

Greener Gateway Community Awards

Guidelines for Entrants - 2024



Settlement Awards

Categories

Wee Village	(maximum population of 300)
Small Village	(population between 301 and 1,000)
Large Village	(population between 1,001 and 2,500)
Town	(population over 2,500)

Assessment Criteria

Section A: Horticultural Achievement

Maximum 40 Points

In tackling this section, entrants should take into account the total landscape of the area.

- Planting should be appropriate to the area concerned and judges will expect to see well-designed seasonal and perennial displays with top quality plants in well-prepared beds and/or containers.
- Permanent plantings should provide form and colour over a longer period of the year with emphasis on quality throughout and a high standard of maintenance. Trees, shrubs or bulbs can be used to provide effective spring and autumn colour, with evidence included of year-round achievements.
- Plant selection should demonstrate an understanding of the need for sustainability with an emphasis on the longer term through permanent planting.
- Biodiversity considerations should be demonstrated through the use of wildflowers and/or more bee-friendly planting, along with other plant types that increase or improve the biodiversity of the areas concerned.
- Selection and use of plants that mitigate for climate change should be demonstrated, e.g. through the use of more drought tolerant plants.
- The sourcing of plants used should have considered any potential adverse impact on the area's carbon footprint, e.g. are local growers/suppliers used to reduce transportation?
- Evidence that community food growing sites have used native seed varieties and, where possible, have harvested seeds from previous crops should be documented. Projects that encourage seed/seedling swaps and sharing of resources should be demonstrated in the submission.
- Thought for the disabled (e.g. access, scented plants, etc.) should be included in the entrant's activities.
- Maintenance of grass areas should be appropriate for the intended use of each site and it is likely that there will be variations throughout each area depending on Council policy and local activities, e.g. roadside verges often cut less frequently and the introduction of wildflower meadows and/or 'biodiversity' grass areas may have resulted in once a year cutting. Judges will look to satisfy themselves with the overall standard of maintenance while allowing for these differences.

Areas for judging include parks, open spaces, public gardens, private gardens (front and back), community gardens, allotments, churchyards/cemeteries, war memorials, schools, industrial areas, business premises.

Section B: Environmental Responsibility

Maximum 30 Points

This section should include information about local history and heritage, highlighting notable architecture and landmarks, etc., which contribute to the area's local identity and pride of place.

Your community's response to climate change adaptation should be demonstrated, including (but not limited to) measures such as those suggested below:

- Where planting and/or maintenance initiatives to increase or improve biodiversity opportunities are carried out, demonstrating an understanding of habitats in relation to their management and conservation requirements should be included.
- Information about all areas of recycling, e.g. community upcycling/composting/recycling of plants, should be included.
- Minimised use of natural resources, e.g. water, and minimised use of pesticides, chemicals, etc. should be evidenced.

Campaigns to reduce litter, dog fouling, etc. should also be included.

Section C: Community Involvement

Maximum 30 Points

This section covers the year-round activities and future commitment of individuals, school/youth groups and any other groups/organisations in the community concerned.

- Assessment will be made from appropriate evidence, e.g. a few photos (before and after, work in progress), a calendar of events, 'what's next', press cuttings and social media.
- Please show how the entrant interacts with everyone in the area, is involved in partnership working, and any actions the entrant is undertaking to promote their activities.
- The entrant should also show how their activities are sustainable, i.e. how they are funded and any in-kind support. Can include fundraising events, grant funding, local business involvement, national funding opportunities and volunteer hours.

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Individual Awards

The Awards Programme also includes the following categories, aimed at recognising the significant and important work undertaken by communities in keeping our towns and villages vibrant, attractive and sustainable throughout the region, all year round.

Border Biodiversity Award

Where a project, initiative or community group wishes to be considered for their efforts in increasing the biodiversity of the Scottish Borders through areas such as: community/volunteer involvement, use of native plants for pollinators, beekeeping, habitat creation such as bug hotels, or through enhancing the Scottish Borders as a result of changed environmental management or maintenance.

Cultivating Communities Award

Presented for gardens/projects where Community Food Growing is a key element in helping to address the climate change emergency alongside building community cohesion. This encompasses gardens/projects where Community Food Growing is predominantly the main objective.

- Projects of all levels are encouraged to enter, to share their work and advance their interests.
- Criteria that form the assessment are: plant health and production, sustainability practices, beneficial habitat for wildlife, aesthetic appeal, and social connections to family/neighbourhood/community.

Sustainability Award

Presented to entrants that demonstrate best practice in regards to sustainability. For example, this could focus on things such as recycling, upcycling of materials (such as repurposed items for planters), permanent planting, good resource management (such as water recycling), and measures to maximise engagement with the wider community and volunteering efforts to sustain your local community.

Entrants wishing to take part in the Border Biodiversity, Cultivating Communities and/or Sustainability Awards should do so on an individual award basis.

Schools Award

Presented to schools who have projects that include one or more of the following themes; biodiversity, sustainability, food growing and intergenerational working.

Video submissions will be judged on four criteria, each of which will be marked out of 25. The four criteria, which should address any, or all, of the themes outlined above are:

- Originality – the project should demonstrate original ideas/concepts
- Inclusivity – the project should be accessible to everyone and include people of different age ranges/demographics
- Environmental impact – the project should demonstrate how it improves environmental challenges
- Sustainable legacy – the project should have longevity and demonstrate how it will grow/be sustained year on year