



LANCASHIRE BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

DIAMOND JUBILEE AWARDS CEREMONY 2018

Press Briefing

The Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition held its Diamond Jubilee Awards Ceremony at the Villa in Wrea Green on Monday 15th October, to mark 60 years of the competition.

The invited Finals Judge for this year's competition was Mrs Pam Barker, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire and Constable of Lancaster Castle. She announced that the winner of the Champion Village Class in this year's competition was Elswick. They received a commemorative plaque, along with a framed certificate and a water colour painting of the village by local artist Gordon Wilkinson, sponsored by Lancashire Life magazine. They now continue in the Champion's class for a further 4 years.

The other winners this year were Preesall & Knott End in the Large Village Class, Wrea Green in the Medium Village Class, and West Bradford in the Small Village Class. They each received a commemorative plaque and a framed certificate and will enter the Champion Class next year. In the Hamlets Class, Roughlee was the winner.

Framed Certificates of Merit were also awarded to the Best Kept items on a list of 15 possible entries. Among the winners were St Nicholas Church in Wrea Green which won the best kept Place of Worship, and St Michael's C of E Primary School in Grimsargh which won the school award. The best kept War Memorial was awarded to Chipping.

A full list of the winners is available on the website.

At the packed ceremony attended by over 150 guests including 10 mayors from all over Lancashire, the Chairman of the organising committee, John Isherwood, took people back to 1958 when the competition first started. It came about from an idea by the then Community Council of Lancashire that a competition of this sort would inspire communities to work together to make their villages a better place to live. In doing so it would create a better environment for everyone in Lancashire. People in those days didn't travel very far and tended to shop and work not far from home. But they had a feeling of belonging, a sense of community and pride in where they lived. And that's what many villages often re-discover when they enter the competition. It's why the competition is more relevant today than it has ever been.

This year 67 villages entered the competition, and 30 were winners, runner-ups or received highly commended in one or more award categories. This shows the very high standards of Lancashire villages that we have nowadays.



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The organisers would like to encourage more villages to enter next year to make Lancashire a great place to live. There are five categories of village, all depending on population sizes – hamlets, small, medium, large and champion villages. The cost to enter is only £15 for Hamlets and Small Villages and £25 for Medium and Large Villages.

John also explained that the competition is very keen to for new judges to come along and take part. The Judges are ordinary members of the public and come from all walks of life and from all over the county. They judge on a voluntary basis, giving freely of their time. An informal New Judges Meeting is held in March every year in which we talk more about the competition to anyone thinking of joining as a judge, and we explain how to be a judge and how the marking system works.

Judging takes place over a 6 week period from the beginning of June to mid July. Judges often say that they enjoy a good day out when judging and it gives them a purpose for visiting some out of the way villages that they would never think about visiting otherwise. And they find some good walks and places of interest and discover some great pubs, restaurants and cafes, that they often go back to after the competition has ended.

The AGM and Spring Conference is held at a village hall in May which includes a trial judging exercise. It is useful for new judges and acts as a refresher for existing judges. It's always followed by a lively discussion and any points raised are noted, which helps to keep the competition up to date.

If you would like any further information either about becoming a judge or to enter your village in the competition please look at the website or contact the following who will be pleased to help with any enquiries.

Website: www.lancashirebestkeptvillage.org.uk

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