

RHS It's Your Neighbourhood assessment form

The items listed within each section of the assessment form are simply suggestions of things that you could be doing; you do not have to be doing all or even most of them to earn a top mark. The assessor will gauge how much has already been done against how much could be done by your group, under the conditions present.

RHS It's Your Neighbourhood Assessment Form

Section A - Community Participation (40% or 40 points)

The group is working towards things such as:

- Being inclusive of local people
- Local ownership and direction
- Making a difference to local people
- Involving local people with planning, decision-making, communication & implementation
- Engaging the wider community (beyond just your committee or group members)
- Getting support (e.g. from local council, grant aid, sponsorship, in-kind aid etc.)
- Planning for the future
- Working in partnership with other organisations (e.g. council, police, community support officers, housing association, environmental groups etc.)

Total points assessed for Section A (out of 40):

Section B - Environmental Responsibility (30% or 30 points)

The group is engaged in environmental activities such as:

- Conservation (e.g. resources, heritage, wildlife)
- Composting
- Recycling
- Creating, maintaining or improving green space
- Sharing knowledge and skills
- The group is engaged in addressing environmental issues such as: fly-tipping; fly-posting; litter and graffiti; anti-social behaviour; dog fouling

Total points assessed for Section B (out of 30):

Section C - Gardening Achievement (30% or 30 points)

The group is employing good gardening practices appropriate to the area, such as:

- Good plant choice
- Good maintenance, presentation and management
- Creativity and innovation
- Overcoming site difficulties
- Enhancing the area through gardening

Total points assessed for Section C (out of 30):

Grand total points assessed:
LEVEL ACHIEVED:
ASSESSOR'S COMMENTS:
Areas of achievement:
Areas for development:

Further information about the assessment criteria:

Community Participation

Community participation is about working together for the benefit of the local area. It might be involving people in hands-on gardening, but also includes engaging people in fundraising, providing moral support/ facilities and resources or publicising your events etc.

Groups will come in many sizes and have many different structures; the key consideration is that even if only one or two people are driving the project, they are engaging with other members of the community or seeking ways to do this in the future.

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 [Volunteer Now](#) in Northern Ireland.

Environmental Responsibility

Environmental responsibility is about care for your local area, including both the built and the natural environment (e.g. aspects such as cleanliness of the streets as well those relating to conservation of local wildlife and reducing the use of natural resources).

Examples of environmental responsibility:

- Practising an environmentally-responsible approach – e.g. use of peat-free compost, composting of green waste, minimising water usage, establishing local recycling etc.
- Conservation activities – e.g. supporting wildlife through installing bird/ bat boxes, log piles or bee hives; planting pollinator friendly plants; re-introducing native species or controlling invasive species; creating new habitats or renovating existing ones e.g. ponds, wildflower meadows, coppicing etc.
- Efforts to: promote responsible dog-ownership and reduce dog fouling; reduce littering, graffiti, fly-posting and fly-tipping; clean up areas spoiled by such activities.
- Efforts to encourage a sense of local heritage – education and heritage-related activities such as tree trails, history leaflets, signage/interpretation boards etc.

Gardening Achievement

This will be completely dependent on the nature of your local area and should always be relevant and appropriate to your needs and the wishes of the community. The gardening should enhance the locality and should be within your group's ability to develop over the long term.

Examples of good gardening practices are things such as:

- Good plant choices for the local conditions (soil, climate, aspect), which suit the natural and built environment; a good balance between seasonal and permanent planting
- Appropriate quality of maintenance – good pruning, mulching, lack of weeds, etc.
- Creativity – planting that shows originality and local flavour.

What are the achievement awards?

In the RHS It's Your Neighbourhood campaign there are five levels of achievement:

Level	Description	Points
Level 1	Establishing	0-35
Level 2	Improving	36-52
Level 3	Developing	53-68
Level 4	Thriving	69-85
Level 5	Outstanding	86-100

Groups who have done consistently well over time may be nominated to receive the *RHS* It's Your Neighbourhood National Certificate of Distinction.