

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE VILLAGE AWARDS 2022

Judges' Appraisal - Braunston

(A list of village assets is attached to this appraisal)

Braunston is a village and civil parish in West Northamptonshire. It is situated close to the Warwickshire border, just off the A45 main road between Daventry and Rugby. The 2011 census recorded the population as 1,759 and the number of households as 776. It is a hilltop village lying above the junction of the Oxford and the Grand Union canals. The canals and many of the waterside buildings associated with them date from the late 18th/early 19th centuries and are of significant historical importance.

The village is twinned with Quincy-Voisins, France.

The village has 4 public houses, several B&Bs, a number of shops, including a butchers, a bakery, a hairdresser, a village store incorporating a post office, a community cafe (strongly supported), a fish and chip shop and a car repair/servicing garage. Along the canal, as well as the boatyard and the extensive marina, there are an artist's studio/art materials shop, a floating cafe ('The Gongoozler's Rest'), a boat chandlery and a canal-side general store.

The village has a Church of England primary school located in the centre of the village. The OFSTED inspection in May 2017 graded the school as 'Good' in every category. The Diocesan inspection in February 2017 graded the school as 'Outstanding' in every category.

The village hall is well used by the community and has a community herb garden, which may be used by all residents of the village.

The village is well served with public transport links. It also has a village owned car (with a pool of volunteer drivers) for the use of those without their own transport, or the ability to use public transport, to take them to hospital appointments etc. out of village, as well as to attend leisure activities within the village.

Braunston is one of the few villages judged in 2022 to have (in 2017) prepared and adopted a Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan objectives appear to have been met.

There are ample employment opportunities, both within the village and in the neighbouring towns of Daventry and Rugby.

There is a good broadband service in the village. Mobile 'phone reception is said to be adequate.

There are allotments within the village, these are well used and maintained.

There are many voluntary groups within the village, including:

- The Friendly Club, a group for over 60's;
- A Cinema Club;
- A History Society, which has a range of speakers;

- A Women's Institute, now renamed 'The Hive';
- A Fishing club, which runs bingo evenings; and
- An amateur dramatic group - 'The Braunston Players'.

Young people are well catered for with brownies, cubs and a 'Tiny Treasures' group for the youngest members of the community.

The playing field hosts a football team a cricket team.

The village is separated from the canal by a well maintained communal field with mowed paths. Children from the school have designed the notice boards and signs within this field.

Braunston was one of the few villages judged in 2022 to have grasped the need to address the challenges posed by climate change. A Climate Action Network has been formed; this group has already planted a community orchard, and assessed air pollution levels. The group is currently planning for the installation of electric car charging points, solar panels, and the creation of a tree trail.

During the Covid pandemic, a support group ('Braunston Heart') was formed. It was supported by the parish council and many of the businesses in the village. Over 100 volunteers signed up within hours of its formation. In addition, the vicarage set up a food share. Braunston Heart has now become an organised Good Neighbour Scheme and the food share has become a community larder.

Last Christmas (2021) Braunston Heart and the Parish Council organised an event called 'Twinkle on the Green' as a village event to bring everyone together.

On our visit we were introduced to a wide cross-section of the residents of the village, all of whom had considerable and genuine pride in it. It is important that during their visits the NVA judges meet as many of the people involved in the life of the community as is possible as it is from talking to them that the judges gain an informed understanding of the village.

Overall we were very impressed by this village and all it has to offer its residents; it should be highly commended.

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Braunston - Asset List

Asset	Tick if village has asset	Judges' comments
Newsletters or Parish magazine - separate or combined	X	
Noticeboard	X	
Website	X	
Allotments	X	
Community gardens	X	
Open spaces or Pocket park	X	
Car schemes	X	
Recycling items	X	
Swapping or selling of products	X	
Telephone box in use or repurposing	X	
Empty shop windows		
Signage	X	
Sports field	X	
Church	X	
School	X	
Village hall or Community centre	X	
Pub and or clubs such as British Legion	X	4 public houses in or near to the village.
Shop and/or Post Office	X	There is a good range of village type shops in the village.
Library		
Community shop	X	
Monuments or Memorials	X	
Dog waste bins	X	
Public footpaths	X	
Defibrillator	X	
Local Businesses such as a garage	X	
Community bus		
Listed or historic buildings (that are known) especially if on the local community asset list	X	18/19 century canal & associated buildings.
Old fashioned signposts e.g. finger posts	X	
Others:		
Local business directory	X	
Good Neighbour Scheme	X	