

# RHS Yorkshire in Bloom CIO Entry Pack



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**Charity Number 1190444**

## **Introduction to RHS Yorkshire in Bloom**

RHS Yorkshire in Bloom is a voluntary regional organisation that administers the RHS Britain in Bloom campaign across Yorkshire. Yorkshire in Bloom works with local communities, groups and a diverse range of organisations to create lasting floral and environmental improvements across the county and also to foster and enhance community spirit.

## **General Information for ALL entrants into the Yorkshire in Bloom Campaign**

### **Why Enter Yorkshire in Bloom?**

- To improve the local environment
- To foster civic pride
- To develop community spirit
- To improve the visual appearance of a place making it an attractive place in which to live, work and play.
- To create a good impression for visitors and to attract potential business
- To involve local organisations – Schools, other voluntary groups

### **Which categories can we enter?**

<b>C1-C5</b> Village, Town, City, BID, Coastal Communities	Entry into the community categories of RHS Yorkshire in Bloom is based on the resident adult population and/or the type of community. Please use the up to date electoral roll for your community which can be obtained from your local council.
<b>C6</b> for Parks, Cemeteries and Open Spaces	This class is primarily, but not exclusively, intended for “Friends of” parks, small spaces, cemeteries, churchyards, hospitals, HM Prisons, public buildings and their surrounds.
<b>C7</b> Royal Horticultural Society It’s Your Neighbourhood	Aimed at small, resident led communities just starting out on enhancing their environment using the campaign as a catalyst.
<b>C8</b> Grow Your Community	Aimed at past entrants who are considering rejoining Yorkshire in Bloom and first-time entrants who are tentatively considering entering but don’t necessarily feel they are ready to join in the main community categories just yet!
<b>C9</b> Railway and Transport Hubs	This class is for bloom volunteers and friends groups who are brightening up their local railway station and/or transport hub within their community
<b>C10</b> Charitable Establishments	This class is intended for those organisations who have charitable aims and objectives and are not for profit. This could include Hospices, Church

	Grounds, Supported Learning Environments and Community Gardens.
<b>C11</b> Golden Rose Awards for Town and Parish Councils	This is a relatively new class primarily aimed at Town and Parish Councils and introduced to Yorkshire in Bloom in 2024. The entry does not necessarily have to come from the Town or Parish Council, it could be devolved down to a local bloom or friends group.
<b>B1-B4</b> Small, Medium & Large, Business and Tourist Attraction	A small business employs up to 5 staff A medium size business employs between 6 & 20 staff A large business employs 20+ staff
<b>B5</b> Golden Hop Awards	Open to Pubs and Restaurants
<b>E1</b> Harrogate Flower Show Young Peoples Award	Open to all young people's groups including after school clubs, out of school clubs and supported learning centres primarily for young people under the age of 18 who have made a significant contribution to improving their environment.
<b>E2</b> Universities, colleges and Further Education establishments	Open to universities, colleges and other further education establishments

### **How Do We Enter?**

Entry to the Yorkshire in Bloom campaign is via our website which can be found at [www.yorkshireinbloom.co.uk](http://www.yorkshireinbloom.co.uk)

where you can also find a full list of all the Yorkshire in Bloom categories, entry fees and judging allocations for each class.

Please pay the appropriate entry fee for your chosen class either by bank transfer or by cheque made payable to Yorkshire in Bloom CIO

If you are paying by bank transfer, our details can be found on the entry form.

Please visit the Yorkshire in Bloom website for closing dates for entries.

### **Mentoring Visits**

If you would like a member of the Yorkshire in Bloom team to visit your entry to give advice and encouragement, please contact our co-ordinator, Liz Kenny, at [postmaster@yorkshireinbloom.co.uk](mailto:postmaster@yorkshireinbloom.co.uk) who will be happy to make arrangements for a mentoring visit from one of our team.

### **The Judging Timetable**

The Yorkshire in Bloom judges are all volunteers who give their time freely to assess entries. They receive their judging allocation several weeks before the judging period

and they will get in touch with your named primary contact soon after this to work out mutually convenient dates for their visit. The lead contact for your entry will also receive notification of the names and contact details of the judges allocated to them. Please ensure that the correct contact details are supplied on your entry form so we are sure we are contacting the right person!

There will normally be one or two judges who will visit to carry out the assessment. Judges will be aware that entrants, particularly first time entrants, will be apprehensive but we are a very social campaign and the judges will do their very best to put you at your ease.

### **What Are The Judges Looking For?**

Yorkshire in Bloom is based on three core principles

- Horticultural Achievement
- Environmental Responsibility
- Community Participation

Judges will be looking for examples of each of these principles in the smallest open space or park to the largest towns and cities, schools, educational establishments, business premises and transport hubs.

Assessment is made against a set of criteria to ensure a level playing field. Examples of marking sheets and criteria for your class can be found on the website or by emailing the coordinator.

Yorkshire in Bloom judges are always looking for excellent quality horticulture and a wide range of different types of planting. We would also encourage all entries – wherever possible- to consider supplementing or moving towards more sustainable planting and increasing the number of pollinator plants used within their entry. While such planting may initially seem costly, in the long term it pays for itself with communities not having to purchase as many annuals and being able to split and create more plants in the years to come.

### **The Judging Report**

Immediately after their visit, your assessors will put together the judge's report using the appropriate marking sheet and matrix for your category. The report will include the introductory paragraph "Overall Impression" plus an area for Judges Feedback on Areas for Consideration". These are the comments that the judges believe would assist in improving and raising the profile of the entry in the campaign. These are intended as constructive suggestions.

This report is returned to you in late September, or presented to you in person at the annual Yorkshire in Bloom awards ceremony. Awards of Gold, Silver Gilt, Silver and Bronze are made.

Every entry will receive a certificate of recognition and there is the opportunity to order a plaque to display. Results are also posted on the Yorkshire in Bloom website and publicised through social media channels.

**Standard of Achievement Awards** (except C6 and C7,C11 & B5)

Awards will be made in conjunction with the appropriate report sheet and judging matrix.

<b>Award</b>	<b>Standard</b>
<b>Gold Award</b> <b>Score 85-100 points</b>	An <u>excellent</u> and exceptionally high standard demonstrated throughout. A consistent approach which demonstrates both best practice and sustainable effort. Meets all of the judge's criteria and objectives of RHS Yorkshire in Bloom and score very highly in each section of the judging criteria.
<b>Silver Gilt</b> <b>Score 75-84 points</b>	A <u>very good</u> , high standard which generally meets the judge's criteria and objectives of RHS Yorkshire in Bloom. This entry shows potential to progress to Gold Standard.
<b>Silver</b> <b>Score 60-74 points</b>	Considered to be a <u>Good</u> entry which meets most of the judge's criteria and objectives of Yorkshire in Bloom. There may be some inconsistencies which, when ironed out, offers potential to move to a higher award.
<b>Bronze</b> <b>Score 50-59 points</b>	A satisfactory entry which meets some but not necessarily all of the judging criteria and objectives of RHS Yorkshire in Bloom.

**For C6 Parks, Gardens, Cemeteries & Public Buildings :**

Platinum 85 -100 , Gold Award – 75-84, Silver Gilt – 60 -74, Silver – 50-59, Bronze – 40 -49.

**C7 It's Your neighbourhood Levels of achievement.**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Points</b>
Level 1	Establishing	0-35
Level 2	Improving	36-52
Level 3	Advancing	53-68
Level 4	Thriving	69-85

Level 5	Outstanding	86-100
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**C11 & B5 Yorkshire Roses/Golden Hops are awarded for merit as follows**

10-19 points	1 Yorkshire Rose/Golden Hops Yorkshire Rose a fair place to visit which does need a number of targeted improvements to bring it up to standard.
20-29 points	2 Yorkshire Roses/Golden Hops (a reasonable place to visit however with a bit of work could easily improve to good or very good status)
30-39 points	3 Yorkshire Roses/Golden Hops (Roses a good place to visit with a few areas where improvements could be made to achieve very good status)
40-49 points	4 Yorkshire Roses/Golden Hops (A very good place to visit which with a little effort could be brought up to excellent)
50-60 points	5 Yorkshire Roses/Golden hops (An excellent place to visit with very little detractors)

**Overview of Judging Criteria**

**C1 – C5 Community Classes**

- The judges will be looking for the following key points in addition to those listed on the appropriate marking sheet.
- Evidence of thoughtful planning of how to maintain the improvements that have been made
- Effective communications raising awareness and understanding in the local community. This can be through the traditional press and/or social media channels in all their forms.
- Have a year round programme of events and activities to keep the community engaged throughout the year
- Evidence of a broad base of community involvement across all ages, backgrounds and socio-economic groups with a particular effort to engage young people/schools/colleges as appropriate to the community.



## **C6 Parks, Cemeteries and Open Spaces**

- The judging criteria is similar to the community marking sheet outlined for C1-C5 but the best scoring entrants into this class have the opportunity to be awarded a Platinum Certificate of excellence.



## **C7 RHS It's Your Neighbourhood Campaign**

It's Your Neighbourhood is a non-competitive scheme for community groups who want to 'green up' local areas –adding some colour to your community, making new friends and getting active in your local area. Entry to the campaign is by completion of the Entry form located on the Yorkshire in Bloom website. This is a free to enter campaign, but registration through the entry form is essential.

Registered groups receive:

- An annual visit from an It's Your Neighbourhood assessor, with useful feedback and advice to help grow for maximum impact, for both your community and local environment
- Support from experienced mentors who will provide guidance and advice on how to progress and achieve your ambitions
- Recognition of your hard work with an annual certificate of achievement • Membership to a nationwide network of groups engaged in community gardening
- Access to networking opportunities in your area
- A free copy of the RHS community gardening magazine, Grass Roots, full of inspirational stories and expert advice
- The opportunity to purchase affordable insurance cover, specifically created for community gardening groups
- Free advice from expert RHS horticultural advisors
- Access to a range of seed giveaways



When you form an 'IYN' group and begin work you should set your own goals which should be suited to your local needs - what follows below are ideas to help illustrate

activities relevant to each pillar, not rules to be followed nor to do lists to be ticked off. When deciding your goals you should consider whether these are realistic and manageable and whether the work is relevant to the core pillars. If you are a newly formed group, your first set of goals may relate to things such as forming a group, deciding on a project, consulting with the wider community and so on. Then as the work of the group progresses so should the goals with the focus being increasingly on getting jobs done that move the project from initial ideas and planning to actual delivery and results. The examples below are just suggestions and assessors will also consider where your group started, the challenges that you faced and how far you have come.

Yorkshire in Bloom can offer you advice and support and if you would like details please contact our Co-ordinator.

It's Your Neighbourhood - is part of the wider RHS Britain in Bloom initiative but it is not competitive; benchmarking levels are used to recognise and applaud the achievements of the participants as well as to provide them with some feedback and guidance for the future. The assessors are there as mentors and friends – not as judges – and you should take advantage of their visit to get constructive feedback. The assessors benchmark your achievements in the areas of the core pillars by considering how much the you have already done and how much more you could do given your unique circumstances.

There is a total number of marks allocated to each section and the sections correspond to the 3 core pillars of RHS It's Your Neighbourhood. There are no sub-sections with allocated scores; the assessor evaluates the section as a whole. The items listed within each section are simply suggestions of things that you could/should be doing for that core pillar; you do not have to be doing all or even most of them to earn a top mark for the section. The assessor needs to gauge how much has already been done against how much could be done by your group and under the conditions present. The assessor will also consider if, in relation to the core pillar, you seem to be just starting out (Establishing) or if you have achieved something truly outstanding (Outstanding), or if you are somewhere on the spectrum in between (i.e. Improving, Advancing, Thriving).

## **C8 "GROW YOUR COMMUNITY"**

- The mark sheet and judging criteria used for this class is the same as for Community Classes 1-5.





## **C9 Railway and Transport Hubs**

- This is a relatively new class introduced by Yorkshire in Bloom in 2024. Judging is based on the three core pillars of Horticultural Achievement, Environmental Responsibility and Community Participation with the aim of “Getting Your Railway Station Growing!”
- Often, the first impression visitors will have of your community will be the local transport hub. What does that visitor see when they step off the bus or train? Yorkshire in Bloom encourages new partnerships and aims to increase community pride. The In Bloom campaign can be a powerful tool for tackling local issues together.
- The marking sheet and judging criteria used for this class is the same as for Community Classes 1-5.
- All entrants will receive a certificate of achievement



## **C10 Charitable and Not For Profit Organisations**

- The emphasis of the assessment would, once again, be placed on Horticultural Excellence, Environmental Responsibility and Community Participation in all its forms.
- The marking sheet and judging criteria used for this class is the same as for Community Classes 1-5.
- All entrants will receive a certificate of achievement.



## **C11 Golden Rose Awards for Town and Parish Councils**

This class is unique from the other classes in that judging will take place sometime in the first three weeks of July but will be unannounced. There is no requirement to meet the judges or to produce any paperwork other than the initial entry form. Yorkshire in Bloom hope to reduce pressure on already busy councils by making this class as simple as possible but enabling town councils and parish councils to participate and gain recognition and reward for enhancing their community spaces.

Judging for this class is based on good, old fashioned principles of horticultural impact, cleanliness and community facilities. Is this a nice



place in which to live and visit? Do visitors feel welcome? Are the various facilities on offer well maintained, clean and easy to find? Is there a WOW factor in the horticultural impact on show?

There will be 20 points available for each section making a total of 60 available marks.

All entrants will receive a report sheet with judge's feedback and suggested areas for consideration. These will not be onerous! Consider your assessor as a critical friend!



One winner will be chosen annually from each of the four corners of Yorkshire, North, South, East and West. These four winners will be invited to compete head to head with one another the following year to determine the Champion of Yorkshire and Winner of the Golden Rose Award.

The main focus of the assessment will be on the approach roads in, entrance signs and around the town/village centre, the judges **will not** take into account outlying areas, housing/industrial estates, but will concentrate on the core of the entry which often forms the visitor's first impression. Allowances will be made for the location of the Town/Village, rural versus urban and we will not be looking for perfection, just a nice place to live in and visit.

**Assessment would be based on the following:**

- Horticultural Impact, provision and maintenance of baskets, tubs, planted areas, gardens (private and public) planted entrance signs.
- Cleanliness, lack of litter, condition of street furniture, including litter bins, public seating, signage, entrance signs etc.
- Public Amenities, provision of shops, pubs, libraries, toilets, defibrillators, mini libraries, play areas/grounds, car parking, church grounds, meeting rooms/village halls, electric charging points and anything else that constitutes a shared public resource.

**The five key words for assessment will be**

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Reasonable
- Fair



## **B1 – B4 Business and Tourist Attractions Classes**

The Yorkshire in Bloom Business and Tourism classes are separated relative to the size of the business concerned. They are split into small (under 5 Staff), medium (6-20 Staff) and large enterprises (20+ Staff), depending on the number of staff employed, and could include hotels, guest houses, shops, shopping centres, caravan sites, residential care homes, restaurants, industrial estates and many other forms of business.

The Tourist Attraction class is intended for entrants maintaining eg. Stately Homes, Pay on Entry Gardens, Visitor Attractions, Arboreta, Racecourses and Sculpture Parks to name but a few!



## **B5 Golden Hop Awards for Pubs and Restaurants**

We are lucky to have so many pubs and restaurants across Yorkshire who take great pride in their outward appearance, often working on the principle that “what looks good outside must be good inside!”

This year, due to popular request, Yorkshire in Bloom have created a new competition for Pubs and Restaurants – aside from our regular business classes – where we hope to recognise and reward those hard working Publicans and Restaurateurs who are going the extra mile to make their premises look inviting with a floral welcome.

We have gone back to the original campaign launched in 1964 where businesses were rewarded for their local pride with three basic threads, Floral Impact, Cleanliness and Overall Impression.



Entrants would be judged by experienced Yorkshire in Bloom assessors in the period late June to early August on a “Mystery Visitor” experience. The assessors will have no requirement to meet anyone from the business and will not give pre notice of their visit.

The main focus of the assessment will be on first impressions of the business, entrance signs and floral welcome. Cleanliness and overall impression of outdoor areas, such as pub gardens, will also be included

The judges will concentrate on the core of the entry which often forms the customer’s first impression. We will not be looking for perfection, just a nice place in which to visit, relax and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

**The entry will be judged on the following three criteria.**

- Floral impact, provision and maintenance of any hanging baskets, tubs, planted areas, pub gardens etc
- Cleanliness, lack of litter, condition of outdoor furniture, signage, entrance signs etc.
- Overall Impression? Tidy? Welcoming? Inviting?

Assessment will be given in the form of Yorkshire Hops Awards 1-5, five being the highest and a simple feedback form will be provided with three positive points and three areas for consideration. None of this will be too onerous and positive feedback will be provided. Certificates of Yorkshire in Bloom accreditation/endorsement will be awarded, with the results being posted out as well as being published on the Yorkshire in Bloom website in September.

Each year we will be picking the best overall winner in each from the four major regions of the County, North, South, East and West. These nominees will receive an invite for two people to attend the Yorkshire in Bloom annual awards and receive their accolades in person. Unfortunately, attendance at this would be at the same standard cost that everyone pays which is reflected in the low entry fee.

The following year and each subsequent year thereafter as part of the ongoing development of this initiative we will be inviting the four regional winners to take part in the “Yorkshire in Bloom Golden Hop” Finals when a senior judge will visit all four entrants and decide on the overall winner for the whole county. To ensure fairness across the county the four sub regional winners will then have to take a step back for a couple of years before they can compete once again for the county title, but they may enter the normal competition to reflect and maintain their very high standard.

**Educational Classes E1 & E2**

As with all Yorkshire in Bloom entries the judge will contact the school to make arrangements for the assessment visit and will check if there are any specific requirements in regard to child protection so that they are prepared in advance. We do ask the judge to follow the guidance lines from Yorkshire in Bloom Safeguarding policy.

Broadly speaking, schools tend to focus on three main areas of horticultural interest: (1) Productive horticulture is popular, with many



schools using raised beds as a favoured method for undertaking this activity (2) Many schools (subject to space) have a 'wildlife' area, which may be managed to a greater or lesser degree. (3) Areas of ornamental plantings which enhance the school grounds. Pupils may (or may not) be involved in the planting and maintenance of ornamental areas. Involvement is more likely to be with annual plantings. In schools, pupil involvement may be class based or may be delivered via a gardening club. The gardening may be linked to other initiatives such as the RHS Campaign for School Gardening, Eco-schools, Forest School and in some areas such as Leeds, Healthy Schools.

- During the assessment it is good for the judge to look for evidence of pupil or young person involvement. Talking to them will soon elicit the degree of their participation.

- It is better that the pupils have hands on involvement, so the judge won't expect everything to be perfect but the grounds may / will be maintained by contractors.

- Gardening is a big commitment and of course schools are not open throughout the year, summertime is particularly difficult unless someone can come into water and pick the produce. Sometimes it is better to do a smaller amount well and build up the skills etc. required. For vegetable production choosing varieties that crop before July might be an option or in September.

- The judge may assess the pupil's/young person's knowledge by talking to them. Project books, display work, diaries, newsletters, gardening club web pages etc. may also demonstrate this.



- The judge may look for evidence of community involvement and remember this can include the immediate school staff and pupils, the wider school community (parents, grandparents, guardians etc.) and the local community. Are they supported by a local 'in Bloom' group?

- If there isn't a dedicated wildlife area, the judge may look at other evidence of supporting wildlife and biodiversity e.g. plants for pollinators, plants for shelter, bird boxes, bat boxes, minibeast shelters/hotels etc.

### Help In Getting Started

The aim of this section is not to offer horticultural advice, but to give hints, tips and assistance on how to bring your entry to life and keep it flourishing in what we hope

will be a long and sustained bloom partnership. Once you get started, you will form your own ideas for improvements you can make.

Here are some pointers to help you on your way.

- The best results are often achieved when an enthusiastic group of people get together to organise an entry.
- Ask for a mentoring visit from a Yorkshire in Bloom representative to explain the process and answers any questions you may have.
- Arrange to visit another similar Yorkshire in Bloom entry to discuss ideas and tips for entering the competition.
- Remember to engage with different sectors of the local community, voluntary groups such as Lions or Rotary, Uniformed groups, schools, local horticultural societies etc.

### Public Liability Insurance

Community Groups should be advised to take out Public Liability Insurance. Details of the scheme administered by the Royal Horticultural Society can be found via the following link

[www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/affiliated-societies/resources/insurance](http://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/affiliated-societies/resources/insurance)

For more information on any Yorkshire in Bloom events and activities, please contact:

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Coordinator

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