

Judges Notes for Summer 2026



Category C7 It's Your Neighbourhood

Friends of Crow Wood Park

**Level 5
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

The community engagement within Crow Wood Park is of an excellent standard with the group actively working with different groups of all ages from the local area. The recent Great Get Together event, coffee mornings, litter picking and the well supported activity groups create a fantastic sense of community in the park which is enjoyed by all. The friends group continue to raise funds to support the upkeep and development of the park and are actively engaged with Calderdale council to continue to develop this valuable community asset for Sowerby Bridge.

The appearance of the park was excellent with very little signs of litter or graffiti. The facilities are maintained to a high standard and the link between the council and the friends group has a strong positive impact on the fabric of the park

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

Areas for development:

The judges felt that although the standard of maintenance in the park was good there were several areas where the maintenance of the green space could be improved and Horticultural standards raised. There is a strong reliance on bedding schemes which are supplied by the council but due to budget restraints there was a lack of creativity and impact in the plants used in the schemes. The judges felt that the friend's group could identify key areas such as the front of the pavilion or the large planters located around the area and look at fundraising to develop the planting with species more suited to the location which would improve the appearance of the areas and save the council money on bedding plants in the long run.

Other areas to consider:

1. Consider linking with the Incredible Edible organisation to see how community growing could be introduced into the park
2. Introduce further measures to promote wildlife and biodiversity in the park
3. Considering how to make the space feel safer for women and girls would be an excellent development project and something which is increasingly relevant in

public spaces. Take this a step further by actively engaging with the 'Make Space for Girls' campaign.

4. Rowntree Park in York has a similar history to Crow Wood and has an active friends group. Making a connection with the group to share best practice and ideas for further development might prove beneficial.

Ginny Greenholes

**Level 5
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

Ginny Greenholes play area is something that many villages would be delighted to claim as their own. From the newly built castle entrance feature to the modern play facilities, natural play areas, woodland shade and chainsaw sculptures, this is an area which will allow children's imaginations to run riot. Ginny Greenholes connects Spofforth to Wetherby by the old railway line now a green corridor, a safe space for cycling and walking. The heritage of the line is very well explained in good interpretation boards. This is a superb example of a well maintained and well used village play area which many other villages would do well to study.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

The area at the far side of Ginny Greenholes is proposed to become a wild flower meadow at some point in the future when funding becomes available. This needs some careful planning and consideration before any clearance takes place. Perhaps some thought might be given to what is already there and how the plants already in situ can aid nature conservation. Also, some thought perhaps could be given to conducting some nature surveys to establish a base line for insects and mammals which are already there! Establishing a wild flower meadow is notoriously difficult and expert help should be found if this is going to happen successfully.

Gleadless Valley Methodist Church Community Garden

**Level 5
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

This garden is a little gem, fully open to the local community in the middle of a housing estate. Originally conceived from a partnership between the church and Heeley City Farm and starting with a couple of raised vegetable beds to provide produce for the food bank in the church, it has extended over the years to include more vegetable beds, lots of fruit trees and bushes and plenty of colourful flowers.

Local residents are free to help themselves to the produce in the garden and, while occasionally someone will take more than they need, in general people just take enough for their meals and to enjoy. There is plenty of evidence that Iren and the team of six volunteers are gardening to encourage wildlife. There are lovely wildflower beds for pollinators, teasels for the goldfinches and areas where the grass is left uncut; there is a Twigwam (a wonderful stick tower for insects), a small pond, a log pile and a newly planted hedgerow with trees from the Woodland Trust to provide nesting areas for birds. The Percy Street Collective, who support young adults facing barriers to work, have made some bird and bat boxes for the garden and helped build a storage bay. No weedkillers are used on the site.

There are three compost bays and turf lifted to make a new raised bed has been piled up and covered to make new soil. There are three rainwater tanks, which have been disguised with wooden fencing and one fence now has plants growing over it too. Filled watering cans are left out, and local children help with the watering.

Funding for the garden comes by application to the Heely Trust and to the local area committee. A National Lottery grant from Awards for All has been obtained for a polytunnel in the garden which will help with propagation and growing plants that need more protection.

Four large planters, planted up to cover a concrete area, contain colourful plants which are now well established and make a welcoming entrance to the site.

The church building is no longer used as a church, but there are plans for a youth club to start using the building and it is hoped that the young people help to look after a couple of raised beds, so they can grow and cook their own food.

It was a pleasure to meet Iren and her team, who are doing a fantastic job in their community.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

Ensure the new polytunnel is firmly anchored against the wind. It will be a great addition to the site.

Consider one or two additional large planters, like the ones already at the front of the site, to go against the wall of the building to replace the small pots that are currently there.

Grow Scarborough

Level 5
Outstanding

Overall Impression

An oasis in a built-up area, this garden with its impressive mosaic on the back wall, has it all and is managed by Darren who is passionate about its aims. Started in January 23, there are twelve raised beds, with all crops labelled and using companion planting. We saw fruit trees, dead hedging and native hedging and a pond. The garden is used to educate what can be achieved without a large green space with sessions for schools, clubs, refugees in the area. Food is supplied to the community fridges and waste is returned to be composted. Seeds are given to local libraries to be distributed to users. There are information boards, water butts and produce can be prepared and cooked in the adjacent community building.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

Darren is always looking for new ways to enhance the growing experience. His next project is converting a tool shed into an engagement shed to develop his ideas.

Continue to pursue new funding outlets.

Harrogate Neighbours

**Level 5
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

It was lovely to visit this flowery place on such a lovely summer afternoon and to meet a lovely group of people involved with gardening. It was pleasing to see how many seating areas were available for people to enjoy the views. It was nice to see that the people living there were given every chance to enjoy working in the lovely gardens. The polytunnel was impressive and so was the wide range of crops grown in the raised beds and used onsite. Keeping hens on site is a lovely idea.

We were pleased to see the importance which is given to biodiversity. There were so many varied opportunities for wildlife to thrive. The pond was beautiful and everywhere the wide variety of planting was in excellent condition. We were very pleased to hear how much the site is involved with the local community and indeed supporting other organisations there. We were impressed by the knowledge, skill and dedication of the people organising the outdoor spaces.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It might be nice to keep a record of insect and other wildlife found on site, perhaps have a little notice board to record the latest sightings.
- Perhaps consider labelling the planting so that visitors and residents can enjoy identifying them.
- Perhaps consider increasing the planting in the lounges and researching house plants which would thrive there.

Heeley City Farm

Level 5
Outstanding

Overall Impression

Heeley City Farm is an urban farm and visitor attraction in the heart of Sheffield. It is very community focussed and valued by local residents. It is free to enter, though donations are always welcome. The farm provides adult supported placements, opportunities for young people who struggles in mainstream education, a variety of activities for young children, dementia support plus a range of volunteering opportunities. There is a café, a children's playground and also a plant centre, which is run by those involved with the farm's programmes. The plant centre currently buys in 70% of the plants sold, but it is hoped to produce more plants from seeds and cuttings in future.

The farm is a rare breeds centre. The animals are well-cared for and healthy. There is a large allotment garden with a wide variety of vegetables, fruit and flowers. There is plenty of manure from the animals, but the team also produce great compost from the allotment garden waste and food waste from Foodworks, so no compost is bought in. There are some water butts, but it is hoped that a bigger system for water collection will be able to be introduced in the future.

The Valerie Garden – a recent development – offers a quiet, relaxed space for visitors and is also used for activities and support for dementia sufferers and their carers. It was named by two of the staff whose mother suffered from early onset dementia. There is also a memorial to a local fireman in this garden. A newly erected small amphitheatre, funded by the Veolia Environmental Trust, overlooks the allotment garden and can be used by visiting groups and for plays. It has lighting and is fully accessible and wheelchair friendly.

The well-supported café has an outdoor space which is being developed to provide an extra seating area. It is surrounded by a gabion wall with shade-tolerant plants planted in the top and will be a lovely place to sit when it is completed and as the plants grow. There are swift boxes on the only house remaining from the original terraced housing estate, which is now used as an office. There are living roofs on some of the buildings and lots of wildflower and unmown areas. It is clear that Sarah, Julie and all the members of staff are working to encourage biodiversity and provide food and homes for wildlife. Sadly, a large well-established pond suffered some vandalism with the pond-lining being badly damaged. However, the local residents rallied and have offered help to get it back to its former state. The pond is in an attractive shady area with log piles.

Funding is obtained from donations, grants from the local area committee and by bidding for grants for specific projects. Funding has been granted for a new children's playground and there are plans to lease some new land which can be used for animal grazing.

Heeley City Farm is a great community asset, offering opportunities to a wide range of people. There are some challenges with vandalism, but overall, it is a well-loved and well-managed site.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Look into more ways of collecting water for use in the garden. Fenced-in water collection tanks may prevent theft. These could be disguised with planting too.
- Continue to work on all areas of the site, especially those which are currently underdeveloped.
- Consider more interpretation boards to provide more information for visitors, especially about the history of the site.
- Honeysuckle or Jasmine would provide attractive, scented planting for the new pink fencing.

High Green in Bloom

**Level 5
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

This small very enthusiastic hard working group have made a huge difference to the area. Several rather derelict corner sites have been made into lovely green oasis sites which are appreciated by the community and wildlife alike. These include :-= Thompson Hill, with a rebuilt wall and statue. The Old Vets Corner with good sustainable planting including the hypericum buzzing with bees.

Green Gate corner with its Christmas Tree is another interesting example and good to hear that it is used for well supported Christmas Festivities. The Park is well used for many activities including the Gala, making it a real asset for the village. It is extremely clean and tidy everywhere.

There are 15 large planters throughout the village with good quality sustainable planting enhanced with a few bedding plants which are all well looked after and make a real difference to the area. I was pleased to hear that there is underplanting with spring bulbs creating interest and colour all year.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- While this group work very hard themselves and with other organisations more help would be welcome. Continue to go out and be seen and use all forms of publicity.
- In view of the current hot, dry weather which is predicted to be more frequent in the years to come take this into account when doing any further planting.

Hookstone and Stonefall Action Group

**Level 5
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

It was lovely to visit these gorgeous parks and to meet the people who obviously love them so much and devote their time to caring for them. The people of the district are very lucky to have this beautiful, green space right on their doorsteps.

It was very impressive to see how much conservation and biodiversity matter and the provisions made to encourage wildlife. The bug hotels will be a valuable addition to the park.

The variety of tree species in the parks was impressive as was the range of plants in the carefully managed wildflower areas. The knowledge shown by the people who showed us round was clearly extensive.

It was good to see that the heritage of the park as a former brickworks is being honoured.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It would be good to see even more planting of native wildlife trees and shrubs, especially those which berry.
- Perhaps near the entrance gates it might be possible to encourage insect life with a few buddleia bushes and even lavender beds to further enhance the main entrances to the park.
- It might be nice to see some more information boards with pictures of birds and insects found in the park. A board with pictures of a leaf of each of the tree varieties might make it easy for people to identify them.
- Perhaps it might be possible to add a few more seats to the park so that people can sit and enjoy the lovely views.

Incredible Edible Northallerton

**Level 4
Thriving**

Overall Impression

Incredible Edible has developed as an 'outreach' of the well-established Secret Garden and encompasses three areas: Applegarth, Cherry Croft and the Railway Station. The Applegarth site has seen the repair of some raised beds and the addition of others allowing a wider range of vegetables to be grown. A well supported Crowd Funding appeal has raised money for a CCTV camera which has been successful in reducing antisocial behaviour. Another improvement is the introduction of small whiteboards attached to each of the raised beds, identifying what is growing there and when it is ready for harvesting. This has also been introduced at the Cherry Croft site. The Cherry Croft site now has an area of seating set around a new ornamental bed and a rhubarb bed has been added to the productive garden. Shrubs donated by a local business provide a 'hedge' alongside the adjacent path. It was good to hear that additional volunteers have been recruited in support of this area.

Regular gardening sessions for volunteers are held on both sites, while at the Station staff undertake watering of the planters there with support from volunteers for maintenance. Sustainable practices are undertaken across all sites and wildlife is encouraged with insect hotels, pollinating plants etc. The group have good links with local businesses (in kind donations and other assistance) and with local charities (eg Men's Shed). There is good community awareness of the project through newsletters, Facebook and events held on site.

Please note that while the project has been assessed in the same category as last year, the marks have improved from the lower end of the category to the top end, reflecting the development of this project.

A huge 'Well Done' to all involved and if the improvement is maintained then hopefully the Outstanding category will be achieved in the future.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The Wildflower border at the Applegarth site is difficult to maintain due to the intrusion of grass and also lacks year-round interest and functionality in defining the edge of the garden alongside the path. Consider replacing with perennials (possibly shrubs). These could be herbs such as Rosemary, Thyme, Sage, Chives or similar.
- Following someone raising the issue of poisonous bulbs (daffodils), there needs to be clarity about exactly where the edibles are located (ie in clearly marked raised beds). It is also important to ensure that weeds known to be poisonous are removed from edible beds.
- The on-going recruitment of volunteers is important as the project develops. The effective and varied community engagement will hopefully help with this.
- It would be good to see information on simple recipes for some of the produce. FaceBook could possibly be used for this purpose? Perhaps the local library could highlight some suitable books? Community events could have handout leaflets or demonstrations?

Millennium Garden Spofforth

Level 5
Outstanding

Overall Impression

Spofforth Millennium Garden is well-established in a quiet corner of the village where people can sit and enjoy the ambience or volunteer to maintain the garden to a very high standard. The perennial planting found here is a haven for bees and butterflies which were seen in abundance in the hot sunshine. The lavender hedge, in particular, was “buzzing”! Congratulations to all the volunteers who work in this beautiful garden.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue to progress the area under the tree with the “fairy doors” project.
- A small bed of plants next to the seat in the garden was struggling in the dry weather. As we continue to experience hotter summer weather, perhaps some thought could be given to plants which can cope with extreme heat and dry and would enhance this area for people using the seat.

Mount Tabor

Level 3
Advancing

Overall Impression

Thank you for the warm welcome to Mount Tabor’s In bloom group who should be commended for their organisational skills in planning for the visit. The criteria matrix and action planning documents produced by the group were outstanding giving them a great record of where they are starting from and how they can improve in the future. This group are ones to watch!

The In-bloom group in Mount Tabor are newly formed in February 2026 as a branch of the larger community association. As a newly formed group they should be immensely proud of all they have achieved in the run up to this year’s judging. The memorial garden at the church and community bench provide a warm welcome to the area and are a credit to the community effort that has gone into them.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- There is a lot of potential for improvement in the village, and the group are actively planning to develop further areas for planting.
- There are several areas of planting which the group would like to improve. It is likely that the soil in the village is slightly acid so choosing plants which thrive in these conditions will result in the most successful displays.
- The group have been in talks with the council about improving planting diversity in the play area. One suggestion is some wildflower planting. The spiral feature with the standing stone in the middle of the would be further highlighted if it was planted with wildflowers. Choosing a mix specifically for acid soils would give the best chance of success.
- Encourage further local participation by having planting days or fundraising events to help with producing displays for future seasons.
- Continue to work with local councils, the police and the Methodist church to strengthen relationships and build opportunities to develop the green spaces in the village.

Mytholmroyd Community Station

**Level 4
Thriving**

Overall Impression

1. Strong volunteer commitment with some strong historic and current links to other community groups. Monthly meetings and trips, and themed volunteer days including 'Spring Clean Day'. Volunteers come in from other areas on the train to help and have been heavily involved in restoring the community building at the entrance to the station, which is now an art hub.
2. The Yorkshire platform has a shrub bed containing a compost heap and a memorial garden, which is managed by the Friends. The Lancashire Platform has another steep slope, leading to a flatter area of garden and the Friendship Garden, an area of raised beds and planters with some herbs, fruit and wildlife habitats.
3. The local fire station fills the IBCs with water at both sides of the station, and some rainwater collection is happening by the Friendship Garden.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

1. Signage could be improved to celebrate the green spaces and encourage more people to engage with these spaces.

2. Planting by the side of the path up to the Lancashire platform could be improved - there are currently annuals dotted through the front of this bed (Nasturtiums), that require significant watering and care. Consider drought resilient low growing shrubs to fill the space without encroaching on the paths (Creeping Thyme, Rosemary, Lavender).
3. Develop the steep bank at the side of the slope up to the Lancashire platform as a wildflower area to increase summer interest and biodiversity on the site.
4. Use clippings and pruning's from the site to refresh the bug hotel in the Friendship Garden, and work to incorporate green matter into the compost bin to encourage rotting down (trimmings from the lawn could be added here).
5. Rainwater collection for watering is vital to the group. There are currently two large water tanks on the site. Adding a simple wooden or metal 'roof' to the tanks connected to guttering would enable the group to collect additional water during wet weather.

National Inpatient Centre for Psychological Medicine, Leeds

Level 3 Advancing

Overall Impression

The garden for the Centre is located on the oval balcony at the end of the patient ward. It is a surprising site which overcomes significant challenges (being at height with the inherent weight restrictions and exposure to wind etc.) to create a really welcoming and calm oasis for patients, staff and space for wildlife too. There's a joyous informality to the whole area. There is limited space, however, what has been achieved is commendable. Edward explained how with limited funding this area has been created.

There is a growing area to one side where we could see tomatoes and beans being cultivated. A mixture of annual and perennial plants follow on with the indoor plants being placed outside during the good weather. It was really surprising to see the impressive olive tree. There is a bird feeder and a bird bath which is providing space for nature as well. To the other side there is an area where some salad leaves are growing with an area where gardening tools and equipment is stored. The area is looked after by patients, visitors and staff a real community endeavour.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- It is understandable that composting cannot take place on this site, however it may be worth considering if you can have a water collection area attached to the down pipe by the gardening tools area.
- Consider adding some further perennial plants to some of your planters such as sage and lavender along with some mulch to conserve water.

- Consider exploring external funding opportunities, consider contacting your local councillors for funding.

Northallerton Secret Garden

Level 5
Outstanding

Overall Impression

An outstanding project which is celebrating 10 years. The garden is located in the centre of Northallerton at the rear of the busy high street. It is well sign posted and is a very much a Secret Garden which has grown from a derelict and overgrown site. The project is very much community lead through out, with involvement from local schools, the church (who pays for the lease on the land) and Christian organisations who support homeless and addiction problems in the area. The public can access the garden two days a week and during special open day events.

Users are able to work within an organised framework which is set on site each week and can chose to work on their own or within small groups which are often led by volunteers. The site is managed using sustainable principles with ornamentals, soft fruit and vegetables grown in different areas with plantings designed to attract wildlife and pollinators. There is a recycling and composting area containing compost bins and water butts and an information board with a list of wild birds, mammals and reptiles seen in the garden.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Wildflower Meadow; introduce some more grass species and Yellow Rattle.
- Raised beds near to the Polytunnel; Remove the woodchip mulch and add compost and soil to improve the beds soil structure. Add a general organic fertiliser.
- Start off seeds in the polytunnel in trays or modules using a good seed compost before planting out into the raised beds.
- The recruitment of more volunteers might allow the garden to be opened on more than two days.

Penda's Community Garden

Level 4
Thriving

Overall Impression

Congratulations to Rachael who took on this project just over 6 months ago. A small area for locals to grow a variety of soft fruits, herbs and vegetables in planters around the site. Some of the plants have been donated by the public and the Arium Leeds. Good use of social media is also used to ask for volunteers, funding and advertising events. Some events that offer training have also been organised such as how to use a scythe, how to produce various types of propagation methods. Close by is also a orchard plantation that is managed by the group. This is indeed a thriving project that also expands into helping with other projects in the area. We are looking forward to seeing this Community garden flourish in the future.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Continue your quest to find new volunteers to join the team and lighten the load on existing team members.
- Continue to use social media for advertising events and help on the site.
- To enhance the orchard site and to look at methods of protecting the area.
- To carry on the good work and gaining funding.

Priory Growing Group

**Level 3
Advancing**

Overall Impression

The growing group is part of a unit acting as a social provider within the NHS and other bodies, starting in 2025 it supports people with non medical issues.

Establishing a collection of fruit trees, having bird boxes, wishing well, memory tree and options to undertake art projects if not possible to work on the garden.

Whilst water butts are on site watering has been challenging this year.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Once the road works are complete the intention is to form more raised beds, but to build these with experience from the first builds such as making them narrower for better access and so on.
- The plan/hope to take over the building to become an on site potting/teaching facility will greatly enhance the work and opportunities for the project.
- Continue to encourage people to both attend and then volunteer to help this will be mutually beneficial.
- Once the expansion is completed and the projects develops I am sure it will set standards for others to follow.

Residents of Cudworth

Level 3 Advancing

Overall Impression

It was lovely to meet a group of people who care so much about the community that they live in and they were prepared to make tremendous efforts to make that community flowery and beautiful and better . Their efforts are definitely benefiting everybody who lives there and it's great to see what a lot of support they have in the local community. It was impressive to see the efforts that the group make to overcome site difficulties ,such as watering and carrying bottles of water over quite long distances to benefit the various flower beds.

Saint John's Garden is a lovely, peaceful place In the centre of the community with its raised beds. It was interesting to see the Miners Memorial and other installations . It was interesting to hear about the various events that take place in Cudworth and especially the Tea in the Park event taking place in Cudworth Park.

The Peace Garden is a very peaceful place and the mural is really is atmospheric. It was impressive to see the beds of sustainable insect friendly perennials planted in Cudsworth Park by a member of the group . That is a tremendous achievement and those responsible should feel very proud indeed of the results of their efforts Altogether visiting the group showed what a tremendous difference can be made to a community by quite a small number of people.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- Keep trying to involve local businesses in the work of the group . It will be a tremendous help if businesses near some of the flower beds will be prepare to take on just part of the watering.
- Perhaps it will be possible to just consider what would need to be done to create a simple garden competition in the town and that might help to get people in more involved with the work of the group
- Perhaps it might be possible to invite the schools in the town to perhaps design a flower bed in the park, if it was possible to create another flower bed that schools could design and take a pride in . Perhaps the group could invite them to design an infant insect friendly pot to get them involved with the work of the group.

Shadwell in Bloom

**Level 5 -
Outstanding**

Overall Impression

Firstly the judges would like to thank Liz, Ruth and Stephen for a well planned visit to Shadwell and the great work the group continues to do for the benefit of the village, thank you. The group is a small dedicated team with support from volunteers of all ages, along with local residents, businesses and the Parish Council. Their collective efforts have contributed to stronger community connection.

On the day of the visit the village was clean and tidy and presented to maximise its impact with sponsored hanging baskets and beds. It was good to hear that the group are now incorporating Perennials into the flower beds demonstrating a strong commitment to sustainable planting, biodiversity, and environmental considerations, encouraging pollinating insects and the challenge we now face with drought conditions. Particular highlights where the perennial beds at the entrance to the village Hall and the Bee Corner both well planned for visual impact and plant quality and choice of planting, well done.

One collaboration that stood out was the partnership with Shadwell Primary School, encouraging the children to take part in planting the bed out side the school entrance and it was really pleasing to see the passion the children have for their community and what it means to them for their local environment, a big thank you to for taking the time to meet the judges and explain the great work they are doing, thank you.

Other areas of achievements and special mention is the Community Herb Beds on Colliers Lane, created by Liz and David and now maintained by Martin and Anne. The choice of herbs was well thought out and all thriving and it was good to see plant labels used for passers by to identify what herbs were included within the beds. It was good to see the use of composting bays at the allotments used by Shadwell in Bloom

The group's achievements reflect the dedication of its volunteers, residents, sponsors and partners, who continue to work together to create an attractive, welcoming and thriving village for all keep up the great work you all do.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The group mentioned that most of their funding covers watering the hanging baskets so it was mentioned on the visit that these could be reduced to help reduce costs, and the judges believe this would benefit the group but not detract from the remaining hanging baskets and the visual impact this has throughout the village, also there is a move to introduce water reservoirs to

the hanging baskets to help reduce watering costs, again welcomed by the judges. Utilising the bus shelter to help collect and store water through guttering to water the two planters on either side.

- Continue to explore perennial beds to reduce annual bedding costs and watering costs, the savings could then be used to help future projects.
- Could the collaboration with the school be further developed to the Herb Beds and talking about the different herbs and what they are used and get the children to plant some herbs at school and then transplant to the beds on Colliers Lane.

St Joseph's Garden

Level 3 Advancing

Overall Impression

It was lovely to meet the volunteers at St. Joseph's Garden. There are 8 volunteers who describe themselves as a relaxed group. The new seats facing the calvary are lovely. The planting around the calvary is good and has evolved over the years with plants being donated from the volunteers gardens and plant sales.

The team have worked with S2R a local mental health charity who have built a bug house for the garden and they have agreed they would be happy to return to help further. The group receive funding from various source and by organising plant sales which are very well attended.

The interpretation boards are really good and identify the full history of the garden and how it has been regenerated.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The borders are an area which you have identified as requiring work. Consider splitting some of the large plants on the calvary or take cuttings and grow on to place in the borders. Consider placing alpines into some of the gaps around the calvary.
- Consider creating a composting area at the back of the church.
- A number of the plants would benefit from being cut back, especially around the paths of the church.
- Look to perennial plants such as geraniums, grasses, lavenders, sage. Consider plants such as these which will require less maintenance.

St Marys, Mirfield

Level 5
Outstanding

Overall Impression

The 'headquarters of the Mirfield in Bloom operation:

- Welcoming entrance with the florally planted boat, book bank and seated areas
- Attractive planting around the community centre and car park
- The adjacent public path was clean and litter free
- Good composting systems providing growing materials for plant cultivation, hopefully reducing the bill for buying in plants and compost for the whole Mirfield in Bloom operation
- Polytunnel was productive
- Vegetable growing in raised beds
- Fruit tree planting on the field boundary
- The start of the 'hedgehog highway'
- We travelled to the end of the 'hedgehog highway' the 'island' which was a previously neglected roundabout, now transformed into an attractively planted area, clearly looked after by local people
- Volunteers were aware of the need to plan for ongoing heat waves and climate change by reviewing planting regimes, more drought resistant plants, nature friendly cultivation etc.
- St Marys Church is an historical gem and the volunteers are doing a sterling job managing it for the public and wildlife.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- The polytunnel and surrounding growing areas can be developed and expanded to grow more flowering plants and edible crops
- Watering systems can be designed and implemented to both improve watering and reduce labour (allowing more time for cultivation)
- The 'County Park' part of St Marys Church is an excellent wildlife area in its own right. Perhaps a proper ecological survey could be undertaken by local ecology students to save costs of hiring a professional, and the findings displayed on an interpretation board.

Starbeck Library Garden

Level 4
Thriving

Overall Impression

The Library Garden is beautiful, tranquil place to visit on a lovely summer day. The people of Starbeck are lucky to have such a peaceful haven in their community. The level of knowledge of the people caring so well for the garden is very impressive. The new wooden arch at the entrance to the garden is a lovely focal point and will be even more attractive when the newly planted climbing roses have developed. The variety and quality of the planting is very impressive.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- There is an impressive variety of planting, perhaps people might benefit from looking at labels, so they know what plant they are enjoying.
- Perhaps a seat could be put in the main garden area so that people can sit and enjoy mindfulness surrounded by the planting.
- If it is possible to have a seat perhaps it would be nice to have a pot of scented planting by the seat to increase the enjoyment.
- The serpentine border to the grass is very much in keeping with the atmosphere of the garden. Perhaps edging the lawn might make that flow even better.

The Nab Neighbourhood, Mirfield

**Level 4
Thriving**

Overall Impression

Amy and Michelle have led on some outstanding work here. Their enthusiasm is clearly inspiring and is impossible to miss by all who meet them. This enthusiasm has rubbed off onto local business owners, including the Co-op, who have supported the effort with striking floral displays. The neighbourhood is kept very clean and weed free, which appears to be influencing others.

Of particular success is the rockery at the corner of Nettleton Road, where a very uninspiring slab of concrete has been transformed into a very well thought-out but wonderful rockery/alpine garden. If only we could see more of these!

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- We look forward to seeing 'Part 2' of the Nettleton Road rock garden once completed!
- The team are already considering improvements for the open space at the Knowl – subject to permission from the Council. It could well be turned into a small wildlife area.

- We hope the team are successful in securing funding to improve the Brickyard Lane area.
- If resources allow, the team should continue to expand efforts further into the immediate area but be wary of overstretching themselves.

Vale Community Garden, Cornholme

**Level 4
Thriving**

Overall Impression

Within the space of a year this group has achieved a great deal on this small area at the edge of the village which they have taken over from the local Council. An initial 4 raised vegetable plots were established which have increased to 6 plots including a dedicated herb bed. A number of soft fruit bushes have been planted too. The beds have been productive and appreciated by the local community. The group also have well established fruit trees on the site which they are maintain and harvesting the fruits - mirabels and plums for jam making and apples that have been turned into apple pies.

Working with partners, including the local school, local forage society, Culturedale, and the neighbouring church who provide access to water for the site, the garden is achieving the aim as a community/edible garden. Providing food grown by the community for the community. A seed swop bank and book box is on site and well used. Information is provided for the local community via the notice boards and posters including what is growing on site and when to pick and harvest. Plans are in place for more partnership working this year and there is all year involvement of the volunteers and local community.

Judges feedback on areas for consideration

- There are plans in place for the woodland area which include environmental developments - bird boxes, insect and hedgehog houses. We look forward to seeing these move on.
- Moving forward there are plans for working with the school on future projects - the busy main road prevents easy access by foot but a pedestrian crossing is in the pipeline which will provide safer access from the school.

