

Judges Notes for Summer 2022



Category B1 – Small Businesses

Huddersfield Irish Centre

Gold

Overall Impression

If Yorkshire in Bloom judges are looking for a garden that gives an excellent first impression and has that special "wow" factor, then they need look no further than The Huddersfield Irish Centre. This is a small garden filled with beautifully grown and tended flowers, full of colour with unusual plants rubbing shoulders with traditional bedding. Congratulations to Peter and Pat on producing an outstanding garden and Yorkshire in Bloom small business entry.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- An excellent first impression. This garden must be admired by all the people passing through on the busy road in front of the property as well as visitors to the Irish Centre itself.
- Excellent choice and presentation of plants.
- The commitment to the environment is evident in the collection of rainwater and the numerous bird boxes and insect houses seen.
- This is a very small space which is fully utilised but never feels overcrowded.

James White (Butchers)

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

James White family butchers has been established for over 35 years and is located centrally on the High Street directly opposite the village pond in Hutton Cranswick. The shop website describes the history of the business and explains when James took over from his father in 2001. He is now the second generation of the family who is committed to supporting the Yorkshire in Bloom competition which has been well documented over the years through press and social media coverage.

Although the shop front is small, the area outside is clean and appealing. The tubs outside have been planted to give maximum impact and add to the overall floral display of the village. The plants inside the shop window create extra interest to the display and are grown to give long term colour throughout the summer. These are then changed seasonally to offer additional interest during in the winter months.

This entry is a very good effort for such a busy small business. Well done.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It would have been useful to have seen photographs of the shop from other times of the year.
- It would have been nice to have seen previous years certificate on display or as part of a portfolio with the photographs.
- It might be worth considering adding more sustainable species to the seasonal displays going forward.

John Blenkiron Funeral Directors

Gold

Overall Impression

Situated on a crossroads along a busy road close to the town centre, John Blenkiron's commands attention as it occupies an elevated position and the architecture is quite unique. The property was built as The Cottage Hospital and is clearly well cared for and maintained. The elevation lends itself to the numerous large hayrack baskets set on the railings. Immediately noticeable was the blue and yellow colour scheme with sunflowers standing out and further enhanced by the beautiful pictures of sunflowers painted by local schoolchildren from Trinity Academy. Rebekha Taylor, the community champion had organised a competition and the children, in support of The Ukraine, had produced a wonderful display of paintings. A winner was chosen and a resident from Wayfriars presented the award. A lovely collaboration of business and community across age groups. We were shown photos of the spring planting of yellow and blue pansies which also looked impressive. Along the terrace there were half barrels with a good mix of plants of different heights and a good range of healthy plants, some scented which was an added bonus. The perennial shrubs around the side of the building had been pruned in keeping with the overall impression of a well cared for premises. Many thanks to all also on behalf of the passer by.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- In order to support wildlife the provision of fresh water near the shrubs would be welcome, especially in dry weather. Possibly consider a further half barrel placed in the car park area to extend the colour for those arriving by vehicle. When pruning has been done a little more attention is needed to remove all the clippings from the shrubs.

River House B&B, Malham

**Gold & Category
Winner**

Overall Impression

Whilst the garden to the front of River House B&B is small, it is perfectly planted with an array of perennials with just a few annuals in hanging baskets and pots. There is year round cover with spring bulbs to brighten the area in the early part of the year. The grass had been allowed to grow longer so that when it was mowed it hadn't been scorched by the recent very hot dry weather.

There is a seating area for guests to enjoy the garden. The planting scheme blends really well with the natural surroundings of Malham. The new sign at the front of the property looks really good.

The cobbled area at the rear of the property is a lovely peaceful place with acers, hostas, a potted lemon tree and witch hazel to name but a few. This area is where guests can come and sit out if they so wish. The cobbled area was completely weed free which is no easy task. At the far end of this area are the plants the owner, Ann, is growing and will be exhibiting at the Malham Show. Ann advises she is a regular exhibitor at the show. Ann loves plants and this can be clearly seen when viewing the garden areas. I am sure all the guests to River House really appreciate the time and effort put in to create these two lovely spaces.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It was good to hear that the water butt will be reinstated once the oil tank has been moved back to its original place.
- Whilst a few of the hostas had been attacked by slugs the majority were fine. Keep removing the slugs as you do now.
- It would have been good to see an acknowledgement to Yorkshire in Bloom in your entrance or on your website, perhaps by displaying your award.

Stable Cottage Vintage Holidays

Silver

Overall Impression

Stable Cottage is a fairly typical stone cottage but whose garden has escaped beyond the small courtyard and provides colour and interest to people visiting and/or parking their cars nearby.

The stone wall of the cottage makes a lovely backdrop to the numerous wide variety of plants on display which give the appearance of a mixed border but most of which are in a variety of pots and containers. Different pots and plants are switched in and out to keep the display varied and interesting year round.

Inside the courtyard there are a number of pots and different planting as this area is mainly shaded. In the covered bin area a toad has found refuge. Unfortunately, there is no opportunity to collect rainwater for plant care although there is a regular feeding programme. The overall effect is a colourful and interesting display which should delight visitors to the cottage and passers-by alike.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consideration should be given to changing to more drought tolerant species and increasing the number of larger containers in order to reduce the demand on water usage and the environment.
- Although some planters have water reservoirs it would be good to increase the number of these and provide more trays beneath the remaining pots to retain water. Consider trying to introduce some wildlife habitats which would not be disturbed when pots are moved around.

The Old Colonial, Mirfield

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

Upon entry, there is instant impact provided by the numerous floral displays along the front and side of the building and the superb herbaceous border in the car park. The war memorial is a triumph and the owners are to be commended for the support they drum up for veterans and those fallen in battle.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider painting/treating the 'guard house' and the barrells/planters to improve overall impact.
- Consider having slightly fewer planters/tubs along the front of building. This should still complement the excellent hanging baskets but be cheaper and hopefully more sustainable long term.
- The memorial is a real gem and would benefit from a small interpretation panel to inform the public and visitors of the mementos but without attracting thieves.

Category B2 – Medium Businesses

Abbeydale Residential Home, Ilkley

Gold & Category Winner

Overall Impression

Immediately on entering Abbeydale you are welcomed by a clean entrance and parking area. The natural woodland, at the entrance, has a mix of long established trees and shrubs. The large bird house/table placed on a felled tree stub is lovely. There are bird boxes scattered around the areas. The compost area has had to be temporarily moved so that work can be completed on some new fencing.

Moving further up the driveway there is a beautiful lawned area, an arbour for residents to use and a large shed and greenhouse where some of the plants are grown. The garden furniture is bright and clean. The quality, standard and mix of both permanent and annual plants is to be commended. All were healthy and fit perfectly to their surroundings. Having spoken to a number of residents it is clear how much they really love and appreciate this garden. One of the residents is growing vegetables, the broad beans used by the chef the previous evening were loved by all. For Christmas there will be fresh Brussel sprouts, parsnips and carrots. To the side of the kitchen entrance the chef has a lovely area planted with herbs which are also used in the kitchen.

A project about to commence is the installation of solar panels.

Abbeydale is a very welcoming establishment which was a pleasure to visit and meet both residents and staff.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It is hard to make suggestions as this business is at a very high standard.
- Continue to make your own compost.
- It may be worth considering a wildlife area in amongst the trees.
- Consider adding some perennial plants such as lavender to some of your pots.

Audley Court Estates Ltd

Gold

Overall Impression

With fabulous views over Nidderdale this makes a special place to live and work. Although the majority of the grounds maintenance is completed by the team to a high standard at Hollins Hall there is still the opportunity for the residents to continue gardening around their properties or in small allotment plots. David and the team work with the residents supporting them with their own areas or taking over the maintenance when required. He takes time to create areas for the residents to enjoy and help garden. The opening up of the dining and terrace areas to the public will provide another opportunity to enhance the greenspace.

Wildlife plays a large part of the management of the grounds. Different grass areas are left at different length to encourage wildflowers whilst other areas are left completely natural. The ponds also add another dimension along with bird and bat boxes for the wildlife around the site. There are solar panels on the summerhouse roof and water butts at various points making the most of rainwater. It is good to hear that the boules court will be reinstated as another opportunity for the residents to enjoy the outdoors.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The plans to relandscape the entrance beds will be a great addition to the site and help to promote the complex within the wider community.
- It is useful to hear about the tree planting project as mature trees in the neighbouring land may be nearing the end of their lives which will create gaps in the landscape so starting successional planting will be an opportunity to fill some of the areas.
- Would the residents consider participating in the RSPB Great British Birdwatch in January to survey the number and type of birds that visit the gardens?
- The bamboo canes on the trees down the drive could be removed and some mulch or compost could be added round the base of the trees along the driveway.

Beverley Racecourse

Gold

Overall Impression

The approach to the Racecourse through Beverley Common provides an excellent setting for what awaited the Judges. We found an impressive course, very well maintained with a variety of excellent planters throughout. We were guided around the Racecourse by Tom who explained all the improvement work that has taken place, premier enclosure, and gave us information about future plans and aspirations, such as new planting on terraces and front of the building, and an improved access path to the disabled viewing area. We

felt that Tom is a great ambassador for the Racecourse. New wooden containers, made in house, have been planted this year with trailing begonias. In fact begonias, mixed varieties, have replaced petunias this year to overcome the challenges of rabbits, wind and the weather either being very wet or dry. They seemed to be thriving. The tree lined hydrangea walk with memorial seating and pergolas was beautifully kept and we could see why it is a popular area with racegoers. Memorial benches can be purchased and are placed throughout the course, all made locally. The Racecourse aims to support local businesses including local artists and we were pleased to see examples of art within the Racecourse, such as the frog in the lavender bed and box bed. Lavender planting within the Racecourse was attracting much bee activity. The colourful floral display at the Touch Above Bar, 55 boxes, lifts the area. In winter violas are used to provide an all year display to greet non race going visitors out of season. We would like to congratulate all involved in this entry and look forward to seeing the future plans develop.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Photographs of the Racecourse throughout the year, including Race Days would help the Judges and assist the entry.
- Whilst we applaud the improvements that have taken place we did notice that some of the masonry paint on the terrace steps was flaking and bins were looking a little tired.
- We support adding an accessible path to the disabled viewing area rather than grass access. Overall the pathways on site are accessible.
- Regarding the Acer reversion - we would advise staged removal of the reversion branches to maintain the Acer.

Goldsborough Hall

Gold

Overall Impression

A first-time entry to YiB and what a pleasant entry to visit. This historic 12 acre garden first laid out in 1706 is in the grounds of the grade II early 17th century house – the former home of HRH Princess Mary. All sounding very grand but when the present owners took possession in 2005, all the grounds had been left neglected for decades so all that we see today have been sympathetically and expertly restored since that date.

An impressive list of areas around the grounds: champion trees, woodland walk, lime tree walk, rose garden and long herbaceous borders, and a must visit kitchen garden and glasshouse make this a business that has much to offer its guests to view. The kitchen garden is a great feature with raised planting beds flanking a water running rill and central fountain culminating in the impressive glasshouse. Vegetables and herbs grown here are used by the Hotel chefs.

Goldsborough Hall has a collection of snowdrops in the spring (over 100 varieties, some rare) and opens the grounds for NGS twice a year and holds a snowdrop festival every February. Mark the gardener made the judge most welcome in this comprehensive tour of the grounds and gardens.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continuing with further planting in the woodland walk with more shade loving plants and consider adding more structural planting like the tree ferns near the seating area will enhance the visitor experience.

- Adding the village pub to the business portfolio adds another dimension to the visit. Continue with the development and enhancement of the pub gardens and seating area.
- Look at possibly encouraging new volunteers to assist in the garden.
- Consider a management plan for the garden and any future projects for enhancement and development. Look at showing future judges the before and after pictures and any evidence of the garden throughout the year.

Mirfield Coop

Gold

Overall Impression

The hanging baskets provided by Mirfield in Bloom have a lot of impact. The range of planting in the insect friendly area is varied and extensive. There was a good and appropriate selection of planting in this rockery area. The plant quality throughout is very good. A great deal of care and attention to detail goes into maintenance of planting throughout the site.

The dedication and commitment of the staff tending the planting is impressive. The planting definitely has the 'Wow' factor and the addition of lots of little bee decorations to the beds adds interest and a touch of humour, while being appropriate to the planting. The work with the community to improve the riverbank is impressive. The insect hotels on site are well designed and constructed with a variety of fillings. All areas are cleaned and maintained to a high standard. There is impressive liaison between the business and the local community as shown by the in-store information board. Support to the local Bloom group is generous and ongoing, year round.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Perhaps consider an information board showing the history of the Coop movement.
- Consider plant labels, especially in the insect friendly area.

Saltmarshe Hall

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

A new entry to the Competition and we were given a tour by the head gardener of the 5-acre formal grounds around the restored Saltmarsh Hall building which looked out to a further 12 acres of woodland and grounds alongside the tidal River Humber.

The hall is used as a hotel and wedding venue and guests have access to the formal grounds which contain an outdoor swimming pool and hard surface tennis court set in a formal garden setting.

The formal gardens contained herbaceous borders with a wide range of plant varieties. There was a pond area, home to newts, with a backdrop of mature specimen trees and colourful large Acers. The Hall is part of the National Open Gardens Scheme open to the public on selected dates

The gardens are undergoing a restoration and renewal of trees, shrubs and plants. And there are many old rare plant species on site.

A good new competition entry

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It is hoped to re-establish a composting scheme which was destroyed when one of the large mature trees were blown over in storms last year and this will provide future mulching for the herbaceous planting and cut down maintenance and watering.
- The careful pruning of the orchard will help to protect a number of very old apple and pear varieties and history of the site.
- We were impressed with the work achieved by the gardening team and the selective replanting which has been carried out.
- The hall is heated by a bio mass boiler and the future work on the large area of the woodland may provide an additional source of material for the boiler system, reducing the carbon footprint of the hall energy.
- We were impressed by the careful planting of small sheltered areas around the edges of the halls building using pots, containers and drought tolerant species which has improved the outlook from guests' windows.
- Future investment around the glasshouse area would allow the gardening team to increase the production of plant replacement by cuttings and division and reduce long term costs of using externally produced plants.
- The planting of herbs and vegetables in part of the walled garden will provide a future resource for the hotel's restaurant.
- Careful thought needs to be given to the site of a planned future guest car parking so that vistas and views in the historic landscape are not compromised.
- The location of the formal gardens on the edge of the River Humber provides a unique climate for plants and offers a number of opportunities for herbaceous border replanting.

Category B3 – Large Businesses

Airedale Shopping Centre

**Gold & Joint
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

This Shopping Centre is a real asset for Keighley both the community and businesses. This is largely due to the excellent Centre Manager Steve. The whole area is very well maintained, with good facilities, and horticulture and colourful artwork. Cleanliness is of a very high standard

The recycling is excellent. All waste is collected, sorted and sent to appropriate sites with the absolute minimum going to landfill. Work is continually being done with the businesses for them to take ownership and reduce their own waste.

Work for the community is outstanding. Of particular note is Dementia Friendly Keighley and its' centre providing such a good example of support in this group of the community.

The food bank, events for the many organisations in Keighley and support for this multicultural society are all excellent.
Future developments and plans for the future look good.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- There are some good planters and hanging baskets both inside and outside which immediately add to the centre's appeal. The budget was reduced during Covid and has only been partially restored since. An increase would be greatly appreciated to enable planters and hanging baskets to return to the former levels and allow for further developments.
- Consider enhancing the central area planting in the with trees or a green wall.
- The development of the management "garden" space is interesting and hopefully quite productive this year so a good project to be continued..
- The brightly re-cycled seats are a real asset and I am sure everyone is looking forward to having more
- The support for Keighley in Bloom is much appreciated and hopefully will help to raise the profile of the group and ensure it attracts more much needed volunteers.

Camira Fabrics Ltd.

Silver

Overall Impression

The chosen plants are appropriate to the calm, green atmosphere of the site. New planting blends well with original planting. The planting flows well into the lovely natural backdrop and blends well with no jarring notes. Plant quality was good especially when it is quite recent.

Maintenance was good and the entrant is to be commended on producing planting with plenty of impact in a short time. The area around the water feature is very atmospheric. The provision of a duck house was a good idea and the idea of introducing a fake heron to prevent loss of newly hatched ducklings is well worth trying.

Hard surfaces, railings etc. around the site are clearly smart and well maintained.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Adding one or two buddleia or native berrying shrubs to other areas of the site would bring in bees and butterflies and need little maintenance.
- Adding a few dogwoods with colourful stems would add winter interest to the water feature.
- Consider growing labelled examples of as many plants as possible which are used in the fabrics.

Crystal Peaks Shopping Centre

**Gold & Joint
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

Crystal Peaks is a thriving shopping centre on the edge of Sheffield which draws customers from the many residential estates which surround it. The car parks and paths are well maintained and litter free and edged with shrubs and plants. Each entrance has large containers filled with colourful annuals and hanging baskets festoon the lamp posts; Petunias in Summer and Pansies in Winter. Even in the current drought the containers are well maintained and watered regularly.

The natural environment is important to Crystal Peaks and there are many areas of wildflowers with information boards, nest boxes and four beehives on the roof. Swifts have nested in the boxes provided (although not this year) and Kestrels are nesting and rearing young in the adjacent mature trees. All the gardening of the site is undertaken by Steve and one helper.

Staff are knowledgeable about wildlife and keen to share their knowledge, e.g. showing off the local wild orchids.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The plants are well chosen for the various areas. Coffee grounds and shredded prunings top dress the beds.
- Particular care is taken to attract and cater for the wildlife.
- The grounds are all well maintained and litter free.
- It would be great to see the green walls reinstated, although we appreciate the capital expenditure and ongoing maintenance costs.
- The Sensory Garden will further enhance the grounds as it matures and seating is added.
- We hope the post-Covid plans to involve more local groups, schools and individuals will bear fruit.
- Some of the wildlife information boards are showing signs of weathering and could be updated and upgraded.
- Perhaps your involvement and successes in Yorkshire in Bloom could be publicised within the centre and on your website, also mention of the scythe making industry.

Nidd Hall

Gold

Overall Impression

Nidd Hall is a hotel aiming for high standards in lovely extensive grounds. Like many businesses it suffered as a result of Covid.

We were shown round by Harvey who works very closely with Luke maintaining the grounds with great enthusiasm for the wildlife and the environment. He is extremely knowledgeable, enthusiastic and dedicated to his Job.

Much of the formal bedding has now been replaced with pollinating sustainable plants with the grounds all maintained to a very high standard, in spite of the reduced staffing levels.

The very informative educational tour we were given is also given weekly to visitors. The wheelchair friendly footpaths are well maintained designed to show off all the many features. The wild areas and the water garden are interesting features and of course the lake adds to the beauty of the grounds.

There are numerous information boards, bird boxes, bug hotels and some beehives. This entry has so much to offer and the wonderful grounds in which the hotel is situated can only add to the success of the business.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It is difficult to suggest any improvements except to say an increase in staffing levels would help with all the ambitious future plans.
- Visiting in July can only give us a snapshot of the entry and it is always beneficial to see photos of the grounds at different times of the year and perhaps some before and after pictures.

Rudding Park Hotel

Gold

Overall Impression

The hotel and holiday park sit within 300 acres of landscaped gardens and woodland. With a hard working team of gardeners, who have considerable knowledge of the plants and trees within the grounds, the judges enjoyed their time at the Rudding Park Hotel. The kitchen garden is well maintained. There is obvious consultation between the Chefs from the hotel and the gardening team as many of the abundant produce from the kitchen garden is used by the Chefs to create specialty dishes in the hotel. It was a joy to see a beautiful wild flower area and very busy Beehives, along with bug hotels and the use of their own compost on the beds, the kitchen garden was a pleasure to visit.

The Spa and Leisure area, with its recycled water scheme has clever use of planting whilst creating a peaceful and tranquil setting allowing the clients to truly enjoy the experience of this particular area of the hotel.

There are a variety of planting schemes around the hotel including the pool terrace, with colour coordinated Lavenders, Alliums and interspersed with tall grasses, the cocktail terrace with the large bell shaped Yew and Follyfoot North with an array of Begonias, Ferns and Rhododendrons.

It was encouraging to see that the 'team' are still looking at ways to improve the grounds with a new area replanted in February 2022, using Monkey Puzzle trees, Ferns and Rhododendrons, this area is sure to be a pleasure to visit in the future for their clients.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Identification of a number of the Rhododendrons in the grounds had begun – this would definitely be a useful tool for the gardening team once completed.
- A 'tree post trail' would be interesting for the hotel guests. The large variety of trees is evident as you walk around the grounds, placing a number of tree markers around the woodland area, explaining the variety and origins of the trees would make it another experience for the guests to enjoy.
- Introduce more bird/owl boxes in the woodland area, this would continue the work carried out with log piles which are evident around the winding paths of the woodland.
- Continue with the work that is being done to rejuvenate the 1950s planting.

York Racecourse

Gold

Overall Impression

Obviously the maintenance is geared to the race meetings and events in the racecourse calendar which is nearly year round. This must require planning months ahead to create the vibrant displays particularly contending with over thirty thousand visitors over the weekend event. There are vast amounts of tubs, troughs and planting areas to make the whole area very colourful for all the visitors. The new Up the Pole baskets enhance the area behind the main stand continuing the vivid displays. It was good to hear that apprentices are planned for September to support the existing staff. There is a wide variety of planting as well as the seasonal bedding areas such as herbaceous and shrubs which give a different dimension. This is particularly well presented in the parade ring shown off by the immaculate high quality lawns. It was good to hear of the involvement of the racecourse with the Queens Green Canopy planting 5 trees near the hostel area.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider increasing plant types for wildlife have a look at RHS Plants for Pollinators list www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators
- Could some insect hotels be considered which could be hidden from view on some of the rooves etc
- Also could swift boxes or sparrow terraces or other bird boxes, bat boxes be put up around the site.
- Is there any capacity somewhere in the grounds to create some compost areas?
- Are there any areas where the grass could be left a little longer or could there be areas turned into wildflower areas?

White Rose Centre

**Gold & Joint
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

Driving up to the shopping centre was a pleasure in itself with living walls bordering the site, and trees and flowers dotted wherever possible to break up the standard concrete and tarmac that is present in any car park. The use of planters as hostile vehicle barriers is a simple yet effective method of brightening up the car park whilst also serving a higher purpose.

The flower beds and hanging baskets outside the main entrance of the shopping centre made for a pleasant approach to the building, and the inside was bright and welcoming with natural light opening up the area. The building is spotless – a real credit to the cleaning staff.

The partnership working with “Nurture Landscape”, the introduction of “No Mow May”, green waste composting, grey water use, where possible and the Centres “Green Apple” Environmental Award and International CSR overall winner award, is to be commended. A lot of work has been done to fully recycle all waste from the centre itself and the retail and food venues, with an impressive 0% of waste heading to landfill. 2902 solar panels

line the roof, and rainwater harvesting is in place; the centre is aiming to be 100% self-sustainable by 2030. If the goal is met, this will be an outstanding achievement.

As well as solar panels, there is another great surprise on the rooftop of White Rose Shopping Centre. Multiple beehives are situated on a lower section of the roof and the passion for these is very evident. Carefully managed and well-promoted on social media, these bees bring a literal buzz to the atmosphere and are complemented with the new Honeybee Maze, made up of sunflowers, situated in the 'Village' area outside. The Village is a section of outdoor space filled with potted plants and colourful planters; these being repurposed after the summer. This is a lovely smoke-free area to protect children in the play area and learning about bees from the educational boards in the maze.

Despite the enthusiasm around bees, other wildlife has not been forgotten. Bird and bat boxes are dotted around the area as well as bug hotels, and the centre is working with children to create hedgehog houses in the near future.

The centre works closely with children and young people, especially working on wildlife projects to benefit all. This allows children to learn about the environment and wildlife and prevents anti-social behaviour within the shopping centre by promoting respectful behaviour. Other age groups are also catered for, with regular coffee mornings taking place to allow all ages to come together. The centre makes sure that all areas are accessible. From something as simple as a set-back 'Queen Bee Throne' in the Honeybee Maze, to quiet Tuesdays and calm areas for people who feel overwhelmed, it is clear that the centre is confidently considerate of all disabilities and work with Paralympic Champion, Hannah Cockroft MBE, to ensure they are as accessible as possible.

In addition to the calm areas, the shopping centre is surrounded by a woodland walk to allow visitors to relax and staff to wind down on their lunch breaks. A section of the walk includes a well-maintained bridge which runs over a pond filled with lily pads, reeds, fish and ducks.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- A street furniture replacement scheme is in place, so this would enhance the approaches to the shopping centre once some litter bins and bollards are replaced or refurbished.
- Good to hear there's a replacement programme for any distressed trees in the car park areas, to continually provide a green canopy in what is normally a very harsh environment.
- The bee maze is a fantastic feature in the Village area, though only temporary. It would be great to keep bringing this back in the spring and summer if this is a possibility as it promotes the bees around the area and in the hives; it's colourful, engaging, and accessible to all.
- One consideration could be interpretation boards on the woodland trail to inform visitors of what wildlife they may see on their walk. This would tie in with the educational boards in the bee maze and would give families the opportunity to really look around for different wildlife when walking.
- In addition, a map or leaflet to promote this area could be beneficial to provide information about accessibility and different walks to take depending on ability. As the area is so peaceful, this could be advertised as a calming space for people with mental health conditions to visit if they're feeling overwhelmed in addition to the Quiet Tuesdays and quiet room at the centre if this isn't something in place already.

Category B4 – Tourist Attractions

Brodsworth Hall and Gardens

**Gold & Joint
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

Brodsworth Hall & Gardens

Brodsworth Hall is a wonderful experience, restored to their Victorian grandeur, these gardens offer vibrant formal bedding, colourful herbaceous borders, topiary, ferns and more than 100 varieties of roses, along with a fine collection of ornamental trees. The original structure of tunnels, bridges and paths creates visual surprises at every turn. On a morning of a heatwave with temperatures set to reach 39C we were greeted by Bethan, one of the full-time gardeners, who then escorted us on our tour of the 15-acre gardens, we gratefully thank her dedication and enthusiasm in such difficult weather conditions. The gardens are maintained by Head Gardener Dan Hale, and 6 fulltime staff and 60 enthusiastic volunteers. We started our tour in front of the impressive 350yr old Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) and hidden behind its impressive size is the equally impressive Brodsworth Hall.

The tour then guided us around the side of the hall where you are greeted by the formal stripped lawns complimented by grass banking's now uncut and left to naturalise which harbour wild orchids and other wildflowers. Within the boundary hedges are incorporated and relevant a new exhibition of wired sculptures that depicts Brodsworth connection to the transatlantic slave trade by renowned carnival artist Carl Gabriel. This display is named liberty and lottery after two slave ships owned by the previous owner of the hall Peter Thuellsson (1735-97).

From there we were greeted by Daniel Hale (head gardener) who joined Brodsworth in 2015 and another member of staff who were busy watering the highly formal seasonal bedding in the Fountain Garden, with its central three-tiered marble fountain by Casentini. The bedding scheme, backed in front of some 1000 topiary forms, gives an excellent contrast to the vibrant colour scheme of a staggering 25,000 plants. This season's scheme was designed by our guide Bethan, Dan has given the responsibility of designing the beds each year to one of his staff giving a sense of ownership and pride, while keeping to the history of the gardens. Dan and his team are now able to produce their own seasonal bedding on site, which is a big advantage for future schemes.

Following the paths, you begin to explore woodlands, rocky outcrops and ferny grottos which create an impression of a garden much larger than it is. One project being undertaken is the Alpine bed, proudly being restored by our guide and alpine expert Bethan. Another major project was the restoration of the fernery in the 1990's. Dan and his team have planted new species of ferns, Judas trees and Chusan Palms as a form of canopy as they grow to add to the 100 fern species and a trickling waterfall.

Tucked out of sight behind in a wooded grove is a Pets' Cemetery where, among those for the family dogs, is a headstone for Polly Parrot (1919–45).

Bethan then guided us to the Eyecatcher that forms the southern end of the 175-yard-long Target Garden, once an archery range. More recently, Dan and his team have

turned their hands to making improvements in the Target Garden. The 1880s tapestry-style mosaic flowerbeds have been revealed and replanted and the original paths uncovered.

The rose garden has undertaken new box hedging and planted with species of wild and native roses - in full flower and scent all summer. It is no surprise that they get so many volunteers signing up to help at the recruitment drives. These are held at some of the many events held at the house and gardens Brodsworth in bloom, Victorian falconry, and the very popular Enchanted gardens). Some of the volunteers also fetch skills along with them that are beneficial like Dave who has done the dry-stone walling along the target range. Overall, the gardens are keeping to the original Victorian style but also incorporating modern techniques and ways of thinking.

Nestled away amongst all the formal gardens are areas to encourage wildlife like the pet cemetery and beech lawns all with log piles and wildflowers (bee orchids, yellow rattle). A pair of beehives looked after by Duncan that now produce Brodsworth with its own honey. A big thank you to Dan and his team for a wonderful day and experience in the restoration being undertaken sympathetically to the 1860's.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Plant labels on more plants and trees.
- Possibility to expand the beehives

Himalayan Garden and Sculpture Park

Gold

Overall Impression

Most places having lost 160 larch trees this year to *Phytophthora ramorum* and the spring storms would be devastating news, however here at the Himalayan Garden they have taken this on as a challenge to replant, and move on.

Now achieving the National Collection status for the nation's rhododendrons, evidence is to be seen of all the new varieties and plantings. An ever-increasing array of sculptures and inspirational contemporary artwork and building structures from around the world blend symbiotically in with this tranquil and glorious landscape. The judges had pleasure in being shown so many points of interest both environmentally and horticulturally, too many to list, making this garden interesting and exciting to view. We could see all year-round interest and activity that the team had created. The passions of the garden team and its volunteers goes well beyond what the judges expected to see. A truly unique and delightful visitor experience and a pleasure for us as judges to visit.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Much work had been done to lift the 'skirts' of many trees and rhodos has resulted in wonderful open views and new vistas across the valley site, also given the benefit of creating another level of planting and interest to the natural habitats formed.
- The newly installed blue *Meconopsis* hillside cascade, constructed with the many hands of local school children, makes a wonderful sculptural feature. Care with selective thinning of emerging plant life may be needed in future to keep the overall effect.

- Continue with planting and dividing the candelabra primulas along the lakeside to further enhance the spring primula displays.
- Consider more sustainable planting in the Buddha garden border – perhaps look at lavender to replace the bedding.

Keighley and Worth Valley Railway

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

The KWVR is well known nationally due to the original Railway Children film and now the new Railway Children Return and the latter should ensure the continuation of this. The volunteers are to be commended on their enthusiasm, hard work and dedication to the KWVR. Despite the difficult growing conditions due to the predominance of engine ash and clinker the work on the main bed at Ingrow West has resulted in this being much improved, the little station at Damens (smallest operating passenger station in the UK) was very colourful with sustainable planting and hanging baskets and the quality and vigour of the plants at Oakworth particularly caught the eye. At Oxenhope there were colourful planters and hanging baskets and the new herb bed added to the range of planting. The area planted with heathers, dwarf conifers and alpines was very attractive. All hard areas platforms, car parks etc. were clean, weed, graffiti and litter free and picnic areas were well maintained.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The use of variegated evergreens gives sustainable year round colour but watch for reversion to green since this will take over being more vigorous.
- The proposed work track-side at Ingrow West will improve this area.
- The development of the Midland Shed will add to the attractions for visitors.
- Hopefully further gardening volunteers will replace those recently unfortunately lost to the group.

Middleton Railway Trust Ltd

Gold

Overall Impression

Middleton Railway Trust offers a great visitor experience for all ages, the railway is extremely inclusive catering for all visitors. The future plans to include a 'quiet hour' for visitors with autism, mental health or other disabilities demonstrates the culture and forward thinking nature of the Trust.

The cleanliness of a working heritage railway is somewhat of a rarity due to the nature of the business but all indoor/outdoor accessible areas were maintained to a high standard. The volunteers clearly cared for the railway & their pride shone throughout the tour of the railway from the spotlessly clean Engine House & all the local history information to the immaculately kept engines & exhibits in the museum.

All planted areas were of a high standard with obvious thought & consideration gone into selection of plants.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider creating informal 'windows' in lineside scrub/vegetation to improve sightlines, also reducing the height of hedgerows will bring similar gains.
- Continue to develop/sow wildflower meadows alongside the line to add interest/biodiversity ensuring correct preparation & maintenance regimes are followed to ensure success.
- The gate mechanism/workings to the road crossing could be made into a feature with relevant interpretive information for visitors.
- Painting of the exterior railings could form a project for volunteers or even a corporate volunteering day.
- Consideration could be given to include more planters/troughs within the car park area to add further horticultural content to the entry.

Oakwell Hall & Country Park

Gold

Overall Impression

The enthusiasm and dedication of this small team are helping with the covid recovery programme in this beautiful country park. Despite the proximity to a busy motorway network, the park is tranquil and quiet and a haven for visitors and wildlife alike.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Excellent specimen trees in the woodland and formal gardens.
- Numerous informative interpretation panels across the site giving historical and environmental context to the area.
- Local identity well covered across the site and particularly prominent on the gates to the visitor centre.
- Excellent programme of activities for schools education.
- Consider additional but discrete signage at strategic points (junctions of paths) in the woodland to aid directions back to the house and garden.
- Continue to develop future plans to replant the herb garden.

Sutton Park Stately Home

Gold

Overall Impression

Just a short trip north from York is Sutton Park Stately Home and Gardens. Developed in the 1750's, many grand looking trees within the grounds are still evident from this period. The judges had a very pleasant sunny days visit being escorted round by Michal who gave a very comprehensive tour of the grounds and explained all the work achieved. Large grounds with many individual areas of attraction and much for the visitor to see as well as relax in some wonderful tranquil spots. The work done over the last few years by Michal and small team is now paying dividends as the grounds looked superb on our visit.

Areas of note are the walled garden, wildflower meadow, the fernery and lily pond gardens all a buzz with wildlife and colour. The new plantings to the front of the house set the scene as to the high standard you see throughout the visit. Engagement with the local community and schools as well as list of events make this entry a place you would wish to revisit.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The wildflower meadow and walled garden area is a good place to relax. Consider more seating / eating possibilities. Also consider adding yellow rattle to some of the beds to keep the grass content down and flower content up.
- The Icehouse is a great feature. To enhance the experience more, it would be good to see some interpretation boards etc showing the use and information as to what the Ice House is. Perhaps a leaflet and dispenser on the door would inform the visitor more.
- Look at getting some of the trees in the grounds registered. It is apparent that many are mature and old and getting them on the national register would be good for the entry. www.treeregister.org. (Also look at ancient tree inventory <https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>)

Thorp Perrow

Gold

Overall Impression

Thorp Perrow is a well-presented and maintained woodland gardens with an excellent collection of trees and hosting five national plant collections. A trail is available highlighting the varied tree collection including those that have been registered with Champion and Veteran tree status.

The gardens successfully balance an appropriate maintenance and succession planting schedule with the development of many varied wildlife habitats to improve biodiversity. Multiple examples of year-round engagement with visitors and the local community throughout the gardens, workshops, events and via social media, highlighting areas of seasonal interest and opportunities to observe and engage with the variety of wildlife. Much improvements to paths and car park has been carried out over the recent period, sympathetically with these surroundings.

A worthy gold medal. Well done and keep up the excellent work.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The opportunity to provide further information on the national plant collections. A tree trail booklet is available (to buy) at the gardens entrance, but perhaps consider if information could be provided in-situ to inform and educate visitors.
- Excellent recycling facilities are available in the tea rooms/ entrance areas. Consider if facilities could be provided at other locations in the gardens to improve recycling.
- The judges appreciate that the grounds are still in essence a private garden however as a pay on entry garden, much more could be done with strategically placed information boards and signage. EG The Katherine Parr tree – even though a map given to entrants show the location, extra information as to the age, tree variety, work

done to help the tree, its heritage status etc would make the visitors experience much more enhanced.

Category C10 – Charitable Establishment

Barnsley Hospice

Gold & Joint Winner

Overall Impression

The effort put in by staff and the team of volunteer gardeners is very impressive to say the least. It was wonderful to see the dedication and commitment that the team put in. The beautiful planters and hanging baskets at the front of the building are full of colour with a well chosen selection of planting. The care and imagination which have gone into creating very different and beautiful garden rooms is amazing. The inclusion of a pond with koi carp is a very special feature. It was very pleasing to hear of the year round opportunities provided for residents and their families to use and enjoy the lovely outdoor features. A very special place indeed.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider more planters in the littlest seating areas. Pots of lavender would require little maintenance and provide scent and butterflies.
- Perhaps consider some pot grown apple trees on dwarfing rootstocks which would give interest and pleasure year round.
- Consider pots of strawberries in the little seating areas, so residents can taste their own fruit or even tumbling tomatoes to taste and enjoy.

CASE Training Services (GROW)

Gold

Overall Impression

CASE Training are a Hull based charity providing training and support for adults with learning disabilities. During the pandemic they have taken the opportunity to amalgamate their 4 allotments onto what is in effect one site and to improve the facilities for their trainees with a new classroom and composting toilet. The rather overgrown wildlife area has been tidied, re-planted and access improved. The site was awash with colour from flowers both annual and perennial, all grown from seed where possible and complemented by the colourfully painted buildings. Currently a group of eight trainees are

able to work alongside the two staff to maintain and develop the area. Effective use is made of raised beds and many features, often suggested and indeed built by trainees, are incorporated eg seating areas, artwork. The group have good links with other community projects and fellow allotmenters, and are successful in receiving support from local businesses. They garden in a sustainable manner and actively encourage wildlife, including having their own beehives. There is a huge and infectious enthusiasm for the garden from staff and students alike. Well done, Sally, Brenda and the Grow Team!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It was good to hear the news about the installation of a kitchen back at CASE training headquarters and that they will be using the produce for cooking lessons.
- Hopefully once the COVID restrictions still in place (as at 6/7/22) are lifted, then other students using this facility will be able to visit the allotment and see where it comes from!
- I may have missed this, but I wondered if you had any bird boxes on-site to encourage garden birds to nest in the area? I appreciate you may not wish to have bird feeders because of issues with rodents – though Alan the cat may not complain!

High Green Methodist Church

Gold

Overall Impression

As one approaches High Green Methodist Church you cannot help be acknowledge that this entry and the grounds is well cared for and cherished by the people who tender the site. All areas around the church and church hall are planted with an array of all year-round horticultural attractions. Each area is maintained to a very high standard demonstrating David and Janet's enthusiasm and passion for the site. Excellent work and I am sure appreciated by not just the Church users but the residents of High Green.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Look at the possibility of installing some form of information board detailing the garden work you do and perhaps the grounds history and garden regime.
- Since the area is mainly the dedicated and hard work of so few perhaps consider other volunteers to assist and have input into the site and any future plans and also they are there to continue the great work already achieved.

Hope Pastures, Equine Rescue Centre

Gold

Overall Impression

Hope Pastures is an equine rehoming and rehabilitation charity located in North Leeds. The Centre is totally inclusive and benefits from being open 365 days a year and has a commendable community engagement programme. With strategically placed information boards around the site (with interchangeable content) and appropriate use of signage the educational and environmental information passed on to visitors is excellent. Visitors are

free to engage and interact with the residential donkeys, ponies and horses (up to 30 at any given time) and even visit the volunteer led café and visitor centre.

Situated within the grounds are three distinct separate garden areas, including the newly developed Celebration Garden at the top of the site. As well as all this Philip and the team have still had time to plant a native hedgerow around many of the paddocks – all wildlife, and of course donkey friendly trees and plants.

All year-round activities and fund raising from dog show to Christmas fair help raise funds for the centre's activities. A commendable team of dedicated volunteers and sponsors help make Hope Pastures a wonderful equine visitor experience.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The charities approach to land management, using the equi-central management system is to be highly commended. A system whereby the sustainability of the land is at the forefront of land usage and grazing, and as such helps with healthy equine living and results in a healthy sustainable land environment.
- Using native (equine friendly) tree planting hedgerows acts as a natural enclosure that also becomes a natural grazing product. This practice I would encourage to further develop where appropriate.
- In the newly developed Celebration Garden consider more evergreen shrubs (like Pittosporum or Griselinia) to augment the herbaceous planting and improve the wind break capability of the new area.
- A site that has limited space for floral enhancement however replacing the herb containers with say a raised bed would cut down on watering and create a greater planting area for the much-enjoyed mint herbs, as well as this being an attractive feature in the space.
- Develop further and enhance the wildlife habitat within the secret garden.
- The three-year pruning cycle will start to pay off and rejuvenate the area however do not be afraid to cut back hard any remove plants struggling, especially in areas around the car park border.

Just the Job

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

Just The Job is a charity whose aim is to empower, support, and nurture individuals and aim to develop a wide variety of skills and social experiences for them. Giving each one the opportunity to access practical working skills training, life skills and social activities. The main work activities are garden maintenance, processing wood into logs to sell to customers for firewood, crafting and horticultural activities at the 3 acre community gardens. Working with Richmond in Bloom and providing planting and care of displays at the town signs.

Like many other charities they have had a difficult time through Covid lockdowns and restrictions particularly with maintenance and other commitments which has led to reorganisation of the teams.

There is a lot of enthusiasm for growing vegetables and flowers on individual plots and a good collaboration with a local shop to sell produce. Petals are gathered and dried for confetti among other projects.

It is clear that there is good collaboration with many organisations and similar charities to share ideas and workspaces for mutual benefit. The woodland is used for a forest school and willows and hazels are grown for green woodworking. Wildflower seed is collected. A wide variety of wildlife habitats have been developed throughout the site and bat and bird boxes along with insect housing in the form of “flats” have been made on site. Sadly the bees died in the winter but it is hoped the hives will be filled again this year.

Fund raising is particularly important at the moment with a move to a new site in planning. It is hoped there will be opportunity for better water collection at the new site and the plans for eco build to include green roofs along with other measures are forward thinking. Very well done to all involved and thank you for an informative tour.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It was good to see temporary signage in the orchard to identify crops but better and durable signs would be helpful going forward especially to identify the varieties of the fruit trees.
- With young fruit trees it is important to summer prune which ensures better shaping and strength in the branches to hold the weight of future crops.

Northcliffe Environmental Team (N.E.E.T)

Gold

Overall Impression

Development of the site continues at a pace, which results in not just better facilities for service users but increases the range and type of work they can engage in.

The ethos of recycling is embedded with all types of materials and products being reused. A rare benefit of covid has been the development of productive links with both voluntary and statutory bodies to the benefit of all parties.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The plan to improve access across a large part of the site is ambitious, but when completed will again improve access for service users. This will also involve rebuilding the raised beds in the vegetable garden for which the timber has been secured.
- The supporting of other groups and joint working on some projects is to be encouraged and will hopefully continue to bring good results for all involved.

Rainbow Community Garden

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

Tucked away on a housing estate, Rainbow Community Garden was created from an area of wasteland some 21 years ago. It truly serves its local community and in return is well supported by it. It comprises a number of elements including an area with raised beds allocated to individuals and other raised beds with vegetables for communal use by volunteers/service users, ornamental borders, pots, a recently developed garden of

reflection, and a paved area adjacent to the pensioner bungalows. Two part-time staff and a team of volunteers alongside other users such as a women's group, CCG social prescribing, work experience students maintain and develop the garden. Families are also encouraged to use the space and a summer holiday programme is provided. Environmentally friendly practices are employed including composting, rainwater collection and re-using and recycling materials. Having recently received additional funding the group is in the process of recruiting an Operations Manager who will support the current staff in developing the garden further. A huge thank you must go to Brenda and Emma and the many volunteers and service users who look after this very special and well-loved garden.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- As with all gardens there are areas which are under development and still have some way to go. One of these is the area adjacent to pensioners' bungalows which in line with your community spirit you have offered to run for the council. Now that it has been cleared it has the potential to be an attractive area for the adjacent residents and it is hoped they can be encouraged to use this area and perhaps even contribute to its maintenance?
- The intention to employ a new Operations Manager will free up staff time for more practical work and bring in more funding all of which will hopefully help with ongoing and new development projects in the garden.
- I may have missed this but wondered if you had any birdboxes in the garden? Not only are they good for birds but with the possibility of nest-cameras they can be of great interest to adult and children alike.

St Gemmas Hospice

Gold

Overall Impression

St Gemmas Hospice is a Leeds based charity and the largest hospice in Yorkshire and occupies a 4.2 acre site with a 3 acre garden. The main garden has a very diverse range of quality plants which are all well-tended and weed free with a pleasant rill running through and the new Path of Life is developing well, being only 12 months old. A new feature in the latter is the vegetable plot planted by schools with produce to be used in the kitchens. All the paths in the gardens have mosaics inset designed by patients and staff. 70% of funds are provided by donations. There are compost bins, bug hotel and frog spawn is collected each year and distributed to local schools in order that they may witness the life cycle. Planting is very sustainable supplemented by baskets of annuals to give increased colour. Many of the plants are donated by volunteers and continuity of colour is provided by under-planting the herbaceous borders with spring bulbs. A number of trees have TPO's which is restrictive, but these are accommodated well.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The judges look forward to seeing the new carbon neutral pavilion and the development of interaction with the schools and the vegetable plot.
- A suggestion which would be good for the patients and provide biodiversity would be to provide more bird boxes, feeders etc.
- The relatively new Path of Life will mature over the next 12 months.

The Kirkwood Hospice

**Gold & Joint
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

Kirkwood Hospice Garden is a remarkable and beautiful place. The volunteers are to be congratulated on their fantastic recovery from covid when they were not allowed on site for nearly two years. The garden must be a haven for patients, staff and visitors who can choose many different areas to sit and relax in stunning surroundings. The judges were overwhelmed by what has been created at Kirkwood - awe inspiring!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- There is colour in every part of this garden and many interesting trees and shrubs - all well cultivated and looked after.
- Planting is appropriate for each area of the garden with well thought out design leading the visitor around.
- The kitchen garden and greenhouses all contribute to the day-to-day running of the hospice kitchens and the pond is welcoming to wildlife.
- The "terrace" of compost bins was most impressive.
- Continue to look for a solution to the mature chestnut trees at the front of the property which are showing signs of disease.

Category C6 – Parks, Gardens, Cemeteries

Barnsley Main Heritage Group

Silver

Overall Impression

This is clearly a impressive, dedicated and committed group. What they are doing on a site with no water or power is very impressive. Anyone would have to admire their determination not to give in when faced with theft and vandalism. The value put on their lovely natural environment and wildlife was very good to see and clearly efforts are being made to protect and conserve it. The woodland area is a good resource. The wildflower border running the length of the site, by the road was very sustainable and clearly well used by insects and bees. The clearing of the carpark and other areas around the site has been an amazing achievement. The little museum is a lovely idea and so much effort has gone into it. It was good to see the way children are catered for on site.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue working to strengthen bonds with local groups. Working with Dearne Valley Country Park quite closely would benefit both groups.
- There are lots of good ideas considered by the group, lovely ideas but you are a small group. Try to make a definite list of priorities and choose one, the most important to concentrate on.
- There is so much knowledge on wildlife in the group, consider giving a wildlife tour occasionally or /and contact local schools and see if anything on site, possibly about habitats fits with the National Curriculum.
- Information boards are a good idea, consider starting with one basic one on the history and heritage of the site.

Cannon Hall Park and Gardens

Platinum

Overall Impression

This is a beautiful site, full of colourful bloom and with plenty of surprises just around the corner. The updated herbaceous borders are full of a rich variety of planting and the introduction of a path among the borders at the front of the hall is an excellent idea. The historic rhododendron collection is impressive, as is the famous pear collection. The area of raised vegetable beds, used by activity sessions with children is a lovely idea. Pear Day is an unusual and interesting event.

The range of talks and activities on site, including ceramic making is very impressive. The information boards and signs on site are wide ranging and it was pleasing to see that children were catered for.

It was good to hear about the site's committed volunteers and to see the lovely facilities provided for them.

Efforts to conserve wildlife, ranging from unmown areas, monolith dead trees and wildflower areas was pleasing to see.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Perhaps have a designated area of bee friendly planting with information boards on plant species there that the public might grow to help bees.
- Create a corner featuring habitat piles, insect hotels, hedgehog houses etc which people might recreate at home.
- Consider a simple raised bed/planters featuring things children might grow at home. For example consider potatoes grown in a bucket, radishes, cut and come again salad leaves etc. which might encourage young gardeners.

Carlton Marsh Nature Reserve

Platinum

Overall Impression

With just a short walk from the car park you are transported into a totally different landscape. A clear stream runs by an excellent bird hide that gives amazing views over the nature reserve, affording close views of the birdlife and wildlife. Carlton Marsh is a fine example of partnership working, with the local authority, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and a dedicated enthusiastic group of volunteers and Voluntary Rangers.

The group produce a natural history report every year (now onto the 46th edition) highlighting all the work done on a monthly basis within the reserve over the last year. Including in this report is a commendable list of bird counts, bird ringing, entomological reports to name but a few of the documentary evidence the group are engaged in. There is no mistaking the groups environmental improvement and continued enhancement that have helped make this nature reserve a special place to visit.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Attention may be needed to display boards and interpretation points around the site.
- Interpretation boards along the wildflower meadow and a cut path through will enhance that area.
- Continue to manage the reed beds and any invasive flora.
- Excellent new seating point – consider looking at increasing where possible around the site

Cliffe Castle Park

**Platinum &
Category Winner**

Overall Impression

A wonderful park with beautiful parkland providing amazing community facilities and support. All aspects of the horticulture were good and well maintained with particular attention to the environment.

The new mowing schedule allowed for the creation of a wild meadow to support pollinators including bees. Children love the mown paths. Good links are in place with local bee keepers and the two organisations work together providing maximum benefit for our bees .

This park is certainly extremely well used all year round by the very many diverse community groups. It provides many health and well being opportunities including park run, Tai Chi, various health walks. The two workshops provide instruction and facilities for art and joinery and are well used by the diverse community. The arts are well supported with successful events welcoming the LGBTQ+ community.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The museum and gardens provide information and recognition of the history and heritage but unfortunately as time was too short we were unable to visit this part of the park.
- The work with so many groups of the communities is to be commended and continued.
- Publicity and information are both good using many appropriate up to date methods which is so important and must be continued.

Elsecar Park and Nature Reserve

Platinum

Overall Impression

This wonderful park really does have something for everyone and was buzzing with activity on the day of the judging visit. Changes to the layout of paths at the entrance have made it safer and more accessible and it was good to see that smoking in the park is discouraged. Three staff work full time maintaining the garden and an active Friends group support them with monthly gardening and litter picking. The group also raise funds and organise summer concerts in the bandstand. Their latest fundraiser is a calendar for 2022 which is already proving popular with park users. A wide range of facilities is on offer including, amongst others, play areas, crazy golf, pitch and putt, a MUGA and a popular café. There are also quiet peaceful areas, floral beds and the Nature reserve with its reservoir and adjacent meadows and trees provides a haven for a huge range of wildlife and is classified as a Natural Heritage site. Sustainability is central to the park's management plan and improvements to the delivery of this are constantly being addressed eg in the recycling of waste materials. The planting of trees has been undertaken as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative with a memorial Purple Beech included. A huge thank you must go to all those involved in the management, upkeep, development, and fundraising for this great community space.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- As schools start to return to normality after the recent pandemic, it would be good to see them being encouraged to use the park as an educational resource with the Nature Reserve in particular, being ideal for this purpose.
- Perhaps downloadable activity sheets could encourage and facilitate this? These could equally be used by families.
- There is clearly an abundance of wildlife in the Nature Reserve and there have obviously been surveys in the past. Perhaps more could be done to record what is there now eg by encouraging local naturalist groups to undertake these and/or encouraging the local community to take part in national/regional initiatives such as The Big Butterfly Count (Big Butterfly Count (butterfly-conservation.org), the Big Garden Birdwatch Big Garden Birdwatch | The RSPB or the regional Great Yorkshire Creature Count Great Yorkshire Creature Count | Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (ywt.org.uk).
- Much is being done to manage the park sustainably but there was little evidence of water collection. Is this something that could start to be introduced in some areas?

Foxwood Residents Association

Gold

Overall Impression

It was lovely to revisit this entry and catchup with the developments and hear about the increase in volunteer numbers. There is a range of planting on site including herbs and vegetables and it was excellent to see the Duke of Edinburgh student's vegetable planting. There is good awareness of the local wildlife and how to encourage it to the site from compost heaps, wildflower areas, bird boxes and a good ethos of reusing and recycling. There are good relations with other groups to support project work such as

Poppleton Railway nursery, York Good Gym and the social prescribing scheme. Great to see the photographic record of the development of the site, it just shows how much has been achieved. The jubilee signs have added to the garden this year and created a focus for the celebrations. There is certainly great entrepreneurial skills selling garden produce and creating lavender bags to help with group funds

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- There could be further discussions with the Trustees of the centre on some of the grounds maintenance works such as the tree work. I would recommend a qualified tree surgeon was used if any tree pruning is required. The logs that were removed could have been used as log piles in the wild areas for habitat for beetles etc.
- Now the Youth Club has restarted there is an opportunity to do some projects with the group, growing potatoes in buckets, bulb planting, or possibly creating a small pond to increase the biodiversity on the site
- Maybe some grass paths could be mowed through the meadow area to help people enjoy this area a little more.

Friends of Monk Bretton Park

Gold

Overall Impression

The park provides an interesting area of open space in that it is an ancient area of land of ridge and furrow cultivation thus have listed status. This has resulted in any planting being on the edges which does leave a large event space.

The former paddling pool provides a mini wet land area that is maintained for wildlife. The delayed (Covid) sign board is excellent, providing a history of the site along with a traditional notice board for events and so on.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- continue the maintenance program of clearing parts of the pond for wildlife habitats.
- When possible increase planting density along the new boarder by the new fence as this will increase the impact and decrease weeding and so on.
- When possible continue to hold events and encourage others do do so as so a great piece of open space needs to be fully utilised.

Friends of Thurnscoe park

Gold

Overall Impression

The park was maintained to a good standard. It was nice to see so many volunteer groups helping to maintain the park. There was a real sense of community and that really stood out on my visit. I really liked the giant bug hotel. They have some fantastic events over the year and the outdoor cinema sounds great fun. Keep up the good work Friends of Thurnscoe! Well done!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Some of the planting had suffered due to the weather. I would look to be adding more sustainable planting in the park, which would not require as much up keep.
- Try adding more hardy Geraniums and Lavenders into less accessible dry areas of the park. Add more mulch to beds to help suppress weeds but also help retain moisture.
- Add more ground cover plants like periwinkle. Keep adding seasonal interests and try where possible to add more native bulbs, flora and fauna.
- Planting under dense tree canopy be selective in adding shade loving plants like ferns. I would recommend *Dryopteris affinis*, *Filix-mas* and *Asplenium*

Friends of Wilthorpe Park

Platinum

Overall Impression

Fantastic attention to detail. Plant choice really good. The whole park was spotless and seemed to be loved by all. Great interpretation panels. Also great to see tree identification posts around the park. I was blown away by the tree inspection lists and yearly management plans for the park. This is a fantastic park and a real credit to the amazing team of friends of Wilthorpe. Superb!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Look at more sustainable planting in the borders. My recommendations would be more lavenders and hardy geraniums in the formal round borders.
- With regards to the long border keep adding more interest. Identify shade loving plants like ferns (*Dryopteris affinis* and *Filix-mas*) for under the heavy tree canopy areas. Keep planting more seasonal bulbs and where possible introduce more native bulbs and flowers.
- Look at planting more shrub roses in the rose garden. Blush noisette is a real winner and *Rosa glauca*.

Friends of York Cemetery

Platinum

Overall Impression

The Friends Group is a well organised and mature group with many years of experience. The new Harriet Centre is a great additional facility, well deserving of the recent design award and it will be useful for more events and fundraising. A variety of planted areas & distinct areas over the 24 acres such as the herb garden, butterfly walk orchard and scented area is great for biodiversity and adds to the visitor experience. The plans to upgrade the web site will make the various walks, events and information more available to visitors although most areas are covered with posters promoting events on site, twitter, facebook, newsletters, the use of QR codes, self guided walks, headsets for walks, a regular programme of walks and powerpoint presentation to various groups. There is a huge range of walks including geology and trees which must be of interest to everyone. Having the stonemasons on site allows new signage to be created which is in keeping

with the cemetery. There are many groups visiting the site including school children, Duke of Edinburgh and University students and there is a network of local groups also using and helping with the site. It was a very interesting visit, thank you.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- When enhancing the planting for the scented walk it might be worth a visit to RHS Harlow Carr, Harrogate to see the winter walk for suitable plants.
- Would there be an opportunity to plant a nuttery as a new feature?
- Would it be possible to label the ferns?
- Would there be any scope to invite local groups of artists into the cemetery?

Harold Park

Platinum

Overall Impression

A beautiful and obviously much loved community park giving people of all ages a green space in which to stroll, exercise and relax in equal measure.

The Friends of Harold Park are a very dedicated and enthusiastic group who work extremely hard for the upkeep of the park and who are much valued by the local community for the beautiful surroundings and the social benefits that are very evident.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Excellent programme of health walks for all levels and abilities and very good interpretation giving encouragement and support and outlining the benefits of walking in the park.
- The sensory garden looked after by Beryl and Anthea is a riot of colour and the planting is well thought out and maintained. Both ladies are doing a great job and deserve praise for their efforts.
- The Friends of Harold Park are the lifeblood of this beautiful park organising events and activities all year round for fund raising and awareness.
- The community hub and cafe are a model that other groups could follow.

High Green in Bloom - The Rose Garden

Platinum

Overall Impression

What a pleasure it was on a warm sunny afternoon to meet the volunteers of High Green Rose Garden and the In Bloom group. Escorted around the site it was interesting to hear all the work the group have done to the garden through the years, including how they continued to use the garden in lockdown. An ever-expanding garden, well tendered and cared for is in a thoroughfare corner of Mortomley Park. Volunteers David and Janet gave a comprehensive tour of all the varied areas, plantings, and projects that the group expertly care for. A garden that demonstrates all year-round interest, new seating, tree planting, mini orchard, and wildflower areas. All a credit to the group's endeavours. Well done.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider achieving funds to update or refurbish the main notice board.
- Having new and more information points or interpretation boards within the garden would enhance the visitor experience and give deserved credit to the group of volunteers for these achievements.
- Possibly look at creating a leaflet telling users about the Rose Garden and all the different areas and consider placing in a leaflet dispenser near the main notice board.

Hillsborough Park Walled Garden

Gold

Overall Impression

Firstly, it was a pleasure to meet up again with Christine, Andy, Melvyn, and Colin having previously judged several years ago, and to see that their enthusiasm and dedication has not diminished and to see the progress they have made over these past years, so thank you all for a pleasurable tour and your continued hard work and dedication.

Walking up to the entrance of the gardens you are welcomed by the impressive gates kindly donated by Liverpool FC as a fitting memorial to the tragic events that occurred at Hillsborough on the 15th of April 1989.

Walking through the gates to the right is a striking herbaceous border with an excellent planting and colour scheme which is maintained to a high standard by Colin. Within this area is a small woodland walk and stumpery with pond and is a compliment to the gardens, one note of interest was the Lillidendron Tree, which according to the group is 1 of only 2 in the Sheffield area. The wildlife area has a good amount of diverse wildlife, which also has a resident badger, which gives evidence that these areas created by our communities are valuable assets for our wildlife within urban areas.

As you approach the entrance to the main gardens lies two local tombstones from Wards End Cemetery that have some historical importance to the local area and Sheffield.

These will be incorporated into a new feature with information/interpretation boards.

Entering the gardens, you are greeted with a distinct peaceful feeling with paths winding through various planting schemes which have been created with thought and consist of herbaceous, wildlife, vegetables, heather, grasses, and an impressive fig tree full of fruit. Some of the beds have had plants supplied to the group from local enthusiasts such as Dahlia and Hydrangeas. Repairs have taken place to the brick work of the raised bed areas and is an ongoing project.

One area in the corner has a small wall fountain, the wall is also an 18th Century heated wall and is a main project the group wish to concentrate on.

The group continue to work well with external partners in particular Age UK who now run activities from the Bradbury Makers Shed, so there is potential to further this partnership with possible volunteering contribution to the gardens.

The newly renovated Old Coach House has proven a success in generating extra visitors to the gardens which, hopefully, will encourage further volunteering possibilities.

Credit must go to the group in the amount of funding they self-generate through the sale of plants and through various events like "All Lit Up" where the garden is illuminated with various lights and lamps and the Flower Plot People Open Day which was a significant amount which helps fund future developments of the gardens and with support from external partners this only helps the sustainability for the future of the gardens.

The group and its volunteers continue to grow which is a testament to their hard work and dedication. With the renovation of the Old Coach House this will only add to the visitors to the garden making them a major attraction within Hillsborough Park and for its long-term sustainability.

We thank the group for a very pleasant visit and look forward to returning to seeing this flourish into what will become a fantastic and Historic feature.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Is there a potential to have a raised sensory bed to the side of the listed 18th Century wall which already has a raised bed and was in the groups plans for development?
- Sand and re-stain the benches – is there a possibility the Community Repair shop would kindly like to volunteer to help with the bench maintenance.
- With the newly renovated Old Coach House the gardens are now attracting more visitors and the judges think interpretation boards and map would further add interest to the history of the gardens.
- Use mulch, which is produced by the group on site on the beds and borders to help maintain moisture and suppress weeds, this will help with maintenance.
- Be mindful not to expand too much which could be detrimental to the maintenance of the main gardens.

HMP Hull

Gold

Overall Impression

HMP Hull may look forbidding from outside but hidden within its walls is an amazing range of gardens with different purposes and meeting different needs within the prison community: the visitors' entrance provides a welcoming and colourful area for families; Emma's memorial garden is a peaceful place for staff to sit; the kitchen gardens and polytunnel provide food for both the prison kitchen and a local food bank; the 'GOOP' wellbeing garden serves prisoners with severe mental health issues and the recently developed Islamic garden is a beautifully designed and peaceful multifaith area adjacent to the Chapel. In addition to the specific gardens, walkways, pathways, and roadsides are planted or have containers bringing splashes of colour throughout the site. Sustainability and environmentally friendly gardening is at the heart of all the gardening activities and they are supported in this by links with organisations such as Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, RHS Community Outreach and Beverley Beekeepers. A twitter feed communicates their work to the wider community and prisoners have the opportunity to undertake NVQ qualifications. It is impossible in this brief resume to touch on everything that goes on, but suffice it to say it is the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff (Dave, until recently Steve, and now Pete) and their gardening team who are responsible for the transformation of what could otherwise be a sterile and forbidding environment, for the benefit of all within and connected with the prison community. A huge WELL DONE and THANKS to you all, particularly given the recent challenges and difficulties posed by the pandemic.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The use of annual bedding throughout the site undoubtedly provides wonderful colour and in the growing from seed or cuttings provides work for the gardening team.
- There are however, some areas where the maintenance is problematic because of access issues and additionally annuals require more watering than well rooted perennials. You have started in some areas to plant perennials to overcome these issues and we would encourage you to continue with this process by selecting plants appropriate to the site and a range to provide year-round colour as far as possible (this could of course be foliage, not necessarily flowers).
- You have a number of wildflower 'pockets' throughout the site. Perhaps you might be able to establish a more permanent wildflower meadow? Although we didn't see the area close up, perhaps the space where the beehives are kept would be suitable (and of course beneficial for the bees)?
- To support and prove the benefits of your gardens for local wildlife, have you considered taking part in any of these national activities: The Big Butterfly Count (Big Butterfly Count (butterfly-conservation.org)), the Big Garden Birdwatch Big Garden Birdwatch | The RSPB or the regional Great Yorkshire Creature Count Great Yorkshire Creature Count | Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (ywt.org.uk)?

Knaresborough Castle

Platinum

Overall Impression

Knaresborough Castle and the grounds in which it sits are steeped in history and occupy an iconic situation providing what is often referred to as the best view in Yorkshire. The area is well maintained with attractive and appropriate flower beds throughout.

There is also a very well maintained war memorial with a good planting scheme. The brass memorial plaques are regularly polished by a retired soldier.

The children's competition to design the long flower bed beside the bowling green demonstrates good work with young people and jubilee design for this year was excellent.

It was good to hear about the program for the maintenance of the cliff face and also about the regular tree inspections. Training for the staff is excellent ensuring consistency and standards are maintained. The work with apprentices is also to be commended.

The gardens are well used with many well publicised important events taking place. There are Pop-up Parties, Children's entertainment, as well the site being a popular filming location.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- There are numerous good information boards and seats some which were in need of a little attention.
- Although resources are scarce do try to ensure the maintenance to a high standard.
- There are exciting plans for the new developments which sound very impressive and should ensure that the Castle remains an interesting and top class tourist attraction

Knaresborough House

Gold

Overall Impression

The frontage of Knaresborough House has a fine array of formal bedding, hanging baskets and window troughs. Complimenting the historic house. It was lovely to see some more unusual planting including Canna Lilys, Coleus and Abutilon used in the main bed. Also of interest was the Purple for Polio crocus bed supported by the Rotary Club. The grounds to the rear of the house provides an ideal space for holding events. The compost heaps, use of recycled plastics on the bench lats and the window troughs together with the long grass areas and bulb planting show good environmental consideration. A lovely public space.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The Green Gym needs refurbishment.
- Attention should be given to the maintenance of the legs of the serpent benches.

Millhouses Park

Platinum

Overall Impression

A combination of heritage with a superb array of facilities all maintained to a superb standard make for an outstanding visitor experience. Top-notch youth and sport facilities provide great recreation for active types whilst the charming river walk, boating lake and excellent formal gardens cater for those just wanting to relax.

Bordered on both sides by ancient woodland, the Friends group have ensured the wild 'theme' pervades through the park with their wildflower beds and bird walks.

The group have a host of both short and long-term plans, including a community orchard, new information leaflet and map and trimtrail, (the latter which should be completed this year), a new footpath to form a circular route and developing a low-maintenance 'riverside glade'.

The City Council are to be commended too for the very high standard of maintenance. It's exceptional considering the works is part of schedule of other sites.

This site is a fine example of a community group working closely with a local authority, using an excellent social media following and fund-raising skills to the max.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider enquiring about available section 106 monies which could be used to improve the small areas of hard landscaping, such as the pathway linking the boating lake to the formal garden area.
- Perhaps enquire about local training organisations and/or Community Payback to paint the steel bridge.
- Consider a few minor aesthetic improvements such as treating the timber of the planter in the sensory garden and any wooden benches.
- The planned 'wildlife scrape' will be a superb addition to the park and would be perfectly complimented by an interpretation board.

Monk Bretton Memorial Garden

Platinum

Overall Impression

The garden is maintained to a very high standard by a small team of dedicated volunteers.

Over the years a number of improvements have been made to include fencing, poppy names, seats and planting plants as pollinators.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- If desired the Bottle Bush (*Callistemon* sp.) could be lightly pruned in late winter, the flower is produced on new wood .
- On the pruning theme continue to think how the tall greenery at the wall can be maintained in future.

Priory Primary School

Gold

Overall Impression

Despite the difficulties of the pandemic, the school have done well to keep up with the maintenance and indeed development of their varied garden and wildlife areas. They are now picking up the pieces and moving forward enthusiastically with their plans. The well-used KS1 quad was looking good with a mix of vegetables, ornamentals, perennials and fruit trees. However, for the pupils who showed me round, their pride and joy was the compost heap. The KS2 area had raised beds used for various purposes including vegetables and herbs, with interpretation boards devised by pupils from their own research. An exciting new development, still in progress at the time of the visit, was a sensory garden. Using the principles of local charity Child Dynamix, the design and build of this area is pupil led and they were very proud to show me round. The wildlife area has to be the largest I have ever seen in a school with the focal point a large reed-edged pond, with mown paths through the surrounding vegetation providing a haven for not just water creatures but other such as hedgehogs. What a fantastic resource as well as a haven in a built up area. Well done to all the staff and pupils involved in all the above and to the senior management team for supporting it and recognising the benefits for their pupils.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- I know that there are plans to plant further trees in the school grounds. You might like to investigate the possibility of linking this to the Queen's Green Canopy initiative. (Schools - The Queen's Green Canopy (queensgreencanopy.org) As life hopefully returns to normal after the pandemic,
- it will be good to see you encourage more visits from other schools such as those in your Trust,
- the wildlife area particularly being a fabulous resource. If you don't already take part, you might like to consider taking part in national events such as The Big Butterfly Count (Big Butterfly Count (butterfly-conservation.org), the Big Garden Birdwatch Big Garden Birdwatch | The RSPB or the regional Great Yorkshire Creature Count Great Yorkshire Creature Count | Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (ywt.org.uk)). I'm sure any or all of these organisations would love to find out about the wildlife in your garden.

Ripon Spa Gardens

Platinum

Overall Impression

What a precious resource for residents and visitors alike is this delightful park with a number of facilities adding to the interest and use. So close to the centre of Ripon and next to the old Spa Baths this charming park shows evident signs of being loved by local residents and visitors and very importantly John Bryan the gardener who is clearly looking to see how it can be improved and cared for.

The Ripon Community Poppy Project (and knitters) have also been influential along with local businesses as the BID group who have been recognised by Her Majesty The Queen with a letter of appreciation for the Jubilee celebrations. The Ripon in Bloom group also add to the care team along with the local authority This truly is a community park with many events(keep an eye out on their website) including Theatre in the Park and many other events. There are also interactive leaflets with a tree trail and plans for more.

The area is clean and well maintained and there is year round planting of both seasonal and sustainable planting. Along with a transformation of the gardeners shed to Gingerbread House.

The bandstand is a lovely feature and was festooned with knitted poppies and bunting to celebrate the jubilee. There is coded access to the restored tennis courts, a crazy golf course and well maintained war memorial and additional features of shadow sculptures and the inventive use of dead trees carved into an Alice in Wonderland sculpture, with a good interpretive sign linking Lewis Carroll with Ripon.

John clearly looks out for ways he can make the park more user friendly and interesting and has raised the canopy of old conifers and pruned periphery planting to aid Mum's keeping an eye on their children whilst maintaining the mystery awaiting round the corner. Local Scouts and Guides have contributed with bird boxes etc.

Thank you to all

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It would be good to refurbish the composting area and introduce a separate bin for leaf mould possibly with hedgehog shelter nearby.
- Increase planting for pollinators along with Interpretation boards to add interest.
- Continue to monitor dieback and take action when necessary.

Roberts Park Bradford

Platinum

Overall Impression

Opened in 1871 the park was designed by William Gay, to create the final part of Sir William Salt's ambitious plan in creating Saltaire. Whilst the park is comparatively small at 5ha including the cricket field. The design incorporates a grand avenue, three wonderfully designed shelters, a band stand and a park keepers house. A very special park within the World Heritage site is well promoted by the friends group. One way the group helps is the season of band concerts, which supports musician's and importantly encourages people into the park.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to monitor the cut down holly trees and ensure future maintenance keeps them in a suitable shape for the park.
- Consideration could be given to the use of bark or wood chip around the mature trees to relieve pressure on the roots (Kew do this)
- The developing plan for developing the shelters for more secure use should be pursued as and when possible
- .

Royston Canal Club

Platinum

Overall Impression

Royston Canal Club maintain half a mile of Barnsley Canal, to provide a site for anglers, they have constructed over 40 platforms for fishing. This will also see the construction of a further wheel chair angling point.

Site management includes litter picking, vegetation control, water levels and water weed control.

Seating and picnic facilities are provided along with extensive fencing that is painted on a regular basis.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Still recovering from the pandemic the club hope to recruit more volunteers and restart the young angler programme.

Sandringham Park

Platinum

Overall Impression

This is a great space for the community with lots of thought given to the environment whilst providing a social area to be enjoyed by all age groups. The volunteers, particularly Kazia Knight the Chair, show great enthusiasm for improving the area for the local community, saving what was an area to be closed due to anti-social behaviour years ago into a community asset, which was a real bonus during the recent lockdowns as it was enjoyed by many families as a safe social space to meet. Kazia is and has been over many years a real champion in the local community, working tirelessly to improve the area for the enjoyment of so many others.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- A new Sandringham Park sign could be considered, possibly engaging the local high school in its design and implementation.
- With so much information having been collected showing the progress of the park over the years it may be worth displaying this on the notice board to share with the local community.

The Friends of Sowerby Bridge Railway Station

Gold

Overall Impression

On arrival the judge was impressed by the Cordylines in barrels on the platform along with other planters planted with numerous varieties of plants, some had been cut back and re-grown to flower another year.

Features such as Mavis the train and the old luggage cart gave a sense of a bygone era.

Compost was made and used on site to grow some container plants. The many interesting story boards and memorial area must have taken many hours of painstaking research and the quiet sitting area will have been a great help to many people during the past few years.

Water was collected from the roofs in large containers and used to water the plants.

Communication with the community by facebook and regular open meetings encouraged local people to exchange ideas. Memorial services held annually are very popular to all who attend them.

The plants in the Bronte garden had been well researched and grown in a special area which is not an easy task.

The station and surrounding areas were clean and well kept which may encourage passengers to linger and enjoy the plants.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The plants were in keeping with the station and blended in very well. A little bit more attention and perhaps feed could have been given to the Cordylines and some of the yellower leaves removed.
- It would be nice if the refreshment room could be re-opened Covid permitting which may attract more regular visitors to the station.
- As the station was opened in 1840 it is holding its own at the moment but in time will need maintenance and even running as a heritage station. Overall a very interesting and enjoyable visit.

Valley Gardens Harrogate

Platinum

Overall Impression

With over four million visits in a year this is an exceptionally well used place. In order to ensure a successful and well maintained future, a five year plan is in place. This includes gradually opening up the stream side, introducing bee friendly planting and of course things like building maintenance.

Increasing use by theatre performances, band concerts and the like, and high level of visitor numbers mean that income can be generated by sponsorship which in turn ensures that value for money is being well achieved.

The valley gardens is well supported by a friends group, the creation of a Japanese garden and is an excellent example of what can be achieved by working jointly with such groups. Having apprentice's with the programme including designing and planting a new feature for the garden is excellent.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The proposal to work with Western School will improve the planting and by being designed and planted with the children a sense of ownership should develop.
- Continue when possible to replace the bins, the new ones with increased capacity and recycling options are to be commended.
- Proposals are in place to relay the flagged area and carry out maintenance on the colonnade these improvements are noted.
- Having a nursery allows a greater selection of plants to be produced and thus increasing the variety and interest in the garden. Continue to recycle the plant pots and work on compost selection.
- I am sure that the current rose garden is included in the plan as the current roses are looking a little worn out.

Wilsden in Bloom - Closed Churchyard

Gold

Overall Impression

Wilsden in Bloom took on this project eighteen months ago and have made considerable progress in this short time through a lot of hard work by the group. It was indeed a challenge to make inroads to this very overgrown church yard and much has been achieved.

The existing trees and wild flowers were carefully catalogued. Woodland flowers, daffodils English bluebells (Spanish dug up) and foxgloves were planted. The existing snowdrops were dug up separated and replanted around the whole area.

The graves that were known about were all researched and existing families located often via Facebook. Some unknown graves were also located during the clearing out process. The group had an excellent response when appealing for volunteers to help here, demonstrating the very good community spirit.

The path around the area is now mown regularly by volunteers to enable easy access for the public.

The area where the church stood till 1962 is being prepared for wild flowers. Yellow rattle will be planted once the grass is cut short and scarified.

The plentiful wildlife noted in the area is being encouraged with bird boxes and bat boxes etc

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- While acknowledging the tremendous amount that has been achieved we know that you all appreciate how much there is to be done to maintain it and to further develop the site.
- Having seen the information board to be placed in the churchyard it will be a real asset for everyone to see.
- Once again Wilsden in Bloom have demonstrated their ambition to meet all the challenges of Yorkshire in Bloom, the community involvement, the publicity, working with many other groups, forward planning, are all evident in moving this project forward.

Wilsden in Bloom - Wilsden Park

Platinum

Overall Impression

Wilsden Park had been looked after by a Friends group and now is part of fairly recently formed Wilsden in Bloom. They are very enthusiastic about their mission to improve to environment with good horticulture while bringing the community together.

Five years ago the original traditional parks bedding was replaced by permanent planting, to great affect. Good horticultural was noted. Sue Downes has kept meticulous records of all the planting and has researched information and guidance when needed. It is very well maintained with good planters and an attractive entrance.

There is evidence of working with other groups in this active community. Of note are the British Legion, the WI and of course the Parish Council.

The environment is considered with the wild flower border and interesting to hear that there are hedgehogs in the compost area.

The whole area is well used by the community and well maintained. There is a good children's playground, bowling green and games court. Sam's memorial bench overlooks this so his friends can gather in his memory.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Many large projects have been undertaken with plans to continue doing this. The recent removal of a laurel hedge and replanting with sustainable plants is a good example. Good to hear of plans to remove two ash trees with die back so the area can be used to good effect.
- The bowling green is well maintained but perhaps could be brightened with the addition of some planters based around some sustainable plants.
- Care is taken to ensure the seats, litter bins etc are in good condition and when necessary replaced or renovated. This should be continued.
- Well done to this group who are so enthusiastic and actively involved with all that "In Bloom" represents. They hold good fund raising events and the Fairy Door Festival sounds delightful. All aspects of their work is excellent and hopefully in the future they feel they will be in a position to enter the whole village into Yorkshire In bloom

Category E1 – Young Peoples Award

Birkwood Primary School

**Gold & Category
Winner**

Overall Impression

What great pleasure the judge felt visiting Birkwood Primary School, and being greeted by the enthusiastic and exuberance of the school ambassadors, Jacob, Elliot, Joe and Darcy. The knowledge and informative talk these children shared with the judge are a credit to the school. A comprehensive tour of the school grounds was given, highlighting each area of achievement and the many varied projects that the school have undertaken to enhance the environmental and horticultural knowledge imparted on to its pupils. With great enthusiasm the ambassadors gave a well-presented explanation of each area of the school grounds, with guidance from a passionate and knowledgeable member of staff. Every aspect of the grounds had been considered and used to its full potential to engage with classes and pupils of all the ages, a great example of the whole school being inclusive in all gardening activities. The projects carried out by all the classes within the school, and all able to partake in the gardening activities is lovely to see and as the school's inclusive motto says- Inspire, Cherish, Achieve, Togetherness. Well done to all classes for making the visit a wonderful time.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Once the School library bus is removed more space will be available for new and exciting projects.
- Consider engaging with parents to assist with watering outside of term time.

Church House Pre School, Mirfield

Gold

Overall Impression

The school are heavily involved with the St Mary's Community In Bloom initiative, which was a joy to see. A major part of the school's ethos is learning whilst having fun in the natural environment and incorporating horticulture in their curriculum. The children's enjoyment and engagement is clear to all.

The planted boat on Church Street looked superb and it was great to hear parental involvement with the more manual side of the project.

The dinosaurs in the community centre borders was a great little touch!

The 'little bloomers' initiative is fantastic and to witness the engendering of environmental responsibility at such an early age was impressive to see, particularly the building of bug hotels and hedgehog boxes.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider a children's poster competition, where the entries can be displayed around the village.
- Explore Mirfield Educational Trust and other organisations for further funding opportunities.
- Continue to have fun while learning.

Crossley Fields Junior and Infant School

Silver

Overall Impression

It was encouraging to see the school taking tentative steps regarding the In Bloom initiative with a sizeable gardening club and some short and long-term plans in place. There is good use of old tyres for planters and the trial wildflower area is a real triumph and looked excellent.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The school has rather extensive grounds and everything is spread out so perhaps consider concentrating on one or two areas and keeping things manageable to start with rather than over-reach yourselves.
- The removal of the neglected shrub beds and return to grass would improve the area hugely, although this will take much resources and will largely be out of the school's hands. Just one per autumn/winter would be a start. These could then make excellent areas to place containers/raised beds.
- The pond and wildlife area will be an excellent and rewarding project to tackle in the near future. Perhaps the Council could be approached to remove the dense overhang that is shading out the pond for starters.
- Consider enrolling on the RHS campaign for schools gardening. A readily available resource for you to access free of charge. <https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/home>

Holly Bank Trust

Silver

Overall Impression

This is a new venture to create outdoor space that can be constructively used by the children in a safe manner. To help an outdoor store has been created specialist tables that can be adjusted for wheel chair users and due soon is such a table for potting and so on.

With the aid of staff and volunteers wellingtons have been used to provide containers which have been planted and placed around the garden fence.

There are some safety surfaces in the garden and a need to ensure wheel chair access for a number of children at the same time so planting at the edge will probably be necessary.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- This is a good start and many challenges have been overcome to create the garden.
- This is such a specialist area of child care that development of the garden will be according to the needs of the children, funding and what the dedicated staff and volunteers can achieve.

Molescroft Primary School

Gold

Overall Impression

Molescroft Primary is a school where the environment is embedded in everything that they do. Their experience of the Eco School Green Flag status is demonstrated throughout the school grounds and is reflected in their curriculum work. We were shown a wonderful ten-minute video which showed us the complete all year-round work which goes on throughout the school.

The judges were particularly impressed by the inclusive nature of all year groups taking part in this year's 'Pride of Yorkshire' Project which represented notable people and places from across Yorkshire and was illustrated in a flower tub competition that was supported by an entry from every class group throughout the school. The displays showed innovation and a good use of colour. Also, the plant combinations, along with the ornaments and artwork was inspirational. The judges had the difficult job of judging the entries but particularly liked the Wensleydale Creamery display from year 1 and their theatrical presentation, the Yorkshire Dales entry from year 5 with its solar powered water feature and the David Hockney tub which used vibrantly coloured pollinators to represent the artist's work.

The rest of the school grounds were immaculately maintained with flower planters punctuated throughout, starting with a cheerful display of mixed petunias planted in a rowing boat at the entrance of the school to greet visitors. All plant species had been well thought out for their locations, and the emphasis of biodiversity shows through with the clever use of pollinators, native species and the inclusion of bird boxes, insect hotels and the newt hibernaculum situated at the side of the well-stocked wildlife pond. Also, the Martin Wood is a fitting memorial to a former teacher and the inclusion of the new wildflower meadow, sponsored by the Parish Council and located at the front of the school is a welcome addition that can be enjoyed by the whole community.

It must be noted that the overall impression when visiting this school is "Wow" all of which is encouraged by the Head Teacher Mr Lancaster and his team who enthuse the pupils to look after the site and the wildlife. Local identity is present in all areas and when walking around you get a sense of enjoyment and calm.

The judges would like to thank all the pupils and staff that we met on judging day and would like to say that the lettuces from the vegetable plot were delicious.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The inclusion of the new wildflower meadow, sponsored by the Parish Council is a welcome addition that can be enjoyed by the whole community, but the judges felt that there could be potential to extend this area to give even greater impact for people visiting the school in the future.

- The judges noted that the wall boxes near the main entrance of the school were proving difficult to maintain. It appears that watering could be a challenge during hot weather, therefore it may be worth considering planting drought resistant species going forward.
- Although interpretation was excellent throughout the school, the judges would have liked to have seen the environmental folder, which supports the Eco School Status.

NORTON GREEN TEAM

Silver

Overall Impression

The Norton Green Team is a new entry in the Competition in the E1 category. The school initiative started in 2019 but was affected by the pandemic and lockdown so this is the first school year that the project has had impact in the school's environment.

It is apparent when you enter the school with floral tubs at the reception entrance and large display boards of photographs outlining the achievements to date.

We were shown around the school with a number of groups of students who were part of the Green team. The school is maximising the two glasshouses within the grounds which has enabled them to make a real impact inside many of the classrooms and learning areas by propagating indoor plants and bringing greenery inside

The group have started to clear a number of raised beds which they hope to start to cultivate and plant in Autumn. The college has a wildlife area and extensive grounds and planting around the new build facilities which will provide a great source of cuttings and shrub plant material for the future

Some future tree and Shrub planting around the perimeter of the playing fields will provide shade and attract birds and wildlife.

A good new entry

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- This project has the support of the college staff and parents and will go from strength to strength in future years and will make a real difference to the learning environment around the college if all the plans come to fruition.
- The future development of composting on site will generate a supply of mulch for the newly planting areas and cut down watering and future maintenance.
- The college have recognised the links between gardening and many of the other subjects taught including Arts and Maths and biology and the skills and enrichment this could bring to the students.
- The hiring of indoor plants to staff over the summer period is a great way to overcome the problems school and colleges have over the holiday periods and also generate income for the purchase of materials to enhance and widen the plant types.
- The college is establishing local links with businesses and has received help for the local supermarket.
- It would benefit the college if they could establish links with local conservation groups or in bloom groups and allowing them to contribute to a floral feature in the Malton Town Centre.

Oxspring Primary School

Gold

Overall Impression

Oxspring is a small village school with relatively limited space around it, but my goodness, they have so much packed in that is put to such good use by the entire school. To name but a few of the elements within the grounds they have flower and vegetable beds, fruit trees, a bell tent used as an outdoor classroom, a wildlife pond, potting shed, poly tunnel. Their most recent addition to the grounds is a well-being garden created from an adjacent area that had fallen into disrepair. It has a simple but very effective design, with elements of touch, sight and sound. It proved to be highly beneficial to both pupils and staff during the difficult times of the pandemic and continues to be so going forwards. With the full support of the headteacher the garden is managed by long-term volunteer Emily and a group of KS2 pupils who in turn mentor a group of KS1 pupils. Gardening sustainably and improving the biodiversity of the local environment is at the core of all they do. Well done and a big thanks to all involved in maintaining and developing such a wonderful space.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- As the restrictions of the pandemic ease, it will be good to see the garden used by the wider school community or even village community for family events and similar.
- This may happen already, but have you considered taking part in national events such as The Big Butterfly Count (Big Butterfly Count (butterfly-conservation.org)), the Big Garden Birdwatch Big Garden Birdwatch | The RSPB or the regional Great Yorkshire Creature Count Great Yorkshire Creature Count | Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (ywt.org.uk). I'm sure any or all of these organisations would love to find out about the wildlife in your garden.
- Perhaps not necessarily an issue at the moment, but it may be worth giving consideration to improving accessibility around the site, which I appreciate is easier said than done, given the sloping location.

Category E2 – Universities, College & Further Education

University of Bradford

Silver Gilt

Overall Impression

On entering the campus at the University of Bradford it is noted that there is a mixture of architectural styles that are enhanced by the clever design of the urban landscape that weaves between the buildings. The artwork displayed throughout tells an interesting story from the 1964 tiled frontage of the Richmond Building, which was designed with colours designed to reflect Bradford's history of fabrics and dyes, to the Peace Garden that provides a place for memorial and commemoration of students both past and present. Moving through the campus, the overall impression is very good. The use of seasonal bedding at the main entrances to buildings provides a vibrant and cheerful seasonal display to welcome visitors and students whilst the window boxes show good use of colour against the natural tones of the brickwork and concrete structures.

The most notable public space is at the heart of the site just outside the Richmond Building. The planting here includes an interesting mix of Mediterranean plants such as grasses and perennials that take advantage of the hot location, along with several well-manicured grass areas that are punctuated with a variety of native and ornamental trees which soften the brutal construction of the landscape.

Sustainability is key to the ecological ethos of the University. Many of the buildings are built to some of the highest environmental standards with water harvesting, solar panels and green roofs to most of the areas. Fruit trees, hedgerows and wildflower meadows have been planted to great effect, supporting a range of flora and fauna around the car parks and buildings across the campus. The judges were impressed with the wildflower meadow surrounding the Shearbridge Car Park, and the aromatic bee friendly borders planted next to the main paths to provide the perfect nectar source for the onsite apiary. Although the biggest part of the grounds is managed and maintained by a team of five gardeners, who are employed by the Facilities Team, there is also evidence of community involvement. The student allotment areas are an interesting addition to get everyone growing their own and the introduction of a new polytunnel this summer will keep the interest going throughout the winter months when the weather is less favourable.

Finally, all waste is recycled on site and green waste is composted and used for hanging baskets and mulching, whilst metal, glass and paper are collected in multi recycling bins dotted across the campus.

The judges would like to say well done to all the staff and volunteers involved in the maintenance and development of the grounds and a big thank you to Richard and Simon for being our guides throughout the visit. They are both fairly newly in post, but have achieved a lot and have good plans for the future.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The judges felt that the University has a lot of history to share, and maybe some interpretation boards would help to tell the stories from the past.
- The judges noted that some of the picnic tables and benches could do with some minor repairs to remove the rotting timber and maybe an annual/bi-annual paint.
- The sleepers in the Peace Garden need some attention, particularly where they are missing.
- The judges felt that it would have been useful to have seen some photographs of the campus displays from other times of the year, such as spring bulb planting, and maybe some

University of Leeds

**Gold & Category
Winner**

Overall Impression

Leeds University campus is vast and hosts 34 thousand students and 8 thousand staff. Despite this the campus is maintained to an excellent standard throughout. Borders are well stocked and give all year round interest. There is a huge emphasis on looking after the environment with students being fully involved in all of the projects. The most

surprising element of visiting Leeds University campus is the ability to forget that you are in the centre of a major city whilst being surrounded by greenery and tranquillity.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- There are thousands of beautiful mature trees on campus and a full programme of replacement planting.
- Extensive partnership working with many other organisations is evident and adds to the overall excellent standard of maintenance and workmanship.
- Students are fully involved as biodiversity ambassadors , working on the Well Wood project and many other initiatives.
- Gardens across the campus are accessible and many plant labels and signs are in braille or large print.
- Wildlife is encouraged and the large pond area is well maintained - the university works with the charity Buglife to encourage this initiative further.
- Art in the landscape and heritage are well covered with many beautiful buildings of listed status.
- Congratulations to everyone involved in presenting an excellent Yorkshire in Bloom entry.

Carleton in Bloom

Level 5- Outstanding

Overall Impression

It was lovely to finally meet the Carleton in Bloom community after having assessed them remotely last year. This is a large community group who work closely with the various groups operating around the village. They are excellent at fund raising and are supported by the Parish Council, Craven Council, Heritage lottery and the Post Code lottery to name a few of their funding streams.

The ethos of this group is to work with nature and look after the many natural habitats. They actively encourage others regarding environmental matters, using peat free compost, splitting plants and composting. They have a group who daily go out and litter pick. This isn't a planned 'litter pick' but done by individuals who have an hour to spare during the day.

There are a number of planters in and around the village, this year's theme has been red, white and blue in support of the Queens Jubilee. It is impressive to see how the local residents have supported this. The spring bulbs have been removed and will be put back into the planters in the autumn.

The Plantation and The Old Graveyard areas are lovely wildlife havens. The team have worked really hard to improve these areas without changing the natural growth of various grasses and plants that are good at attracting insects and pollinators. A scythed walkway in the churchyard has created a lovely area. The footpath through The Plantation gives access to a wooded walk with the beck running at the side of it. The 'dead hedge' woven from brash looks good and stops walkers slipping down the steep slope to the beck.

The Rose Garden is a tidy and well planted area with plans to erect a memorial plaque to the owner of the mill.

It was impressive to see the house frontages all planted really well, especially the wildflower meadow by the beck which one resident clearly has worked extremely hard to create. The mass and variety of wildflowers and colour was fabulous.

This is a fantastic community effort ensuring the village is kept clean and tidy.

Environmental matters are communicated through the village newsletter. Their team consist of many residents who all offer different skills to the team. From the joiner who has made all the wooden planters to a very high standard, the environmental advisor, historic building advisor and the many volunteers who help throughout the year.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The Carleton in Bloom team have a number of projects for the autumn/winter months. The largest of which is the New Street project which will take a number of years before it comes to completion. The work clearing the space has already been completed by the team and they are currently working out a plan for a planting scheme and seating areas within the space. Make sure you do not try to complete too much at once – as we discussed on the day.
- Consider adding some lavenders and low growing rosemary to some of your planters.
- A new compost bin was being delivered on the day of the assessment. Once that is up and running it will certainly help the group to create even more of their own compost.
- It would be good to see Carleton in Bloom, at some point, considering moving into the main competition.

Cleckheaton in Bloom - Library Garden

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

The Cleckheaton in Bloom volunteers have achieved a great deal in a very short space of time. Their hard work edging borders, clearing invasive ivy and pruning shrubs is paying off and there is a clear plan of action in place for future work. Fund raising opportunities using the garden have been recognised and more events are planned. Library users and local residents are all benefitting from this transformation. A local forum of library users, volunteers, council officials and others has been formed as a result of the hard work done so far and this will allow the group to move forward positively with confidence. Library staff are full participants in the project and everyone is working together to promote gardening, community and reading related activities using the garden.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue with your excellent work on the Wildlife Garden and the Jubilee Garden.
- Go ahead with plans to consult a bat expert for advice and information.
- Continue to work with local families and residents to encourage and increase use of the garden.
- Continue to progress the 5 senses project that Lauren is leading.

Darton Academy

Level 2-Improving

Overall Impression

This tranquil garden is a lovely tribute to a lost school student. Clearly a lot of love and care is being put into it. It was good to see the way in which local people are becoming involved with the garden and to see the support which has come from the local post office. It was pleasing to see that thought is being given to caring for wildlife. Involving the School Council and Enrichment Club in caring for the area is a good idea.

The planned stencil work by students will enrich the area. The apple trees on site are a nice feature.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Perhaps it might be an idea to plant more fruit trees and begin a little community orchard. There is a possibility of planting raspberries from the school which would be a lovely idea. Consider other fruit bushes, black and red currants and gooseberries perhaps.
- If space permits consider planting a buddleia which would need little care and would bring in butterflies which would fit well with the ethos of the site.
- Flowering herbs such as lavender would add scent and colour and benefit bees and butterflies, perhaps planted around a little seating area wherever people can relax and take in the soothing atmosphere of the site.

Dearne Valley Country Park Group Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

This is a truly beautiful place and it was lovely to meet such a dedicated group with so much local support. A tremendous difference has been made by the activities of the group. The involvement of local people and interest in their views and opinions is commendable.

The efforts made to interact with local groups and the local authority are greatly benefitting the park. The use of social media is impressive. The group are to be commended for their efforts in getting the youth of the area involved with caring about the park.

Future plans are varied and impressive. The idea of using Facebook Messenger as a way for local people to comment is a good one. The park mosaic is a lovely feature.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Perhaps a community orchard near the mosaic entrance to the park might be considered?
- Buddleia or native berrying shrubs planted in the open, grassy spaces around the park might provide interest by bringing in butterflies, bees and even more wildlife.
- Consider an information board on wildlife in the park, also an information board on the canal heritage of the area.
- Consider closer links with Barnsley Main Heritage Group. Advertising each other would benefit both.
- Continue efforts to control graffiti in areas other than the skateboard park.

Friends of Crow Wood Park

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Crow Wood Park was opened in 1923 and plans are already in place to celebrate the centenary next year. The Friends of Crow Wood Park are a dedicated and enthusiastic bunch who tackle projects and events with gusto! Many of the volunteers are founder members of the group which was formed 13 years ago. There is plenty of community spirit to be found here and everyone is very willing to help out and pitch in when needed. The views out of the park towards open countryside are magnificent and it was well worth the walk up the hill to take in the view. It was lovely to meet such a dedicated, committed group and to hear how the hard work that goes into their impressively wide range of activities, year round. Engagement with local people is very good and the park grounds are used as a catalyst to bring people together. The heritage material about the old house, park and world war memorabilia was extensive and fascinating.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to look into grant aid for the tennis court refurbishment.
- Look into ways of safely putting up the bird boxes that you have ready.
- Look in to grant funding possibilities to replace or mend the notice board at the main gates to the park.
- The litter picking activities by individual group members are most commendable.
- Clearly the Memorial Archway is loved and cherished by the group.
- Fundraising work is impressive and we were pleased to hear of the support from local businesses.
- The wide range of games courts us a wonderful community resource.
- Ideas such as providing dog waste bags are a very good idea.
- We were pleased to see the Covid Memorial Bench.
- Tree planting in the park is a good idea.
- The top woodland path, created by the group is a real asset for the whole community and we were very impressed by the work the group have done there.
- If space permits consider a community orchard.
- Consider native berrying shrubs lower down the park to bring in insect life and birds.
- The children's playgrounds are a nice feature, perhaps it might be an idea talking with the Council and looking for Grant's to increase the range of equipment even further.
- Perhaps consider an information board on the wide range of wildlife found in the wooded area.
- Consider a larger sign marking the park entrance.

Friends of Sandringham Park

Level 5 - Outstanding

Overall Impression

All areas of Community Participation are displayed in Sandringham Park due to the outstanding work of the group led by Kazia Knight as the Chair Person, making the area a well used asset by the local community when once it was in danger of being closed due to anti-social behaviour. The group took over the running of the park and by engaging local groups improved the area and the anti-social behaviour problems.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The group have liaised with the local council who plan to develop and improve the children's play area in the park, with the Friends undertaking to plant a wild flower area. We look forward to seeing this area once it has been developed.

Friends of Wombwell Park

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Great community awareness and fantastic community events. one event in particular was attracting 100s if not 1000s from the local community. Future project identified kids tunnel/trail. Great relationship with local coop. Funding from the RHS for plants. New planters created. Well done!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Identify the right plant for the right place.
- Make sure when planting trees and shrubs to identify best time to plant i.e. autumn/winter where easier to manage watering.
- Bedding are lovely but lots of upkeep and not very sustainable. Add more perennial plants to borders to help with workloads. A
- Add mulch in to the borders and around newly planted trees to help retain moisture and suppress weeds.

Ginny Greenholes, Spofforth

Level 5 - Outstanding

Overall Impression

From the outset Ginny Greenholes had strong community involvement including from the children who were encouraged to enter a competition to draw their favourite playground which contributed to the final design. The wildlife/environmental area was initially left to see where the children would naturally play. Residents have sponsored bird boxes, trees and benches making a relaxing area for adults as well as children, and encouraging wild life to the area. As well as bird boxes there are bat boxes, log piles and insect houses, including the magnificent bug hotel. Many signs are displayed to educate visitors and encourage them to see how many species of birds, beetles and other wildlife they can spot. The vision, hard work and contribution of many individuals and organisations have achieved an exceptional area to benefit all of the community, wildlife and the environment.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Unfortunately part of the area is to be given up for access to a new housing estate so plans will need to be put in place to adapt once the full effect of the changes are known. It will be interesting to see how this develops in the future.

Gleadless Valley Methodist Church Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Hosting a food bank and community hub, the church and adjoining garden is an impressive bank of colour and opportunity within the Gleadless housing estate. Much has been achieved in a relatively short while from what was purely an area of amenity grass.

The raised bed at the site of the old cross looks excellent whilst the other numerous raised beds are used by a group of local volunteers to grow colourful floral displays and a range of fruit and veg which provide a valuable addition to the food bank and dinner tables of the local residents.

There is a real 'care for the community' spirit here (no pun intended!) and the volunteers are to be commended for their efforts.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider cutting the bulb planted areas at the front of the church at the end of May/early June to improve the visual appeal when approaching the site.
- It will be good to see the new noticeboard in place and the IBC water tanks up and working.
- Consider a narrow wildflower strip in place of one of the 'rhubarb' plots planned to be removed.

Heeley City Farm

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Rare breeds, superb allotment gardens and fantastic volunteering opportunities so close to a bustling city centre make this site a real gem. It was a real pleasure to learn about and see the work the staff are doing with vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

The garden centre was a joy to look round and it is commendable that most of the stock is grown on site. There are effective eco-friendly, recycling and sustainable practices on display including the use of produce in the café, the on-site use and off-site sale of manure and the 'living roof'.

There is also excellent interpretation, a well-thought out Dementia Garden and the environmentally friendly garden practices make it a rich refuge for local wildlife.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue with the excellent work and seeking suitable funding streams.
- Hopefully the recent funding bid for the Deli will be successful and this will provide another excellent facility and help generate further income.
- It will be good to see how the pond and wildlife area develops after the proposed works to improve it. This will help you attract even more wildlife to an already rich urban site.

Herdings Heritage and Community Centre Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Excellent horticultural and woodworking opportunities can be found here in the grounds of this listed building in the heart of the Gleadless estate in urban Sheffield.

The organisation, Heeley City Farm, are leaders in social inclusion and it was pleasing to hear about and see the results of the work done by the volunteers and excluded pupils attending their twice weekly gardening sessions.

Effective recycling practices are demonstrated and there are great vegetable growing opportunities for the volunteers which they can then take away themselves.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It would be great to see the completion of the clearing of the paved area which the volunteers have started. Perhaps the Council could consider herbicide-free foam weedkiller. For example see www.weedingtech.com
- Consider removing, or asking the Council for assistance in removing, a few of the limbs from the trees on the boundary that will allow more light into the gardens.
- Consider using woodchips, if they can be sought, to mulch the beds to retain moisture and cut down on weeding.
- Consider planting more low growing herbaceous perennials to replace annual bedding plants. These can be split and would also reduce the need for weeding.
- Continue with the outstanding work with the volunteers and excluded pupils.

High Green in Bloom

Level 5 - Outstanding

Overall Impression

High Green in Bloom are a small but enthusiastic group of volunteers who look after the projects that they have initiated to improve the area of High Green. There is no doubt that there is great improvement to the environment achieved by the groups regular weekly gatherings all working to improve the area in which they live. Centred around Mortomley Park there are many floral features and projects that the group have come together to establish for all to benefit from. With much sustainable planting both in the park and the many containers and focal point flower beds, High Green in Bloom looked colourful in the

sunshine. Good social media activity with 500 followers and good partnership workings with the local authority in evidence. A true neighbourly feel and this group of friendly volunteers all enhance High Green.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue with the local partnership workings and continue to foster new business participation.
- Continue working with the younger members of High Green and recruiting new volunteers.
- The Christmas tree is a great addition. Continue with looking at further funding avenues to assist in future projects.

Incredible Edible Brighthouse

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Despite difficult circumstances over the last two years the Incredible Edible Brighthouse team are up and running once again and deserve congratulations for all the hard work and hours they are giving to the town.

The Bridge End garden is delightful with raised beds, herbs and strawberries growing well. Pockets of colour - such as the lavender on the corner of the bridge- add to the overall floral effect.

The group are to be congratulated on taking on the old parks department beds and creating an allotment in the centre of town.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Perhaps some thought could be given to the planting by the canal - particularly the boxes that are in the shade of the trees. Maybe some more shade tolerant plants would be happier here.
- Continue to work towards overcoming the problems of watering.
- Continue to let people know of the good work you are doing.
- Look at changing some of the plant containers which are beginning to deteriorate.

Incredible Edible Northallerton

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Applegarth Community Garden was a bare plot of land at the beginning of the year, but the group of volunteers have achieved so much in such a short space of time – well done!

The creativity and resourcefulness in sourcing recycled materials (wood and tyres) to build the garden and reusing materials on site (turf in the raised beds) demonstrate what's possible when building a garden from scratch.

There's already engagement with the local primary school, and during our visit a family were using the picnic benches donated by local groups.

The information provided on the plants, especially the herbs, was inspiring.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue the engagement with local schools to provide learning opportunities.
- Planting the wildflower beds for winter interest.
- The addition of compost bins to dispose of waste on site.
- Consider using the large brick wall as an information point. It could be a good resource to advertise who you are and what Applegarth Community Garden is about.
- Perhaps consider a newsletter or leaflet that could be produced showing the many activities and achievement to date.
- Keep up the great work!

Lodge Drive Neighbourhood

**Level 5 -
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

Lovely to see local groups working together. The Greenway is a wonderful resource for local people and visitors alike. We were pleased to hear that the No Mow May initiative was supported.

The memorial bench to a fellow volunteer was a fitting tribute and blended well into the nature around it. Throughout the Neighbourhood we saw gardens of impressive quality. Clearly a lot of care goes into maintenance and presentation.

There were Wow factors all around. We were amazed and enchanted by the artistic plant installations, not only in gardens but by the roadside.

Clearly people have worked very hard to support the Bloom initiative.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue supporting wildlife along the Greenway, perhaps consider planting more native berrying shrubs.
- Continue with the valuable No Mow May initiative.
- Perhaps consider an information board about wildlife around the Greenway.

MAFWA Lincoln Greeners

**Level 2 -
Improving**

Overall Impression

It is a major achievement in itself just to get this small group up and running given the difficulties that have had to be overcome so far. Congratulations to everyone involved for their hard work in setting up the group.

Language difficulties are overcome by lots of hand gestures but smiles and laughs are plentiful. This project is about learning social skills through community gardening and given time will surely succeed.

The trips to RHS Harlow Carr and other gardens will encourage community spirit and help to increase horticultural skills amongst volunteers.

There is a sense of joy about this project and although it is in its infancy, given time it can surely grow and succeed.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to work on solving the watering problem.
- Continue to work on creating a garden on the old playground.
- Consider using Matilyas horticultural skills to propagate from existing plant material to bulk up your borders very economically.

Mirfield Railway Station

**Level 5 -
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

This is an impressive, community led project. The murals and unique lighting are an impressive feature. The input of the group into proposed station changes will benefit the travelling community. We were pleased to see the impressive range and quality of support the group has. Future plans are well made. The Mirfield in Bloom signs on the platform are a good idea. There is impressive use of social media and the press. We were pleased to see that recycling takes place. Bird boxes at the platform are an unusual idea. Throughout the site was clean, tidy and well maintained. The wildflower area brings nature into a built up area, which is lively. The challenge of watering has been well overcome in inventive ways. Plants throughout the site are well tended and in good condition. The flower train is a creative and unusual feature. Planters on Platform one had a lovely planting mix with pleasing contrasts of colour, form and texture. We know the station will be redeveloped but are sure the group will cope well and make a big impact on the new station.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Perhaps consider the use of small evergreens around the site for all year round interest.
- Pots of lavender would bring colour and insect life into the station. Little maintenance would be required and dry conditions would not be a problem.
- Consider adding an information board to the meadow area, listing plants and possibly insect visitors.

Mytholmroyd Station Partnership

**Level 5 -
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

New recycled and well planted plastic plant containers on platforms. Well designed and maintained shrub borders leading to both platforms. Excellent work with schools and art work round the station. Communications with the local community helping to prevent antilocal behaviour. Areas both outside and in the station areas clean and well maintained.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The volunteers are in urgent need of an accesible water supply for plants on the platform as they need to carry the water a long distance.
- Cosmetic painting of several handrails down the slope from the platform would smarten up the area.

New Lodge Community Gardening Group Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

New Lodge Gardening Group are newly formed and comprise of the residents of the JRHT New lodge Housing complex of independent living apartments and a residential care home. An active social group that has made good strides in such a short period of time - forming the group in Spring 2021. Enhancing the areas around the Care home with hanging baskets, planters, and two edible veg pods. They have made good advancement in engaging with all the residents and now have 14 of the apartments on board and still growing. The plant swap with New Earswick Community Garden and other gardening group, the assistance of the maintenance and development of the flower beds and living wall and Rays excellent work in developing the 100m long border by the drive are all examples of how the group are achieving a sense of community in this new development.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It was pleasing to see so many of you on the day and to hear of how you have come together to enhance your community. Continue with this engagement with new and other residents.
- Ray and Denila's 'nursery area' was lovely to see and also the knock on effect the group has had in encouraging neighbours to take part in gardening activities.
- Continue the partnership working with other groups highlighted to us on our visit.
- Continue to develop and replace the plantings within the flower beds as funds and timings allow. Well Done.

Norfolk Park Community Food Growing Garden Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Tucked away on Duke Of Norfolk land this site has the potential to be a wonderful community asset. Bee hives, an old orchard and the typical 'English Country Garden' setting make it an excellent place to learn horticultural skills and this is another fine example of the social inclusion work that Healey City Farm do so well. Again, recycling is high on the agenda with the use of comfrey being commendable but with pride of place

going to the new compost loo! Birds and butterflies abound already with the garden's natural boundaries and this would be the perfect setting to start a wildlife garden.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The potential Heritage lottery Funding bid would pay for interpretation and signage that would raise the profile of the site.
- Perhaps consider several water butts.
- Perhaps consider putting in a simple wood chip surfaced footway through the orchard to the garden.
- Several bird and bat boxes would benefit the already rich variety of wildlife on site.

Northallerton Secret Garden

Level 5 - Outstanding

Overall Impression

A sanctuary, only a stone's throw from the hustle and bustle of Northallerton High Street, providing a peaceful and inspiring space for the local community.

Ample evidence of engagement with local groups across the generations, providing a range of opportunities from volunteering to educational.

Recent additions, including the delightful wildflower meadow, demonstrate the ongoing development of this garden and its importance to local people.

Information on the wildlife observed in the garden further demonstrate the importance of such spaces in urban communities.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue the great work in developing the garden and building on the engagement with the local community.
- Temporary planting alongside the hall will shortly be removed to allow for maintenance to the building but will provide an opportunity for further development of the garden.

Panhandle and Stonefall Parks

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Thank you to the members of HASAG for their hospitality and sharing their enthusiasm for this lovely park. Stonefall and Panhandle park is a secluded natural area of open space bounded by housing estates and factory sites. The park has been reclaimed from a landfill site and provides walking and cycle routes between the estates and supermarkets as well as recreation space and is well used by the local communities. The active group comprises of 7 members with over 70 supporters. As part of Team Harrogate the group is able to gain support in publicising their working days and input from the Countryside education officer and local Councillors. Building on the work by the group to obtain a full woodland TPO for the privately owned embankment. The owners Taylors Teas are now working to develop a full tree management plan. The park was clean with no evidence of

litter, fly tipping. A credit to the Star litter pickers. There is an impressive level of local and plant knowledge within the group, this is evidenced in the information in the notice board. The history of the site is well reported and the site has been developed within the constraints of its previous industrial use. The heritage board at the Wetherby Road entrance documents this and it is good to hear that the group has been supported in repairing this following vandalism in 2021.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to foster involvement from the wider community.
- Continue to work with Taylors Teas, possibly hosting corporate volunteering days.
- Continue to log and report the plants which occur on the site.
- It would be good to find ways to share the groups obvious enthusiasm and outstanding knowledge of the natural environment with local schools and youth groups.
- Develop a system and support for recording and collating wildlife sightings.
- Consider ways in which the management plan could be used to develop and improve habitats with a view to increasing species.
- Continue to develop use of social media as a means of communicating with the wider community, making greater use of the "Blog".

Robert Street Allotments

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

It was a pleasure to meet the small band of volunteers at Robert Street Allotments. Peter, Tony, and Steph re-established the group three years ago and now have a good community garden and work space for people to visit, use and socialise in an all accessible site.

With Raised planters, polytunnel, seating areas this is a happy place for people to engage with and socialise together and community garden. Some good fund-raising grants, work with sponsors and further community groups help these volunteers develop the entry further. Well done.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Much time could be saved if the group could look at fundraising for an automatic irrigation system, or a manual overhead watering layout for the polytunnel.
- Continue making partnerships within the community and using the allotment site for this. Also possibly consider engaging and fostering relations with the other allotment users.
- Perhaps a newsletter or leaflet could be produced showing the many activities the group do.

Roberttown Grange Tenants and Residents Association

Level 5 - Outstanding

Overall Impression

What a surprise from this first-time entry when you walk into this council run residential home comprising of 23 flats. As soon as visitors arrive at the complex from the car park, they are greeted with an assortment of hanging planters on the smart railings, a pebbled garden (once a neglected lawn) complete with a small street-side seating area. The pebbled section is simple but effective, with larger stones strategically placed to highlight low growing herbaceous plants and succulents. Lavender forms an attractive boarder under the railings between the pavement and the garden and is clearly a bee's favourite place to be!

A planter in memory of a resident sits neatly to the side of the pebbled area and is planted with bright seasonal bedding that gives off a gorgeous scent, in addition to the lavender. The choice of plants, lends itself well to the hot and free draining frontage, and the use of gravel/pebbles for a mulch works well here. The courtyard in the centre of the complex is just bursting with colour, texture and has a real feeling of tranquillity, and aptly named the "Secret Garden"

Anne and her small group have transformed this once harsh concrete and weedy courtyard into a stunning communal space, where the residents can sit, socialise, and enjoy the colourful flower displays, scents and the trickle of water coming from the central fishpond. The choice of plants will also bring in pollinators to the space, bees and butterflies evident at the time of judging. The whole space gives a Mediterranean feel. The central communal room opens out on to this space giving a real feel of inclusion. The courtyard garden and improvements to the home frontage have been 5yrs in the making. They comprise of seasonal, herbaceous and small trees and shrubs to give all year-round displays. Good use of gravels to act as mulch for water retention and weed suppressant.

Anne is encouraging other residents to get involved, by providing, seasonal planters and window boxes for the upper floors and asking residents to help by watering, and slowly, slowly, is transforming the area floor by floor. Junes balcony was a picture and the tree lilies were stunning.

Where possible Anne grows what plants, they can in a small greenhouse, others are sourced locally, and funds have been raised via, coffee mornings, bingo and small grants from the council. Grey water collecting is taking place where possible, and the brightly coloured bird box and water feature add to encouraging wildlife into the space.

The group expressed that the planted areas were vital during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it's easy to see why.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Anne has recently obtained a small lawn mower to help improve the grass cutting to the side of the complex, this will supplement the scheduled cuts from the council and improve the look of this area.
- The completion of the front garden and the maturing of the recently planted lavenders will only add to this fabulous little entry.
- Good to hear the group are persuading the other residents to help with the watering, while enjoying the space.
- Links in with Roberttown in Bloom will be beneficial if the group need any help with heavy works in future

Royd Court

Level 5 - Outstanding

Overall Impression

The court yard garden provides an oasis for residents and space for them to get involved. Involvement can be physically gardening, or holding an advisory roll. The development of the bible garden was created following a suggestion by a resident. This has led to research, plant collecting and gardening - a project involving residents and now labelled and recorded is an excellent piece of work. Residents have their own small areas and work with maintenance contractors to provide the hidden gem.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue research and planting for the bible garden.
- Monitor shrubs and hedges to ensure they do not become too large.
- Importantly continue to garden but do not forget to enjoy this wonderful space.

Royston Green Spaces Group

Level 5 - Outstanding

Overall Impression

Gaining support from the community enables the group to station over thirty large planters around looked after by individual supporters. This also applies to other planting areas and so on.

A group holds a weekly litter pick and many volunteers pick litter throughout the week. Parkside Primary Academy children presented some of the excellent work that they carry out in their various year groups.

The overarching work of Royston Green Spaces Group brings together the work of many groups and volunteers to great effect on improving the area.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- A difficult area and one only for consideration is that it may be helpful to provide advice on the maintenance regime for the planters, some coordination of plant selection could result in the planters having more impact.
- The weed problem in the pocket park will be easier to control if planted with perennial plants.
- You may need to consider revamping some of the older plantings to ensure they are not all over age at once and to allow a programme that can be managed within the available resources.

Shadwell in Bloom

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

Community Participation - Thank you to Peter, Norman and Cathy for showing us round your beautiful village. We saw a fantastic amount of community support and heard about the regular Tuesday meetings. Good use of social media with WhatsApp groups and more traditional communication via the newsletter. There is a huge amount of sponsorship for containers, beds and baskets, supported by individuals, clubs and businesses actively involved in planting, maintaining, and watering. Environmental Responsibility-it was good to see measures being introduced to conserve water by the use of the self-watering containers and the collection of rainwater from the library roof. The new Bee border is beautifully planted with perennials to attract pollinating insects. A new mower has been purchased allowing grass to be mulched as it is cut rather than collecting, this will help retain nutrients and moisture in the grass sward. The hedge line on boundary with Harewood has been left unmown creating a significant wildlife corridor. Gardening achievement - The wildflower beds were lovely, and it will be good to see how these develop. The hanging baskets and barrier planters were beautiful and to a very high standard, There are flower beds in every possible space. The annual bedding was maintained to a very good standard which obviously takes a lot of effort from a very dedicated group of people. As well as the in bloom displays there were some lovely private gardens along the route.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to develop links with the Scout group, school and nursery this would be an ideal way to share knowledge and skills with a younger age group.
- Consider replacing some of the annual bedding with more sustainable planting looking forward to a time when members may not have the enthusiasm for bedding out on an annual basis and where water is not as easily available.
- Sub station beds, consider ways that these can be more sustainable both in the design of the beds to conserve water and the choice of planting.
- It would have been good to have had chance to stop and walk round some of the newer beds on the judging route so that we could appreciate the planting.

Spofforth Millenium Garden

Level 5 - Outstanding

Overall Impression

All areas were outstanding demonstrating inclusion of the local community and working in partnership with other organisations. As well as local inclusion, others such as visiting ramblers are welcomed into the area which is widely publicised. Environmental responsibility is demonstrated in all areas including the Millenium Garden and much thought has been given to the planting to create a welcoming and tranquil area accessible to everyone, Plants are well tended and maintained with a plan to establish all year interest with Hellebore seedlings being grown for winter interest, and bulbs for spring; trees have also been grown for their seasonal interest including blossom, berries and autumnal colour. During our visit the Lavender border which was buzzing with bees

filled the air with its beautiful fragrance. The previous high standard achieved has been maintained due to the outstanding dedication and hard work of all the volunteers involved.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- There are no areas that we could recommend for improvement or development due to the high standard of the entry, it was good to hear that there is a long term plan for the future to replant the Lavender when appropriate.

St Mary's Church Community Garden, Handsworth

**Level 5 -
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

The tranquil and productive walled garden is tended by a team of five regular volunteers, mainly Tuesday mornings. Steve and Mary showed me round and showed their knowledge of the plants and shared the future plans for the plot. The garden is publicised through local posters, the local GP refers patients (green prescribing) and various other groups have been approached, although numbers have dropped during Covid. Mary must be commended for acquiring funding and products from local businesses. She keeps a spreadsheet of funding and a notebook records tasks undertaken. The garden, which had been neglected for a long time and had to be cleared of brambles, has a composting area and plants to attract wildlife and water butts. No chemicals are used. The entrance has an arch of Sweet Peas and a Jubilee themed flower bed. The paved paths allow easy access to all areas. One wall has fruit trees, including apricots and another has soft fruits. A greenhouse and polytunnel housed tomatoes and the beds were full of all kinds of vegetables and herbs. They also have egg laying hens and board two pygmy goats. Any excess of food is sent to the local foodbank

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to build up numbers of visitors who would benefit from the garden.
- Proceed with the plans for renovating the potting shed and netting the soft fruit area.

St Mary's Neighbourhood, Mirfield

**Level 5 -
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

With the imposing but mightily impressive church as the centrepiece, St Mary's was an absolute delight to visit. This has only been achieved by first rate organisation and collective effort by the Mirfield In Bloom group. There is a very impressive community spirit on display here! This was immediately apparent from the superb floral displays and well-maintained grass and hard standing areas.

Nothing goes to waste here and the superb herbaceous borders of the church are just one example of what can be achieved with well-thought out sustainable planting. Recycling is well considered as demonstrated by the group experimenting with their own compost mixes and the local wildlife is given due thought with the numerous hedgehog refuges.

Highlighting local heritage is obviously very important and the church volunteers are diligently working towards restoring the 11th century 'motte' and the relocation of stone tablet.

There is excellent links and support from local businesses and the use of Community Payback when available is to be applauded.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider grant funding i.e. Heritage Lottery Fund to relocate the old stone tablet back to the 'new church. This would complement the already fine work supporting the long-term aspiration to restore the 'motte' and the necessary interpretation that would make for fascinating reading.
- Consider creating wildflower/wildlife areas at the rear of the Community Centre by reducing mowing frequency or if possible create a new small meadow from scratch.
- Consider using the recently fallen tree in the church grounds as a wildlife refuge by making log piles and securing/making safe sections of the large trunk that would provide ideal habitat over time for invertebrates. This could also be then used as a valuable educational resource/link with the pre-school nearby.

St. Paul's Lock Neighbourhood

**Level 5 -
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

Clearly there is a lot of support for the group among local residents which is pleasing. So many people felt involved and took a pride in the Neighbourhood. The work of the group is making a big difference to the enjoyment of the canal by local people and visitors alike. It was good to hear how all the groups in Mirfield come together for the good of the community. The area is extremely well maintained. The colourful planting around the seat areas makes a lovely place to sit. The condition of the well chosen planting was impressive.

Over coming watering problems is commendable. Colourful planting on the bridges does a lot to lift the atmosphere of the canal.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Consider what might be done in certain areas along the canal to encourage wildlife.
- Perhaps an information board could be added telling the story of the canal.

Sunnybank Neighbourhood

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

There are at least two key parts one is the amount of work put in to re claim roadside verges involving cutting back overgrown hedges importing soil and levelling the site. The other achievement is the creation of a wildlife garden and small garden area at The coppice along with a pond and wooded area.

These improvement's along with planters through the area are a positive result of the Mirfield in bloom policy to develop neighbourhoods increasing the positive impact of bloom on a very wide area.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The large verge area is about to become a work site again, so once returned there will unfortunately be some work to do, this is an important entry point to Mirfield
- The proposal to clean out some of the pond is a big task but will greatly enhance wildlife habitats in the area. The project is well on the way to achieving an outstanding award once the pond is completed.

The Embankment, Goldthorpe

Level 5 - Outstanding

Overall Impression

What a fantastic place the Embankment is. The team work tirelessly to make the embankment a fantastic experience and learning environment. The work that has been achieved by this dedicated team is nothing short of amazing. The planting was great, lovely to see Yorkshire varieties being used in the orchard and all labelled. Great activities and information panels. It is safe to say I really enjoyed my visit and all of the embankment team need to be commended for what they have achieved. Superb!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue adding to the planting. Add more seasonal interest through adding more native bulbs and flowers.
- We discussed the next planting project which was under dense tree canopy, so make sure you plant shade loving plants like ferns *dryopteris affinis*, *filix-mas* and *aspleniums*

Thornes Millennium Green Trust

Level 4 - Thriving

Overall Impression

A new Noticeboard is a great asset to the entry providing the local community with information relating to the Green.

The omission of any litter & dog fouling given the aspect of the site is to be commended, this is in some part due to the dedication & standard of maintenance upheld by the team of volunteers.

The use of sustainable planting is good with particular consideration given to areas where space is at a premium such as utilising a sunny wall to grow espalier fruit trees. The consideration to wildlife in the garden is demonstrated through the erection of several nesting boxes in the mature trees and the addition of a 'bug hotel'. There appears to be a good calendar of fund raising with initiatives such as coffee mornings helping to improve/evolve the garden.

All in all a great entry with enthusiastic members that can only get better with year on year improvements!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The process of starting to mulch the beds with bark chippings has begun & this should be continued to all areas of the garden thus aiding moisture retention given the extremely dry aspect of the garden. Consider contacting local Arboricultural contractors or the local authority to source F.O.C
- Consider a systematic removal of old shrubs towards the front of the garden, replacing with careful selection of shrubs/plants that will offer successive flowering periods & thrive in the environment. This will in turn improve sightlines into the garden from the road & pavement.
- Keep persevering with the wildflower border ensuring correct preparation & sowing times, a mixture that tolerates dry conditions may be beneficial.

Wortley Hall Walled Garden

Level 3 - Advancing

Overall Impression

Wortley Hall Garden has certified organic status so there is no doubting their credentials for gardening in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner. One issue they are aware of and dealing with is the collection of rainwater. They have a core group of local volunteers and hope in the long run to improve the pool of volunteers. Their intention to have a volunteer co-ordinator should help with this process. Taking on such a massive walled garden is quite a challenge but undoubtedly this wonderful site would be in ruins had they not done so as they are not only gardening on the site, but undertaking repairs to the walls during the winter months. Notwithstanding the areas mentioned below, I thought this was a wonderful, interesting and educational project with huge potential. Thanks go to all staff and volunteers. Keep up the good work!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The downside to such an enormous plot is that a huge amount of work is needed for its upkeep. Currently the full-time manager is on sabbatical and two part-time staff are covering 3 days a week when volunteers can come in too. It is more than likely that the volume of produce will drop off (and therefore I assume income).
- A pragmatic approach is being taken with some areas put to green manure in the interim. Like all groups, the pandemic has curtailed some activities. In the case of Wortley this has been their courses which they are hoping to resume.
- Bringing local schools to the site would also be fantastic.
- While it was good to hear of the produce being used at Heeley City Farm Café and the Regather Veg box scheme, it would be good if perhaps some could be used more

locally? There is apparently a farm shop in the village and perhaps links could be re-established with the chef(s) at the adjacent hotel who own the land? There was mention of having a stall within the garden but it was not clear how much footfall there is in this rather off-the-beaten track location.

- Funding also appeared to be an issue, and needs to be tackled if this project is to develop successfully.

