



Best Kept Village Community Competition

2025 - Staffordshire



The
**Community
Foundation**

for Staffordshire & Shropshire

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What is it?

The Best Kept Village Competition began in Staffordshire in 1956, and has been running continuously since then. The competition was developed to encourage village residents to take pride in their communities, and was originally managed by the Rural Community Council. Sadly in 2017 the RCC took the decision to close, but wanted to ensure that the competition continued, and so approached the Community Foundation to transfer the management of it. Recognising the importance of ensuring that an event steeped in history continues, and recognising the value of an event to bring different communities together, the Community Foundation took over the administration of the competition from 2018.

In Shropshire the competition was managed by a different organisation, and ran until the 1990s, when it was abandoned. As the Community Foundation covers both Staffordshire and Shropshire we thought it was important to roll the competition out to Shropshire too

Who is it for?

Any Village (large or small) hamlet, or neighbourhood group.

It is often the parish council who take the lead in entering the competition, but, in many cases, local groups are formed by residents. Then there are the judges, dedicated volunteers who spend hours touring the villages of Staffordshire. The competition is not about just finding the most beautiful, old, or picturesque village, and the winners are more varied and diverse than one might think. The most successful communities are often those that achieve the greatest involvement and community spirit from their residents.



What are the categories?

For Staffordshire 2025, the categories are:

Village Awards:

- Best Small Village (North)
- Best Small Village (South)
- Best Large Village (North)
- Best Large Village (South)
- Overall Winner

Large Village is defined as >1500 population and small village as <1500

What is judged and marked in BKVC?

75% of the judging marks come from a village's maintenance and appearance. This is judged from the entry form and supporting documents which are submitted, and from an in-person visit from the judging team.

We recognise that not all villages have all facilities, and so a village is not disadvantaged if they do not have a particular feature, such as a war memorial, or bus stop, or community centre. We also recognise that there may sometimes be areas of a village which are not as nice as they could be and maybe not in the control of the residents to remedy. If you have a problem area within your village, we give you the option to include, within your online entry, a description of any temporary eyesores, and you can ask for them to be excluded from the judging.

Churchyards are a key feature of many villages, serving as a place of quiet beauty for peaceful reflection and precious memories. The maintenance of churchyards is often undertaken by a few volunteers who may value the offer of additional support. However, there are strict guidelines about what is permissible in churchyards, so it is important to check with the vicar or churchwardens before undertaking any action. Advice and examples of good churchyard maintenance are also available from the charity - www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

Community Spirit

25% of the points available will be awarded for demonstrating inclusivity, year-round events, clubs, and community cohesion. This is determined by your entry and will be judged separately to the in-person judging in the community. It is based solely on the entry form and any evidence you send to accompany it. We are aware that communities have year-round events and clubs taking place within their village and so we would love to see evidence of this with your entry, but the event should have taken place between Sept 2024 and August 2025.

Spirit of BKVC:

Picture This Competition (5 – 7 year olds)

This award is for entries from children aged 5 to 7. It can be a drawing or poster and should be based upon the village/surroundings.

We can accept a maximum of three entries from each village.

You will need to photograph them and upload the image with your entry.

Picture This Competition (8 – 11 year olds)

This award is for entries from children aged 8 to 11. It can be a drawing or poster and should be based upon the village/surroundings.

We can accept a maximum of three entries from each village.

You will need to photograph them and upload the image with your entry.

Vision of BKVC (Young People)

The Vision of BKVC award can accept entries of photography, paintings, drawings, tapestry, cross-stitch, poetry and prose or short stories. This award is open to young people aged between 11 and 17. It should be based upon the village/surroundings.

You will need to photograph, if appropriate, or provide a document file and upload them with your entry.

Vision of BKVC (Adults)

The Vision of BKVC award can accept entries of photography, paintings, drawings, tapestry, cross-stitch, poetry and prose or short stories. This award is open to anyone 18 and over.

You will need to photograph, if appropriate, or provide a document file and upload them with your entry.

Living Countryside Awards:

This category is sponsored exclusively by CPRE, and is broken down into four separate awards.

Inspiring Groups

This award recognises groups leading on environmental issues. This could include local community campaign groups fighting for better services and facilities in their area, groups offering advice to residents on matters such as planning, groups maintaining green spaces or carrying out biodiversity projects, litter-picking groups, or community transport groups.

Trailblazer Award

This award would recognise individuals who are going the extra mile to protect their local countryside. They could be people who are providing significant contributions to projects, or working to maintain parks, green spaces or local facilities. Individuals might be actively involved in developing activities and schemes in their community to make it a better place in which to live, work or go to school.

Made in Rural Staffordshire Award

This category celebrates local businesses who provide local produce, crafts and everything in between, who add value to our local economy and make the county so unique and varied.

Countryside on Camera Award (Children's Award)

An award for children to submit their best photo of the Staffordshire countryside Aged under 18.

Countryside on Camera Award (Adult's Award)

We would encourage everyone to submit their best photo of the Staffordshire countryside. Aged 18 and above.

When does it take place?

Jan 7-16th	Pre-launch briefings
27 th Jan	On line pre-launch briefing (email for invite- bkvc@staffordshire.foundation)
1 st Mar	Entries open (on line)
30 th Apr	Closing date for entries
May	Office based judging
June	In person judging
July	Marking assessed and judging completed
Sept	Presentation awards night

How do we enter?

Entries start Mar 1st, cost for entry is £35

Entries can be completed on line by going to :

<https://staffordshire.foundation/bkvc/>

or scan QR code:



What if we have more questions?

Email BKVC support at: bkvc@staffordshire.foundation