

# 50 YEARS

## RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM



### **Welcome by Roger Burnett Chairman, RHS Britain in Bloom UK Judging Panel**

On behalf of the RHS Britain in Bloom UK Judging Panel, I would like to congratulate you on your great achievement of representing your Region/ Nation in the 2014 Britain in Bloom UK Finals, a very special year for Bloom as we celebrate its 50th year.

Being an RHS Britain in Bloom finalist identifies you as one of the best cared for communities in the UK and presents you with a fantastic opportunity to promote your work. You deserve great commendation for your efforts, whatever the medal you achieve at the end of this year.

To see a list of all the UK finalists, please visit the RHS website. The list will also be published in the April issue of *Grass Roots*.

During the next few months, the RHS will be organising this summer's full UK judging tour, as well as the highlight of the year, the annual RHS Britain in Bloom UK Finals Awards Ceremony, which takes place in Bristol on 16 October 2014. At the awards ceremony your community will be presented with an award reflecting your achievements, providing a benchmark for you to build upon year-upon-year.

This manual contains lots of useful information about the UK finals and we hope that you will find it a handy reference guide to use throughout the year. We are only able to provide one printed copy per finalist; however we will also email you an electronic pdf of the manual which you can share amongst your volunteers.

Along with the Regions & Nations, the RHS is here to provide you with support and assistance throughout the year. You can find all of the contact details you need in this manual.

Please let me wish you the very best for your 2014 campaign. As you begin your year in the finals, please remember that the campaign is as much about your community as it is about your local environment, so whatever you do, make sure that you enjoy it!

Best wishes,

**Chairman  
RHS Britain in Bloom UK Judging Panel**

## USEFUL CONTACTS

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The RHS Britain in Bloom team is here to help you throughout the year.

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CONTENTS	PAGE
1. <b>About RHS Britain in Bloom</b>	4
2. <b>About the RHS</b>	5
3. <b>Support for your entry</b>	
3.1 Support from the RHS	6
4. <b>RHS Britain in Bloom participant guidelines</b>	7
5. <b>Timeline for 2014</b>	8
6. <b>Campaign guidelines</b>	
6.1 Categories and time allocations	9
6.2 Judging guidelines	10
6.3 Marking sheet	17
6.4 Tour tips & finalists' checklist	20
6.5 Sample judging tour itinerary	22
6.6 Medals & discretionary awards	24
7. <b>The portfolio &amp; the presentation</b>	
7.1 Portfolio guidelines	26
7.2 Presentation guidelines	
8. <b>RHS Britain in Bloom awards</b>	
8.1 Awards ceremony	28
8.2 Judges' surgeries	
9. <b>Press and PR</b>	
9.1 Top tips for a good story	29
9.2 Tips on writing a press release	
9.3 What will the RHS do?	
9.4 What can you do?	
10. <b>Images required for the UK finals</b>	31
11. Appendices	
<b>Appendix 1</b> – Champion of Champions reference sheet	
<b>Appendix 2</b> – It's Your Neighbourhood	
<b>Appendix 3</b> – Photography permission form	
<b>Appendix 4</b> – Sample press release	
<b>Appendix 5</b> – RHS UK Judging Panel 2014	
<b>Appendix 6</b> – Portfolio ideas	
<b>Appendix 7</b> – Image donation form	

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## 1. ABOUT RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM

Organised by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), Britain in Bloom is one of Europe's largest horticultural campaigns, involving over a thousand communities each year and creating lasting improvements to local environments for the benefit of residents, workers and visitors. In 2014, the campaign celebrates its golden anniversary - 50 years since it was launched in 1964.

Throughout the last five decades Britain in Bloom has been part of the UK's cultural and horticultural landscape, inspiring millions of people. The campaign involves more than 300,000 volunteers across the UK, who donate almost 4.4 million hours to projects that benefit the wider community.

The RHS became the organising body for Britain in Bloom in 2001. The charity, along with the 16 "in Bloom" Regions and Nations, has introduced a number of developments. One of these was the launch of the Champion of Champions category in 2006, which recognises sustained high achievers at the UK finals level (please see appendix 1 for more information).

The RHS also introduced the **It's Your Neighbourhood** (IYN) scheme in 2006, which today has more than 1,600 groups signed up. The scheme is non-competitive and free to enter and supports small volunteer-led community groups interested in 'greening up' their local area. Many IYN groups go on to become involved in the wider Bloom campaign and we recommend that Bloom groups support their local IYN groups as much as possible. For further information about the IYN scheme please refer to appendix 2.

The ongoing popularity of Britain in Bloom can be understood through the real and lasting benefits that the campaign provides. Research shows that participants see not only cleaner and greener environments, but also reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour, renewed economic activity and increased pride of place.

In tough economic times, the campaign is well placed to support communities, providing an invaluable source of ideas and inspiration for thousands of volunteers across the UK. Participating communities use their campaigns to add value to existing activities, to attract additional funds to their area and improve quality of life in towns, cities and villages.

## 2. ABOUT THE ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) is the UK's leading gardening charity, dedicated to advancing horticulture and promoting gardening. We believe that gardening enriches people's lives and we work to enhance understanding and appreciation of plants, and provide contact with the natural environment. Well-designed, planned, managed and maintained horticulture in public spaces is a vital component of healthy, sustainable communities and the creation of long-term environmental improvements.

We aim to inform, educate and inspire those working in parks and public spaces, gardeners of all levels and aspiring gardeners by:

- **Developing skills** – The RHS is dedicated to providing horticultural education for professional and amateur gardeners through a range of respected horticultural qualifications, the **RHS Campaign for School Gardening** and educational outreach programmes.
- **Sharing horticultural expertise** – The RHS provides practical and reliable advice and information, supported by investigative science, to meet the needs and expectations of gardeners now and in the future. We develop ideas on best horticultural practice and run a productive research agenda, often with partners, with practical benefits for gardeners of varying levels of experience and interest.

**RHS Plant Trials** and the **Award of Garden Merit (AGM)** provide an assessment of the garden worthiness of plants, while the online **RHS Plant Selector** recommends suitable growing conditions and highlights plant availability.

- **Supporting community gardening initiatives** – With **affiliation of gardening clubs**, plant societies and allotment holders across the UK and the Campaign for School Gardening, which now involves over 15,000 schools, the RHS actively encourages community gardening in public spaces.

As stewards of the Britain in Bloom and It's Your Neighbourhood campaigns, the RHS is pleased to support the revitalisation and renewal of villages, towns and cities through community gardening.

### RHS Gardens

RHS Garden Wisley (Woking, Surrey, GU23 6QB)

RHS Garden Rosemoor (Great Torrington, North Devon, EX38 9PH)

RHS Garden Hyde Hall (Buckhatch Lane, Rettendon, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 8ET)

RHS Garden Harlow Carr (Crag Lane, Harrogate, HG3 1QB)

### RHS Flower Shows

The RHS organises many first-class flower shows including: Chelsea; Hampton Court Palace; Tatton Park; Cardiff; and those held at our Horticultural Halls in London.

### Membership

As a charity, the bulk of the Society's funding comes from its membership. We rely greatly on the support our members give us to fulfil our aim to protect Britain's gardening heritage and help gardeners everywhere. Members receive many benefits including personalised gardening advice, free entry with a guest to RHS Gardens, free entry at selected times to more than 145 partner gardens in the UK, a monthly copy of *The Garden* magazine, and privileged access and discounted tickets to RHS Flower Shows.

To read more about the RHS, including more on our libraries, publications and regional events, please visit [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk)

## 3. SUPPORT FOR YOUR ENTRY

### 3.1 RHS SUPPORT FOR YOUR ENTRY

The RHS provides a variety of support to finalists throughout the year. Should you have any queries about any of the below, please do not hesitate to contact us (see page 2 for contact details).

#### Finalist logos and banners/ flags

The RHS produces two sets of logos and banners/ flags for all finalists to use to promote their participation in the UK finals. The first of these is the 'Finalist 2014' logo, which is emailed to finalists in January 2014. In addition to this, one 1 x 2m 'Finalist 2014' banner is posted to each finalist. Banner artwork is also emailed to finalists, in case entrants wish to produce additional banners.

Once the results have been announced in October 2014, the RHS provides each finalist with a logo and a flag which indicate the award that they have achieved. Again, artwork is also provided so that finalists can produce additional flags or banners should they wish.

#### Press and PR support

Please see section 9 for further information about this.

#### Year-round information and resources

The RHS also provides tools and information to support all Bloom and It's Your Neighbourhood participants. For advice including:

- Funding and sponsorship
- Recruiting volunteers
- Health & Safety, and much more, please visit: [www.rhs.org.uk/bloomIYN](http://www.rhs.org.uk/bloomIYN)

#### RHS Horticultural Advice

Britain in Bloom and IYN participants have free access to the RHS Advice team, who can answer a wide range of horticultural questions relating to your group's activities.

Simply email: [gardeningadvice@rhs.org.uk](mailto:gardeningadvice@rhs.org.uk), quoting BiBIYN in the subject line, or call 0845 260 8000 (Mon-Fri 10am-4pm). Alternatively you can post enquiries and samples to: Advisory Services, RHS Garden Wisley, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB. *Please note that advisors can only help with queries relating to your group's activities.*

#### ONLINE RESOURCES:

Find appropriate plants for any area/ conditions	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/rhsplantselector">www.rhs.org.uk/rhsplantselector</a>
Find out where you can purchase a plant locally	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/rhsplantfinder">www.rhs.org.uk/rhsplantfinder</a>
Browse the list of plants for pollinators	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/plants-for-pollinators">www.rhs.org.uk/plants-for-pollinators</a>
Grow Your Own	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/growyourown">www.rhs.org.uk/growyourown</a>
Wildlife gardening	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/Wildlife-and-the-gardener">www.rhs.org.uk/Wildlife-and-the-gardener</a>
Find out how wildlife friendly a garden is	<a href="http://www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk">www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk</a>
Advice by topic of choice	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/advice-search">www.rhs.org.uk/advice-search</a>
Sustainable gardening	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/Gardening/Sustainable-gardening">www.rhs.org.uk/Gardening/Sustainable-gardening</a>
Gardening events	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/rhseventfinder/">www.rhs.org.uk/rhseventfinder/</a>
What to do in your garden this month	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/Gardening/calendar">www.rhs.org.uk/Gardening/calendar</a>
Working with schools	<a href="http://www.rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening">www.rhs.org.uk/schoolgardening</a>

## 4. RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

**These guidelines outline the most important aspects of participation. Please make sure that you read and follow them.**

- Please check that the category stated in your confirmation letter is correct and notify the RHS as soon as possible if it is not.
- Please be sure to respond to all RHS communications on time.
- Category winners will be excluded from re-entering the UK finals for one year.
- Discretionary award recipients are excluded for one year from receiving the same award.

### Judging:

- You must ensure your judging tour can be completed in the allocated length of time; extra time will only be allowed if there are unforeseen circumstances and then only at the judges' discretion.
- Evidence that material has been brought in solely for the judging day and is not provided for the whole season will detract from your marks.
- Please ensure that no more than four people at any one time accompany the judges during the tour.
- The inclusion of pay-on-entry gardens is acceptable on the tour; however, if such sites are shown to the judges, they will be judged within the commercial section of the marking sheet.
- Without prior arrangement with the RHS, the judges may not be asked to take part in the judging of another competition.
- Please make sure you give an itinerary to the judges at the start of your tour. If possible, it is preferable for this to be included with the portfolio (see 6.5 for more on how to compile your itinerary).
- If you have been allocated time for lunch or refreshments during your tour, this would be an ideal time to invite key volunteers and VIPs to meet the judges.
- If you intend to have some kind of celebratory gathering at the end of your tour, this could be a good opportunity for a press call, but please advise the judges in advance and also check the itinerary with the RHS to ensure there is sufficient time.
- Please note that judges do need time to discuss marks while things are fresh in their minds and if the schedule shows 30mins or more at a station/ airport this is deliberately set aside for this purpose. Judges also like to use their evenings to work on reports, so please be considerate of this.
- If the judges arrive the day before judging, it is preferable that entries do not organise special functions unless prior arrangement has been made with the RHS. We do, however, hope that finalists will be able to collect judges on their arrival and transport them to their accommodation or the start of the tour, as appropriate.

## 5. KEY DATES 2014

- 30 January**      **UK Finalist questionnaire due** - This is the primary vehicle used by the RHS to understand your entry and assist with PR efforts. A completed questionnaire is required of each UK finalist.
- 30 January**      **UK Finalist Seminar, Sunderland** - This event gives participants the opportunity to understand what is required of them as a UK finalist and to ask specific questions of the judges who will be judging their category. It also provides the chance to network with other participants and to discuss shared problems, solutions and new ideas.
- April**              **Britain in Bloom / It's Your Neighbourhood launch events**  
To celebrate the launch of the campaigns groups around the UK will sow sunflower seeds in April, with the press launch on 14 - 16 April. To find out more and to register for your free seed pack, visit [www.rhs.org.uk/britaininbloomlaunch](http://www.rhs.org.uk/britaininbloomlaunch)
- End-June**         **Judging dates confirmed** - The RHS will confirm your judging date by the end of June. Please do your very best to ensure you will have guides available to host the judges at any point from 28 July to 8 August until your judging date is confirmed.
- 4 July**             **UK finalist portfolios due** – Portfolios are sent to the judges in advance of their visit to help them build a better picture of your entry (see section 7.1 for more details).
- 28 July – 8 August**   **UK finals judging fortnight** - RHS Britain in Bloom UK judges tour the UK to assess the achievements of the finalists
- 15 August**         **UK finalists' images due** - These images will be used on screen at the awards ceremony, as well as potentially on the RHS website and in the magazine (see section 10 for details).
- 29 August**         **UK finalists' feedback & judges appraisal due** - This form is extremely valuable in helping us to ensure the ongoing quality in the delivery of Britain in Bloom. All finalists are urged to submit a completed form by the deadline so that their views will form part of the overall review.
- 16 October**         **RHS Britain in Bloom UK Finals Awards Ceremony (Bristol)** - This glittering evening event provides finalists with the opportunity to relax and celebrate their achievements of the past year and discover the results of the judges' assessments.
- 17 October**         **Judges' surgeries (Bristol)** - Following the distribution of the detailed Judges' Report at the awards ceremony, the judges' surgeries give entries the opportunity to ask specific questions relating to the assessment of their entry and to receive professional, one-to-one advice and guidance.

## 6. CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES

### 6.1 CATEGORIES & TIME ALLOCATIONS

Categories	Electoral Roll	Tour	Press	Presentation	Total
<b>VILLAGES</b>					
Small Village	300 and under	<b>1 hour</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	1 hour 30 mins
Village	301 – 1,000	<b>1 hour 15 mins</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	1 hour 45 mins
Large Village	1,001 – 2,500	<b>1 hour 30 mins</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours
<b>TOWNS</b>					
Small Town	2,501 - 6,000	<b>2 hours</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours 30 mins
Town	6,001 - 12,000	<b>2 hours</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours 30 mins
Large Town	12,001 - 35,000	<b>2 hours 30 mins</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	3 hours
<b>CITIES</b>					
Small City	35,001 - 100,000	<b>3 hours</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	3 hours 30 mins
City	100,001 - 200,000	<b>3 hours 30 mins</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	4 hours
Large City	200,001 and over	<b>4 hours</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	4 hours 30 mins
<b>URBAN</b>					
Urban Community	0 – 25,000	<b>2 hours</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	2 hours 30 mins
<b>COASTAL</b>					
Coastal (Up to 12,000)	12,000 and below	<b>2 hours 30 mins</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	3 hours
Coastal (Over 12,000)	12,001 and above	<b>3 hours</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes	3 hours 30 mins

**Please note:**

The total time includes 15 minutes for press opportunities and 15 minutes for the presentation, but the actual judging tour should not exceed the time indicated in the 'Tour' column.

Please see 7.2 for advice on putting together your presentation. It is strongly advised to have the presentation at the beginning of the judges' visit. It is your choice when to stage the press call.

## 6.2 RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM UK JUDGING GUIDELINES

The RHS Britain in Bloom UK Finals brings together the highest achievers from all of the 16 regions and nations participating in the campaign and, as a result, the expectations are high and the judging is rigorous. Put simply, the judges will be looking for the best and they will be seeing the best from the other regions/nations that are in your category.

Following the revision of the marking sheet in 2010, today's campaign concentrates of three core areas:

Horticultural Achievement  
Environmental Responsibility  
Community Participation

These three core principles underline every aspect of the marking and the marking sheet is broken down to include them all (see 6.3 for a copy of the UK finals marking sheet). The next few pages provide explanatory notes to help you understand each section of the marking sheet.

A few general tips to remember:

- 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.
- The judges will expect that your campaign has considered your entire community and not just the high street or the village square and that, where you have "problem" areas (e.g. vacant premises/plots, eyesores etc.), you have plans in place to address these.
- The judges will also be looking for your campaign activities to benefit your community not just for today but for the long term.
- Finally, Britain in Bloom is not just about spring and summer displays: it should be a year-round programme of activity to improve, enhance and maintain the local environment and get the community actively engaged in keeping things at their best. The judges will want to see evidence of your year-round programme of work.

### **Section A – Horticultural Achievement (50%; max 100 points)**

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

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

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

The judges will take account of:

<b>SECTION A: HORTICULTURAL ACHIEVEMENT – 100 points; 50%</b>	
<b>A1. IMPACT – 20 points; 10%</b> <i>Impact will be evaluated across the entry, in each area and as a whole</i>	
<b>Colours &amp; Design</b>	Is there a scheme or theme overall and/or in key locations? Are the colours/design suitable for the location?

<b>Appropriate choice of plants</b>	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 five 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 (e.g. conservation/ biodiversity), or to provide flowering or other effects for a defined period.
<b>Special features</b>	Sometimes provided as a focal point, and may include structures or an impressive floral display.
<b>Presentation</b>	Are areas well-presented and maintained?
<b>Innovation</b>	Are new and creative ideas evident in the design, colours, themes, plant selection etc.?
<b>A2. HORTICULTURAL PRACTICE – 20 points; 10%</b> <i>Horticultural practice will be assessed in all areas on the tour route</i>	
<b>Cultivation and Maintenance</b>	Watering, dead-heading and weeding is important. Appropriate feeding may be necessary. May include irrigation considerations and thinning, trimming or pruning, as appropriate.
<b>Quality of plants</b>	Good quality plants, obviously flourishing. No obvious signs of pests, diseases or deficiencies. Appropriate size for planting situation, appropriate soil type etc.
<b>Sustainability</b>	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/ perennial planting vs. seasonal/bedding plants and the timing of displays.
<b>New planting</b>	How much new planting has been undertaken on an annual basis? Is there a longer-term plan for the whole area or district?
<b>A3. RESIDENTIAL AND COMMUNITY GARDENING – 20 points; 10%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	Residential - front gardens/gardens in public view Communal areas - shared residential & communal spaces Allotments Grounds of public buildings - includes schools, town halls, libraries, community centres, churches car parks etc.
<b>What is assessed</b>	<i>The areas described above will also be evaluated with consideration for the criteria outlined in sections A1 and A2.</i> 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?

<b>A4. BUSINESS AREAS AND PREMISES – 20 points; 10%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	Retail and shopping areas, leisure sites, transport terminals (e.g. bus stop, station), car parks, farms, rural businesses, pubs, post offices, tourist areas/attractions and other business premises (i.e. estate agents, law office) etc.
<b>What is assessed</b>	<i>The areas described above will also be evaluated with consideration for the criteria outlined in sections A1 and A2.</i> 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.
<b>A5. GREEN SPACES – 20 points; 10%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	Verges, parks and open public spaces including woodlands, arboretums, bulb & tree planting initiatives, copse, shelterbelts
<b>What is assessed</b>	<i>The areas described above will also be evaluated with consideration for the criteria outlined in sections A1 and A2.</i> 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?

Seasonal floral displays are an important element of the RHS Britain in Bloom campaign, but **must be proportionate** to areas of sustainable planting and permanent landscaping within the entry.

### **Section B – Environmental Responsibility (25%; max 50 points)**

In this section the judges will be looking for your year-round achievements in five key areas, encompassing care for the built environment as well as care for the natural environment:

- 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.

While you will be marked on the specific criteria below, please bear in mind that judges will be considering environmental responsibility across all areas of your local campaign. For example, if you have an impressive seasonal floral display they will also want to know if you have achieved this with consideration for the environment: have you been able to grow your own plug plants; recycle the bedding; or reduce your water requirements?

In this section, judges will take account of:

<b>SECTION B: ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY – 50 points; 25%</b>	
<b>B1. CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	Areas of natural habitat, wildlife and conservation sites
<b>What is assessed</b>	Is the local Bloom campaign involved in: Efforts to establish, preserve and maintain these areas? Activities to educate the community and encourage them to visit these areas? Partnerships with local conservation or wildlife protection groups? Activities or plans to re-introduce or restore these areas where they have disappeared or been damaged? Activities might include installing bird/ bat boxes/ bee hives; creating 'bug-hotels'/ log piles for overwintering invertebrates; re-introducing native species or controlling non-native/ invasive species; creating new habitats or renovating existing ones e.g. ponds, wildflower meadows, coppicing; planting to attract bees/ butterflies; appropriate tree planting; maintaining or introducing native hedgerows; conducting wildlife surveys/ monitoring species; coordinating educational campaigns/ walks/ trails with signage to inform people about local flora and fauna.
<b>B2. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	Recycling; minimising demand placed on natural resources; minimising or where possible eliminating any harmful impact on the environment.
<b>What is assessed</b>	What activities has the local Bloom campaign been involved with or initiated in these areas? Has the group 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? Does the group have 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? Is the group minimising its use of pesticides and nitrate fertilisers to reduce harmful effects on the environment?
<b>B3. LOCAL HERITAGE – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	Management and development of local heritage and/or identity such as natural heritage, community landmarks/icons, other heritage sites etc.
<b>What is assessed</b>	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 initiatives?
<b>B4. LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	Vacant premises and plots, litter, graffiti, fly-posting, dog fouling, water features/courses, litter picks etc.

<b>What is assessed</b>	Has the local Bloom campaign considered these issues and actively included them in their initiatives? Are there efforts to deal with these problems? For example, has the local campaign worked to clean up polluted sites, or appropriately screened derelict properties or other eyesores?
<b>B5. PRIDE OF PLACE – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	Management of street furniture, signage, art in the landscape, fences, way-marking, interpretation, hard landscaping etc.
<b>What is assessed</b>	Have these areas been considered in the local Bloom campaign? Are the initiatives in these areas in keeping with the overall efforts of the campaign? Do they show support for campaign's goals of enhancement?

The judges will be looking for local Bloom groups to either initiate or actively engage with these environment-enhancing activities.

### **Section C – Community Participation (25%; max 50 points)**

In this section the judges will be looking for your year-round achievements in five 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 of your local campaign and you should try to involve the community in all your Bloom activities. In addition to inviting support for planting activities, think about other ways you can involve local people. For example, could you engage the community in recycling by coordinating an information campaign; or could you run an activity to inform people about sites of local heritage?

While you will be marked on the specific criteria below, please bear in mind that judges will be considering community participation across all areas of your local campaign.

The judges will take account of:

<b>SECTION C: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION – 50 points; 25%</b>	
<b>C1. DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUITY – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>Areas which may be included</b>	Development and sustainability of the local Bloom initiative and evidence of ongoing projects
<b>What is assessed</b>	Has the local campaign: considered how to maintain and improve upon current achievements in the future? Are the campaign's initiatives sustainable? Have any plans been developed to ensure ongoing benefits to the community from the local campaign? Has the Bloom campaign established a structure and support network to ensure its own existence and development in the future?

<b>C2. COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>Areas which may be included</b>	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.
<b>What is assessed</b>	Judges will expect to see evidence of public awareness campaigns and educational programmes generated and/or actively supported by the local 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).
<b>C3. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>What is assessed</b>	Has the local Bloom campaign made every effort to engage a wide range of people across all areas of the community? Community participation should be representative of your community. Has the campaign engaged with a variety of other local groups and organisations? Has the campaign encouraged any local It's Your Neighbourhood (IYN) groups or supported the start up of new IYN groups? The judges will hope to see your campaign engaging with IYN groups. You may even choose to visit to an IYN project on your tour, if applicable. Has the campaign incorporated community reparation volunteers?
<b>C4. YEAR-ROUND INVOLVEMENT – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	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 might be: litter picks; leaf clearing; fundraising events; repairing/preparing of landscape areas and street furniture; educational activities, etc.
<b>What is assessed</b>	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 or distributed on the day or included in the portfolio. (See section 6 for more advice about the presentation and portfolio).
<b>C5. FUNDING AND SUPPORT – 10 points; 5%</b>	
<b>Areas that may be included</b>	Efforts made to secure support and the 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 and the general public in the campaign (e.g. maintenance support from council services; shopkeepers cleaning up & greening up their storefronts; local businesses sending staff out to

	volunteer on a Bloom project etc.)
<b>What is assessed</b>	Has the local campaign made efforts to engage and secure support from local government, the commercial/corporate sector and local businesses? Have there been activities to raise support/ funds from the general public? Has sufficient support been secured to ensure the campaign is able to deliver its objectives? Is there a plan of action to secure sufficient continuing support for the development of ongoing projects?

As Bloom is a community-driven campaign, it is expected that a diverse range of local people will be involved in your local campaign and that there will be broad-based public awareness and support. Increasing levels of participation may require the involvement of your local authority and other organisations – think creatively about the partnerships you can build.

\*\*Please be aware that groups working with children and young people are responsible for ensuring that they are doing so in accordance with the law with regards to child protection and safety. For further information and guidance please contact your national volunteering body: **Volunteer England**; **Volunteer Development Scotland**; **Wales Council for Voluntary Action**; or the **Volunteer Development Agency in Northern Ireland**.

### 6.3 RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM MARKING SHEET

<b>Name of entry:</b>	<b>Judging date:</b>
<b>Category:</b>	<b>Judges:</b>

**Introduction** (*introductory remarks from the judges*):

#### **SECTION A – Horticultural Achievement**

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

		<b>MAX</b>	<b>ACT.</b>
<b>A1.</b>	Impact – <i>design, colours, appropriate choice of plants, special features, presentation, innovation</i>	20	
<b>A2.</b>	Horticultural practice – <i>cultivation and maintenance, quality of plants, sustainability, new planting</i>	20	
<b>A3.</b>	Residential and community gardening – <i>residential, communal areas, allotments, public buildings (grounds of churches, schools etc.), car parks</i>	20	
<b>A4.</b>	Business areas and premises – <i>retail and shopping areas, leisure sites, transport terminals, car parks, farms, rural businesses, pubs, post offices, tourist areas/attractions, offices, estate agents etc.</i>	20	
<b>A5.</b>	Green spaces – <i>verges, parks and open public spaces</i>	20	
<b>TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION A</b> <i>50% of maximum points</i>		<b>100</b>	

**Areas of Achievement:**

**Areas for Development:**

<b>SECTION B – Environmental Responsibility</b>			
Assessing year-round activities improving environmental responsibility.			
		<b>MAX</b>	<b>ACT.</b>
<b>B1.</b>	Conservation and biodiversity – <i>areas of natural habitat, wildlife and conservation sites</i>	10	
<b>B2.</b>	Resource management – <i>recycling, minimising demand placed on natural resources and any harmful impact on the environment</i>	10	
<b>B3.</b>	Local heritage – <i>management and development of local heritage and/or identity, inclusive of natural heritage</i>	10	
<b>B4.</b>	Local environmental quality – <i>management of vacant premises and plots, litter, graffiti, fly-posting, dog fouling etc.</i>	10	
<b>B5.</b>	Pride of place – <i>management of street furniture, signage, art in the landscape and hard landscaping</i>	10	
<b>TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION B</b> <i>25% of maximum points</i>		<b>50</b>	
<b>Areas of Achievement:</b>			
<b>Areas for Development:</b>			
<b>SECTION C – Community Participation</b>			
Assessing year-round community participation			
		<b>MAX</b>	<b>ACT.</b>
<b>C1.</b>	Development and continuity - <i>Development and sustainability of the local Bloom initiative and evidence of ongoing projects</i>	10	
<b>C2.</b>	Communication and education – <i>community awareness and understanding, engagement with schools and young people and/or other community groups, press coverage, publicity materials</i>	10	
<b>C3.</b>	Community participation – <i>engaging a wide range of people across all areas of the community</i>	10	

<b>C4.</b>	Year-round involvement – <i>schedules of events and supporting evidence of year-round activity (primary evidence to be presented in 15 minute presentation)</i>	10	
<b>C5.</b>	Funding and support – <i>initiatives to secure ongoing support for the local Bloom campaign including local business support</i>	10	
<b>TOTAL POINTS AWARDED FOR SECTION C</b> <i>25% of maximum points</i>		<b>50</b>	
<b>Areas of Achievement:</b>			
<b>Areas for Development:</b>			
<b>GRAND TOTAL POINTS AWARDED</b>		<b>200</b> <i>(max.)</i>	
<b>MEDAL AWARDED</b>			

Please visit the online hub [www.rhs.org.uk/bloomIYN](http://www.rhs.org.uk/bloomIYN) (and click on 'Information about Britain in Bloom') to download further copies of the marking sheet.

## 6.4 TOUR TIPS & JUDGING CHECKLIST

### Essential

- It is important that you only show the judges things that have been a result of your Bloom activities or that you have been involved with as part of your Bloom initiative.
- In addition to the itinerary (see section 6.5 for an example), a map that clearly highlights the judging route should also be provided, so that the judges can understand the scope of your activity
- If transport is required, make the necessary arrangements well in advance. Vehicles should allow the judges fairly unrestricted views. Make sure you know who will travel with whom and whether more than one vehicle will be needed.
- The judges will expect to be accompanied through the tour by a maximum of four people, each of whom should be able to answer questions. Decide in advance who your representatives will be and have at least one person in reserve in case of emergency.
- Allow time within your tour for comfort breaks.
- Remember, **every** part of your route is subject to judging – that includes the places you stop and the places you pass through in between stops.

### Recommended

- Make the most of every opportunity – have display boards with photos at the starting/finishing points and have volunteers who have worked on special features at those places to greet judges and illustrate the level of community participation and support.
- Ensure that there is a photo-opportunity for the press. The judges are happy to answer questions and be photographed; however try to keep this to one location. A 15-minute period has been allocated for press opportunities within your tour, as specified in section 6.1.
- When preparing your itinerary, bear in mind that if you can cover the route alone in an hour, on the day of judging it could take at least one and a half to two hours. If you are using vehicles, valuable time can be lost getting in and out of cars. You will also need to bear in mind that the judges will stop to take notes and photographs. Please allow extra time for these things. It might be worth organising a mock judging tour with two members of your group, on the same day and at the same time that the judges will be visiting.
- When planning the route, go through the marking sheet to ensure you are showing the judges everything they will want to see. Make sure you organise your tour relative to how the marks are allocated. There is no need to waste precious time taking the judges to places of no direct relevance and which do not provide evidence of at least one of the judging criteria.
- Plan for all weather conditions. The judges travel very light and do not generally bring umbrellas with them. Likewise, in hot weather, bottles of water or other drinks are greatly appreciated.

- Allow some additional time at certain stops so that the judges can meet some of the volunteers, members of the business community and young people who have been involved in your campaign. Also allow time for comfort breaks.
- Your tour, portfolio and presentation should all complement one another; the judges will not want to see the same things on the tour as are in your portfolio and vice versa, but some overlap is to be expected, particularly with smaller entries (see section 7 for advice on portfolios and presentations).
- Meals, receptions and other extra hospitality are not an official part of the tour and, dependent upon the judges' schedules, may not always be possible. Please ensure that any dignitaries or key figures that you feel must meet the judges can be available at either your presentation, press call or other appropriate stops on your tour route.

## **FINALISTS' ESSENTIAL CHECKLIST**

- Have all members of your committee read this manual?
- Have you provided the RHS with a mobile phone number in case the judges need to reach you on the day of the tour?
- Have you carefully timed your route and had practice runs to ensure that you stay within the time allocation on the day of judging?
- Have you briefed all of your tour guides, presenters and community representatives meeting the judges so that they know how long they can talk to the judges?
- Have you considered the implications if judging is on a very rainy day e.g. umbrellas, type of vehicle, where to meet the community representatives and other backup contingencies?
- Have you allowed for refreshments and comfort breaks?
- Have you studied the marking sheet, ensuring that every aspect is covered between your route, your presentation and your portfolio, and that the time allocated to things is relative to how marks are attributed?
- Have you ensured that you will be showing the judges a balance of seasonal and perennial planting, new and mature projects?
- Have you taken into consideration the areas that the judges will travel through in order to reach the key points on your itinerary? And have you ensured that the area is clean, bearing in mind the judges may wish to take slight detours off the route?
- Have you informed your local press and organised a photo call?
- Have you produced a map of your area, a copy of the judging route and itinerary to give the judges at the start of the tour?
- Have you ensured there is general awareness in the community about your Bloom activities and the fact that you are a UK finalist? You never know who the judges may talk to during their stay: hotel staff for example!
- Judges will have very little - if any - opportunity to look at additional documentation given to them on the day. If you want to provide brochures, flyers or DVDs these should be included as appendices to your portfolio.

## 6.5 SAMPLE JUDGING TOUR ITINERARY

A judging tour itinerary should be provided to the judges at the start of your tour.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Section</b> (which judging criteria this might correspond to)	<b>Comments</b>
09.00	Judges collected from the station by Mr Higgs and taken to community centre for refreshments and the opportunity to meet a selection of volunteers and local dignitaries.		
09.30	<p>Presentation (15mins)</p> <p>Evidencing year-round working and plans for future development.</p> <p>Opportunity to meet some key people.</p>	C1, C4	
09.45	<p><b>START OF TOUR (2hrs)</b></p> <p>Depart community centre in minibus. View new bedding scheme en route to stop one.</p>	A1, A2, C3	
10.00	Old World and Centenary Garden with restored wildflower meadow.	A2, B3, B1	
10.10	Churchman Gardens – walk through and pick up bus at School Road, meet Mrs Daffy who has led the Bloom group for the past 27 years.	A2, B4, B5	
10.20	Queensgate Roof Garden (winner of commercial entry in local competition).	A4, C5	
10.30	Seaview Garden (large front garden winner), meet Mrs Patel and daughter.	A3, C3	

<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Section</b> (which judging criteria this might correspond to)	<b>Comments</b>
10.45	Walker Road (view new permanent landscape garden and Bloom composting area).	A2, A5, B2	
10.55	Church Yard – view commemorative garden.	A5, B3, C3	
11.05	Walk up the high street to meet the owner of Sparks, who sponsor six roundabouts and 20 hanging baskets.	A4, B5, C5	
11.20	School Grounds (meet children who have worked on new vegetable patch and been involved with bulb planting in Churchman Gardens).	C2, C3	
11.30	Brunel Residential area (meet Mr and Mrs Chan who have lived in the area for 34 years and are active members of the in Bloom Committee).	A3, C3	
11.40	Head back to community Centre viewing new planting.	A1, A2	
11.45	<b>END OF TOUR (2hrs)</b> Press Call (15mins)	C2	
12.00	Refreshments and community reception		
12.30	Judges Depart		

## 6.6 MEDAL & DISCRETIONARY AWARDS

### MEDALS

Award	Description
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GOLD</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Outstanding</b> (85% and above) (Overall 170-200 points)</p>	<p>An exceptionally high standard demonstrated throughout. A consistent approach that demonstrates best practice, continuing development and sustainable effort. Meets all of the judging criteria and scores very highly in every section of the marking sheet.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SILVER GILT</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Very Good</b> (75-84%) (Overall 150-169 points)</p>	<p>A high standard entry which meets virtually all of the judging criteria and includes sections of exceptionally high standards. Exemplifies best practice in multiple areas and demonstrates very high potential for continuing development and sustainable effort.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SILVER</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Good</b> (60-74%) (Overall 120-149 points)</p>	<p>Considered to be an above-average entry that meets many of the judging criteria. The entry will include more than one sub-section that demonstrates exceptionally high standards. In particular, the entry will demonstrate a clear potential to improve in several areas and for sustainable effort.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BRONZE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Average</b> (50-59%) (Overall 100-119 points)</p>	<p>An average entry that meets some but not necessarily all of the judging criteria. The entry will include at least one sub-section that demonstrates a very high standard but the standards will not be consistent throughout. There will be some evidence of the potential to improve and of the ability to sustain effort.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NO AWARD</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fair</b> (0-49%) (Overall 0-99 points)</p>	<p>The entry may have a number of good merits and may have done very well in its category in the region; however the entry has not met the judging criteria to a national standard. The entry is not sufficiently developed to achieve any of the RHS Britain in Bloom medals.</p>

### DISCRETIONARY AWARDS

These special awards are presented by the RHS Britain in Bloom UK Judging Panel to finalists that demonstrate genuine excellence in a particular area of the judging criteria. As discretionary awards, they are only presented when there is a deserving recipient so not all of the awards are presented every year.

Finalists are encouraged to mention to judges any features, projects or people they believe could be considered for one of the discretionary awards, but doing so does not equate to a nomination. The UK judges make all nominations, which they present to the judging panel.

#### **RHS Britain in Bloom 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Award – for 2014 only**

Presented to the finalist that demonstrated the best pollinator-friendly planting in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Britain in Bloom.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Horticulture Award**

Presented to the finalist that demonstrated the best horticultural practice throughout the entry.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Commercial Award**

Presented to the finalist that demonstrated the best environmental and/or horticultural contribution from business / retail / corporate interests.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Young People's Award**

Presented to the finalist deemed to involve young people from across the community in the best way.

**RHS Britain in Bloom School Award**

Presented the school within a finalist's community that demonstrated the best commitment to ongoing environmental and horticultural initiatives.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Conservation and Wildlife Award**

Presented to the finalist that best demonstrated duty and commitment to the protection and enhancement of the flora and fauna in their local environment.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Environment Award**

Presented to the finalist that best demonstrated responsible management of resources and/or high quality sustainable landscaping practices within their entry.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Pride of Place Award**

Presented to the finalist that best demonstrated duty and commitment to on-going maintenance of any one or more of the following: cleanliness, hard landscaping and street furniture.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Tourism Award**

Presented to the finalist that demonstrated the most effective use of their local Bloom initiatives as a means of encouraging and supporting tourism in their area.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Heritage Award**

Presented to the finalist that best demonstrated outstanding commitment to the ongoing care and development of their local heritage.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Public Park Award**

Given in Memory of David Welch

Presented to the park (including publicly run pay-on-entry parks, gardens and botanic gardens) designed for horticultural excellence, giving delight to the visitor through appropriate planting, high standards of maintenance, including infrastructure, conserving wildlife, cleanliness, features of interest and community involvement.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Community Award**

Presented to the finalist that best demonstrated community involvement (including local businesses) in their local Bloom campaign.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Community Champion Award**

Presented to an individual or individuals who demonstrated exceptional commitment and dedication to the Britain in Bloom cause in their community.

**RHS Britain in Bloom Outstanding Contribution Award**

Presented to one individual judges consider to have made outstanding efforts towards the success and promotion of Britain in Bloom.

## 7. THE PORTFOLIO & THE PRESENTATION

### 7.1 THE PORTFOLIO

The portfolio is an important document and while it is not judged, it does give valuable information to the judges prior to their arrival. It provides you with a great opportunity to showcase your campaign's year-round activities and things you can't include on your tour and it should be used to complement your tour.

**We strongly recommend that all finalists send in a portfolio** but please bear in mind:

- It does not need to be professionally designed or cost a lot of money; it is the content rather than the style that is important.
- Some people spend days putting these together, others just a few hours – it is up to you how long you want to spend creating your portfolio. The important thing is to ensure that you are giving the judges relevant information, which complements your tour. We have included some suggestions for things that could be included in appendix 6.
- Please do not include original important documents as portfolios are not returned.

**The only hard and fast rules that apply to all portfolios are that they must be:**

- A4 in size
- No more than 30 sides (15 sheets) of paper. This is a maximum and not the recommended length; less is often more in the case of portfolios.
- Minimum font size 10 point (11-12 preferred)
- No hardcover ring binders please, these are too bulky for the judges to carry
- We will need **three copies** of your portfolio, but be sure to make at least one copy for yourselves
- You can include up to five appendices if you wish. This is a useful place to add in leaflets, press cuttings, local maps and DVDs relating to your Bloom campaign.

To read suggestions for things that could be included in your portfolio (these are again only ideas to help you decide, not requirements), please see appendix 6.

#### **Deadline:**

If you intend to provide a portfolio, three copies of your portfolio must be received by the RHS by **4 July 2014**. If we do not have a portfolio by 4 July we will assume that you are not sending one, unless you have informed us otherwise.

Portfolios should be sent to:

Britain in Bloom  
RHS  
80 Vincent Square  
London  
SW1P 2PE

Should you have any questions about putting together your portfolio, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## 7.2 THE 15-MINUTE JUDGING DAY PRESENTATION

Every finalist has the opportunity to give a 15-minute presentation about their local campaign on judging day. This is an important part of the day and it is strongly recommended that you **start your tour with your presentation**.

The presentation should focus primarily on giving an overview of year-round working and could even be set up in chronological order, taking the judges through the year and showing them the variety of activities with which you have been involved.

### **Guidance for presentations:**

- The maximum length is 15 minutes
- You can use audio-visual aids (overhead projector, slide show, PowerPoint presentation, display boards or printed handouts), but as with the portfolio what is important is the content of your presentation, rather than the style.
- Although the presentation itself is not judged, the judges will be looking for supporting evidence of your year-round working. This is your opportunity to take the judges through all the work you have done that they won't be able to see on the tour. This includes everything from your fundraising events to your litter picks, your bulb planting days to your community meetings, your school projects to your family fun days etc. This is the chance to show the judges how you have achieved the end results they will be seeing throughout the tour.

## **8. RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM AWARDS**

### **8.1 AWARDS CEREMONY**

The awards ceremony for the 2014 RHS Britain in Bloom UK Finals will be held on the evening of Thursday 16 October in Bristol. It is an evening event beginning at 5.30pm and ending at 11pm.

Each UK finalist will be presented with an award of Bronze, Silver, Silver-Gilt or Gold as a result of the marks allocated by the judges on their tour. These awards reflect the standard reached by each entry in meeting the RHS Britain in Bloom criteria and provide a benchmark for on-going development. In addition to the medal awards, the overall category winners and the discretionary award winners will also be recognised.

Five representatives from each UK finalist community are invited to attend the event. As this year's hosts, Bristol will be organising optional activities during the day as well as good value transport and accommodation options. Further details about the awards ceremony, including additional activities, how to RSVP and book accommodation/ travel, will be e-mailed to finalists as soon as they are available.

### **8.2 JUDGES' SURGERIES**

Judges' surgeries are held the morning after the awards ceremony from 09.00-13.00 on Friday 17 October. At the judges' surgeries each entry has the opportunity to meet with their judges for a 15-minute one-to-one consultation to discuss their achievements and to receive professional advice and guidance for future projects.

The RHS encourages all finalists to take advantage of this opportunity to benefit from the additional feedback from RHS Britain in Bloom judges.

Finalists will be sent the details of how to book when bookings open. We recommend that you book as early as you can in order to get your preferred time slot. The judges are usually fully booked so we'd discourage last minute walk-ins on the day; these are difficult to accommodate and usually involve very long waits.

## 9. PRESS AND PR

The RHS Britain in Bloom press and PR team works throughout the year to raise the profile of the campaign in the media. This includes our announcement of the UK finalists, the judging tour and the results as well as placing case studies and features highlighting the impacts of the campaign. While the RHS team focuses on the national media, as finalists you have the opportunity to use your involvement in the UK finals to gain coverage in your local media.

Editorial coverage is great third party endorsement; journalists help the public form their opinions and can motivate people to get involved. The more frequent and interesting the media coverage about your Bloom activities, the more people will be encouraged to support you.

The RHS press and PR team is available throughout the year to support finalists' PR activities – please read the tips below and contact us should you have any queries or need any assistance (contact details on page 2).

**2014 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Britain in Bloom and there will be lots of activity planned throughout the year to celebrate. For more ideas about how you can celebrate the anniversary, visit the online hub:**

[www.rhs.org.uk/bloomIYN](http://www.rhs.org.uk/bloomIYN)

### 9.1 TOP TIPS FOR A GOOD STORY

A story can come from many angles and you need to think creatively:

- What makes your entry different to the others participating in Britain in Bloom?
- Are any new sectors of the community contributing to your entry?
- Are you tackling issues such as composting and water-wise gardening in a new or interesting way?
- Is this the first time your entry has reached the UK finals?
- Are you working on a special feature for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bloom?

Think beyond the physical side of your entry; the press are often interested in the human angle. Has volunteering with your group helped someone back into work or restored their confidence? Are there any big personalities behind your success?

Other media hooks you might draw upon include:

- Has your campaign transformed an area (i.e. before and after story)?
- Have you restored or re-introduced natural habitat / wildlife areas?
- Do you include rare, exotic or unusual plants in your displays?
- Do you have a notable celebrity or personality linked to your entry?

### 9.2 TOP TIPS ON WRITING A PRESS RELEASE (see template in appendix 4)

- Be accurate and informative – get someone else to proof it for typos!
- Don't waffle; the ideal press release is one side of A4.
- A punchy, eye-catching title will capture attention.
- Key information should come in the first paragraph: what is happening? Why? Where? When? Who is involved? Many press releases don't get read below the opening paragraph so make sure you sum it up here.

- Include a quote or testimonial from yourself, a sponsor, a local dignitary, a volunteer or celebrity.
- Make sure your contact details are in the “Notes to Editors” at the end of the release, should the journalist have any follow up queries.
- If you can supply an image to illustrate your story, mention that in the “Notes to Editors”. Often a good picture will get a story featured.
- Always write “Press Release” across the top of the page and include the date together with any logo. Include the date to be released (for example “For Immediate Release”, or “Embargoed until 30 September 2014”).

### 9.3 WHAT WILL THE RHS DO?

The RHS press and PR team will use the information provided in the finalists’ questionnaires as a starting point for finding stories for the media, so we may contact you directly for more information about particular parts of your entry. Please keep us up-to-date with your activities and successes throughout the year. The RHS Press and PR team is also happy to help you with advice and assistance about your own media relations activities.

### 9.4 WHAT CAN YOU DO?

#### **Do your own PR**

Whether contacting your local newspaper or a national magazine, look at the section you’re aiming your story at (news, features, listings), note the names of the journalists who are writing stories on similar subjects and send your press release directly to them. Follow this up with a phone call a few days later to check if they would like any further information.

#### **Regional radio and newspapers:**

Regional media outlets are always looking for local stories. Human-interest features and stories showing benefit to the local community are usually a firm favourite, and they will also want to know about any awards you win for your work. Try to offer an accompanying photograph with your press release, though a newspaper may wish to visit your project and take its own pictures. Try to maintain good relationships with local print and broadcast journalists and keep them in touch with your upcoming projects and events.

#### **Specialist and other media:**

Think beyond the local paper; are there any regional gardening magazines, tourism newsletters, county-wide glossy magazines, council news updates? If you have an idea for a feature, call the features editor and run it by them. Please note: the editorial schedule that magazines work to can be as much as three months in advance for monthly publications and even longer for quarterlies.

#### **Events**

When you are organising an event, it is worth scheduling in a photo call for the press. This is a pre-arranged time when your key volunteers and VIPs will be available in a specific place for press photographs. Pictures might be taken of the group starting to dig a new garden, planting a tree, or cutting the ribbon to open your local plant swap, whatever fits your event best. For more advice about what to consider when setting up good images, please see section 10.

Include the details of your photo call at the foot of your press release, confirming location and time, who will be present and what they will be doing. When inviting journalists/ photographers to your event, it’s a good idea to have a one-page factsheet about your group’s work available for them to take away.

## 10. IMAGES

We cannot stress enough how useful good quality images are in securing coverage. We ask all finalists to submit a range of images, which are used by the RHS in a variety of ways:

- On the RHS website
- In RHS publications - Britain in Bloom images are sometimes used in RHS publications such as *Grass Roots*, *The Garden*, the Annual Review, and may feature in RHS presentations/ publicity materials.
- At the awards presentation (see below)
- In the media - Images of participating Britain in Bloom communities are often requested to illustrate the campaign overall or for individual case studies.

### Images required:

The following images are required for the awards presentation, where they will be shown on the AV presentation while your group collects your award. They may also be used by the RHS for the purposes described above.

- An image capturing a key feature or area within your local community
  - *This image may include flowers, trees, shrubs and permanent landscaping.*
- An image focusing on horticultural excellence within your entry
  - *This image may include flowers, trees and shrubs.*
- An image featuring an environmental cleanliness programme or initiative
- An image featuring sustainable development programmes or initiatives
  - *This may show wildflower meadows, permanent planting, planting for wildlife etc.*
- An image featuring community participation
  - *This image should show people getting their hands dirty, planting bulbs, weeding flowerbeds and sweeping the streets. Where possible the people should be looking at the camera.*

Please try to take a selection of images throughout the year, to show your “in Bloom” activities through different seasons.

### Sending in your images:

- Please email your images one at a time to: [communities@rhs.org.uk](mailto:communities@rhs.org.uk) (maximum 10MBs per email) or send them on a CD to: Britain in Bloom, RHS, 80 Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PE.
- You can send in images throughout the year but the five images above must be sent to the RHS Britain in Bloom team by **15 August 2014**. We will not be able to include any images sent after this date in the AV presentation. Please send a minimum of five images to a maximum of ten.

- **Please complete and return the Image Donation Form (appendix 7) for each image sent in to the RHS.** Where someone other than you holds the copyright to the images, please ask the copyright holder to complete the form. This form provides the RHS with permission to use the images for the purposes stated above. It does not pass on copyright or approve commercial use.
- Images should be provided as **JPEG files**.
- Please ensure that you set your camera on the highest possible file size setting before taking your images and then send us your uncropped files. This will provide us with images that are of a high enough resolution to use in print (e.g. at least 300dpi).
- Please name the picture with a caption describing the activity, the location and the names of any individuals pictured, plus the photo credit and the date it was taken, i.e.  
*Mole in Bloom volunteers Sarah and Jenny working at the perennial beds at Mountview Park. Credit, R. Bentley. 12 May 2014.jpg*
- Don't forget these images can also be used within your portfolio as well as in materials you prepare for sponsors.
- **IMPORTANT: Any images containing children under the age of 18 must have parental approval for their use. Please photocopy and use the form in appendix 3 to get approvals from parents or guardians of children featured.**

## **TIPS FOR GOOD IMAGES and USING THEM IN THE MEDIA**

A picture is worth a thousand words.....A strong picture is often a deciding factor for a newspaper as to whether it will run a story.

Types of pictures the media are looking for:

- When taking a photo consider what makes an interesting image. Shots of people lined up are on the whole dull to look at. The best images are those with some action in them. People doing something while also looking at the camera make excellent images, and even more so if the photographer has angled themselves, so they are either looking up or down at the subject . And remember a picture can be staged, so take your time, arrange your subject and take lots of pictures.
- When your entry is presented with an award, a pre-prepared staged shot of a key-feature within your community would again appeal to your local press as a post-awards story.
- Before and after photos are always popular with the press, so whatever you do, before you start to renovate that neglected site, make sure you get a good selection of 'before' images.
- Finally, when emailing images to the press, only attach a couple of pictures (jpegs or tiffs) to each email, complete with the press release and information about the people in the shot. Don't let your email exceed 10MB; otherwise it will not get through the newspaper's email system.

# APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX 1 - CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS CATEGORY REFERENCE SHEET**

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The proposal to create a champions' category came about following an extraordinary meeting of chairmen in 2004. The proposal was to consider a competitive grouping of sustained high achievers (not necessarily category winners). The proposal would assist in freeing-up the route to the UK finals for entries in regions/nations already represented by a Champion of Champions.

### **Criteria**

Candidates must have a track record of a sustained high standard in the UK finals in recent years. Candidates are invited to participate by recommendation of the RHS Britain in Bloom UK Judging Panel. Candidates rarely turn down the invitation because of the prestige associated with the category; however it is at their discretion whether or not to accept the invitation.

In order for the category to run in any given year there must be at least three confirmed participants; if there are less than three participants the category will not run in that year.

Champion of Champions participants may participate in the category for one year and must take at least one year off before they are eligible to return to the category, if invited. In order to be invited they must have been in the UK finals the preceding year.

### **Mechanics/ Judging**

1. Judging will take place in August alongside the UK finals tour.
2. The length of judging per entry will mirror that of the UK finals judging, for example, an entry from the large city category will have a maximum four hours of judging; and a large village will have one and a half hours (this time does not include presentation and press call).
3. The entries will be judged using the same marking sheet used for all UK finalists.
4. Although the marking sheet is the same as for all UK finalists the judges will be expecting to see the highest standard in the Champion of Champions.
5. The Champion of Champions category includes entries of all sizes but the judges for this category are experienced enough to be able to deal with this complexity when determining their marks.

### **Awards**

1. Each participant will be presented with an award of Gold, Silver Gilt, Silver or Bronze based on the standard achieved on the marking sheet.
2. The overall winner (the entry with the highest overall mark) will be presented with a Champion of Champions Category Winner Trophy to keep.
3. Participants within the Champion of Champions category will be entitled to send five representatives to the UK finals award ceremony where the announcement of results will be made.
4. Participants will also be eligible for any of the RHS Britain in Bloom Discretionary Awards.

### **Benefits for participating communities**

- Opportunity for a new challenge and a new media angle
- Opportunity to showcase their activities as examples of best practice to others

## APPENDIX 2 – IT’S YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD REFERENCE SHEET

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*Please note: Supporting and encouraging your own local It’s Your Neighbourhood projects can earn you marks in Section C of the marking sheet.*

### **What is It’s Your Neighbourhood?**

RHS It’s Your Neighbourhood (IYN) provides support, recognition and reward to small groups of people starting to ‘green up’ and clean up their local areas. Participation is free, and non-competitive. Advice, guidance and support are offered to all participants on an ongoing basis. IYN projects are run entirely by volunteers and tend to be small groups focusing on a defined area. IYN is supported by the RHS and administered by the Regions/ Nations in Bloom.

### **Who can enter?**

RHS IYN is open to any group eager to make a difference to their local environment. It doesn’t matter if the group consists of a few neighbours keen to tackle local litter and vandalism, or a larger community group determined to turn around a problem ‘grot spot’ or eyesore. There isn’t even any need to know about gardening. We particularly welcome beginner groups taking their first steps towards community improvement. By taking part in IYN, groups can breathe new life into their area by improving their local streets and open green spaces for the benefit of local people. IYN participants must be genuine community-lead groups from within the area where the project is being carried out.

### **What happens after joining?**

While entries are not judged against each other, each will receive a visit from an environmental, horticultural or community development expert, with experience of the wider Bloom initiative, over the summer months. These mentors provide valuable feedback on how to develop current activities and encourage ongoing improvements. Based on the visit, each community receives a certificate of achievement of either *Establishing, Improving, Developing, Thriving or Outstanding*, depending on the extent to which groups have met the IYN aims.

### **What are the benefits?**

Communities participating in IYN see the benefits of:

- Community ownership and empowerment
- A healthier community through cleaner and greener surroundings
- Safer environments for the enjoyment of people of all ages
- Increased pride and involvement of local people.

### **How can groups join?**

To register, groups should contact their region/nation Bloom co-ordinators.

Detailed information about IYN can be found online at [www.rhs.org.uk/itsyourneighbourhood](http://www.rhs.org.uk/itsyourneighbourhood) or by contacting the RHS Community Horticulture team on 020 7821 3038 / [communities@rhs.org.uk](mailto:communities@rhs.org.uk)



Sharing the best in Gardening

## RHS Model Release Form

In giving The Royal Horticultural Society, RHS Enterprises Ltd and RHS Special Events Ltd (collectively known as 'RHS') permission to use a photograph containing your image, you are supporting our aim of inspiring, informing and educating all with an interest in gardening. Our policy is to use the photograph with care, respect and in a context appropriate with RHS aims and goals. Please return a signed copy of this form to the RHS as soon as possible.

### Models

Name(s) of subject(s): .....

If aged under 18, date of birth:.....

Address: .....

Telephone:.....

Email:.....

Date(s) of shoot: .....

Name/location of shoot: .....

Photographer: .....

### 1. General Release

I give permission for (my image in) photographs from the above shoot, including all reproductions, extracts and adaptations, to be used by RHS in all media (both currently known and any future media) and for any purpose. I also give permission for RHS to supply the photograph(s) to any other persons to be used by them in all media and for all purposes provided that this does not extend to the use of the photograph(s) in advertisements for companies or organisations, other than RHS, without my further permission.

### 2. Waiver

I waive any right to inspect or approve the photographs or finished versions incorporating the photographs. I agree and acknowledge that I have no interest in the copyright or any other rights in the photographs and that I have no claim for usage fees or other payments in respect of any use of the photographs permitted by this release.

### 3. Data protection

RHS is registered as data controllers with the Information Commissioner's Office. RHS is committed to protecting your privacy and security. Whenever you provide personal information, the RHS will treat that information in accordance with this policy and current UK Data Protection legislation.

Signed ..... Date .....

Signature of Parent/Guardian for under 18s .....

Name and Address of Parent/Guardian (if different from above) .....

Telephone .....

Email:.....

- See section 10 for advice about when to use this form.
- To request an electronic copy of the form, please email [communities@rhs.org.uk](mailto:communities@rhs.org.uk) or call 020 7821 3038

PRESS RELEASE  
28 March 2014

For immediate release

### XXX GROWING FOR GOLD IN 2014

It may have been a drizzly day in xxx today, but nothing could dampen local resident's spirits as they prepared to plant over 1,000 daffodil bulbs to kick start their entry into the 2014 UK finals of the RHS Britain in Bloom campaign.

The daffodil bulbs, generously donated by Greenhouse Nursery, were planted at various sites throughout xxx including the entrance path to the Town Hall, Flower Hill Park, and on the A33 roundabout. Mr Cliff Richards, Co-ordinator of xxx in Bloom says 'We are planting daffodils to celebrate 50 golden years of Britain in Bloom in 2014 and to add some cheerful colour to our city. We also hope it will increase our chances of winning gold come October!' xxx are up against Cardiff, Doncaster and Aberdeen in the Large City category.

Betty Thomas volunteered to head up the small team of people at the roundabout and says 'xxx's involvement in Britain in Bloom creates a fabulous opportunity for all sectors of the community to work together. Yesterday I worked with the Girl Guides who were very excited to be involved and did a marvellous job covering the roundabout with bulbs.'

Local supermarket, SuperPower, also contributed to the day by hosting a free BBQ of hotdogs, hamburgers and bacon rolls for the hard working bulb-planting volunteers. 'All this hard work makes me really hungry', says 10-year-old James Farmer who volunteered with his mother and sister. Chomping through his second hotdog he continues. 'Today I planted over 50 bulbs and next week I'll be back to make sure they are ok'.

The daffodil bulb-planting day is a perfect example of how a community working together can achieve fantastic outcomes. Their hard work will be rewarded in the coming weeks as the bulbs begin to bloom and the residents of xxx take pride in their beautiful surroundings.

**- Ends -**

If you would like to know more about xxx in Bloom contact Glen Miller on  
☎ 0207 888 8888 or via [glenmiller@yahoo.com](mailto:glenmiller@yahoo.com)

#### **Editor's Notes**

- Britain in Bloom is organised by the RHS. It is one of Europe's largest horticultural campaigns and involves thousands of communities throughout the UK, from tiny rural villages to the largest cities. The campaign is focused around three pillars: horticultural achievement, environmental responsibility and community participation.
- Gold, silver gilt, silver and bronze awards are presented to each entry in October, according to the results of the judging tour in August. Category winners and discretionary award winners are also announced.
- The campaign is made up of 16 independent nations/regions (11 English regions plus Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Jersey and Guernsey). The first stage of the campaign is run at this level. Each year these nations/regions nominate certain entries to represent them the following year at the UK-wide finals: Britain in Bloom. So the name 'Britain in Bloom' refers to the campaign as a whole and to the UK finals that are organised by the RHS.
- For more information about RHS Britain in Bloom please contact Ed Horne, Royal Horticultural Society, 80 Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PE ☎ 020 7821 3356 Email: [edhorne@rhs.org.uk](mailto:edhorne@rhs.org.uk) [www.rhs.org.uk/communities](http://www.rhs.org.uk/communities)

## APPENDIX 5 - 2014 RHS UK JUDGING PANEL

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### JUDGING ASSIGNMENTS

Team	Judges	Categories
1	Roger Burnett & Jim Buttress	City (4)*
2	Jeff Bates & Ian Beaney	Town (8) & Small Village (3)
3	Jon Wheatley & Darren Share	Large Town (11)
4	Andrew Jackson & Mel Henley	Urban Community (9)
5	Mark Wasilewski & Brendan Mowforth	Champion of Champions (5) & Small Town (5)
6	Jim Goodwin & Nigel Bishop	Coastal Over 12k (3) & Large Village (6)
7	Sue Wood & Kim Parish	Village (6) & Large City (3)
8	Martyn Hird & Rae Beckwith	Small City (8) & Coastal Under 12k (3)

\* Roger Burnett will be conducting moderation visits during week two.

### JUDGES' BIOGRAPHIES

#### TEAM 1

##### **Roger Burnett (Chairman)**

With over 37 years' experience in civic horticulture and now working as the Community Environment Officer for Scarborough Borough Council, Roger aims to promote the benefits of Bloom across the borough, raising the profile of volunteering and helping to support and develop community horticulture as a means of delivering sustainable environmental improvements.

He began his horticultural career as an apprentice working in the nurseries at Scarborough before attending Askham Bryan College near York. Since then he has held various posts within the Authority, including heading up the Parks Service for almost 20 years. Roger is a great advocate of community involvement and has a keen interest in using community horticulture to regenerate disadvantaged areas through empowering local people.

Roger is a member of the Yorkshire in Bloom Executive, and a Yorkshire in Bloom judge, as well as a member of the Radio York Gardening Team, regularly taking part in phone-ins and Garden Question Times.

He has been a Britain in Bloom judge since 2003 and is currently Chair of the UK Judging Panel.



*My garden needs.....*

*A gardener! I promised my wife I would landscape it 31 years ago, she's still waiting. Maybe I need to set up a friends group!*

*I'd like to meet...*

*Over my lifetime I have met and indeed worked with some fantastic gardeners, but the one I would most like to meet is the grandfather of modern celebrity gardening, Percy Thrower, maybe one day, but not just yet, we will get to share a potting shed!*

### **Jim Buttriss, VMH**

Jim is involved with judging at a large number of horticultural shows including the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, Hampton Court, Tatton Park, Gardeners' World, Vincent Square as well as many local shows. He is chairman of the Guild of Horticultural Trade Display Judges. He was chairman of London in Bloom for the ten years and a member of its committee for several years, having also participated in the campaign as a judge.

He has been Chairman of the London Gardens Society for thirteen years, which includes judging of the emergency services, plus London Borough competitions and he was also a senior judge for Fuller's, Young's, and Wadworth's breweries. He was a member of the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society (Perennial) Cases Committee from 1990 and took over the chair in 1997. He was reappointed as a Trustee in 2006.

In 1998, he became an 'Associate of Honour' of the Royal Horticultural Society and was also awarded a Fellowship of Institute of Horticulture in 1999. In 2006 he achieved the highest accolade in the British gardening world, the Victoria Medal of Honour. Only 63 horticulturalists can hold the VMH at any one time, to commemorate the length of Queen Victoria's reign.



## **TEAM 2**

### **Jeff Bates (co-Vice Chairman)**

Jeff's career in horticulture began in 1970 as an apprentice gardener in the Royal Gardens at Windsor Castle and in the Savill and Valley Gardens in Windsor Great Park, training at the Berkshire College of Agriculture and Askham Bryan College before working in landscape design and construction in Yorkshire and then a period of over twenty years as a senior lecturer in horticulture in Derbyshire. For the past 25 years he has been a judge for East Midlands in Bloom, and is also the organisation's chairman. He holds the RHS Master of Horticulture qualification.

He is a freelance lecturer, consultant and examiner in horticulture, a busy garden designer, and has a particular interest in historic gardens.



*My favourite plant...*

*There are too many to list! (but I don't like Acer 'Brilliantissimum'!)*

*Colour combinations that keep me awake at night...*

*The fleshy pink of Acer 'Brilliantissimum'*

### **Ian Beaney**

Biography will be circulated in early 2014.

## **TEAM 3**

### **Jon Wheatley (co-Vice Chairman)**

Jon was brought up on a commercial horticulture nursery in Somerset and trained at Cannington, Wisley and Reading. He switched from commercial horticulture to amenity when he joined Bath City Council in the halcyon days of Britain in Bloom. He then moved to Bristol City Council where he was initially in the Parks Department and progressed to become Divisional Director of Community Leisure with responsibilities for Community Initiatives including Sports, Youth & Parks. Jon left local government in 2000 to set up a consultancy and a landscape and horticultural maintenance company based at a nursery at Chew Magna. Jon is also consultant to the National Dahlia Collection in Cornwall.

Jon is the Chairman of South West in Bloom as well as being involved as a member of the Tender Ornamental Plants and Chrysanthemum Committee. In 2011 Jon was awarded the Associate of Honour of the Royal Horticultural Society. He writes and broadcasts on a range of horticultural and landscape issues and has been responsible with his team for many prestigious horticultural exhibits at Chelsea, Hampton Court and Garden Scotland in 2011, achieving high accolades for the RHS Edible Garden in 2011 & Home Grown in 2010.

He is passionate about the benefits of Bloom and enjoys judging both for the Bloom and major shows throughout the RHS & Annual Show calendar. In his spare time he enjoys walking, Latin American dancing & drumming (Middle East style) and travelling to New Zealand to further his interests in arboriculture and forestry.



*My favourite plant...  
I don't have a favourite, but I enjoy most plants  
including the native wildflowers of North Somerset &  
the South West.*

### **Darren Share**

Biography will be circulated in early 2014.

## **TEAM 4**

### **Andrew Jackson**

Andrew has had a keen interest in gardening from an early age and had his first allotment from the age of 10. He began his professional horticultural career as an apprentice gardener with Gateshead Council in 1983 and trained at Houghall College, Durham. In 1990 he moved to City of Durham Council and held various posts with the authority including Horticultural Officer, Grounds Maintenance Officer and Technical Manager. Since 2009 he has been Technical Services Manager with Durham County Council's Streetscene Services Department. In this role he is responsible for the development of parks & open spaces, leading on initiatives such as Green Flag Awards / Bloom / It's Your Neighbourhood, and the promotion & development of 'Friends of' / 'Bloom' groups.

A Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture; Andrew is a member of its Northern Branch Committee and has previously held the posts of Branch Chairman and Treasurer. He has also represented the Branch on National Council.

Andrew is a passionate supporter of 'Bloom'. He is actively involved with several local 'In Bloom' groups and helped steer Durham to national success in 2005. In the same year he received an Award of Commendation from the RHS for his involvement with the competition over a number of years. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of Northumbria in Bloom.

As a 'Bloom' competitor for many years Andrew is pleased that, through his involvement with Northumbria in Bloom and as a national judge, he is able to use this experience to help, support and encourage other 'Bloom' communities to reach their full potential in the competition.



*My favourite Plant...  
Tulips. After the long dark days of winter the  
colour of tulips are like a tonic and they give  
me a real boost and encouragement for the  
gardening year ahead.*

*I'd like to meet...  
The person I would most like to have met was  
the late Geoff Hamilton of 'Gardener's World'.  
His easy, practical, down to earth approach  
encouraged many people to get involved in  
gardening. He was also one of the first  
champions of organic, environmentally friendly  
gardening.*

## **Mel Henley**

Mel started his career with an apprenticeship at a nursery/garden centre, moving on to study at Pershore for the RHS Master of Horticulture. He has worked in several sectors of amenity horticulture and for more than 20 years in local government where he has developed a passion for Britain in Bloom. Mel sees Bloom as one of the most effective ways to engage local communities, improve the environment and develop the services he has managed.

Mel has had a leading role in partnership with the strong teams at Oxford, Nottingham, and Buxton that gained success at Regional, National and Entente Florale competition levels.

Working at Tunbridge Wells he manages a portfolio of services that link to the Bloom campaigns, including parks, street care and recycling. Having been a Regional Judge in two regions for 10 years, he has gained experience of both sides of Bloom. He is delighted to now be a part of the UK Judging Panel, seeing it as an opportunity to give something back. He is also a member of the Green Flag Advisory Board and has been a Green Flag Judge for 10 years.



*My favourite plant...*

*I have several, but a few would be *Cornus contraversa variegata*, variegated geraniums, *Pieris foresstii* cultivars. I love good planting combinations like winter aconites and snowdrops, birches under-planted with black grass.*

*Most incredible thing I've seen on tour...*

*It was a route so clean and well cultivated, the only weed I could find was up a church tower (a buddleia growing out of the brick work)!*

## **TEAM 5**

### **Mark Wasilewski MVO**

Mark commenced his horticultural career in the 1970's working for the Somerset Health Authority where he conducted much of his early training before joining The Royal Parks as propagator and nursery manager at Greenwich Park in 1989.

Mark moved to St James's Park in 1992 in a supervisory role before transferring to The Regent's Park in 1996 where as Assistant Manager his responsibilities included the Queen Mary's Gardens, wildlife management, and maintenance of sports pitches. In 2002 he was appointed as Manager of St James's Park and The Green Park.

His current position sees him looking after one of the oldest and busiest of London's parks attracting 6.7 million visitors per year. As well as his involvement in horticultural management and community engagement initiatives he is heavily involved in the many events which take place in the park including in recent years The Royal Wedding, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations, and the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Mark has been a regional judge for over 20 years and is a Trustee of London in Bloom. In his spare time he has judged for several organisations including the London Gardens Society, Floral Guernsey, and Guild of Horticultural Trade Display judges. In 2013 he re-joins the RHS Britain in Bloom judging panel after taking a 2 year sabbatical due to work commitments.



*My favourite plant.....*

*I love seeing plants in their natural surroundings, be it heather in full bloom on the moors or violets and primroses in the hedgerows. So many are becoming endangered and we must do what we can to preserve them.*

*I'd like to meet....*

*I really am old enough to remember listening to Fred Streeter, one of BBC's original Radio Gardeners! I would love to have met him. He had a such a simple way of explaining things and admitted that he talked regularly to his plants.*

### **Brendan Mowforth**

Brendan started his horticultural career at the Royal Gardens Windsor and Windsor Great Park. This was followed with a period of time at Lancashire College of Agriculture, before completing a Diploma course at Royal Botanical Gardens Kew.

He then started work for a local authority in West Yorkshire, holding a range of posts all connected to parks and the wider environment. During this time he oversaw the restoration of three major parks as well as being involved in the restoration of a canal.

Before retirement he was head of service, for a number of service areas, including parks, countryside and street cleaning. During this time he also instigated the use of perennial planting to replace some areas of traditional bedding.

His involvement with Bloom included working with colleagues to help a large number of groups that entered Yorkshire and Britain in Bloom. He is currently Chairman of Yorkshire in Bloom, having been a judge and member of the executive board.

Current occupations include looking after his garden in the Pennines, a range of voluntary work for the charity Perennial, and acting as a member of the RHS Bursaries Committee and a trustee of the Kew Guild. He also assists his local civic society with essential tasks, such as litter picking.

*My Favourite plant.....*

*This changes according to the season but I do like winter-flowering trees and shrubs.*

*I'd like to meet.....*

*David Douglas, the plant collector who introduced the Douglas fir amongst many other plants new to the country in the early 1800's*

## **TEAM 6**

### **Jim Goodwin**

Jim served as an apprentice gardener with Derby Parks Department, and continued his training at RHS Wisley. He then worked for a major Landscape Contractor to further his interest in landscape construction and design.

He moved to Birmingham in 1970, as Landscape Clerk of Works, and then to West Bromwich (later Sandwell) as Senior Technical Officer overseeing major reclamation works.

He served five years in Manchester as Parks Operational Manager and in 1981 a final move to Cardiff where he later became Assistant Director, Parks. Major accolades were the initiation of the Cardiff in Bloom campaign, and steering the City to success in the 1988 Britain in Bloom competition.

Since early retirement in 1995 he now works as a landscape/horticultural consultant. He chairs a local volunteer conservation group and has judged for Wales in Bloom for 18 years.

He particularly enjoys talking to local groups, and passing on his experience for the benefit of others.



*Most incredible thing I've seen on tour... I've seen some wonderful designs whilst judging. The Sensory Garden in Sunderland was spectacular, created by a young Landscape Architect. The recreated show gardens in Leeds were likewise a brilliant innovation. Finally the cathedral of trees in Milton Keynes was highly unusual, and outside the box. Cleverly created.*

*I'd like to meet... I would have liked to have met 'Capability Brown' as I admire all his landscape developments, and have seen many. His far-seeing instincts were revolutionary at the time.*

### **Nigel Bishop**

Nigel has spent the majority of his horticultural career working within the public sector, but began as an apprentice gardener for the late Princess Royal at Harewood House in Yorkshire. He trained at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and then the Institute of Park and Recreation Administration.

Nigel retired in 2009, finishing 20 years as Head of Parks for Warwick District Council (WDC). During his time with WDC he notes his major achievement as being the £4.3million restoration of the Grade II listed Jephson Gardens in Royal Leamington Spa, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The park's renewal included the addition of a contemporary sub-tropical glasshouse, a restaurant and a teaching studio. The park was awarded Best Park in Britain by RHS Britain in Bloom in 2004.

Nigel has been involved with Britain in Bloom for many years in both professional and personal capacities, serving as Chairman of two Bloom committees.

He is currently a National Horticultural Trade Judge and Vice Chairman of the Guild of Horticultural Trade and Display Judges. He is also Horticultural Advisor to the Shropshire Horticultural Society and the Shrewsbury Flower Show.

This year Nigel received Associate of Honour from the RHS in recognition of his distinguished service to horticulture, an award that he has greatly appreciated.

In his free time he enjoys growing vegetables and soft fruit in his garden, this year his challenges are finding something more inventive to do with the inevitable glut of courgettes and finally getting a successful crop of spring onions!



*My favourite plant...*  
*I have no strong favourite, although spring is always the best time of year for me. Plants that highlight spring is on its way and that the cold winter is behind us are a plus. The simple snowdrop (Galanthus) and snowflake (Leucojum) fulfil that role, with their many different and interesting varieties.*

*Colour combinations that keep me awake at night...*  
*Experimenting with colour is always a good thing, although what suits one person may not another - there are some combinations that I would never use again!*

## **TEAM 7**

### **Sue Wood**

Sue's horticultural training began at Writtle Agricultural College in Chelmsford studying for a Higher National Diploma in Amenity Horticulture. Her initial roles as a gardener were with Sheffield Recreation Department and then the Department of Environmental Services at Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council. She then moved to East Lothian District Council's Department of Leisure, Recreation and Tourism where she was involved with various external works as a technical assistant.

Since 1988, Sue has been with Harrogate Borough Council – initially as the Parks Technical Officer for 12 years where her responsibilities included designing and preparing bedding schedules for the whole District and then she became the Community Liaison Officer, for 7 years liaising with eight local Bloom groups across Harrogate District many of which she has supported and mentored in both the Britain in Bloom and Entente Florale campaigns helping them achieve extremely high standards. Her current role is Horticultural Officer which includes designing landscape schemes across the District. Sue has been a judge for Yorkshire in Bloom since 2001 and on the Yorkshire in Bloom Executive committee since 2003. Sue is a passionate supporter of the 'Bloom' and also assists Bloom groups across the region with talks and mentoring.

Sue is also a member of the Institute of Horticulture, a member of the Northern Branch committee and a Green Flag judge



*My favourite plant...*  
*It depends on the season but I'll go for copper beech tree, I recently found a cut-leaved one in the Valley Gardens in Harrogate.*

*I'd like to meet...*  
*David Attenborough – his knowledge and enthusiasm of the natural world is phenomenal and what stories he can tell about his expeditions*

### **Kim Parish**

Kim grew up in a gardening household and as a child got to visit many spectacular gardens in the East of England. In her late teens she became hooked, setting up a small nursery business, which she managed on top of a full-time job. With no professional training Kim experimented with plant propagation in her spare time.

In 1995 Kim started her professional horticultural career at Writtle College, where she completed a three year BSc (Hons) Degree in Landscape and Garden Design. On graduating she took up a position as a Client Officer in Cornwall, progressing to a Landscape and Community Officer where she designed and oversaw the completion of numerous landscaping schemes as well as assisting local community groups wanting to be involved with Bloom.

During this time Kim completed numerous additional professional qualifications. She has designed and project managed several show gardens. Her team were awarded 'Best in Show' at the LGA conference and she was part of the 2010 Winchester Growers Gold exhibit at Chelsea.

Since 2012 Kim has run a landscape/garden design and consultancy business based in Cornwall. She has been involved with Bloom on both sides for 10 years, is a regional judge and Vice Chair of South West in Bloom.

In her spare time Kim continues to support local Bloom entries and regularly appears on local radio. She has a young family and cherishes family time. She also enjoys travelling, sport, running, cycling, swimming and bodyboarding. In 2011 she completed her first London Marathon. This year she hopes to complete her third and is saying it will be the last...



***My favourite plant...***

*That is such a hard question. I am passionate about exotics and in particular foliage, and living in Cornwall enables me to fully explore this interest. However on the other side I love to see wild poppies. If you are lucky enough to be in Cornwall in June be sure to visit West Pentire headland where you will see fields of them growing of their own and with other native wild flowers.*

***The person I would most like to meet...***

*Another difficult question as through my career I have met the Her Majesty The Queen, and many of the famous gardening professionals. I would like to meet Jamie Oliver, spend the day exploring his fantastic vegetable garden and learn some new skills in the kitchen.*

**TEAM 8**

**Rae Beckwith**

Rae worked for Gateshead Council for 27 years, 20 of which were as Area Manager. During this time he led his team to victory in Britain in Bloom in 1990 as well as seven Britain in Bloom Finals between 2003 and 2007. He is Chairman of Whickham in Bloom and in 2006 was delighted to receive an Award of Commendation from the RHS for his work with Whickham and Rowlands Gill.

He has been a member of The Guild of Horticultural Trade Display Judges for 14 years and judges at major shows around the UK. Rae was Area Advisor for The Royal National Rose Society for a number of years and is currently Chairman of The Daffodil Society Northern Group.

For many years he has served as Chairman of Houghall Horticultural Collage Training Committee. During this time many new training initiatives have been

developed in conjunction with college staff, embracing the changing society in which we find ourselves today.

Currently Rae is Show Referee for Gateshead Summer Flower Show and is Senior Steward in the Daffodil Marque at Harrogate Spring Show. In 2010 he was voted onto the RHS Development Steering Group (DSG) working with other group members to move Bloom ever forward.

In what spare time remains, Rae and his wife Susan run a small daffodil nursery growing and hybridising new cultivars. To date they have registered 25 with the RHS.



*My favourite plant...*

*There are many! Most remind me of friends or places that I have visited. To reduce my list to two, it would have to be daffodils and lupins, as the breeding of both is very fulfilling.*

*Most incredible thing I've seen on tour...*

*The most incredible thing that I see while on tour is the passion and commitment of the entrants. This is often a very humbling experience and the reward of being a Britain in Bloom Judge.*

### **Martyn Hird**

Martyn began his horticultural career as a school leaver in the local parks department in his native East Midlands. After attending Askham Bryan College near York, he worked at Borde Hill Gardens in Sussex and Levens Hall in Cumbria. He finally returned to Sussex to work as Head Gardener at The High Beeches for eleven years.

For the past fifteen years he has been self-employed working for individuals in their private gardens. Martyn is a keen plantsman and traveller and takes every opportunity to extend his knowledge of world flora. He has recently been to Chile and Easter Island and is planning his next trip to Mount Roraima in Venezuela to further his interest in carnivorous plants.

In his spare time he gives talks to local groups following two plant-collecting trips to China and New Zealand.



*My favourite plant...*

*At the moment it has to be the sundews and other insectivorous plants.*

*My garden needs.....*

*A bog garden to show all my new plants off!*

## JUDGES' CONTACTS:

The judges are happy to answer your questions relating to the judging experience; however please direct any questions about this year's events or the organisation of your judging tour to the team at the RHS. The judges will not be able to answer these queries.

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Nigel Bishop	07854 498 618	01926 422 014	nigel_bishop@hotmail.co.uk
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Kim Parish	07888 899 012	01872 519 101	southwestinbloom@aol.com; kjparish@btinternet.com
Mark Wasilewski	07974 236 395	0300 061 2353	mwasilewski@royalparcs.gsi.gov.uk
Jon Wheatley	07879 640 518	01275 333 007	jonswheatley@aol.com
Jim Buttress	07908 911 707	020 8316 7669	No email
Ian Beaney	07889 994892	028 9127 0371	ian.beaney@northdown.gov.uk
Darren Share	07717 155322	0121 303 4477	darrenshare@btinternet.com

## APPENDIX 6 – PORTFOLIO IDEAS

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### Tips about content:

The suggestions below are for information that you might include in your portfolio, they are not requirements. It is entirely up to you what information you include in your portfolio.

- A quick introduction to your local campaign and your village/ town/ city. This might include when you were established, major projects/successes through the years, approximate number of volunteers, key partnerships and sponsors. This is the place to include all your statistics. It is also a good opportunity to show the judges how you generate your funding.
- A copy of your diary of events, showing year-round activities and major projects. Portfolios are one of the few opportunities you have to show the judges what you did throughout the “off” season (i.e. fundraising events, awareness campaigns, educational programmes, community consultation and planning etc.).
- You can also use the portfolio to show the judges things you would like to include on the tour but can't, due to time or other constraints.
- Names of the key people involved in your local Bloom campaign and a list of your sponsors, funders and supporters.
- A quick insight into your future plans.
- Photos where you have them available; photos ideally should have been taken within the last year (since October 2013).

Please remember that it is recommended that the portfolio not be a printed version of your tour, it should show the judges things you will not have the opportunity to see on the day due to time or other constraints. This is your opportunity to really complement what the judges will see during the tour.

### Tips about format:

What follows is merely an idea as to how you might organise your portfolio. You may choose a different set up, but these suggestions make the portfolios more user-friendly for judges:

- have clearly defined and labelled sections (for quick referencing)
- ensure information is easy to find
- use bullet points / lists wherever possible.

Possible outline:

- Introduction
- Review of the past year in chronological order
- Illustrating your achievements, using the headers below:
  - A. Horticultural Achievement
  - B. Environmental Responsibility
  - C. Community Participation

You may, if you wish, break down this content even further using the sub-sections (A1, A2... B1, B2... C1, C2 etc.) but there is no requirement to do this.

- Conclusion, giving a brief summary of key achievements and an outline of future plans for sustaining/ maintaining your good work and new projects.

**Should you have any questions about compiling your portfolio**, please contact Stephanie Eynon (stephanieeynon@rhs.org.uk; 020 7821 3689).

## APPENDIX 7 – IMAGE DONATION FORM



Sharing the best in Gardening

### RHS IMAGE COLLECTION

In order for the RHS to make use of images given to them by “in Bloom” groups, we need to have the photographer’s consent in writing. By signing this form, you confirm that you are the copyright holder of the images, and that you agree that the RHS may use your images for promotional and editorial purposes, for example on the website, in marketing material, or in *The Garden* magazine. We will **not** however, make commercial use of these images, and they will not be passed on to third parties. If you are sending in images for which you do not hold the copyright, please ensure that this form is passed to the copyright holder for them to sign.

The information below will be kept only to ensure that RHS use of your images complies with your wishes and to ensure that the images are correctly credited.

**If you are uncertain about what it is you are being asked to sign, or have any questions, please contact Sophie Dawson: 020 7821 3118 /sophiedawson@rhs.org.uk.**

	IMAGE INFORMATION	PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS
1.	Photographer’s full name	
2.	Photographer’s Contact details (name, address, telephone number, email address)	
3.	Subject/s of images e.g. Milton Keynes Britain in Bloom	
4.	Credit line e.g. John Smith	
5.	Special requests	

### REPRODUCTION RIGHTS

PLEASE SIGN BELOW TO CONFIRM THAT YOU AGREE WITH THE RHS’S RIGHT TO REPRODUCE YOUR IMAGES

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Including RHS Publications, e.g. *The Garden* and *Plantsman* magazines, RHS Marketing, RHS Shows, scientific and educational use, RHS websites, information signs & leaflets, presentations, schools materials. This list is not exhaustive.

I agree to the *Royal Horticultural Society* making use of these images for all RHS Internal use.

Signature: .....

Date: .....