







## Entrants' Hints and Tips: How to Ensure a Smooth-running Judging Day



Judging Day is always full on and very busy. These hints and tips are aimed at helping you plan ahead to ensure Judging Day goes as smoothly as possible. Remember Judges are human 😊. Most importantly they are all passionate about the In Bloom movement and definitely want you to achieve the best result possible.

### Before Judging Day...

- Check entry deadlines on the web site and ensure all entries are submitted in time. See: <https://www.angliainbloom.co.uk/important-dates> 
- Read the marking criteria and re-read it to ensure your entry is compliant and will score well on Judging Day. See: <https://www.angliainbloom.co.uk/markingsheets>
- If you have any feedback from the previous year's Judges' visit reread it **and act on it**. It is surprising how often we return to judge somewhere and have the same issues as last year. 
- If you have entered any **Special Awards** categories pre-plan your Judging Route to include them. You **MUST** make sure the Judges know about and see each **Special entry** you wish to be considered for during their tour.
- Arrange where to meet Judges, ensure car parking is available, and provide a contact phone number.
- Travel the route / double check timings and what can be seen – include a check of what can be seen behind you by the Judges.
- Check the route again the day before judging (and on the morning of Judging Day if possible) for a final litter / graffiti / weed check. 
- If there are distances between places on the route then transport should be provided to minimise walking (some of us Judges are beginning to feel our age).
- Think about access to any vehicle used. Is it easy to climb in and out of? Is it big enough for teams of up to three Judges plus you and anyone else from your team – or will you need two vehicles?
- Be prepared for all weathers. If the day is scorchingly hot and Judges are walking the route incorporate a place / time for a short rest, drink and toilet break. If it's wet then some occasional shelter will be appreciated. 





### On Judging Day...

- Treat the Judges as you would expect to be treated if you were a visitor and you won't go far wrong.



## Entrants' Hints and Tips: How to Ensure a Smooth-running Judging Day



- Provide a map of the judging route – or a document/table with the key stops. Give this to the Judges on arrival.
- **Special Awards:** on arrival, please give the lead Judge a USB stick with correctly captioned photographs - six single shots of each nomination. If photographs are **NOT** supplied, the nomination **will not be considered**. 
- You are allowed an extra 15 minutes 'press briefing' at the start of the tour. Use it well:
  - Use display boards to show off your work.
  - Show year-round activity with photos and captions.
  - You can have relevant people there to answer any Judges' questions.
- Judges always appreciate knowing in advance if there are toilet stops at the beginning / during / end of the Judging Route 😊 
- Remember that Judges should **NOT** see any **Virtual Award** entries on Judging Day. This is because Virtual entries take time away from the main judging route. It could cloud their deliberations, when later judging Virtuals, due to the strict marking criteria.
- Keep the tour party small – a maximum of four people to accompany the Judges. 
- Do arrange to meet additional people on the route to talk to the Judges.
- Got something on the route that isn't great to look at but is beyond your control to fix? Explain this to the Judges at the appropriate time. We can make allowances but only if we are made aware of the issue(s).
- Keep to time. Consider having a time keeper. Do move the judges on. 
- Have a 'runner' going 5-10 mins before the Judging Party (or phone ahead) to tell those who are waiting of any alterations, changes to timings, advise if there are three instead of two Judges (it could be intimidating to find three Judges if expecting two). The runner could also pick up any last-minute litter or tidy up as needed.
- After the Judging Tour (and hopefully a drink and possibly a sandwich – hint, hint 😊) give the Judges a quiet place to sit alone so they can discuss what they have seen between themselves. It's important they get first impressions down on paper immediately after judging, although further discussions will take place.
- Above all, smile and enjoy the day. It's your chance to shine, make the most of it! 