



Village & Churchyard briefing notes
South & South East in Bloom
2019

West Farleigh in Bloom - Churchyard



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Foreword & Welcome to our Judges

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our judges for 2019, Vince Gradwell and Paul Dalby.

2019 is our first year entering the Churchyard category of South and South East in Bloom.

The church is 11th century and although now only a small congregation, it is used for Pilates and other events during the week.

2018 saw major stone work to the tower and rebuilding of the main church naïve.



A: Site Assessment

1. General Layout & Accessibility
2. Entrances & Noticeboards
3. Infrastructure (paths, walls, lych gate)

History

The Grade 1 listed church dates from the 11th century with additions carried out in the 15th century. It was restored in 1875 and then had substantial stone work refurbishment in 2018 too. It is made of uncoursed ragstone and a pebbledash render with tiled roof.

There are 5 Grade 2 listed headstones in the churchyard of All Saints, including monuments to:

- John Siles Charlton d.1815 – stone, double stepped base, moulded plinth, corniced lid.
- Augustine Hodges C17 – stone, moulded plinth, corniced lid, latin inscription.
- Susan Olive d.1826 – rectangular base, formerly railed, double-quirked bead edging.
- Amy Charlton d.1789 – bulbous side pilasters, fielded inscription panel with convex corners.
- John Gibbons d.1800 – oval finial on slightly raised circular base.

During work to tidy up the graveyard, 2 'new' headstones have been found under the yew trees.

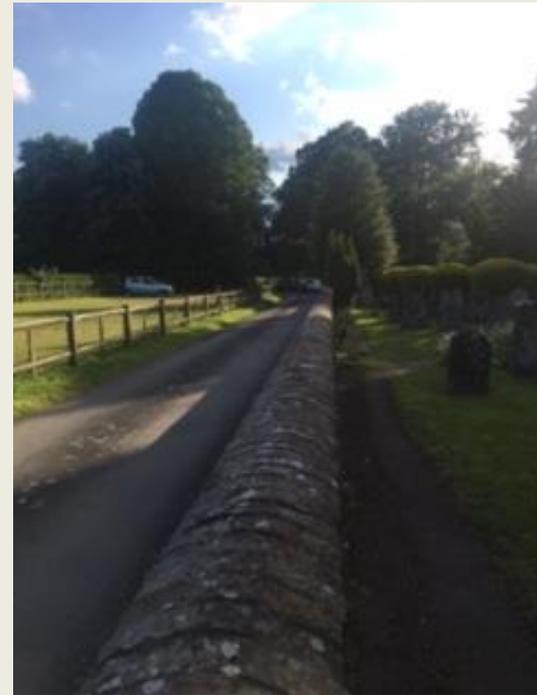


B: Horticulture

1. Cleanliness, trees, flowers
2. Horticultural practice

We believe that our church our church is well maintained and we try to ensure that we document the church history for future generations. For example, to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee a wrought iron arch was installed over the gate.

The Yew trees below have been trimmed and their bases kept clear of weeds.



Wild flower meadow

In the main village entry we planted a wild flower garden on a grassy road island.

We extended this idea to the Churchyard as well where there was an old bonfire area that was not so pleasing to look at. With some additional earth we planted a different mix of wild flowers which we eagerly anticipate coming up this summer.

More flowers were planted around path verges and took very successfully.



C: Environment & Conservation

1. Nature Areas
2. Resource Management, pesticides
3. Recycling

- Ivy which was starting to take over all of the walls and around the yew trees, has been removed by hand
- Graves kept as much as possible free from ivy etc. So as to prevent vegetation damage.

- Pesticides kept to a minimum as so not to affect wildlife.
- Grass is mulch mowed to put nutrients back into the ground.

- Wild flowers sown where old tree stumps have rotted out.
- Swaths of naturally occurring daisies have been left wild so as to encourage pollinating insects.
- Nature bug area being built

- Yew trees have been worked on to reduce weight of lower limbs to reduce risk of fracture damage and conifers have had extensive work to raise canopies, this surprisingly uncovered old forgotten graves ..
- Yew sapling self seeded has been trained into a crucifix instead of being removed.

- Church gates have been pressure washed and cleaned.

Recycling

- Through an online free upcycling site we acquired a water butt for the church.
- Provision of composting area for green waste.
 - Any cuttings are disposed of into green recycling bin / compost bin
- The fortnightly recycling lorry also stops outside the church on its round to collect paper etc.

Wildlife at All Saints Church

The Bloomers asked local villagers for any spare wood pallets to make Bird Boxes, see photo.

2 Bird Boxes were put up on the Churchyard (straps onto trees rather than nailed so as not to damage the host tree)

We then had a stall at the church during the plant sale to sell excess birdboxes to local people. We also offered personalisation in the form of disks “Daddy’s bird box” as an example and caterpillars for children’s names.

1 bird box was successfully claimed by blue tits and with monitoring 13 eggs were layed.



C: Pride of Place

1. Litter, graffiti, fly-posting
2. Seating, Signage, memorials

4 years ago it was agreed with the owner of Court Lodge to fence off part of his paddock for dedicated church parking. A yew hedge that was planted at the time is now becoming mature and the natural look of the paddock is retained by the paving sunken into the earth.

Court Lodge also installed an art sculpture in their paddock that is visually shared with the church in the form of a herd of 5 deer sculpted in metal.

Although our village has a litter picking team, we do not find any need to extend it to Church Lane and the surrounding area. We see a pattern of litter along the main through roads of the village. If you are using Church Lane it is for the houses there, to play cricket or to visit the church / churchyard and the activities there.

Planters

In West Farleigh we don't have open garden spaces to use so showcase planters instead. We have managed to increase the number of planters we create this year and continue to encourage our local residents to put planters out for all of us to enjoy.

Flower Arranging

We have a team of volunteer flower arrangers at the church who rotate their skills on a fortnightly basis, except for Lent, to ensure the church always looks colourful, bright and welcoming.





Little Angels

Although our small village does not have a school, we do have a lively toddler group run every Friday at All Saints Church. It is aimed at pre-school children and their carers and regularly attracts healthy numbers of the local and wider community.

One of the activities we have been running with them is their entry in the Annual West Farleigh Sunflower competition. The Bloom group supplied them with seeds and propagation trays and a lot of fun was had as all the children took part with filling their seed trays, planting and watering them. They have followed up regularly with the plants growth and visit them in the churchyard to see their progress. They are hoping to grow the tallest sunflowers in the village this year!





Thank-you for visiting us in
West Farleigh, Kent!

[http://www.thefarleighs.co.uk/
all_saints_church.html](http://www.thefarleighs.co.uk/all_saints_church.html)

Facebook – ‘The Farleighs’

* A photo of the recovered litter from a
monthly volunteer litter pick.