



## Maindee in Bloom Competition 2026

### Introduction

The Maindee in Bloom competition is a new competition born out of a community consultation exercise in Maindee as part of our Nature Plan. Its aims are to make Maindee a brighter and more colourful place to live, to teach people how to garden and to help nature in the process. There are prizes (vouchers and visits) for the Best Window Boxes, Best Front Garden and Best Community Bed.

### Who can enter?

Anyone who lives or works in Maindee but the garden **must** be in Maindee. We are defining Maindee as in the map and roads in Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

### What do you need to do?

#### STEP 1 DECIDE YOUR SKILL and CATEGORY

Firstly you need to decide if you want to enter on your own or in a group (3-6 people). If you are entering on your own are you new to gardening or would you class yourself as someone who has gardened for a while. Then which category would suit you and your home or business.

Advice: If you are a new gardener choose a pot or window box as it will be more manageable than a whole front garden.

#### STEP 2 : REGISTER

Then you need to register for FREE where your garden is going to be.

<https://forms.gle/XBPpW2VthSzWVTxF9>

#### STEP 3: GET GROWING

Think about how much time, resource and expertise you have and read the judging criteria.

- Lots of time and resources then start planting seeds in February or using plug plants in March is fine. Read the Guide for Participants below to help find the list of plants below that will be colourful and help pollinators.
- If you have time but few resources then planting seeds is the cheaper option but you'll need to start now. If you need soil, ideas, a large plant pot or window box (£5 extra) advice or seedlings then come along to one of our starter days on April 1st and 10th at St.Marys Garden, Wharf Road. 11-1pm.
- If you have very little time and few resources then we can help by providing soil, plants and pots to get you started. Remember there are lots of people who do know how to do this and have spare plants, pots and advice in your community. Also the judges will be giving extra marks for re-use and recycling of containers so use your imagination and be ingenious!

#### **STEP 4: PLANT your GARDEN**

If this is the first time you have entered a competition like this then Read the Beginners Guide for Participants to help you plan and time your planting to perfection so that your garden looks at its peak on July 1st. If you are a pro then go ahead and impress!!

### **BEGINNERS GUIDE FOR MAINDEE in BLOOM PARTICIPANTS**

To excel in the Maindee in Bloom competition your window box or pots need to show peak health, vibrant colour, and high pollinator activity.

#### **1. Planning for the "Winning" Look**

Competition judges look for visual impact and intentional design as well as a nature pollinator friendly content.

#### **The Recipe:**

Use the "Thriller, Filler, Spiller" method.

Thriller: A central tall plant (e.g., Dwarf Snapdragons).

Filler: Mid-sized bushy plants to pack the space (e.g., Calendula, Marigolds).

Spiller: Trailing plants that overflow the edges (e.g., Sweet Alyssum, Nasturtiums).

**Colour Theory:** Use contrasting colours for drama (e.g., orange Marigolds against blue Cornflowers) or a monochromatic theme for elegance.

**Pollinator Logic:** Bees are most attracted to blues, purples, and yellows. Choose single-flowered varieties; "double" flowers often have less accessible nectar.

EXAMPLE: "Competition Winner" Layout (60cm Box)

Position	Plant Type	Example Variety
Back (Thriller)	Tall/Upright	Dwarf Snapdragons or Lavender 'Hidcote'
Middle (Filler)	Bushy/Bright	Calendula or Marigolds
Front (Spiller)	Trailing/Soft	Trailing Verbena, Alyssum, or Lobelia

## 2. Competition Plant List

Here is a list of plants that could be used but it is not exhaustive. The main thing is to make your show of plants colourful and pollinator friendly. Remember annuals are good and some will re-seed for the following year but it is more sustainable to grow perennials (they come back every year)

### Annuals to Sow in February

These annuals are perfect for a July 1st peak if sown indoors in mid-February.

Sweet Alyssum (Spiller): Fragrant, fast-growing, and a magnet for hoverflies.

Calendula (Filler): Bright yellow/orange "Pot Marigold"; very easy and nectar-rich.

Dwarf French Marigolds (Filler): Robust and colourful; helps deter pests.

Cornflower (Thriller/Filler): Brilliant blue; a classic native bee favorite.

Dwarf Snapdragons (Thriller): Essential for height and bumblebees.

Nasturtiums (Spiller): Provide rapid "curb appeal" with trailing vines and edible flowers.



ler) Varieties

These varieties are selected for their speed of growth and ability to reach a "waterfall" effect by July:

Trailing Nasturtiums (e.g., 'Jewel of Africa' or 'Alaska'): These are the gold standard for competitions. They grow fast and provide large, vibrant blooms. The 'Alaska' variety also has variegated (white-splashed) leaves, providing colour even before the flowers arrive.

Trailing Lobelia (e.g., 'Sapphire' or 'Regatta Mix'): These create a dense "froth" of blue or white. They are particularly loved by smaller pollinators and stay neat.

Sweet Alyssum (e.g., 'Snow Crystals'): While a "filler," it spills beautifully. The scent is a major plus if the judges get close—it smells like pure honey.

Black-Eyed Susan Vine (*Thunbergia*): Usually a climber, but if planted at the front of a window box, it will trail down. Its distinct dark centers (the "eye") make it a visual standout for judges.

Trailing Snapdragons (e.g., 'Lampion' or 'Candy Showers'): Unlike the upright versions, these branch out and hang over the sides, providing unique architecture for bumblebees.

Planting plug plants in March is a clever "cheat" to get a 4-6 week head start over seeds, ensuring your box is overflowing by the judging date.

### **Top Pollinator Plug Plants to Buy in March**

These varieties are specifically selected for their high nectar value and compact habit, perfect for window boxes.

Lavender 'Hidcote': A dwarf variety that is a magnet for bees. Buying plugs in March allows the roots to establish before the late June flowering peak.

Trailing Verbena: Unlike its tall cousins, these plugs will cascade over the edges, producing clusters of nectar-rich flowers that butterflies love.

Hardy Geraniums (Cranesbill): Look for varieties like 'Rozanne'. They offer hundreds of simple flowers that are perfect for bumblebees and will be in full flush by July.

Calibrachoa (Million Bells): These "mini-petunias" are tireless bloomers. Plugs planted in March will trail elegantly and be covered in flowers by the judging date.

Wallflowers (*Erysimum*): Specifically the perennial types like 'Bowles's Mauve', which are very long-flowering and highly attractive to early-summer pollinators.

### **Perennials:**

If you have a slightly bigger space or pot then try these flowers that will come back every year:

Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), Lavender (*Lavandula*), Joe Pye Weed (*Futrochium*) Blazing Star (*Liatris spicata*), Bee Balm (*Monarda*), Summer Phlox, Globe ops), Catmint (*Nepeta*), Red Valeria



Climbers: Honeysuckle, Buddleia, Hydrangea, Verbena.

Wildflowers & Natives: Swamp Milkweed, Butterfly Weed, Mountain Mint, Black-eyed Susan, Sunflower, Common Teasel, Hemp Agrimony.

Herbs (when flowering): Chives, Fennel, Hyssop, Oregano.

### 3. Propagation Guide: From Seed to Sill

Indoor Sowing (February): Use clean seed trays and high-quality peat free seed-starting compost.

Sowing Depth: Generally sow seeds at twice their diameter. Note: Calendula needs darkness to germinate, so cover well.

Heat & Light: Place on a warm windowsill or in a propagator (roughly 18–21°C).

Pricking Out: Once they have their second pair of "true" leaves, move them into individual small pots.

Hardening Off: In May, gradually move plants outside during the day for a week to acclimatise before final planting.

### 4. Planting and Maintenance Guide

Preparation: Use a **peat-free** multi-purpose compost and add "crocks" or grit to the bottom to ensure drainage and prevent waterlogging—judges will look for healthy, non-soggy plants.

Planting Density: For a "competition look," plant closer than usual (approx. 10–15cm apart) to create an immediate, lush impact.

Training & Pinching: When your plug plants or seedlings reach 10cm, pinch out the tips. This stops them from getting "leggy" and forces them to grow bushy and full of flower buds for July 1st.

Directional Planting: Angle your "spiller" plants slightly outward (at a 45-degree angle) when you transplant them into the window box or pot. This encourages them to cascade over the edge immediately.



Greening  
MAINDEE

: If your window box is against a wall, the plants will naturally grow toward the wall. To keep the box symmetrical for the judges, rotate the box 180 degrees every year so the growth stays even.

Support for Tall Fillers: If your "thrillers" (like Cornflowers) get a bit floppy, use subtle birch twigs or "pea sticks" pushed into the soil to give them invisible support.

Feed Regularly: use a high-potash liquid feed (like tomato food) every 2 weeks from May to encourage maximum blooming.

Deadhead Daily: Once your plants have flowered then pinch off faded flowers to trick the plant into producing even more blooms for the judges.

The Pollinator Polish: Include a tiny dish of water with pebbles among the plants; it provides a safe drinking spot for bees and shows the judges you've considered the whole ecosystem.

## **5. July 1st "Show Day" Checklist**

Hydration: Water the box the evening before. A wilted plant is a disqualifier!

Grooming: Remove every single dead leaf or faded flower on the morning of the 1st.

Cleaning: Wipe the actual window box container with a damp cloth to remove any soil splashes or water marks.

To secure a win at Maindee in Bloom on July 1st, your window box needs to look established and vibrant.

If you need any more top tips the following websites are really useful:

<https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/grow-plants/plants-for-pollinators-in-summer-and-autumn>

Wildlife gardening tips:

<https://www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife>

For community gardens:

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening/resources>

GOOD LUCK!!

## **Appendix 1: List of Roads and Map included in Maindee in Bloom**

Albert Avenue  
Alfred Street  
Amber Close  
Archibald Street  
Bankside House  
Baroque COurt  
Batchelor Road  
Bathstone Mews  
Bedford Road  
Beech wood Road  
Bernard Street  
Bishton Street  
Bond Street  
Bristol Street  
Brittania House  
Brynderwen Grove  
Brynderwen Road  
Caerleon Road to Turner Street - Clarence Place  
Cambridge Road  
Camelot Place  
Cedar Road  
Chaucer Road  
Chepstow Road between Beechwood Road and CLarence Place  
Christchurch Road up to Beechwood Road  
Church Road  
Chwarel Court  
Clarence Place  
Clayton Street  
Clevedon Road  
Coleridge Road  
Collier Street  
Colne Street  
Conway Road up to Rothesay Road  
Copper Dome Mews  
Corelli Street  
Corporation Road from Telford Street to Clarence Place  
Courtney Street

Cowparsley Way  
Crawford Street  
Crescent Road  
Crown Street  
Cyril Street  
Devonia House  
Diocletian Mews  
Dragonfly Avenue  
Duckpool Road up to Christchurch Road  
East Usk Road  
Edwardian Muse  
Essex Street  
Eton Road  
Eveswell Court  
Eveswell Lane  
Eveswell Park Road  
Eveswell Street  
Exeter Street  
Fairoak Avenue  
Fairoak Court  
Fforest Glade  
Forest Close  
Frank Street  
George Street bridge to River Usk  
Glanusk Primary  
Glebe Street  
Glebelands Park  
Gloster Place  
Gordon Street  
Gordon Street  
Grafton Road  
Halstead Street  
Harrow Road  
Herbert Road  
Hereford Street  
Jackson Place  
Jeffrey Street  
Kensington Grove  
Kensington Place

Kingston Road  
Lennard Street  
Lincoln Close  
Liverpool Street  
Livingstone Place  
Llanvair Road  
Llanwern Street  
London Street  
Maindee Parade  
Malvern Road  
Manchester Street  
Marlborough Road  
May Street  
Methuen Road  
Milton Road  
Morgan Street  
Newport Indoor Bowls  
Oaklands Road  
Oriel Road  
Oxford Street  
Phillip Street  
Prince Street  
Probert Place  
Redbrick Gardens  
Rhosyn Close  
Riverbank Avenue  
Riverside  
Rochester Road  
Rodney Road  
Rosendale Court  
Rosslyn Road  
Rothesay Road  
Rudry Street  
Rugby Road  
Shelley Road  
Soho Street  
Speke Street  
St.John's Road  
St.Julians Allotment

St.Vincent Road  
Summerhill Avenue  
Swinburne Close  
Teasel Grove  
Telford Street  
Tennyson Road  
Tramway House  
Tregare Street  
Turner Street  
Tweedy Lane  
Upper Tennyson Road  
Victoria Avenue  
Victoria Court  
Victoria Lane  
Vine Street  
Vivian Road  
Westonia House  
Wharf Lane  
Wharf Road  
Woodland Park Road  
Wordsworth Road

**Please see the map below.**

