles courtesy of Thanet District Council in the corner where a tree had to be felled due to highway safety concerns. The pathway allows odd 'escape' routes for children as you walk it so in my mind meets safety concerns but importantly allows children in the village a taste of the wild countryside in a safe environment. A Forest School takes place using these areas and a tepee has been made I understand for youngsters by a grandad of some children. The Parish Council supports a 'Camp in the Meadow' in the summer. Links with the nearby Pegwell Country Park are proving useful in giving guidance to the Parish Council and actual collaborative work on bird boxes and bird spotting. The insect house at the entrance to the meadow area is a real work of art and humour. There are links as well to 'Dottie the Hedgehog' rehoming group in Herne Bay I believe. The meadow area as we entered was a delightful sight. This has changed from what I recall and is a real gem in the making. The variety of grasses was delightful and there are signs of the future potential with wildflowers. There are real efforts by the Parish to establish useful contacts to achieve their aims and to ensure other bodies are aware of the journey they are on. TDC has appointed a Climate Change Officer and Anna who has recently left was very helpful but already her replacement Hannah is active it seems in supporting the Village. KCC are also a critical element and a new contact Tony seems supportive, keep these contacts up. There is to be a new orchard on Bakers Fields from developer's funds and this has just been agreed and will be a great asset to the central village area. The Viking Ship green also now has a wild meadow area and this links with the Country Park and there is work to reduce the impact of the petrol station which is very intrusive visually on the edge of what is an environmentally sensitive bay with very high levels of protection for its bird life in particular. Finally a big thankyou to Beryl who really does seem to have embraced this encouragement of nature into the village. The use of her garden for village functions on occasions is a sign of the community feeling I felt on this visit. Long may it continue.

## Areas for Development

The Meadow area near the Village Hall and the Viking Ship look great but to increase species diversity you really need to try and remove the autumn grass cuttings. This is probably best done in late September or early October with an agricultural contractor who can cut and then collect the cut grass. The arising's can be left around the edge of the site on the boundaries where they will enhance the biodiversity of the area. The key to species diversity in meadows is decreasing the soil nutrient and the rotting grass cuttings will smother flowering plants and add nutrients to the soil as they rot, so this is why they need removing, otherwise you are just creating just grass and fewer flowers. Working with TDC you may be able to encourage them to do a joint cut and clear on the Viking Ship grassland where you both benefit by getting a reduced price. The new orchard proposed needs careful consideration of what rootstock you are going to use on the new fruit trees. Modern fruit farming has created a series of root types that in turn limit the height that the future fruit tree will achieve. These have been used for fruit farmers so that climbing of fruit trees at harvest time is not required but equally allows more trees in a row or field to ensure a decent harvest. Look or get advice about this before you buy, you are looking for rootstocks that will have Initials and numbers e.g. M26. There are plenty of commercial growers out towards Preston and Ash who I would think may be able to help. New fruit and tree planting look to plant as small as possible. Small whips or very light standards for any project are the best use of money if as I suspect you do not suffer from too much vandalism. Heavy mulching around the base of new trees and shrubs is also critical in these months of very hot and changeable dry weather. 30cm thick woodchip and out from a stem by at least 45-60 cm sounds a lot and looks a lot but will really help establish the future trees and shrubs. Just make sure there is a slight gap between the stem and woodchips, a cut up lemonade bottle can do this. We used up all the allocated judging time but Alison remembered a spot we had passed close to but not seen. To ensure that the next judge gets the full picture do a trial walk to test for time and prepare a list of sites you want to visit. If you are getting tight for time do consider driving the judge or judges from site to site where applicable, it does speed up some of the route and gives you more time for the key elements. Thank you for your time and what a delight it was to see and hear about such enthusiasm.

## Results

<b>Level</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Points</b>
	Bronze	0 - 35
	Bronze	36 - 52
	Silver	53 - 68
	Silver-Gilt	69 - 85
	Gold	86 - 100