

AN INTRODUCTION TO NATURAL JERSEY AND GUIDE TO 'PARISH IN BLOOM'



natural!jersey

Promoting community pride
through horticulture and conservation

in association with the Royal Horticultural Society & Visit Jersey supported by EDTSC

Natural Jersey is registered with Jersey Financial Services Commission as a charity
under Art.6 of Non-Profit Organizations (Jersey) Law 2008 Registration no. NPO1128

Foreword

Islanders will be aware of the annual 'Parish in Bloom' event and of 'Britain in Bloom'; the hugely popular and well supported national floral competition. Both events are held under the professional auspices of the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS).

Although floral displays and horticulture sit high on the competitions criteria, far more emphasis is now being directed towards community participation and the natural environment. Jersey, it can be said, already excels in both.

The principal aim of Natural Jersey is to co-ordinate those Islanders already engaged in parish life and whose wishes are to improve and preserve their local urban and natural environments.

By so doing, NJ seeks to encourage the formation of community groups in order to fulfill specific projects in their respective local areas.

Once achieved, the collective strands can be drawn together and, when presented at a parochial level, will create positive opportunities for parish involvement and excellent prospects for entering into national competitive events.

Nationally, this offers Jersey full recognition as a premier tourist destination while, locally, it will demonstrate community pride and achievement.

The route to the national competition will be through regional 'heats' which, in Jersey, will be known as 'Parish in Bloom'. Natural Jersey, therefore, has been primarily constituted to co-ordinate, organise, promote and provide advice and guidance to all those parishioners wishing to participate.

The winning parish in each main category (see Addenda) will be automatically nominated to represent the Island in the national finals during the following year.

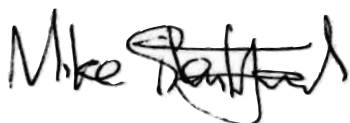
It will come as no surprise to hear that much of what is required for a successful entry already exists and therefore only requires highlighting. We refer to these diverse attributes as 'Parish Assets' - projects, facilities and amenities of which a parish is a beneficiary.

These include our parks and gardens maintained by the Department of Infrastructure, heritage sites administered by Jersey Heritage, natural landscapes managed by both the National Trust and the States Environment Department and ecologically important areas that lie within Jersey's National Park.

Additionally, there are numerous commercial and tourist attractions where independent contributions from businesses form a critical part of the RHS criteria.

The following introductory guide has been specifically prepared for Natural Jersey by accredited RHS judges; Mr Rae Beckwith and Mr John Woodward, and is set out in helpful FAQ format.

We hope you will be encouraged and enthused by the future prospects arising from Natural Jersey.



Mike Stentiford MBE
Chairman Natural Jersey

About Natural Jersey

Natural Jersey is a registered charity. It was born out of the transition of Jersey Tourism, a government department that traditionally sponsored and organised 'Parish in Bloom', to Visit Jersey whose primary role is to promote and market Jersey rather than to organise events.

During the transition, Parish in Bloom was kept alive by a small group of dedicated individuals from those parishes who had been involved in the event over many years - and had achieved further success in 'Britain in Bloom' representing Jersey. The group initially adopted the name of the Jersey in Bloom Group. However, with the RHS placing increased emphasis on the natural environment and community based initiatives, it was agreed that the name no longer portrayed the right image.

After consultation with the RHS and counterpart groups it was determined that a charity, to be known as Natural Jersey, should be set up and this has been achieved with support and input from the Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture Department. The charity was registered and incorporated in November 2016.

Natural Jersey Objects state:

- To promote good horticultural, environmental and conservation practices in Jersey, and;
- To encourage increased community participation and passion in horticulture including the promotion of the annual competition run by the Royal Horticultural Society known as 'Parish in Bloom'.

Natural Jersey Interim Committee

Chairman: **Mike Stentiford MBE**
Vice Chair: **Dale Hector**, St. Helier Parks & Gardens
Secretary: **Jeff Hathaway** RHS Dip.Gen.Hort
Treasurer: **Steve Pallett**, Constable St. Brelade
Members: **Tony Andrews**, St. Helier Parks & Gardens
Jennifer Ellenger, Visit Jersey

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What do I need to enter?

The entries are put into categories depending on the population. For example, a small village would be fewer than 300 inhabitants; a large town would be more than 12,000. So you can enter a parish or you can enter an area within a parish. It would be easier to start with a smaller area where you can concentrate your efforts.

How much will it cost?

It could cost nothing at all to get started. You may find that you already have the basics and all you need to do is to make sure they look their best and bring them to the attention of the judges.

How do I make a start?

Generate some interest among your neighbours – householders with gardens, retailers with shop frontages, parish officials, conservationists, anyone who might take a pride in where you live. Use social media, bang on doors, put up posters or distribute flyers to inform people of your plans. Form a small informal committee to share the work.

What will the judges want to see?

There are three important strands to your entry.

1. Horticulture i.e. plants and flowers. Year – round displays that enhance the built environment by softening buildings and adding life and colour. Grassed areas and trees are important as well.

2. Local Environment. Includes clean and tidy street scene and evidence of conservation of the natural environment. Informative signage where appropriate.

3. Community involvement. Year – round interest in keeping your area looking at its best and providing interest and activities for people in your area. Volunteer working parties, fund raising activities, forging connections with organisations and businesses to give the widest possible support over all age groups, publicity and recognition of your aims. You won't achieve this overnight, but once started, it will grow.

Judging is in July, so plants and flowers will need to be in peak condition then.

The judges will look at what you have done and give an award depending on how you have met the criteria above.

Best is Gold of course, but don't expect to achieve that first time! Silver would be a good result for a first attempt, Silver Gilt perhaps. A Bronze would mean you have made a start - although for the most part Jersey is already meeting the higher standards.

Discretionary Awards are also made to individuals or groups who make outstanding contributions to your entry. Recognising the effort that people give is a very important part of the Bloom culture.

The judges will make notes of things that could help you improve and will offer advice in a feedback session following the judging.

How do I start the ball rolling?

Contact one of the Natural Jersey Team (details at the front of this booklet) who will give you all the information and advice you need. You may like to take a look at The Royal Horticultural Society website, which gives more information and ideas.

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/communities/campaigns/britain-in-bloom>

Route

To show off your entry to the judges, you will design a route that takes in all the best and relevant features. All three of the strands need to be shown. The time allowed depends on which size category you are entering, for example a small village has 1 hour plus an extra 15 minutes to make an introductory presentation to explain your activities, plus another 15 minutes for possible press or media interviews. Finish the tour with a get-together of all your volunteers as a chance for the judges to see the depth of your support and also the opportunity to thank them all.

Portfolio

Judging time is limited and you won't have time to explain fully what you have been doing in the time leading up to judging. A portfolio of your work can be compiled and supplied to the judges a few weeks prior to judging. This allows them to get a flavour of your entry, see photos of spring displays for example, learn the names of your group members, who has helped you with sponsorship, your volunteers, info on the other organisations that you liaise with etc. Keep it brief and use photos rather than too much text. Bear in mind that the portfolio will be of much wider interest than just for the judges; look for opportunities to show it off to parish residents, visitors and potential sponsors.

What are the benefits?

You are not just doing this for the judges; the real benefit to your community and the island is much more valuable. Some benefits:

- Long-term enhancement of your local environment
- Increase pride in where you live
- Stimulate voluntary work and cooperation between local community groups
- Raise awareness of local issues and encourage people to take an active interest in preserving their own environment
- Boost local economy
- Regenerate neglected areas
- Have fun!

But I'm already doing my bit for the parish. Why enter the competition?

The competition is well recognised and is set to become more important in helping to enhance the island for locals and visitors.

- It gives you a goal to work towards.
- It enables you to publicise your plans and activities
- Easier to attract sponsors.
- Recognition for people's efforts.
- Access to local and RHS knowledge base.

ADDENDA

Categories & Judging Allocations for Parish in Bloom

NB. The categories shown are those which are applicable to Jersey only.

Category	Population*	Tour time	Presentation	Press	Total
Small Village	300 or under	1 hour	15 mins	15 mins	1.5 hrs
Village	301 - 1,000	1.25 hours	15 mins	15 mins	1.75 hrs
Large Village	1,001 - 2,500	1.5 hours	15 mins	15 mins	2 hrs
Small Town	2,501 - 6,000	2 hours	15 mins	15 mins	2.5 hrs
Town	6,001 - 12,000	2 hours	15 mins	15 mins	2.5 hrs
Large Town	12,001 - 35,000	2.5 hours	15 mins	15 mins	3 hrs
Urban Community	0 - 25,000	2 hours	15 mins	15 mins	2.5 hrs
Small Coastal	12,000 or less	2.5 hours	15 mins	15 mins	3 hrs
Large Coastal	12,001 or more	3 hours	15 mins	15 mins	3.5 hrs

NOTES.

1. Population* is taken as the total number on the electoral register (at time of entry).
2. As outlined above, the total times includes 15 minutes for a press opportunity ie, parish newsletter/ photograph etc and 5 minutes presentation to give the judges an overview of what they are going to see on the tour as well as an opportunity to meet key people. Also, to show the judges other material, for example, display boards with newspaper cuttings, video and evidence of other group activity throughout the year. It is therefore recommended that the presentation precedes the tour and the press call at either the end or at some appropriate point during the tour itself.
3. Tour transport + driver is provided by Natural Jersey for Parish in Bloom. However, those entered into Britain in Bloom, which is wholly organised and funded by the RHS, will need to arrange their own transport
4. A portfolio of activity during the year or items that for timing purposes need to be omitted from the tour, may be presented in either a portfolio or scrapbook format. While not carrying any points, it greatly assists the judges in their overall assessment of an entry.
5. **Judging is NOT on a ranked basis** but on a pointing system that awards either Gold, Silver Gilt, Silver or Bronze. An overall winner in any category is determined by the percentage of marks gained ie. highest percentage.

Supplementary Awards

Best Parish Hall

Open to all parishes. The award takes into account not just floral displays on the building but all attendant planted areas in and around the Parish Hall environ.

Best Pub

Open to all pubs and licensed premises that have a public bar.

Best Hotel/Guest House

Open to all hotels and guest houses including self catering units.

LucasBros Award for Best Allotment or Community Garden

Open to all allotment and community garden groups whose primary aim is to grow vegetables and produce - including fruit and flowers.

Best Environmental Project

Open to all individuals, groups, schools and charitable institutions engaged in environmental and conservation projects of any kind in the island.

Discretionary Awards

Discretionary Awards are also made to individuals or groups who make outstanding contributions to your entry.