

2026



Royal Norfolk Show

Garden Village

A Celebration of Norfolk Gardens

A Show Garden Competition
for Clubs, Societies
and Public Gardens

Information Booklet 2026

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All information contained in this booklet is correct at time of print, subject to review.
Last Updated: 19th November 2025.

Show Garden Theme and Design Brief

Show Garden Theme

Design a garden that celebrates Norfolk's rich horticultural heritage through planting, layout and storytelling. There is no set theme, use your creativity to inspire visitors with a garden that makes the most of the space and shares the story of your organisation or garden.

Show Garden Space

Each garden will be allocated a 1.5m x 1.5m plot, bordered with wooden kickboards and filled with topsoil, prepared in advance. If you do not require kickboards or topsoil, please indicate this in your application.

Gardens should be designed to be viewed from all sides, offering visual interest and storytelling from every angle.

Design Brief

Each garden will be judged against the published criteria and the design brief submitted by the applicant.

The brief should outline:

- **What:** Purpose and function of the garden
- **Why:** Design concept and inspiration
- **How:** Construction approach, materials and planting

Please include:

- A descriptive text (max 500 words)
- A sketch or plan of your concept
- A proposed plant list
- Any relevant details (e.g. sustainability features)

Your design brief must be emailed to the Head Judge at rmsgv@harperdebbage.uk at the same time of, or shortly after you submit your application. This informs the judging team and forms the basis for assessing your garden.

Closing Date for Entries and Notification of Acceptance

Closing Date for Entries

Entries for the 2026 show must be submitted by Wednesday 1st April 2026. Spaces are limited, so we strongly encourage early applications to secure your place.

Notification of Entry being Accepted for the Show

We will confirm the status of your entry by Monday 13th April at the latest.

Costs

Cost to Exhibit

There is no charge to enter the Show Garden Competition for Clubs, Societies and Public Gardens

Show Tickets

Show Tickets

Each exhibit (garden) will be allocated:

- 2 x setup/breakdown passes
- 4 x general show admission tickets (2 per day)
- 1 x Wednesday general car park pass
- 1 x Thursday general car park pass.

If you require additional tickets for show days, these can be purchased using the trade stand portal and are charged at the trade stand discounted rate (free parking). The portal will be issued to you on receipt of your booking.

Building and Removing your Show Garden

Building your Show Garden

Garden build takes place from 9am on Monday 22nd June through to 6pm on Tuesday 23rd June.

During this time, exhibitors are invited to construct and complete their garden displays within their allocated plots. All gardens must be fully installed and ready for judging by 6pm on Tuesday.

Removing your Show Garden

Your Show Garden must remain fully in place until the end of the show on Thursday 25th June. Dismantling may begin after 7pm on Thursday, with access also available on Friday 26th June (8am – 5pm). All exhibits must be fully cleared by Monday 29th June 2026 at the latest.

Please note:

- Security cannot be guaranteed on site before or after the show.
- Your plot must be fully cleared of all materials and left in the same condition as when you arrived.

Awards

Awards for Show Gardens

Each exhibit is judged on its own merit against the judging criteria (see page 7).

Depending on the total number of points the exhibit receives it will be given the relevant award as indicated in the judging criteria.

The awards are Gold (28-36 points), Silver-Gilt (23-27 points), Silver (19-22 points), Bronze (15-18 points), No Award (0-14 points).

Awards

Award Cards will be placed on your exhibit, as soon as possible following judging.

Award Feedback

You will receive feedback on your exhibit via email a few days after the show. The Head Judge will be present during the show and feedback can also be obtained verbally on the day.

Judging

Judging Times

Please note times specified are subject to change on the day.

Gardens will be judged on Wednesday 24th June starting from 8am.

Advising Judges of any significant changes (Exhibitor Comments)

An Exhibitor Comment Form will be emailed to your registered contact prior to the show. This form allows you to highlight any updates or changes to your Show Garden since submitting your original design brief, such as design adjustments, plant substitutions, or features you'd like the judges to note.

Please return the completed form to the Head Horticultural Judge or a Garden Village Steward by 6pm on Tuesday 24th June, or email it to rnsgrv@harperdebbage.uk.

Exhibitors' presence during judging

All exhibitors must leave their show garden when it is being judged to allow judges to discuss their opinions freely.

Help and Advice

Our Head Horticultural Judge is happy to share his expertise and advice to assist you in the planning and design process so if you are unsure of anything, or would like to explore your ideas, please contact Kristopher (see page 6).

How to Apply

Submit Your Application Online (Part 1)

Visit the Royal Norfolk Show website and navigate to the Trade Stand page (<https://trade.royalnorfolkshow.co.uk/trade-stands>).

- Click the green button: 'Click Here' to open a new page to start your application
- Provide all Contact Details (Complete all required fields)
- On the next page, select GARDEN CLUB GARDEN and choose the single available option from the dropdown.
- Next tick the 'Trade Stand Standard' option above the description box
- In the description box enter 'A Celebration of Norfolk Gardens', no other information is required

Once submitted, please email maria.skitmore@rnaa.org.uk and rnsgrv@harperdebbage.uk to fast-track your booking.

Submit Your Design Brief by Email (Part 2)

At the time of, or shortly after submitting your application, email your design brief to the Head Judge at rnsgrv@harperdebbage.uk.

This brief informs the judging team and forms the basis for assessing your garden.

Contact Details

If you have any queries regarding Show Gardens in the Garden Village at the Royal Norfolk Show, please contact.

Maria Skitmore for bookings, show tickets.

Kristopher Harper-Allison for any enquiries regarding the application process, your exhibit, seeking advice and guidance or to arrange a meeting to discuss your garden/application.

Royal Norfolk Show Office

Events & Sales Coordinator

Maria Skitmore

Tel: 01603 731963

Email: maria.skitmore@rnaa.org.uk

Head Horticultural Judge and Garden Village Steward

Kristopher Harper-Allison MHort (RHS), MCIHort, FLS

Tel: 07889 679444

Email: rnsqv@harperdebbage.uk

Judging Criteria

Show Garden Judging Criteria					
Criteria	Excellent (4)	Very good (3)	Good (2)	Satisfactory (1)	Poor (0)
1 Realisation of client's brief <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity Delivery 	First-rate and clear realisation of brief with no apparent discrepancies between brief and completed garden	Strong realisation of brief with minor discrepancies between brief and completed garden	Adequate realisation of brief with minor discrepancies between brief and completed garden	Ambiguous realisation of brief with some significant discrepancies between brief and completed garden	Lack of relevance or relationship of brief to completed garden
2 Ambition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atmosphere Flair Originality Impact Theatre 	Excellent degree of ambition with no apparent issues	Very high degree of ambition with minor issues	Adequate degree of ambition with some noticeable issues	Underlying degree of ambition but with some significant issues	No sense of ambition or showmanship
3 Overall impression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attention to detail Choice of materials Polish and dressing 	Excellent overall impression with no apparent issues of attention to detail	Very good overall impression with minor weak areas lacking attention to detail	Favourable overall impression with some noticeable weak areas requiring attention to detail	Weak overall impression with significant areas requiring greater attention to detail	Garden incomplete
4 Design, layout plan of garden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dimensions Scale Unity 	Excellent layout plan of garden, with no apparent flaws	Very good layout plan with some minor flaws	Good layout plan with some noticeable flaws	Weak layout plan with some significant flaws	Major issues with layout plan
5 Design, 3D and spatial composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scale Mass and void Volume Balance 	Excellent spatial balance and scale, with no apparent issues	Very good spatial balance and scale, with minor issues	Largely acceptable spatial balance and scale, but with some noticeable issues	Weak spatial balance and scale, with some significant issues	Major design issues with poor spatial balance and scale
6 Construction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of build and finish 	Excellent build quality and finish demonstrating craftsmanship, flair and skill with no apparent fault in construction	Very good build quality and finish with minor faults in construction that reflect in the aesthetic finish to work	A generally good finish in build quality with some construction faults that could be improved to enhance the build finish	Variable build quality and finish across garden with notable faults in the construction detail	Lack of coherence in choice of materials, poor build quality and finish
7 Planting design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual impact Colour Texture Form Composition 	Excellent planting design with no apparent errors in composition	Very good planting design with minor errors in composition	Good planting design with some noticeable errors in composition	Sufficient planting design with some significant errors in composition	Little or no tangible evidence of planting design, composition or visual impact
8 Planting associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevance Cultural requirements Sustainability 	Excellent planting associations with no apparent inaccuracies in plant selection	Very good planting associations with minor inaccuracies in plant selection	Good planting associations with some noticeable inaccuracies in plant selection	Weak planting associations with significant inaccuracies in plant selection	Small or inadequate stock, poor quality plants and specimens and inadequate coverage
9 Planting implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Health Density 	Excellent quality plants with no imperfections and appropriate density for design intentions	Very good quality plants with few imperfections and mainly appropriate density for design intentions	Good quality plants with some minor imperfections and/or some inconsistency in density for design intentions	Generally undersized plants of insufficient quality and/or quantity for design intentions	Inferior plants inadequate for purpose. Affected by pests and diseases. Unsatisfactory on all counts
Award	Gold	Silver-Gilt	Silver	Bronze	No Award
Points	36-28	27-23	22-19	18-15	14-0

