



# Baldock Allotment and Leisure Gardener's Association

## Best Kept Allotment Competition

### Judging Criteria

In assessing plots, judges will endeavour to award points positively, for all those meritorious aspects which they identify. However, points may be deducted if there is evidence of a serious deficiency, poor practice or neglect. Judges will assess the extent and quality of cultivation practices, freedom from weeds and disease, and evidence of good gardening skills being used. Soil should be in a well-cultivated condition and of good texture. Between crops there should be little or no evidence of weeds. Paths and leisure areas (if included) should be neatly edged, even and well maintained. Evidence of planting for a constant succession of crops will be given credit. Intelligent use of organic methods of pest control, such as the pinching out of broad bean tips to inhibit black-fly, or the use of barriers against carrot fly, will be given credit. Effective rotation of crops, no-dig or raised bed methods of cultivation, and good composting techniques will receive credit. Plot-holders who have overcome difficulties such as oddly-shaped sites, difficult soil conditions, exposed aspects, or excessive shading and dehydration by an adjacent tree belt, will be given credit for raising an acceptable standard of crop. The overall appearance of the plot should be neat and pleasing to the eye.

#### **1 Overall Condition of the Plot (20 points)**

These marks are awarded by the judges based on first impressions – a “quick look over the fence” view, rather than a detailed assessment. This can take into account general tidiness, condition of paths and sheds, compost heaps and fencing, water butts, quality and variety of crops etc.

#### **2 Good Workmanship (20 points)**

These marks are awarded by the judges based on the condition of beds, paths and crops, freedom from weeds etc. Plots should usually be well-stocked with crops, any unplanted areas where crops have just been harvested, or about to be planted up, being clean and free from weeds.

#### **3 Quality of Crops (15 points)**

These marks are awarded by the judges based on the condition of crops, in terms of size, health and vigour. All plants should be vigorous, sturdy and free from obvious signs of excessive damage by pests, disease or weather. Although planting times and weather will affect crops, this measure will be comparative to other plots, so judges may need to return to the best plots to ensure that this score holds up compared to the other contending plots.

A clear succession of crops should also be credited.

#### **4 Variety of Crops (15 points)**

These marks are awarded by the judges based on the variety of crops grown, but must take account of the plot size, not penalising a small plot compared to a large one. Judges will assess the range, variety, health, and quality of the Vegetables, Fruit, Flowers and Herbs grown on the plot. All the staple vegetable crops should be in evidence, and. A range of food crops with both vegetables and fruit should be in cultivation, and while fruit should not predominate, well maintained and integrated fruit crops of all types will be considered meritorious. Flowers grown for cutting and decoration will be assessed on the same basis as for food crops i.e. with regard to their health, skill in cultivation and suitability for the site. The inclusion of culinary herbs in the cropping scheme will be considered meritorious. The cultivation of less common crops will also receive credit, while tender greenhouse crops (where they exist) will be regarded as extending the range of crops grown on the plot, and assessed similarly.

#### **5 Ingenuity to Improve Growing Conditions (15 points)**

These marks are awarded by the judges based on the techniques used by the plot-holder to improve conditions for crops. Use of raised beds, mulches, crop protection, and crop support can be credited. Supports for plants that require them should be properly positioned and sturdy enough to withstand bad weather.

#### **6 Originality of Layout (15 points)**

Points will be awarded for the skill and originality evident in the layout and planting, and ingenuity shown in overcoming local problems. The intelligent adaptation of the layout to suit the needs of the plot-holder, the use of companion planting, and a pleasing overall visual effect will be considered meritorious. The positioning of sheds, water butts, compost heaps etc. should minimise work, and paths should not take up too much of the plot.

<b>Baldock Allotment and Leisure Gardener's Association Best Kept Allotment Competition</b>					<b>Year: 20</b>	<b>Site:</b>	
<b>Plot No.</b>	<b>Overall condition of the plot (20 points)</b>	<b>Good workmanship (20 points)</b>	<b>Quality of crops (15 points)</b>	<b>Variety of Crops (15 points)</b>	<b>Ingenuity to improve growing conditions (15 points)</b>	<b>Originality of layout (15 points)</b>	<b>Total (100 points)</b>