



The Old Village School

into Lincoln and further afield.

Despite its relatively large size, the village deservedly has a reputation for being a very friendly place – not only to live thanks to its strong community spirit, but also to visit.

The Gardeners' Association has made a huge contribution to creating the picturesque look which adds charm to the village, so it is unsurprising that Nettleham has achieved a number of awards in the annual Best Kept Village Competition.

"Nettleham has won the competition more times than any other village. It was joint winner with Tealby two years ago and both have won it ten times. But Nettleham has just won it again which puts us in the lead now," said Councillor Evans.

Parish Council clerk, Julia Finn said: "We are delighted

that Nettleham has again won the Best Kept Village Competition. It was the first year of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) taking over as organiser.

"Many thanks go to all the pubs, shops and businesses for their wonderful flower displays; to residents for their tidy gardens and to the Parish Council staff for their considerable efforts in keeping the village a litter-free and attractive environment."

The village was awarded a commemorative bench as joint first place winner in 'The most successful communities from the past 50 years' category of the 50th Anniversary Best Kept Village Competition in 2012, which was sponsored by Pennells Garden Centres.

Competition co-ordinator, Teresa Palmer said at the time: "2012 was the last year that I was personally involved with the competition. I was delighted to be asked to co-present the bench to representatives from Nettleham, on behalf of Community Lincs with Richard Pennell.

"In the time that I have been involved with the competition, Nettleham was always 'the one to watch' in Class 3, so it was delightful to be involved in the 50th Anniversary presentation in a village that oozes community spirit."

Consultations were held early last year with villagers and the Neighbourhood Plan Committee to establish what issues

The artisan skill of the master upholsterer

The county used to be full of people making things. Everything could be sourced and produced locally. Mass production and international importing weren't issues and so a thriving specialist craft industry flourished. Upholstery was one of the key crafts at the heart of the Lincolnshire community.

A renewed interest in handmade, one-of-a-kind items, vintage styles, and environmentally conscious consumption is now driving a renewed interest in upholstery.

"People used to get furniture reupholstered all the time, but then it got cheaper and cheaper," said Edward Crowther, founder and managing director of Lincoln master upholsterer, Crowther & Sons. "What looks like a Rolls Royce on the outside can be a cheap, poor quality product on the inside. Now, people are starting to realise that older pieces last longer."

Built to last using traditional techniques, each piece of furniture produced at Crowther & Sons is lovingly crafted by an experienced workforce in their Nettleham workshops helping to preserve and nurture the future of Lincolnshire craftsmanship.

"Traditional upholstery is just quality – you know it will last thirty years or more. Working out from the frame and working out how to do everything, that's the joy of it. I've always liked to build something up, take it from frame to finished job and see people appreciate my work," said Edward, who now has a team of cabinet makers and

upholsterers working alongside him, including eldest son Ed Junior a fellow master upholsterer and youngest son, Daniel at the start of his apprenticeship.

"When it comes to furniture, it's what's inside that really counts. In today's market, that's often cheap materials and a particleboard frame instead of real wood. You could have three chairs that look the same, but you take them apart and every one is different. That means that in addition to patience, the trade requires a lot of know-how, something that's increasingly scarce," said Edward.



At Crowther & Sons the fusion of both state-of-the-art modern and traditional fillings combines the best of both worlds with the overriding emphasis on quality of materials and construction.

"It's nice to update the style, in light of that ethos of renewal and recycling, to give it a more modern feel," added Edward's eldest son, Ed Junior. "There's a lot of older furniture that's in fantastic shape. It has great bones, it's perfectly strong, the frames are great but it looks old. Once it is reupholstered it can work for another fifteen to twenty years."

Crowther & Sons represents the very best in Lincolnshire craftsmanship to a growing regional and national audience. The company is leading the way to train and produce the next generation of skilled master upholsterers, ensuring the skill flourishes in the county for many years to come. For further information please visit www.crowtherandsons.com Tel: 01522 510520.