The following pages tell you all about the competitive “In Bloom” Campaign and the non-competitive RHS “It’s Your Neighbourhood” campaign.

If you are in the East Midlands Region, i.e. Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire or Rutland, you are eligible to participate in either of the above campaigns with us.

More information and all entry forms and guidelines mentioned here can be downloaded from our website: www.eastmidlandsinbloom.co.uk

You can contact Irene Bates, East Midlands in Bloom Secretary or any of our dedicated team of volunteer judges for advice and/or an advisory visit.

Irene Bates: Tel. 01332 679598; Email: info@eastmidlandsinbloom.co.uk

Or write to:
Irene Bates, East Midlands in Bloom Secretary, 64 Chaddesden Park Road, Derby DE21 6HD

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Closing date for Bloom/IYN entry forms - 30th April

The Royal Horticultural Society’s Britain in Bloom campaign is one of the largest horticultural campaigns in Europe, involving over three thousand communities across the United Kingdom each year.
“East Midlands in Bloom” is one of 15 regions/nations that are part of the national RHS “Britain in Bloom” campaign. Participating communities are asked to focus their initiatives around RHS Britain in Bloom’s three core pillars of:

- Horticultural Achievement
- Environmental Responsibility
- Community Participation.

Participants are encouraged to promote these aspects throughout the year, culminating in the judging in July and continuing beyond.

Participating communities create lasting improvements to the local environment for the benefit of those that live, work and visit there – today and in the future. The campaign runs year-round, and communities can be involved for as long as they like. Communities first participate in their region/nation “in Bloom” and from there they can be nominated to participate in the RHS Britain in Bloom Final.

RHS Britain in Bloom is the only campaign which takes such an integrated approach to community improvement, and employs horticulture as its foundation. This means “In Bloom” communities tackle everything from litter, graffiti and anti-social behaviour through to conservation, sustainability and improving horticultural standards – not to mention the positive impact on sense of place, and community spirit and pride.

Anyone can enter this campaign! East Midlands in Bloom / RHS Britain in Bloom is an inclusive campaign and any community – no matter how small or large – can get involved.

To take part “in Bloom” you need to enter your whole community, not just part of it, and you enter into the category which corresponds to your size based on your electoral roll. The only exception to having to enter the whole community is the Urban Communities category.*

For example, you could enter Nottingham in the appropriate category (Large City) and/or you could enter Hyson Green (an urban area within Nottingham) as an Urban Community.

* For smaller community groups there is the RHS It’s Your Neighbourhood campaign (page 20).

All “in Bloom” participants can benefit from advice and support from the RHS:

- Special access to expert RHS advisors’ individual advice
- Access to a vast array of information and helpful tools on the RHS website:
  - The Plant Selector (helping you choose appropriate plants for your area)
  - Month by Month guide to what to do in the garden
  - Guide to organic and sustainable gardening
  - Guide to wildlife gardening.

In addition “in Bloom” groups have access to valuable support from their region/nation organisers. Full details of the campaign and case studies from previous participants are available on the website on www.rhs.org.uk/britaininbloom. If you would like to receive additional information in the post or via e-mail please email britaininbloom@rhs.org.uk.

The benefits of the campaign are:

- Cleaner and greener surroundings
- Creating a sense of community through improvement of public spaces and positive interaction between community members
- An increase in civic pride and sense of community empowerment by engaging people in the improvement of their own community
- Safer environments for the enjoyment of locals
- Long term improvement for the environment by addressing issues such as sustainability, resource management, conservation, litter, graffiti etc.
- Reduction in anti-social behaviour
- Positive effect on the local economy such as increased commercial enterprise and tourism
- Regeneration of run down and/or disadvantaged areas.
EAST MIDLANDS IN BLOOM – a quick guide to the campaign

Welcome to your region! As soon as you have decided to enter the “In Bloom” Campaign, or even if you have not quite decided for the year (closing date is 30th April) please bear these points in mind:

• Keep records of everything you do which may include photographs, flyers or press cuttings about any seasonal planting, fund raising events, litter picks, press or publicity articles that feature anything promoting your Bloom entry. This can be used as evidence of your year round activities to be shown to the judges when they visit you in July.
• Complete and return the Entry Form as soon as you decide to enter and before the closing date.
• Check the population of your entry from your electoral roll to see which category you fit into from the table on page 4. This table will show you how long you have to show the judges around your entry.
• Then you need to plan a route around your entry that comfortably fits within your allocated time (e.g. if your entry is a Town, you will have 2 hours for the judging route). The judges will only mark what you show them, so try to avoid taking them past any ‘grot spots’. Also try to show them examples that fit within each of the 3 RHS core pillars (see page 2).
• Try and get children involved from a local school or youth group by promoting the East Midlands in Bloom Best School Garden Special Award (page 15). Encourage them to hold a local children’s painting and/or digital photography competition with a nature/horticultural theme in mind.
• If you are still undecided whether to enter, remember you can contact us for an advisory visit, and your first time entry is free (except the BID category) so you have nothing to lose, in fact everyone wins just by entering!
• Don’t expect to win a gold medal award at your first attempt, it is much better to be realistic and ‘test the water’ the first year and then take the judges’ advice for improvement for future years. Gold awards are the pinnacle of achievement and may take years of careful diligence to be reached.
• If you still feel daunted, then read about RHS ‘It’s your Neighbourhood’ which is a non-competitive campaign and you are assessed (not judged) only on what you yourselves have planned to achieve and how far you have come to achieving your targets that year: There are five levels that you can aim for; progressing upwards every year from ‘Establishing’ through to ‘Outstanding’.

ABOUT EAST MIDLANDS IN BLOOM

East Midlands in Bloom is one of 15 regions/nations that comprise ‘Britain in Bloom’ and covers Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland. It has been running for over 37 years. The campaign focuses on the three RHS core pillars of excellence which are:

• Horticultural Achievement
• Environmental Responsibility
• Community Participation

It has a dedicated team of experienced committee members and judges most of whom are horticulturally qualified and members of the RHS who give their time voluntarily for advice to entrants and judging. East Midlands in Bloom have two main events of the year which include a Workshop or Seminar during February to which anyone who is interested is eligible to attend. The second event is the Presentation of Awards held in September to which representatives of all entries are invited to receive their awards. There are twice-yearly newsletters issued in December/January and May. Any interested party can request a free advisory visit for their community from one of our Bloom Team.

A number of regional winners will be invited to represent East Midlands in Bloom in the UK National Finals. They will compete against the winners from 15 other regions/nations, including Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, and the Channel Islands.

To enter the campaign simply complete and return an entry form at any time before the end of April to be eligible to enter that year. You will be contacted by a judge in May or June, to confirm a judging date in July. You will be expected to provide a judging route to show the best aspects of your entry within your allocated time and also show a diary of events which should include evidence of all year round planting, community events such as litter-picking, fundraising etc., and any other activities that have been organised to improve your community. Entry into the Best School Garden Special Award is also to be recommended (see page 15).

If you are a small group just taking the first steps to improving your local area please do take the time to read about the non-competitive RHS ‘It’s Your Neighbourhood’ campaign (page 20). To be added to our mailing list or to obtain any other information, please contact EMiB Secretary Irene Bates, or e-mail: info@eastmidlandsinbloom.co.uk. Downloads of entry forms and additional information can be found on our website: www.eastmidlandsinbloom.co.uk.
CATEGORIES AND TIMES ALLOWED FOR JUDGING:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>POPULATION from electoral roll*</th>
<th>JUDGING TIME (route). Additional time is available, see below**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aa</td>
<td>Small Village</td>
<td>300 and under</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab</td>
<td>Village</td>
<td>301-1,000</td>
<td>1 hr 15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ac</td>
<td>Large Village</td>
<td>1,001-2,500</td>
<td>1 hr 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ba</td>
<td>Small Town</td>
<td>2,501-6,000</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>Town</td>
<td>6,001-12,000</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bc</td>
<td>Large Town</td>
<td>12,001-35,000</td>
<td>2 hrs 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ca</td>
<td>Small City</td>
<td>35,001-100,000</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cb</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>100,001-200,000</td>
<td>3 hrs 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cc</td>
<td>Large City</td>
<td>200,001 and over</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Urban Community§</td>
<td>2,501 and over</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ea</td>
<td>Coastal Resorts±</td>
<td>Up to 12,000</td>
<td>2 hrs 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eb</td>
<td>Coastal Resorts±</td>
<td>12,001 and over</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>BID (Business Improvement District)+</td>
<td>not applicable</td>
<td>Maximum 2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>It’s Your Neighbourhood</td>
<td>not applicable</td>
<td>30 – 60 minutes approximately</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Population figures for categories A-E must be taken from your Electoral Roll (verified by your local records office) and must be included on your completed entry form. Population banding alone (from column above) is not sufficient. It is helpful to supply a map showing the boundaries of your entry and the route that your judging tour will take. This can be sent at a later date nearer the time of your judging.

** The additional time allowed is 15 minutes for press opportunities, plus another 15 minutes for you to give the judges an overview of the year-round involvement of your bloom activities, as well as an opportunity for judges to meet some key people from your entry. You can show the judges any other materials, e.g. display boards with newspaper cuttings, photographs or a short video. It is helpful to show judges what you do at other times of the year or places that you were unable to show as part of your judging route.

§ An urban community must be an identifiable community within a larger conurbation (sometimes described as an urban village or town). It must have its own sense of identity and have its own “Bloom” group (a group dedicated to leading the “in Bloom” initiative locally). An urban community may not have its own Council, or be able to stand alone, but it will have its own ‘sense of place’.

±A coastal community must be an area that actively encourages visitors with a resort, beach and/or harbour (which can be part of a commercial harbour), adjacent to or within easy and reasonable access of the local community. The area will have facilities providing varied recreational opportunities for visitors. The beach/ harbour will have some of the following: café or restaurant; shop; toilet; public transport; supervision; first aid; public telephone. A coastal resort is described as an area which has substantial visitor accommodation and tourism as an integral part of the local economy.

+ A BID entry must be an official business improvement district; a business improvement district is a defined area within which businesses pay an additional tax (or levy) in order to fund projects within the district’s boundaries. For a list of bona fide BIDs please visit the UKBIDS website on [www.ukbids.org](http://www.ukbids.org)

All the Towns categories are kindly sponsored by Amethyst Horticulture and all the Cities categories are kindly sponsored by Amberol Ltd.

We have many other sponsorship opportunities available. Please contact us for details.
IN BLOOM MARKING CRITERIA (Use in conjunction with the guidelines on pages 6-10).
The points obtainable under each section are shown.

Please note: The same marking system is used across all categories, from Small Village to Large City, except Business Improvement District (page 11), and ‘It’s Your Neighbourhood’ (pages 20-21).

This is the “In Bloom” marking sheet that judges use:

### SECTION A: Horticultural Achievement (50% of maximum score – total 100 points)
Assessing year-round horticultural achievement including conservation and natural areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Maximum Points Obtainable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Horticultural Practice</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Residential and Community Gardening</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Business areas and premises</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>Green Spaces</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SECTION B: Environmental Responsibility (25% of maximum score - total 50 points)
Assessing year-round activities improving environmental responsibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Maximum Points Obtainable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Conservation and biodiversity</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Resource management</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>Local heritage</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
<td>Local environmental quality</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5</td>
<td>Pride of place</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SECTION C: Community Participation (25% of maximum score - total 50 points)
Assessing year-round community participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Maximum Points Obtainable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Development and continuity</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Communication and education</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>Community participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4</td>
<td>Year-round involvement</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C5</td>
<td>Funding and Support</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maximum TOTAL POINTS obtainable 200
Please remember that your entire tour route is subject to judging. That means what the judges see on the way from one feature stop to another, as well as what they see at all the stops and as they further explore sites on foot during the tour are ALL subject to judging. Furthermore, the judges will expect that your campaign has considered your entire community not just the high street or the village square and that you, at the very least, have plans to address “problem” areas (i.e. vacant premises/plots, eyesores etc.). Finally, please also bear in mind that judges will be looking for your campaign activities to benefit your community not just for today but for the longer term.

SECTION A  Horticultural Achievement (max. 100 points; 50% of total)

In this section the judges will be looking for your year-round achievements in horticulture (including conservation and natural areas) focusing on 5 key factors:

A1. Impact
A2. Horticultural practice
A3. Residential and community gardening
A4. Business areas and premises
A5. Green spaces

Each of these key factors will make up 10% of your overall score and be worth a maximum of 20 points.

The judges will take account of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION A: HORTICULTURAL ACHIEVEMENT – Max: 100 points; 50%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1. IMPACT – 20 points; 10%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact</strong> will be evaluated across the entry, in each area and as a whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colours &amp; Design</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a scheme or theme overall and/or in key locations? Are the colours/design suited for the location?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appropriate choice of plants</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there too many/too few plants to enhance the area? Are the plants appropriate in terms of flowering period and habit? Is there sufficient variation, appropriate herbaceous plants? Are there appropriate varieties of both newly planted and recently (up to 5 years) planted areas (including mixes of trees, shrubs and herbaceous planting). Planting could be for foliage effect, bark effect etc. or for a specific purpose (i.e. conservation) or to provide flowering or other effects for a defined period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special features</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes provided as a focal point, and may include structures or an intensive area of bedding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are areas well presented and maintained?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Innovation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are new and creative ideas evident in the design, colours, themes, plant selection etc.?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>A2. HORTICULTURAL PRACTICE – 20 points; 10%</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Horticultural practice in all areas on the tour route will be assessed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultivation and Maintenance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watering, dead-heading and weeding are important. Appropriate feeding may be necessary. May include irrigation considerations and thinning, trimming or pruning as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of plants</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good quality plants, obviously flourishing. No obvious signs of pests, diseases or deficiencies. Appropriate size for planting situation, appropriate soil type etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Floral displays are an important element of the East Midlands in Bloom Campaign, but should be proportionate to the areas of sustainable planting and permanent landscaping within the entry. Floral displays may be present in a number of locations but typically, displays will be located in:

- Publicly owned areas, including parks, publicly owned buildings, roadside areas and roundabouts.
- Housing and residential areas, residential homes, schools, allotments etc.
- Shopping areas, business areas and premises, commercial premises, public houses, hotels, garages, and transport terminals such as bus and train stations.

### Sustainability
Sustainability is about ensuring ecological functions, processes, biodiversity and productivity can be maintained and only using resources at a rate at which they can be replenished naturally. You should therefore take into consideration the balance of permanent/sustainable planting vs. seasonal/bedding plants and the timing of displays.

### New planting
How much new planting has been undertaken on an annual basis? Is there a longer-term plan for the whole area or district etc.?

### A3. RESIDENTIAL AND COMMUNITY GARDENING – 20 points; 10%

| Areas that may be included | Residential - Primarily front gardens/gardens in public view  
Communal areas - Shared residential & communal spaces  
Allotments  
Public Buildings (grounds of) - includes schools, town halls, libraries, community centres, churches etc.  
Car parks |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| What is assessed          | This section relates to only the areas as described above but they will also be evaluated with consideration for the criteria outlined in sections A1 and A2.  
Are these areas in keeping with the overall efforts of the campaign? Do they show support for the campaign’s goals of improvement/enhancement? Has the campaign engaged other community groups in improving their own areas and/or included these areas in their own initiatives? |

### A4. BUSINESS AREAS AND PREMISES – 20 points; 10%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas that may be included</th>
<th>Retail and shopping areas, leisure sites, transport terminals (i.e. bus stop, station), fee-paying car parks, farms, rural businesses, pubs, post offices, tourist areas/attractions and other business premises (i.e. estate agents, law offices) etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What is assessed          | This section relates to only the areas as described above but they will also be evaluated with consideration for the criteria outlined in sections A1 and A2.  
Are these areas actively involved in the initiatives of the local bloom campaign? Are their efforts in keeping with the overall efforts of the campaign? Do they show support for the campaign’s goals of improvement/enhancement? Support can include: sponsoring displays/planters, actively engaging in horticultural efforts on their own premises, funding bloom initiatives, volunteering/participating in local bloom activities etc. |

### A5. GREEN SPACES – 20 points; 10%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas that may be included</th>
<th>Verges, parks and open public spaces including woodlands arboretums, bulb &amp; tree planting initiatives, copse, shelterbelts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| What is assessed          | This section relates to only the areas as described above but they will also be evaluated with consideration for the criteria outlined in sections A1 and A2.  
Are these areas actively involved in the initiatives of the local bloom campaign? Are their efforts in keeping with the overall efforts of the campaign? Do they show support for the campaign’s goals of improvement/enhancement? |
East Midlands in Bloom has environmental responsibility at its core and the judges will wish to see permanent/sustainable planting initiatives as well. Landscaped areas with permanent plantings could include any of the areas outlined above as well as:
- Woodlands, copse, shelter belts, verges, parks, public open spaces
- Business parks, industrial estates
- Screen planting, near factories/industrial areas, eyesores, vacant premises/plots etc.
- Amenity planting near residential areas, car parks, shopping areas.

**SECTION B  Environmental Responsibility (max. 50 points; 25% of total)**

In this section the judges will be looking for your year-round achievements in 5 key areas:
- B1. Conservation and biodiversity
- B2. Resource management
- B3. Local heritage
- B4. Local environmental quality
- B5. Pride of place

Each of these key areas will make up 5% of your overall score and be worth a maximum of 10 points.

Please bear in mind that judges will be considering environmental responsibility across all areas of your local campaign so, for example, if you have a fabulous floral display they will also want to know if you have achieved this effect with consideration for the environment. Although this section does outline the key areas of environmental responsibility please bear this important core pillar in mind across all of your Bloom activities and initiatives.

**The judges will take account of:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION B: ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY – Max: 50 points; 25%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1. CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY – 10 points; 5%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Areas that may be included</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is assessed</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **B2. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – 10 points; 5%** |
| **Areas that may be included** | Recycling; minimising demand placed on natural resources; minimising or where possible eliminating any harmful impact on the environment |
| **What is assessed** | What activities has the local bloom campaign been involved with or initiated to make strides in these areas? Has the bloom campaign shown due consideration to resource management in their own activities? For example, has the local bloom campaign recycled its container compost? Does the cemetery have a compost heap and waste separation area? Etc. |

| **B3. LOCAL HERITAGE – 10 points; 5%** |
| **Areas that may be included** | Management and development of local heritage and/or identity such as natural heritage, community landmarks/icons, other heritage sites etc. |
| **What is assessed** | What activities has the local bloom campaign been involved with or initiated to ensure these areas are appropriately managed and developed? Has the campaign taken these areas into account in their own activities/initiatives? |

| **B4. LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY – 10 points; 5%** |
| **Areas/activities that may be included** | Vacant premises and plots, litter, graffiti, fly-posting, dog fouling, water features/courses, litter picks etc. |
The East Midlands in Bloom campaign encourages environmentally responsible activities/projects which are designed to improve the areas where we live, work and spend our leisure time. Looking after our environment has become a very important community concern and we are all being encouraged to recycle and use environmentally responsible products and practices wherever and whenever possible. It is the expectation that participants in East Midlands in Bloom will strive to provide a co-ordinated approach so that all environmental issues are resolved in harmony with each other.

The judges will be looking for local bloom groups to either initiate or actively engage with programmes/activities (as appropriate) which are working towards providing environmental enhancements and which might include:

- Establishing nature conservation and wildlife areas
- Cleaning up polluted sites and appropriate treatment/screening of derelict property or other eyesores
- Active policies to reduce the demand placed on natural resources - e.g. source of water used for plants, use of peat, use of hardwood timber etc
- Maintaining and preserving natural habitat.
- Minimal use of pesticides and nitrate fertilisers and reducing or eliminating harmful effects on the environment
- Interventions, management and development of local heritage (including natural heritage)

SECTION C  Community Participation (max. 50 points; 25% of total)
In this section the judges will be looking for your year-round achievements in 5 key areas:

    C1. Development and continuity
    C2. Communication and education
    C3. Community involvement
    C4. Year-round involvement
    C5. Funding and support

Each of these key areas will make up 5% of your overall score and be worth a maximum of 10 points.

Community participation is crucial to the success and continuity of East Midlands in Bloom campaigns and judges will consider community participation in all appropriate areas of the local campaign's initiatives. For example they will consider whether the local campaign has engaged the community in responsible resource management or educated them about this important issue or whether they have tried to educate and engage the community with regards to local heritage sites. Although this section does outline the key areas of community participation, please bear this important core pillar in mind across all of your Bloom activities and initiatives.

The judges will take account of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is assessed</th>
<th>B5. PRIDE OF PLACE – 10 points; 5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Areas that may be included: Management of street furniture, signage, art in the</td>
<td>Have these been considered in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>landscape, fences, way-marking, interpretation, hard landscaping etc.</td>
<td>initiatives of the local bloom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is assessed</td>
<td>campaign? Are the initiatives in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>these areas in keeping with the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>overall efforts of the campaign?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do they show support for campaign's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>goals of improvement/enhancement?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The judges will take account of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is assessed</th>
<th>C1. DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUITY – 10 points; 5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Areas/activities which may be included: Development and sustainability of the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>local bloom initiative and evidence of ongoing projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| C1. DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUITY | Has the local bloom campaign:  
- Considered how to maintain and/or improve upon current achievements in the future?  
- Are the initiatives/works of the campaign sustainable for the longer term?  
- Have any plans been developed to ensure on-going benefits to the community of the local bloom campaign?  
- Are there plans in place for on-going projects?  
- Has the bloom campaign established a structure and support network to ensure its own existence and/or development in the future? |
| **C2. COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION – 10 points; 5%** | **Areas/activities which may be included**  
- Publicity materials; press coverage; signage/interpretation; displays; engaging with schools, young people and/or other community groups; community awareness and understanding; educational and awareness campaigns on key issues  

| **What is assessed** | Judges will expect to see evidence of public awareness campaigns and educational programmes generated and/or actively supported by the local bloom campaign. In this section they will particularly be looking for activities and initiatives to inform, educate and engage children and young people. The Judges will also want to see if the local bloom campaign has engaged with their local media (newspapers, magazines, radio, TV as applicable)? |
| **C3. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT – 10 points; 5%** | **What is assessed**  
Has the local bloom campaign made every effort to include and secure community involvement which is representative of the community’s size and diversity?  
Have they engaged the community across all ages, ethnicities, races, cultures, religions, abilities (i.e. special needs and the disabled) and incorporated community reparation volunteers?  
(Reminder: community participation should be representative of your community. For example: If you have a young and ethnically diverse community the judges will expect to see them engaged with your Bloom initiatives.)  
Has the bloom campaign supported and encouraged any Neighbourhood Awards groups in their area or helped support the start up of new Neighbourhood Awards groups? |
| **C4. YEAR-ROUND INVOLVEMENT – 10 points; 5%** | **Areas that may be included**  
Entries will be expected to show evidence of a year-round programme of activity through photographs, sample promotional materials, press clippings, calendar of events etc. Some examples of “out of season” activities would be litter picks, leaf clearing, fundraising events, repairing/preparing of landscape areas and street furniture, educational activities, etc.  

| **What is assessed** | Judges will be evaluating whether the local bloom campaign has been active and has engaged the community throughout the year. The judges will evaluate this based primarily on the content of the 15 minute presentation however, they will also take into account other supporting evidence (see above) which can be displayed/distributed on the day and/or included in the portfolio.  
(See presentation and portfolio guidelines for additional details.) |
| **C5. FUNDING AND SUPPORT – 10 points; 5%** | **Areas that may be included**  
Both efforts made to secure support and amount of support actually secured for the local bloom campaign. “Support” can mean not just funds but also the active engagement of the local government, commercial and corporate sectors, local businesses/offices and the general public in the campaign (i.e. maintenance support from council services, shopkeeper cleaning up & greening up their own storefront, local business sending staff out to volunteer on a Bloom project etc. qualify as active engagement). |
East Midlands in Bloom is a proactive campaign of communities creating long-term improvements to their local environment. As such it is expected that a diverse range of community members will be involved in the campaign and that there will be broad based public awareness and support. Focusing on community participation may require some local authorities and public bodies involved to in driving local bloom initiatives to take on the role of enabler or advisor to generate that participation.

East Midlands in Bloom’s positioning as a community improvement and environmentally responsible campaign means that the judges will want to see how finalists intend to continue to develop their programme. Judges will also be very interested to see that (where applicable) young people and schools have been involved and that care has been taken to make effective use of the educational opportunities which exist. Furthermore, East Midlands in Bloom is not just about spring and summer floral displays; it is about a year-round programme of activity to improve, enhance and maintain the environment around us and keep the community actively engaged in keeping things at their best.

The judges will be looking for campaigns which:

❖ Evidence thoughtful planning of how to maintain the improvements they make and how to develop in the future.
❖ Have an effective communication and education programme evidenced by the level of awareness and understanding in the community as well as by physical evidence such as informative signs and displays, press clippings, publicity materials etc.
❖ Evidence a broad base of community involvement across all ages, ethnic and/or religious backgrounds, and socio-economic groups with a particular effort to engage young people/schools/colleges as appropriate to their community.
❖ Have a year-round programme of activity to keep their community engaged and at its best throughout the year (not just spring/summer displays and activities).
❖ Have secured funding/sponsorship and/or support for their activities and the support of government, commercial, corporate, business sectors for their campaign.

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT MARKING CRITERIA (it may help to also read the guidelines to accompany the “In Bloom” marking sheet on pages 6-10) but:

Please note: This marking system and distribution of marks is slightly different to that of the “In Bloom” marking sheets. The points obtainable under each section are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION A (BID) – Horticultural Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Assessing year-round horticultural achievement including conservation and natural areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MAX</th>
<th>ACT.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1. Impact – design, colours, appropriate choice of plants, special features, presentation, innovation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2. Horticultural practice – cultivation and maintenance, quality of plants, sustainability, new planting</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3. Community Gardening – engaging wider community/residents, residential &amp; communal areas, public buildings (e.g. grounds of churches, schools etc..), car parks</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### A4. Business Areas and Premises – retail and shopping areas, leisure sites, transport terminals, car parks, pubs, post offices, tourist areas/attractions, offices, estate agents etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAX</th>
<th>ACT.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### A5. Green/Open Spaces – squares, (packet) parks, seating areas, meeting points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAX</th>
<th>ACT.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>37.5% of maximum points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SECTION B (BID) – Environmental Responsibility

Assessing year-round activities improving environmental responsibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B1.</th>
<th>Conservation and biodiversity – consideration for wildlife in plant choice, provision of habitat (e.g. bird/bat boxes, bee hives etc) etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAX</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| B2. | Resource management – recycling, minimising demand placed on natural resources and any harmful impact on the environment |
| MAX | 15                                                                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<p>| B3. | Local heritage – management and development of local heritage and/or identity, inclusive of natural heritage |
| MAX | 15                                                                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<p>| B4. | Local environmental quality – management of vacant premises and plots, litter, graffiti, fly-posting, dog fouling etc. |
| MAX | 15                                                                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<p>| B5. | Pride of place – management of street furniture, signage, art in the landscape and hard landscaping |
| MAX | 15                                                                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>37.5% of maximum points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SECTION C (BID) – Business and Wider Community Participation

Assessing year-round community participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C1.</th>
<th>Development and continuity - Development and sustainability of the local Bloom initiative and evidence of ongoing projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAX</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| C2. | Communication and education – business and wider community awareness of BID greening activities, direct engagement with local business to develop their green activities, engagement with wider community (e.g. residents, schools) and groups, press coverage, publicity materials |
| MAX | 10                                                                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<p>| C3. | Business Community participation – engaging a wide range of business and their employees across the whole of the BID area |
| MAX | 10                                                                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<p>| C4. | Year-round involvement – schedules of events and supporting evidence of year-round activity (primary evidence to be presented in 15 minute presentation) |
| MAX | 10                                                                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<p>| C5. | Funding and Support – initiatives to secure ongoing support for the local Bloom campaign including local business support |
| MAX | 10                                                                                                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>25% of maximum points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### GRAND TOTAL POINTS AWARDED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(max.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following Discretionary Awards are awarded to the “In Bloom” entry by the judges where they feel it is merited each year. No application form is necessary.

| TDP East Midlands in Bloom Award for Horticultural Excellence within Parks. |
| Given for: Planting and maintenance of beds within public parks. |

| East Midlands in Bloom Award for Best Wildflower and Conservation Area. |
| Given for: Efforts made to provide a wildflower and conservation area and effectiveness of the area. Appropriate management of these areas. |

| East Midlands in Bloom Award for the Most Improved Entrant (sponsored by Taylors Bulbs) |
| East Midlands in Bloom Award for the Least Littered Environment |
| Given for: Upkeep and cleanliness of areas, general tidiness, lack of litter, graffiti, and vandalism. |

| East Midlands in Bloom Committee Award |

| East Midlands in Bloom Award for Best New Permanent Landscape (tree donated by Barcham Trees) |

### EAST MIDLANDS IN BLOOM SPECIAL AWARDS

Below are four additional Special Awards that “In Bloom” entrants can register for. Please let us know which award/s you intend to enter even if you do not know your nomination/s by the closing date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Award</th>
<th>Closing Date for forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong> The Frank Constable Award for Best Residential Garden (page 13)</td>
<td>30th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong> East Midlands in Bloom Award for Best Hotel/Pub Garden or Display (page 14)</td>
<td>30th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong> East Midlands in Bloom Award for Best Retail/Commercial Premises (page 14)</td>
<td>30th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands in Bloom Award for best School Garden (page 14)</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you intend to enter categories A, B or C but do not know who your nominations are likely to be before the closing date (perhaps you run your own local competition), please still let us know which categories you intend to enter by 30th April or at the same time you submit your Bloom entry form. You can let us have the full details of your nominations later; after you have results from your local competition or have decided who to nominate, by the closing date 30th June. This ensures judges allocate adequate time for your ‘In Bloom’ entry when they make the judging arrangements. If this is not done, judges may not be able to judge the award nominations or award a certificate. Please also inform us if you need to withdraw an entry before your “In Bloom” judging date.

The Best School Garden Special Award requires submission of a separate entry form (see page 14) and “In Bloom” entrants and their selected school/s are requested to read the information pack. All forms and information can be found on our website.

### A: The Frank Constable MBE Award for Best Residential Garden

This award was introduced in 2001 and is sponsored by the Constable family in memory of our late President, Frank Constable MBE, who sadly passed away in February 2014. The nomination must be linked to an “In Bloom” entry.

**Details of the award**

- **Name of Award**: The Frank Constable Award for Best Residential Garden
- **Form of Award**: An engraved trophy together with a certificate to be presented annually by the President and retained by the recipient.
- **Judging**: The EMIB entrant will nominate one ‘best garden’ from their community to be inspected by the EMIB judges during their judging tour in July. Judges will award marks out of 20, for consideration by the judges’ panel, using additional photographic evidence to determine the overall winner.
- **Previous winners** cannot win this award again, although they can re-enter.
**Rules:**

- Judges should be shown the ‘In Bloom’ entry’s single nominated ‘best garden’ on the annual judging tour.
- Please use the Special Awards form available from our website and make sure you register your intention to enter before the closing date even if you do not know who your nomination will be at this date.
- Side and rear gardens may be entered if they are clearly visible to the public.
- Please ensure the owners of the garden are aware that their garden will be visited on the pre-arranged date, so that judges can have access.
- If the garden nominated is off the normal judging route, it will be possible to make arrangements with the judges for this to be inspected separately at the beginning, middle or end of the judging tour. Please inform the judges what your choice is before the start of the judging tour.
- Please supply the judges with (a) photograph/s, clearly named (that can be taken away) of the nominated garden for use in the final judging process.
- A maximum of 15 minutes is allowed in addition to that of your ‘In Bloom’ judging time.
- If the entire 15 minutes is not used, the remainder cannot be added on to your ‘In Bloom’ judging time.
- East Midlands in Bloom reserve the right to use photographs of the entry for publication purposes.

**Marking criteria**

- **Visibility.** The garden should be visible to the public and make a positive contribution to the street scene. Account will be taken of the degree of pleasure given by the garden to the wider community.
- **Design.** Includes how creatively the available space has been used and the combination of plant form, texture and colour. Displays will be assessed to see if the layout and plants chosen are sufficiently varied to offer interest and colour throughout the year. Account will be taken of the effort and imagination used to overcome site constraints and obstacles.
- **Maintenance Standards.** Looks for overall impact, standards of grassed areas, edging, dead heading etc.

**B: Best Pub/Hotel Garden or Display Special Award and C: Best Retail/Commercial Premises Special Award**

These awards were introduced in 2007 and they are an integral part of the East Midlands in Bloom campaign. Applicants are invited to submit their single best entry in any or all Special Awards, either as part of an “In Bloom” entry or independently if there is no local “In Bloom” entry nearby. Both awards are free to enter if part of an “In Bloom” entry but there is an entry fee of £10 if it is an independent entry. To check if there is a local “In Bloom” entry, please contact us at East Midlands in Bloom. The closing date is April 30th this year.

**Rules:**

- An “In Bloom” entrant is only allowed to nominate one in each category of Special Award.
- Please use the Special Awards form available from our website and make sure you register your intention to enter before the closing date of 30th April, even if you do not know your nomination/s by this date.
- A maximum of 15 minutes each for categories A, B & C is allowed in addition to your normal “In Bloom” judging time, and may be judged before, during or after your ‘In Bloom’ judging tour. Judges must be informed when this will be before the start of the tour.
- If the entire 15 minutes is not used, the remainder cannot be added on to the ‘In Bloom’ judging time.
- The “In Bloom” entrant must communicate with the nominated proprietor/owner of the Special Award entry so that they are made aware of the judging date and time which will have been confirmed with their judges in June. Judges reserve the right to disallow an entry if the proprietor is not informed of their visit.
- The entry must be permanent and original.
- EMIB Judges reserve the right to disqualify entrants who submit outside of the criteria and their decision is final.
- East Midlands in Bloom reserve the right to use photographs of the entry for publication purposes.
Best School Garden Special Award

This award is sponsored by Moulton College and Bloom entries are encouraged to ask local schools to enter this award. Schools that are not in a Bloom entry area can also enter independently. In all cases there is a limit to the number of schools allowed each year which is as follows:

**Small Village, Village & Large Village** - one school
**Small Town, Town, Large Town, Urban Community and Coastal** - two schools
**Small City, City, Large City** - three schools

Please consider that the earlier a school is approached, the more time it has to prepare entry into this Award. Individual entries should first find out if there is a local “In Bloom” group and if they have already entered a school. This can be done by contacting us at East Midlands in Bloom.

The Special Award for Best School Garden requires submission of a separate entry form and “In Bloom” entrants and their selected school/s must also read the information pack, specially written to help them.

The closing date for this award is **June 3rd 2016**.

In addition to the award for the Overall Best School Garden in East Midlands in Bloom, these extra awards were introduced in 2012 to recognise the best gardens and gardening activities in the following sub categories:

**Best Fruit and Vegetable Gardening**
**Best Gardening for Wildlife**
**Best Ornamental Gardening**

The Best School Garden will be judged by different judge/s on a different date and/or time from that of the main “In Bloom” judging. The same school can also be entered as part of a “Bloom” main judging route (a short visit only), but please ensure the head teacher is made aware of the date and time you intend to visit the school, well before the visit. Judges reserve the right to disqualify a BSGSA entry if the relevant contact person at the school is not informed of their visit beforehand.

**Thirty minutes** are allocated for the judging and all schools will receive a report and certificate (usually forwarded by the “In Bloom” representative) following the Presentation of Awards in mid September. Results are confidential before that date. Representatives from the winning schools will be invited to the Awards Presentation in September.

*All forms are available to download from our website.

We also encourage schools to arrange a local children’s art and/or digital photography competition. *To see details of the RHS Campaign for School Gardening please go to page 22.*
POST JUDGING - AWARDS

One of the following five awards will be presented to each “in Bloom” entrant at the Presentation of Awards in September. No results will be released until then. All results will be available on our website following this date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Percentage%</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>85 +</td>
<td>170 -200</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Gilt</td>
<td>75-84</td>
<td>150-169</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>60-74</td>
<td>120-149</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>100-119</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of Achievement</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>0-99</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The awards system ensures that all entrants receive a grading, allowing them to benchmark against others in their category. All categories will be marked against the strict judging criteria to determine an award level. Due to the high percentage of marks required to gain gold, very few are awarded. Britain in Bloom and the RHS use this method of marking for the national competition and their flower shows.

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

During August representatives of all “In Bloom” entries will be invited to attend the East Midlands in Bloom Presentation of Awards. The Awards are held annually in September at a pre-agreed venue. Entrants will receive their certificates, trophies (where appropriate), and other certificates (Special Awards & Best School Garden Awards where appropriate).

This year we are grateful to Mansfield for hosting the East Midlands in Bloom Awards Presentation at the John Fretwell Complex on Wednesday September 14th 2016. Invitations will be sent to entrants in August.

New Venue suggestions are always welcomed from our entrants! Please contact us.

East Midlands in Bloom RHS It’s Your Neighbourhood Awards will be held at various local and regional events which will be announced later in the year. Please look out for them on our website or contact us by email or telephone. We are always looking for volunteer IYN assessors - please get in touch if you are interested.

The following Local IYN Awards dates are as follows:

Friday 21st October       Leicester IYN Awards: venue to be announced
                         Nottingham IYN Awards: to be announced
                         Loughborough IYN Awards: to be announced
Some Winning Tips

Co-operation between the local authority, public sector, private groups and individuals is of utmost importance in this competition. Judges will allocate marks for activity by each of these groups so it is important that they all contribute.

❖ Do take photographs as soon as you decide to enter.
❖ The judges are in a position to award marks for displays at other times of the year, i.e. spring bulbs and autumn colour so they need to see photographs of this display.
❖ Show your long term commitment by keeping a record of your achievements: litter picks, pond clearance and community involvement to show your efforts.
❖ It is not just flowers that the judges are looking at; the absence of litter, dog fouling and graffiti is a necessity.
❖ The condition of park benches, notice boards, fences etc., should be good. They should be well maintained and the areas around them weed free.
❖ Litter bins should be carefully sited, regularly emptied and kept clean.
❖ Why not get the local social services involved, brightening up old people's homes, day centres and hospitals?
❖ Car parks, railway stations, bus stations and stops are important - the first port of call for visitors. Make them welcome!
❖ Why not run competitions or provide incentives for local businesses, hotels, shops and offices? As well as brightening up their premises, some may sponsor flower displays!
❖ Get the support of your local press - as well as publicising your efforts they can help maintain enthusiasm.
❖ Initiate new projects that brighten up your environment. How about planting a garden for the blind, encouraging wildlife to your community in your choice of plants, using wild flowers in your displays, starting a butterfly garden at your local school, planting a hedge maze? Originality could earn your marks from the judges as well as benefiting your community.
❖ Above all, this competition is not about how much money you spend! If you work together and enjoy yourselves your enthusiasm will shine through. The judges are looking for pride in your surroundings, cleanliness and team effort.

Putting the finishing touches to your Judging Itinerary

You will be contacted by a judge (in May/June), and allocated a date and time for judging. Please confirm in writing to the judge concerned that this date and time is acceptable to you, and wherever possible, include a directional map. Do make sure that the judges (they are usually paired up, but occasionally there may be an additional designated judge) know where they are to meet you. Please also provide a mobile contact telephone number in case of any emergencies on the day (e.g. traffic hold ups etc.).

Make sure any Special Award entries have been noted (by sending your Special Awards entry form in before the end of April) so that judges know to allow a little extra time. If you wish to provide any refreshments (entirely optional), please make this known to the judges, so that they are not double booked!

❖ Make sure car parking facilities are available for your judges.
❖ Remember that the judges may not enter your Town/Village by the main route.
❖ Be relaxed - this helps to relax everyone.
❖ Introduce the judges to everyone – but don’t expect them to remember all the names (name badges could be used). A list of their names and who/what they represent would also be helpful.
❖ Do offer the judges comfort facilities on their arrival (remember they may have just driven 70 or 80 miles).
❖ If the judges visit in the morning then a drink of tea or coffee would be most welcome.
❖ Wet weather - have umbrellas available, if necessary; have an alternative route planned.
❖ Do have a copy of the itinerary for the judges at the start - don’t give it to them after the visit.
❖ Do plan the Itinerary - if for any reason you have to change the itinerary, do tell the judges.
❖ Take each section of the judging criteria and try to ensure the judges see examples in each one. Repetition and concentration on any one section will not gain you extra marks no matter how good it is.
❖ Consider the use of a short video; say 5/6 minutes long at the start of the visit, whilst having coffee - show winter work or pre-visit activities.
❖ Don’t turn your video into a full length feature film.
❖ Do check the route out on the day of judging and remove any litter left from the previous night, if possible.
❖ If you can cover your route alone in 1 hour, it is very likely that on the day of judging it will take twice as long. Please make allowances for discussion with key people, and busy times of the day.
❖ Don’t expect the judges to judge for more than the allocated time for your category. However, extra time can be allowed for any unforeseen circumstances or press activity - this will be at the judges’ discretion.
❖ Do have transport arranged - do know who is going with who if more than one vehicle is going to be used.
❖ Make sure that judges can clearly see out of the windows and can hear any commentary.
If you intend for the judges to meet with someone who is not a Committee Member e.g. a garden competition winner, or local schoolchildren, please make sure they know you are coming and how long you will be spending with them so they are not disappointed if you need to rush the judges along.

If you are planning a reception for the judges after the visit to meet with the people involved or prize winners of your competitions, then please advise the judges beforehand to enable them to plan their day. Their schedule is very tight but if they know what is planned beforehand then they will be very pleased to spend the time with you.

Do remember the judges enjoy meeting the people involved with your entry into the ‘In Bloom’ Competition.

Do give the judges time and space to take in what they are seeing and being told - otherwise they may just miss that vital element that would have given you that extra point you needed to be a winner.

Do remember if you are judged in the afternoon that the judges will probably have judged that morning. If the judges require more time they will say so.

Be prepared to give the judges a few minutes on their own.

Don’t spring any surprise receptions on the judges.

Don’t cram too much into the visit and most of all …

…Don’t be put off, enjoy the day, it’s your day!

A DIARY/PORTFOLIO – not required but can be very useful!

During July each year the East Midlands in Bloom judges visit many places from large cities to small villages. The specified time spent by the judges at each location means they only see a small fraction of what has been achieved over the past 12 months or so. You may wish to prepare a portfolio/diary which can clearly illustrate what you have achieved during the rest of the year; throughout the other seasons, and across all sections. For example:

- Local competitions
- Involvement of the community
- Improvements made over the past year and encompassing as well the wider environmental approach of the competition
- Keep a photographic record of all the things that have been done during the year - even committee meetings
- Use selected press cuttings to show what publicity has been achieved.
- The judges will be impressed with before and after photographs of earlier plantings, projects and records of achievements in collecting litter, improving public places and waterways and generally cleaning up the environment.

If you do prepare a portfolio or diary it needs to embrace a wide range of subjects, be kept simple and easy to read. It has often been said that the most effective reports are those which are restricted to one side of an A4 sheet. Remember - ‘A Picture Paints A Thousand Words’ but, also remember to add that important caption!

When it comes to completing that all important marking sheet, the diary/portfolio can be an aide memoir for judges. In other words, after a long and tiring day of judging, (often more than one entry per day) it helps to jog the judges’ memory of what they have been told and seen earlier.

Do not give the judges your only copy of the portfolio, as it’s return cannot be guaranteed.

If you would like your portfolio returned, please inform judges and let them know whether you need it before the Presentation of Awards. Judges should bring your portfolio for you to collect at this event, but please give them a reminder beforehand!

The advice is:
- Start collecting materials as soon as you decide to enter the competition.
- Make it a pictorial record.
- Include a copy of the itinerary used on the day of judging.
- Be original
- Keep it simple and easy to read. The recommendation is a maximum of 10 A4 pages (20 sides; and it does not need to be elaborately designed).

If you do compile a portfolio it should be thought of as a diary or record of the tasks and events that have taken place over the past twelve months. This could include all-year-round photographs and, wherever possible, before and after shots. (Please note that all photographs should be dated and relatively recent i.e. not taken more than two years ago).
**The content could include:**

- A brief introduction/resume about your entry, including the names and roles of your committee members.
- Anything that hasn’t already been covered during your judging route or press and publicity period. Concentrate on at least one item from each section, i.e. Horticultural Achievement, Environmental Responsibility, and Community Participation. Sometimes marks can be picked up here if things have been omitted during the judging route.
- Year-round effort and work undertaken in areas not included in the judging tour (for example, evidence through the use of photographs, of people actually getting involved in the planting of winter/spring displays and at other times of the year).
- How your ‘In Bloom’ entry is funded (for example, any fundraising event such as a coffee morning, plant sales, raffle etc. It’s also good to see photos!) Also any grants that you may have obtained.
- How you promote your ‘In Bloom’ campaign (maybe you have a display in an empty shop window, for example, or posters to let your area know about the campaign and when the judges will be coming; any litter picks etc.)
- Press coverage is all-important but please don’t just fill the portfolio with press cuttings; why not find some display boards and use them to showcase your ‘In Bloom’ activity. These can then be examined during the judges’ comfort break and save you valuable space in your portfolio/diary.
- An illustration of your achievements to date and an outline of your goals for the future.

**Additional portfolio ideas for larger category entries:**

- An outline of your policy and strategy plans; these might include or outline key objectives and approach for the 12-month period alongside longer-term aims for Bloom delivery. Ensure these include any partnerships and community participation plans, education aims and preparations for future development.
- Examples of how you conserve and manage your natural resources.
- Examples of initiatives to combat litter and graffiti etc.
- Demonstrate how you get the wider community involved.
- Indicate how you encourage recycling, e.g. through composting etc.

**Recommendations (for all categories)**

- Not larger than A4.
- Not more than 10 pages (20 sides).
- Please do not include important documents. Portfolios are either kept for reference and/or to give examples to other and/or new entrants.
- Please remember that the size of font you use for your text can make a big difference to the number of words you get onto the page, e.g.
  - East Midlands in Bloom = 12 point
  - East Midlands in Bloom = 11 point
  - East Midlands in Bloom = 10 point

  Don’t however; go too small, the Judges do after all need to be able to read the document.

  The preferred font size is 12 point.

- The portfolio doesn’t have to be professionally designed; there are no marks for portfolio presentation. Do however, keep it simple and clear, and concentrate on content detail which demonstrates your community’s efforts to create improvements to your local environment.
**East Midlands in Bloom RHS IT’S YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD campaign**

This is the non-competitive category of the Bloom Campaign and is ideal for any group taking the first steps towards community improvements. Any group (defined as more than one person!) eager to make a difference to their local environment, whether a few neighbours keen to tackle local litter, or a larger action group determined to turn-around a problem ‘grot spot’ or eyesore is eligible to enter.

East Midlands in Bloom are delighted with the standards achieved by our neighbourhood entrants since this category was introduced in our region in 2006.

The Royal Horticultural Society’s It’s Your Neighbourhood campaign is part of the wider Britain in Bloom initiative, providing an opportunity for smaller community groups to get involved.

RHS It’s Your Neighbourhood is a unique scheme for volunteer led community gardening projects/groups which are focused on cleaning up and greening up their local area, whether that is the estate where they live or the back alley they share or the local community centre’s outdoor space. It’s Your Neighbourhood is an inclusive, non-competitive scheme which welcomes projects/groups of all kinds.

**Getting involved** is very easy; in fact, you only need two things:

1. A group (two or more people!)
2. An idea for a project which involves horticulture.

**Once you have these things, you are ready to get started!**

It’s Your Neighbourhood is all about bringing members of the community together to make a positive change to the place they live, work or spend their leisure time. Groups participating in the campaign are asked to focus on its three core pillars of:

- Community Participation (40% of marks)
- Environmental Responsibility (30% of marks)
- Gardening Achievement (30% of marks)

While participating groups are not judged against each other; they are visited by environmental and horticultural “In Bloom” experts, who provide valuable feedback and helpful advice on how to develop current activities and encourage ongoing improvements. Based on the assessment visit, each community will receive an RHS certificate of achievement reflecting the extent to which participants have met the It’s Your Neighbourhood aims as encompassed in the three core pillars.

There are **five levels** of achievement in It’s Your Neighbourhood: Establishing, Improving, Advancing, Thriving and Outstanding – and groups who have done consistently well over time may be nominated to receive the one off It’s Your Neighbourhood National Certificate of Distinction. Larger consistently “Outstanding” entrants will be asked to consider entering the “In Bloom” campaign if appropriate.

At East Midlands in Bloom we also have a trophy for the “Most Inspiring IYN Entry” sponsored by DART Training.

It’s Your Neighbourhood is open to groups of all sizes and with a variety of projects, as long as they are focused on cleaning up and greening their local area and as long as they are:

- A group
- Hands on
- Involved in community gardening
- Representative of the community and/or getting input from the community
- Benefitting the community
- Volunteer-led
- Sustainable over time
- Owned by the community and with the community responsible for the work.

**Some examples of It’s Your Neighbourhood groups are:**

- A residents’ group/association
- A “friends of” group
- A youth group
- A gated alley area.
All It’s Your Neighbourhood groups receive the following support from the RHS & EMiB:

- A special link to the RHS website with helpful guidance and information
- The chance to draw on the experiences of other local communities through a strong Britain in Bloom network
- Access to a network of 3,000 local gardening clubs and horticultural societies offering support and expertise
- Product offers from selected suppliers
- A quarterly community gardening review magazine - “Grass Roots”
- Special access to expert RHS advisors' individual advice
- Access to a vast array of information and helpful tools on the RHS website:
  - The Plant Selector (helping you choose appropriate plants for your area)
  - The Plant Finder (everything you need to know about a plant including how to care for it and where to buy it)
  - Month by Month guide to what to do in the garden
  - Guide to organic and sustainable gardening
  - Guide to composting
  - Guide to wildlife gardening.

In addition, It’s Your Neighbourhood groups have access to valuable support from their region/nation organisers.

What are the benefits?

- **Cleaner and greener surroundings**
- Developing a **sense of community** and creating positive interaction between community members.
- **Safer** environments for the enjoyment of local people.
- **Reduction in anti-social behaviour**.
- **Increased civic pride** as local people take ownership of the improvements to the area.
- **Positive effect on the local economy** such as increased commercial enterprise
- **Helping the environment** through recycling, energy conservation, reducing litter, improving/adding green spaces and other sustainable practices
- **Greater community contact**/relationship with the local authority.

For further details please contact Irene Bates or visit our website where you can download participants’ guidelines and see an assessment sheet. More information including case studies from previous participants is also available on the RHS website: [www.rhs.org.uk/communities](http://www.rhs.org.uk/communities)

“It’s Your Neighbourhood” entrants will be able to obtain free access to valuable information and advice from the RHS website, once registration with East Midlands in Bloom is made. We welcome return entries each year, but it is essential to re-register each year by posting or emailing the entry form to us.

The CLOSING DATE for registration into the 2016 East Midlands in Bloom RHS ‘It’s Your Neighbourhood’ campaign is **30th April**. In certain cases, late exceptions may be possible. Very late submissions will be entered into the following year’s campaign.
RHS CAMPAIGN FOR SCHOOL GARDENING

This is a campaign organised by the RHS for young people to develop their understanding and appreciation of plants and the diversity of the plant kingdom, and to enjoy the physical, emotional and therapeutic benefits of gardening. The RHS Campaign for School Gardening works by helping schools and youth groups to take positive action to transform an area in their school grounds or the wider community into a garden, and by encouraging teachers to use the 'outdoor classroom' to deliver the National Curriculum in a more flexible and imaginative way and give children first hand experiences of good citizenship.

Gardening offers huge potential for teaching the National Curriculum – not just science but subjects ranging from geography, art and design and history through to maths, PSHE and citizenship. Education has always been central to the RHS's charitable mission and it recently launched a 'Vision for Learning' which outlines plans to inform and inspire people about plants and growing – particularly those who don't usually have access to either.

For more information please go to: [www.rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening](http://www.rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening); or make contact via e-mail: schoolgardening@rhs.org.uk or write to School and Family Learning, RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB

FURTHER INFORMATION

The RHS produces a helpful range of literature about biodiversity including an information leaflet entitled ‘Gardens and biodiversity’. There is also a range of Conservation and Environment leaflets on subjects relating to biodiversity such as:

- Wildflowers in the garden
- Wildlife in gardens
- Invasive non-native species
- Wild & endangered plants in cultivation
- CITES (Convention on International Trade in endangered species of wild flora and fauna
- Bringing plants in from abroad

To contact the National Britain in Bloom team please contact the RHS Community Horticulture team
Tel: Candy Elton, Senior Events Co-ordinator 020 7821 3651 or Sophie Dawson 020 7821 3118
www.rhs.org.uk/communities or write to: britaininbloom@rhs.org.uk

In all instances please feel free to contact Irene Bates, East Midlands in Bloom Secretary:
Tel: 01332 679598 or via e-mail at: info@eastmidlandsinbloom.co.uk

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