

## **BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2018 – JUDGES’ COMMENTS FULFORD**

BKV awareness was tackled through “What’s on” posters, items in the village news and church and parish newsletter and website, local magazines, garden and photo competitions and the BKV calendar. There were excellent bespoke banners at the village entrances and BKV posters on noticeboards, in the phone box and elsewhere. An excellent effort all round.

There were good displays of children’s posters (with a hedgehog preservation theme) on the noticeboard at the Village Hall; 25 on a board at the Village Green; and another 50 or so (with a BKV poster too) on the fence leading to the small open space to the rest of the Village Green. This was also a very good effort indeed and the sites chosen were very sensible.

The noticeboards at the Village Hall were good, but the one near the entrance to the car park had dirty glass. The boards at the Village Green and on Saveley Green Road were both in good condition, with very tidy surrounds. Notices were all neatly displayed.

There was a good range of local information, including Parish Council matters (but no Council minutes) details of local events and organisations, recycling and dog fouling awareness.

St Nicholas’ Church surrounds were very well maintained (much improved on recent years). The grass was well mown and the paths and edges and grave areas were very tidy. There were some sensible, clearly identified wildflower/conservation areas, good seats and benches and excellent noticeboard. The grass in front of the church looked particularly good and the parking area was very tidy.

The carpark and surrounds of the Village Hall were very neat, with no weeds or litter. The attractive planting areas were well maintained and free from weeds.

The car park, surrounds and beer garden at The Shoulder of Mutton were extremely tidy, with no weeds or litter at any time. The beer garden at the front of the premises looked very attractive and well maintained; and the community herb garden “was a nice touch” (May and June judges).

The phone box, which is due to be de-commissioned, was very clean inside, with a BKV poster and local information displayed. The surrounds were weed and litter free and there was some attractive planting adjacent.

The green metal bus shelter was in good condition and tidy inside; but the glass needed a wipe down in July. The surrounds were free from weeds and litter.

All the seats and benches were in good condition and their surrounds were tidy.

There were some excellent, well maintained planters throughout the village; a lovely Fulford Diamond Jubilee sign on the Village Green; and the renovated Village Well. All were excellent, well cared for village features.

The war memorial and its surrounds were neat and tidy, with no weeds or litter seen. An application had been made for funds to repair and refurbish the memorial.

The small open space at the back of the Village Hall was well mown and litter free; but there was long grass and weeds along the base of the fence. The Village Green looked very attractive, the grass was well mown throughout the judging period and there were two nice seats. However judges noticed that the oak tree looked in very poor health indeed. The small open space to the West of The Green was also very well maintained, with no litter or dog mess.

Private gardens were maintained to a very good standard indeed throughout the village (except for two or three which were up for sale).

The equipment and safety surfaces in the play area were in good condition and looked very attractive. The grass areas were well mown, paths were tidy and there was no litter. There was a very good bench. (Had the swings been removed for repairs?" July judges).

The map was clear and neat and easy to follow; and the detailed inset was useful.

There were a couple of bits of litter along the main road in May, but virtually nothing at other times. One small dog mess was seen in June, but nothing in May and July. There was clear evidence of community awareness, involvement and effort. There appeared to be plenty going on throughout the year in Fulford and quite a lot of that was linked to BKV in one way or another.

It was a pleasure to visit Fulford and all the judges were impressed by the overall appearance of the village. There were very good open spaces, excellent BKV and children's poster coverage, an attractive pub and much improved church surrounds. A good deal of effort had gone into the BKV entry pack and into maintaining the appearance of the village throughout the judging period. Third Place in the Small Village Category in the Stafford Area was very well deserved this year. Well done and good luck in 2019.

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Chairman, BKV Working Group

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