



In BLOOM Competition



Top Tips for Your In Bloom Entry



ENTRY CLOSING DATES:

Schools and allotments: **29 May 2026**

All other categories: **17 July 2026**

antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/in-bloom



To help the judges fairly assess each entry, please follow the guidelines below when submitting your photographs, examples are provided on pages 2-4.

Number of Photographs

- You may submit up to three photographs of your garden/allotment.

Required Shot

- At least one photograph must be a wide shot of your garden.
- This should provide a clear overall view, showing the layout, design and general appearance of the space.

Additional Photographs

- The remaining photographs can highlight specific features of your garden, such as seating areas, pathways, water features, planting schemes or decorative elements.
- Choose images that best showcase the character and creativity of your garden as a whole.

What to Avoid

- Do not submit close-up images of individual plants or flowers.
- Do not submit composite images (multiple photos combined into one image or collage).
- Avoid edited or filtered images that do not accurately represent your garden.

Image Quality

- Ensure photographs are clear, well-lit and in focus.
- Take photos in natural light where possible to show true colours and detail.
- Photographs captured on your mobile phone are perfectly acceptable.



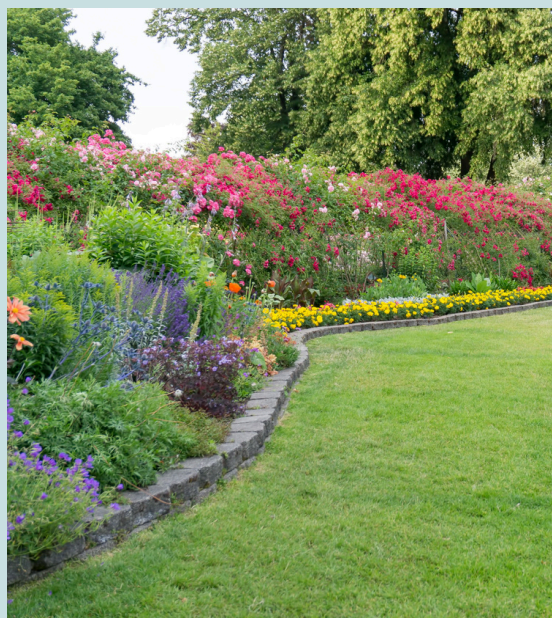
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Please do not submit composite images (multiple photos combined into one image or collage).





IN BLOOM COMPETITION CATEGORY GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are designed to help entrants understand what judges are looking for in each category. Please read carefully and tailor your photographs and description accordingly.

Young Gardener of the Year

Focus on demonstrating personal involvement in the garden or project. Judges are looking for clear evidence that the young person has taken an active role in planning, planting and maintaining the space. Highlight creativity, learning and enjoyment, as well as any new skills developed. Include how the project benefits the environment or others, and show progression or effort over time.

Best Communal Garden

Show how the garden is shared, maintained and enjoyed by a group. Emphasise teamwork and participation, and how the space is used by residents. Judges will look for a well maintained, attractive garden that makes effective use of space and is welcoming, inclusive and accessible to all.

Best School Gardening Project (Nursery and Primary)

Entries should clearly demonstrate pupil involvement and leadership. Highlight how the project supports learning, creativity, and teamwork. Include how the garden is used as an educational tool and any sustainable practices in place. Judges will value projects that make good use of available space and resources while engaging students.



Best School Gardening Project (Secondary)

Entries should clearly demonstrate pupil involvement and leadership. Highlight how the project supports learning, creativity, and teamwork. Include how the garden is used as an educational tool and any sustainable practices in place. Judges will value projects that make good use of available space and resources while engaging students.

Best Allotment Plot

Focus on the overall management and productivity of your allotment. Describe how you organise the space, maintain plant health and ensure consistent care. Judges will look for efficient use of space, a variety of healthy crops or planting, evidence of ongoing effort and sustainable gardening practices.

Volunteer Group/Individual of the Year

This category is about people rather than places. Clearly outline the individual's or group's contribution, commitment and impact. Provide examples of their work, including how they support others, improve spaces, or lead initiatives. Judges will value dedication, teamwork and long-term positive impact on the community or environment.

Gardening for Wildlife Award

Demonstrate how your garden actively supports biodiversity and wildlife. Highlight features such as habitats, planting choices and sustainable practices that encourage wildlife. Judges are looking for a thoughtful, nature focused approach, with evidence that the garden provides food, shelter, or breeding opportunities for wildlife.



Best Rear Garden

Showcase a well designed and functional private space. Judges will look for strong layout, planting quality, and creativity, as well as how the garden is used and enjoyed. Highlight any unique features, personal touches, and environmentally friendly elements that enhance the space.

Best Front Garden

Focus on how your garden contributes to the overall appearance of the street. Judges will assess visual impact, colour, and design cohesion. A successful entry will demonstrate pride, creativity, and a welcoming appearance, with healthy planting that enhances the local environment.

Best Commercial Premises

Show how planting enhances your business frontage or premises. Judges will look for high quality displays, effective use of containers or hanging baskets, and strong visual presentation. The planting should complement the building and create a positive impression for customers and passers-by.

Best Community Garden

Highlight how the garden brings people together and benefits the wider community. Judges will look for strong participation, good design, and healthy planting. Emphasise the garden's role in wellbeing, education, biodiversity, or food growing, and how it creates a positive local impact.