

REPORT 24.022**LAVERSTOCK AND FORD PARISH COUNCIL****SUBJECT: CPRE Best Kept Village Competition****DATE: 15th February 2024****AUTHOR: Trudi Deane, Clerk****1. Report Summary**

A report to councillors regarding the 2024 competition.

2. Summary

CPRE are inviting entries to the forthcoming Wiltshire Best Kept Village competition. The last entry within the parish was Laverstock in the large village category in 2013.

From CPRE:-

Even though your village might not have entered the BKVC recently, or even at all, please read on. Neither entering the Competition nor preparing for it need be substantial tasks, nor need they be undertaken by your parish council if you can find other villagers to take them on. Please note also that the Competition is for the best kept village, not for the prettiest village.

Entry is open to all villages/parishes with a population not exceeding 3500 as stated on Wiltshire Council's database or in Swindon Borough Council's area. Any village with a population that exceeds this figure is welcome to apply to enter if there are reasonable circumstances, such as a large housing estate in the parish that is effectively separate from the historic village and which would not be included in the judging area. A parish council that covers several villages is very welcome to submit separate entries for one or more of those villages (and an individual or group from that village could submit the entry directly), as several have been doing for many years.

Please note the following:

- *There is no cost to enter.*
- *Prizes of £200 to £30, sponsored by CCM Technologies Ltd, are available for each of the three village size categories.*
- *There will also be a prize of £150 for the "Best Newcomer", open to any village that has not entered the BKVC in the previous 6 competitions (i.e. since 2015).*
- *There will also be a Merit Prize (also of £150) for the village that does not win a major prize this year but which has entered for every one of the past 6 competitions (there was no competition in 2020) and has achieved the best overall results in that period.*
- *We would much prefer to receive entries by email but paper entries will be accepted.*
- ***The work required to prepare entry documents need not take long and can of course be shared amongst parish councillors and other villagers.***
- *Separate entry invitations, to enter the Laurence Kitching Award (sponsored by Princeton Homes), will be sent to the six villages who won at County level in 2021 and 2022.*

Many of those who did well in recent BKVCs benefitted from engaging some of their village community organisations. In this way the work to prepare was shared by many people, rather than being the responsibility of just a few members of the parish council. The other benefits of course are that preparing for judging can bring your community closer together and even be an enjoyable experience, and that your village will look better as a result of the preparation work of its community.

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The timings for this year's competition are similar to those of recent years:

- *The invitation to enter will be sent by late-February.*
- *The entry deadline is 21st April. Late entries can create significant and unfair problems for our panel of volunteer judges, and might have to be rejected.*
- *Judging for the first (District) round will take place from 15th May to 13th June.*
- *Judging for the second (County) round and for the Laurence Kitching Award will take place in July.*

The Presentation Day for the major winners will be on a Sunday in September.

3. Recommendation

That the council considers whether to enter any areas within the Parish for the BKV Competition 2024.