

JUDGES COMMENTS 2019 KINGS BROMLEY

A5 BKV Posters were sent to every household with a request to display in their windows and there was liaison with the school to produce children's posters. There were BKV posters at the main entrances to the village (but some of these began to be obscured by vegetation as the judging period went on). There were also BKV posters at the village hall, on noticeboards and at the pub. Judges saw many BKV posters in house windows throughout the village. They were especially noticeable in the houses in Alrewas Road, Lane Close and Leofric Close.

There was an excellent display of children's posters in the windows of the village hall (both front and back). There were well over 70 posters and they made a good visual impact.

The board at the Village Hall was in good condition, but the glass was dirty, and the board will need re-staining soon. The board near the war memorial was also sound but will need re-staining soon. Notices on both boards were neatly displayed.

There was a good range of local information, including parish council business, programmes of events for W.I. and the Wednesday Club, mobile library dates, recycling and dog fouling awareness and local events. The June judges noted that both noticeboards contained out of date Parish Council agendas and adverts for local events when they visited.

The surrounds of the church were absolutely first rate. Grass was well mown; path edges and grave surrounds were neat and tidy (except in early July when judges said that some grave areas had not been trimmed) The planted areas and rose borders were well maintained and there was no litter or weeds at any time. The seats and noticeboards were in good condition, but perhaps needing some varnish soon. The car park and its surrounds were weed and litter free. The May judges were pleased to meet the Wednesday gang at work and to talk with them.

The surrounds of the Village Hall were neat and tidy in the early days of judging despite the significant building works which were going on in May and June. There were no weeds or litter in the car park and the hanging baskets were good. Judges noticed some broken fencing between the car park and the open space at the rear in June. The carpark and planted areas around the Co-op were tidy enough but there was an increasing amount of litter in the planted areas at the rear and side of the carpark as the completion went on.

The surrounds of The Royal Oak were very good, there was no litter on the paved area and on the frontage; and there were some very good planters and hanging baskets. "The beer garden was excellent" (June judges), with tidy tables and benches, well mown grass and attractive planting. Judges were not sure how the shared carpark with the Co-op worked and wondered who was

responsible for the carpark and its surrounds, where they found increasing amounts of litter during the judging period.

The phone box had been converted into an excellent book exchange. It was very clean inside, with a lovely coconut door mat(!), well displayed books and a BKV poster. There was a nice plaque and an attractive planter and the surrounds were very clean.

One of the seats at the village hall (next to the play area) was clean and in good condition; but the other (in the north east corner) was very dirty – mainly bird mess and lichen. The seats in the Horticultural Field were in good condition and their surrounds were weed and litter free. The bench overlooking fields in Beech Avenue was rather dirty, but its surrounds were tidy.

There were a number of village features of note. The village map (near the phone box) was good; the village sign on the Lichfield Road was very attractive; and the post box has been newly painted. However, the paving around The George V memorial seat was very weedy and needed a good sweep up in May. There were some attractive planters in a number of places. Judges felt that the old milestone outside the Co-op could be freshened up a bit and be treated as a village feature too.

The surrounds to the war memorial were very tidy. The paved areas were very neat and tidy and weed and litter free and there were good free-standing planters. Colourful summer flowers were starting to take over from spring daffodils and tulips and by the end of the judging period the planted areas were a sea of colour and the variety of planting made for a very attractive setting for the memorial itself. Last year's wreaths remained tidy throughout the competition.

The Horticultural Society Field was well mown throughout the judging period, following the sea of buttercups and dandelions seen by the May judges. There was no litter or dog mess at any time.

The area at the rear of the Village Hall was well mown (despite difficulties caused by the building works in May and early June) The small green space around the George V memorial seat was well mown, but the edges were especially untidy in May and there was grass and weeds in the paving. The wildflower meadow off Lanes Close was well managed throughout the judging period. "The wildflower area was good for the time of year and edges were neat and tidy" (June judges). Verges were kept neat and tidy.

Private gardens were maintained to a high standard throughout the village. There were good shows of hanging baskets on frontages along Alrewas Road and gardens in the Lanes Close and Leofric Close areas were especially good.

The equipment and safety surfaces in the children's play area were good and well looked after. The grass was kept tidy and there was no litter. The new jungle gym looked good.

The map was clear and easy to follow, with a good use of coloured symbols and colour; village features however, were still not shown – it would be a simple job to remedy this.

Apart from a few bits of litter along both main roads the village worked very tidy overall. No dog mess was seen. Judges were still rather unsure about the extent of community involvement in BKV (except of course the clear evidence provided by the work of Wednesday Gang!) nevertheless, they appreciated many residents were aware of BKV by the number of BKV posters displayed in house windows and that residents had contributed to the overall good appearance of the village by ensuring that their gardens and house surrounds were kept in very good condition.

As always judges enjoyed their visits to Kings Bromley, which seemed to have regained much of its old sparkle. The church surrounds were again a high spot, but all the open spaces looked good and the potential litter problem which exists along the two heavily trafficked main roads through the village had by and large been dealt with well. The village looked much improved over last year, and the hard work paid off. Congratulations on being the Best Kept Village and Trophy Winner in the Lichfield/Cannock Area this year and good luck in 2020!

John T Perry MBE

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