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**MEDIA RELEASE  
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**BABERGH URGES SMALL VILLAGES TO APPLY FOR THE 2003 VILLAGE  
OF THE YEAR AWARDS**

Babergh District Council has sent a letter to the smaller villages in its area urging them to apply for the Suffolk's 2003 Village of the Year Awards - before the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2003 closing date. Babergh has sent a letter to the parishes reminding villages that, in addition to the main prizes which are run by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils, Babergh will make a separate award to the Best Smaller Village in its district.

The 2003 Awards will be presented to the Suffolk village with an electoral role population of under 500 inhabitants. This category of recognition is awarded in alternate years with those larger villages (i.e. population of 501 – 3000). The first prize is worth £600 to the winning village. The winner will in turn be entered into the National Competition.

Babergh's award to the winner is made up of a trophy comprising a brass plaque/certificate and a £500 prize to be used as a contribution towards a community project.

"Babergh has no less than 45 villages falling within this category and we hope that many of them as possible would be entering" said Colin Matthews, Babergh's Senior Administrative Officer. Last year Cockfield was named as the district winner who together with Lavenham as runner up, successfully progressed in the Suffolk wide competition.

The criteria in which judging will be made includes community spirit, how well the Parish Council is run, protecting the environment and general appearance of villages.  
ENDS

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