

WOODFORD COMMUNITY PHOTO COMPETITION – SPRING 2011

THEME - SPRING

(Featuring Woodford or the surrounding area)

JUDGING PROCESS

[10.6.11]

Twenty-six photos were entered. After a look at all the photos, my first sift looked for photos whose compositions placed a Spring subject in a recognisable Woodford context, to see if any were good enough for short-listing.

Seven photos would I imagine be straightforward to place in a Woodford location, three others might be, making ten in all. Two of the seven were not sufficiently Spring-like, leaving an overall total of eight. One stood out from the others, although initially not an “easy on the eye” composition in one respect. I could not really pick out another one, although the “Spring in Blossoms Lane” shot was a good witty effort.

My second sift reviewed the other sixteen photos, in case any were strong enough images to overcome their lack of a Woodford context. I particularly liked three: “Cherry Blossom, Moor Lane”, “In the Pink” and “Snowdrops in the Garden”. The most striking of these was “Snowdrops in the Garden”.

Sandra looked at all the photos independently. Then we reviewed the photos together.

Sandra demonstrated how several photos (in both categories) would have benefited from cropping to improve the framing, balance and composition. She agreed with my comment on “Spring in Blossoms Lane”, and we added “Spring Blossom” and “Tulips Attention” to my shortlist from the “non-Woodford” shots.

So, finally, it came down to whether “Snowdrops in the Garden” or “Tulips Attention” were good enough (ignoring potential cropping improvements) to overtake the best of the visually Woodford-related photos. The answer, despite my reservation on the best of the latter photos noted above, was no.

Consequently, our winner is “Church Spring 1a”.

To get over my reservation first, the lateral lines of the hedge and road arguably break up the picture too much, but there is a positive to this too – the break separates the “Woodford” elements above from the “Spring” elements below, quite neat – even if not meant?

I always like back-lighting – here it highlights the colour of the daffodils, while at the same time softening and silhouetting the church and the trees (bright foreground, subdued background - here comes Spring waking from the Winter– also neat). An old church is a historic icon and uniquely representative of a Community, while the tower is nicely framed between the branches of the still-leafless deciduous tree (contrasting with the balancing evergreens on the right hand side). Daffodils are also a historic icon, of Spring – so, contrasting Woodford and Spring icons, thrice neat.

Last, back to the lateral lines, a bold if risky touch, and they do lend a perspective (albeit - the risk - the perspective focus is outside the image); they include the hedge with it's trimmed top (echoing the road edge), which serves in fact to bring the natural and human parts of the Community (and the photo) back together (natural hedge, shaped by people).

Consciously or unconsciously, all neat!

Could I write four paragraphs about the visual and technical composition of any of the other photos? – Nowhere near. “Church Spring 1a” – for us, a clear winner.