



## CATEGORY Small Town



**Welton**

Award – Silver

Judged on 13th July 2022

Judges: Sharon Sutton & Malcolm Fisher

**Judges Award:** To the Parish Council and local volunteer team for the research and development of the Welton Heritage Trail.

### **Introduction**

The judges were given a warm and hospitable welcome on arrival by Louise and Julia.

This was the first time Welton had entered East Midlands in bloom since 2019 when they were awarded a Silver Award. The parish council had led the formation of a new team including local volunteers, scouts and guides and the Welton Litter pickers. Note had been taken of areas for improvement at the 2019 assessment and there was particular pride in the establishment of the local Heritage Trail. The judges were taken on an interesting and comprehensive tour of Welton, and it was good to see all the examples of the local initiative of Wacky Planters in which considerable creativity and individuality was on show. Many thanks Welton for your hospitality both on arrival and at a convivial lunch.

### **Areas of Achievement**

#### Section A - Horticulture

A colour scheme of red, white and blue had been chosen for the formal horticultural displays to reflect the Platinum Jubilee year. These were located around Welton, but special mention should go to the Black Bull and surrounding area where the displays were particularly effective and well maintained. There is some seasonal planting with spring flowering bulbs planted at the village entrances. The Wacky Planter initiative was a great success with several really excellent examples around Welton. We were shown planters utilising lawn mower boxes, televisions and shopping trolleys amongst many other diverse items. A community orchard had been planted which when mature will be a wonderful resource for residents to enjoy as well as local wildlife.

#### Section B - Environment

Work continues to maintain and improve the area around the Beck.

Native plants have been sourced and planted around the banks and a cleaning programme has removed rubbish and tree prunings. A volunteer group, The Welton Litter pickers continue to be active with a monthly litter pick. The town certainly benefits from this as it looks very clean and tidy throughout.

A printer cartridge recycling scheme has been started by the Parish council. Early days yet but a good initiative. Work is in progress to enhance the lagoon area. Funds have been made available by Lincolnshire County Council to purchase bird boxes wildflowers and grass seed. An insect hotel (named 'Bugingham Palace') is in preparation with the aim of involving local children in the project.

Welton has over the last few years had a problem with chafer beetles, this seems to have reduced recently though some previously affected gardens have been redesigned avoiding grass. A good degree of skill, variety and individuality has been displayed in finding alternative solutions. The introduction of a local Heritage Trail is a great innovation. Information on 11 different sites is accessed by scanning a QR code to hear a short description given by local residents.

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### Section C - Community

There are currently only 7 small allotments in Welton. There are plans to increase this to thirty when new land is developed. A 22 acre plot, part of a large housing development will be transferred, and this should enable a range of community led initiatives to be progressed. The group has done extensive consultations and ensured that the local residents have been kept informed on progress, thus ensuring that the community uses these areas, and a strong sense of belonging is generated.

Manor park is a well maintained local community sports and recreational area, it is also a hub for the library and groups meetings and events.

A huge amount of impressive work has been done by a group of dedicated volunteers to research the Heritage Trail. This has unearthed human stories and links to the area which are excellently narrated online.

### **Areas for Development**

#### Section A - Horticulture

There is an opportunity to increase the number of formal planters and displays in Welton, what are in place are generally good but there is always room for more and better.

The community orchard will need some extra care to bring it to fruition as some trees appeared distressed with the dry conditions

Consider ways in which more perennials can be used thus encouraging a greater diversity of plant style and form. This will improve the support for a greater range of insect life.

Continue to involve local gardeners in future initiatives to build on the Wacky Planter project

#### Section B - Environment

Continue with the lagoon initiatives. This area has great opportunities for development. More colourful native planting would be good. Can the local wildlife trust make suggestions on suitable varieties to try?

The community orchard is a great idea. The existing planting will need some committed management until properly established. Perhaps similar initiatives could be considered for the new 22 acre site. An extension of the 'Btingham Palace' project to encourage biodiversity would be beneficial as would the greater involvement of local children.

As a longer term development could you suggest to your local bedding supplier that they do some trials on one or more of the newer peat free composts to see if it is possible to move further in this direction. Can some plants be supplied by local gardeners to help with costs? The larger number of allotments may encourage more practical help in this area.

Further work is needed and ongoing on the Heritage Trail project to make it more accessible to all including non-smart phone users.

#### Section C – Community

Continue to include more local groups in the in Bloom project

Look for ways to include more participation and sponsorship from local businesses

Consider opportunities for extra related community events such as garden competitions and horticultural shows. The increase in the number of allotments would possibly help with the latter.

Continue to develop the Heritage trail and increase inclusiveness and accessibility.

Well done Welton, we're looking forward to visiting you in the future to see all these wonderful plans come together.

**Scores: A:28 B:22 C:21 Total Score: 71**