

JUDGES COMMENTS FULFORD 2019

Measures taken to publicise participation in BKV included “what's on” posters, items in the church and parish newsletters, on the village website, through garden and photographic competitions and the BKV calendar. There were 3 excellent “Community working together” BKV banners at village entrances and numerous BKV posters on notice boards, in the phone box, at the pub, village Hall, on the village green and at village entrances. A very comprehensive coverage which impressed the judges.

There were 3 excellent displays of children's posters at the village Hall, on the village green and on the fence leading to the small open space to the west of the village green. Judges felt that the “problems with plastic” theme which ran through the children's posters was extremely topical and appropriate.

The boards at the village Hall and Fulford road were very good; the two at the front of the village Hall were sound, but the glass was grubby on one and the other will soon need some work. The boards on Saverly Green Road and on the village green were excellent. Notices were neatly displayed.

There was a very good spread of local information, including parish council business, recycling and bulky refuse disposal, dog fouling awareness, litter, local events and activities, “what's on in Fulford” notices. An altogether comprehensive list.

The surrounds of the churchyard varied during the judging period, but this was understandable and overall it looked cared for. Grass was well mown at the front of the church and left rather longer at the rear, which made sense. There were some lovely areas of bluebells in May. The informal grass paths were neat and tidy, but the main path was weeds, especially in May and the main gates will need work soon. The notice board was good, and most benches were sound, although 2 or 3 need re varnishing soon. There were few weeds overall and no litter. There were a number of well sited rubbish containers and some attractive planters at the front door. “It looked as though people cared about the churchyard” (May judges). The car park was very tidy.

The car park and surrounds of the village hall were very neat and tidy, with no weeds or litter at any time. The attractive planted areas and grass were well maintained, and seats were in good condition.

The car park, general surrounds, planted areas and outdoor drinking area at the Shoulder of Mutton were very tidy; there were no weeds or litter. The frontage “looked particularly inviting” (June judges); and the community herb garden was a bonus.

The former phone box is now an information point, with notices of local events, village groups and BKV poster. The inside was clean (apart from a few cobwebs in June) and the surrounds were weed and litter free.

The simple bus shelter was in good condition. It was clean inside and surrounds were tidy (no weeds or litter) judges' sense there is no longer a bus service, but praised the shelters use to display local information.

All the seats and benches were in good condition, with weed and litter free surrounds; but one of the benches on the village green will need varnishing soon. (See also the comments on the churchyard).

The Fulford Diamond Jubilee sign and the village well were interesting village features in very good condition. There were also a number of very attractive and well-maintained planters and planted areas around the village.

The refurbished War Memorial looked very good; and the grass surrounding it was neatly mown.

The small area at the rear of the village Hall was well mown and weed and litter free. The village green looked good throughout the judging period and there was no litter. The new oak tree look good in May but had “disappeared” by July (Judges anticipated that it would be replaced at an appropriate time). The open space to the west of the green looked good with no litter or dog mess.

Private gardens were very well maintained throughout the village, but some judges felt that some front gardens in Highview Road had been allowed to encroach onto the pavement and there were a few weeds and brambles in other gardens in this area (In May).

The map was clear and easy enough to follow but there are opportunities to “sharpen it up”, by enhancing the colours, symbols and shapes so that those in the key match those on the map. Nevertheless, it did the job and these minor criticisms are easily put right.

Almost no litter was seen throughout the judging period; and no dog mess (the judges praised the well sited dog stencils in strategic places). There was plenty of evidence of community awareness and involvement and the “BKV philosophy” appeared to run throughout the whole year and not just the judging period. “There was plenty going on in Fulford and the residents seemed to care for their community” (May judges).

Judges enjoyed their visits to Fulford (whatever the weather!) And it looked very well cared for from early May to late July. the excellent standards which have been developed in recent years were certainly maintained this year and the village had a real sparkle to it. Congratulations on a well-deserved 2nd place in the Small Village Category in the Stafford area (marking was extremely close in the latter stages of the competition!) well done and good luck in 2020.

John T Perry MBE

Chairman, BKV Working Group