



Resident Information Pack 2022



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Introduction

Welcome to Ready Steady Grow 2022

This year's competition focuses on three themes '**Growing Green**' '**Health and Wellbeing**' and '**Beautiful Blooms**'. There are also some fantastic prizes up for grabs!

The competition is designed for residents at all Supported Living and Retirement Living services. Whether you have access to a communal garden, allotment or courtyard, you must choose one of three categories for this year's competition.

There is only **one entry per person in each category** and entries can be submitted at any point from the launch date up to **11 July 2022** so you have plenty of time to get planning and planting!

It's easy to get started – read through this, start planning and ask staff for support and advice if you need it.

How to use this pack

This pack provides all the information you need to understand the requirements for Ready Steady Grow 2022, including how to enter the competition, how it will be judged, when it will be judged and what the all-important prizes are.

The pack mentions useful documents that you can use to plan your entry so make sure you ask staff to provide you with these.

Competition categories

There are three categories you can enter in Ready Steady Grow 2022. These are **Growing Green, Health and Wellbeing** and **Beautiful Bloom**. You can choose to enter just one or all. Details on how the competition will be judged are provided in the **Judging** section.



Growing Green

Transform your garden using recyclable products or make an insect house. A great way to create beautiful spaces and keep junk out of landfill. Using toilet paper rolls for growing plants, wellies for planting flowers, pallets are great for displaying plants or making tables.



Beautiful Blooms

Transform your garden or window pots and boxes to capture all the beauty of nature, creating nesting for birds or colourful flowers to attract bees and butterflies. Most of us would like more wildlife to visit our gardens, and making your outdoor space attractive to birds, mammals and invertebrates needn't involve a lot of work but can be very therapeutic.



Health and Wellbeing

Whether you have a small area or a large garden you will need to produce herbs, grow vegetables and/or fruit from scratch, nurture and watch them grow. Following on from this we would like to see you to make a meal with your produce of your choice where presentation will be a key factor.

Important dates

Tuesday 15 March 2022

Competition launch

Monday 18 July 2022

Deadline to submit entries via online form

Monday 8 August 2022 – Monday 15 August 2022

Online public vote is open

Thursday 29 August 2022

Winners announced via email to managers and scheme mailboxes, and on our websites: www.sanctuary-supported-living.co.uk and www.sanctuary-retirement-living.co.uk

Prizes



Everyone who enters the competition will receive a certificate of recognition for participating in the competition.

All winners will receive a certificate, trophy and a gift card as follows:

Growing Green

First Place

“Best recyclable garden or space”

£250 gift card

Runner Up

“Highly commended recyclable garden or space”

£100 gift card

Beautiful Blooms

First Place

“Best garden with wildlife and flowers”

£250 gift card

Runner Up

“Highly commended gardens with wildlife and flowers”

£100 gift card

Health and Wellbeing

First Place

“Best grown vegetables and presented meal”

£250 gift card

Runner Up

“Highly commended grown vegetables and presented meal”

£100 gift card

Gift cards

Winners will receive a gift card from B&Q:

B&Q gift cards can be spent nationwide at all stores on homeware, DIY and garden supplies.



How will my entry be judged?

Your garden or vegetable patch will be judged by public vote between **Monday 8 and Monday 15 of August.**

Growing Green

- Being creative and using original, eco-friendly and sustainable ideas including recycled materials and unusual containers for your plants or wildlife.
- Reuse plastic pots for sowing seeds e.g. a yoghurt pot or butter container.
- Use old egg boxes and the cardboard inner tube of toilet rolls for your seedlings.
- Use old wellies to plant flowers.

Beautiful Blooms

- Consider inventive ways to attract wildlife. Evidence of creatures, great or small, photographed in your garden is likely to get you more votes.
- A welcoming and therapeutic environment that evokes memories and appeals to all the senses: sight, smell, touch, and sounds. Bold and beautiful blossoms and buds.
- A range of flowers and plants with lots of colour and foliage.

Health and Wellbeing

- Creating a vegetable patch to grow your own herbs, vegetables and fruit.
- A range of produce grown (from scratch would be a bonus).
- Innovative ways of growing your produce.
- Creating a meal from your produce – and how creative you are. An unusual or exotic meal, one that follows a theme or the inspiration behind why a meal or theme was chose is likely to score you more votes.
- Whilst we won't be able to taste the produce, presentation will be help voters judge your meal.

Please note

It will be important to show the transformation so that voters can see how your garden or vegetable patch has improved. Make sure you take some 'before and after' photos.

How do I submit my entry?

You will need submit your entry online via our websites:

www.sanctuary-supported-living.co.uk or
www.sanctuary-retirement-living.co.uk

Follow the instructions provided on the Ready Steady Grow pages of the websites. You will need to complete the online entry form and upload your 'before and after' photos.

If you would like to send us any pictures of you in your garden or with a planter or bunch of veg you're particularly proud of, please email these separately to speakup@sanctuary.co.uk with a completed photography consent form (available from staff or the Ready Steady Grow web pages).

The deadline to submit your entry is Monday July 18 June 2022. You can submit your entry any time from the when the competition launches from 15 March 2022 to 18 July 2022.

If you need support with submitting your entry, please speak to a member of staff who can help you or submit your entry on your behalf.

You can view entries and vote for your favourite on the Ready Steady Grow pages of our websites from **Monday 8 to Monday 15 of August 2022.**

You are not allowed to vote for your own entry.

Taking photos

It's important that any photos you take are clear, sharp and high-quality, so that they provide good evidence of what you've done. We can accept photos from staff or residents. If you don't have your own camera or smartphone to take photos with, speak to a member of staff who can take photos for you.

We would also like to celebrate your gardening activities on our social media pages (Twitter for Supported Living services and Facebook for Retirement Living services) as well as our website, in Snapshot magazine or on our social media pages, so please tag your Twitter posts with @SancSL or Facebook posts with @SanctuaryRetirementLiving.

If you or your friends, family or members of staff are in the photos, the photos must be accompanied by a completed consent form, which is included in this pack. Without this form, we will not be able to accept the photos. Make sure you write down the names (first and last) of people in the photos and send a brief description of what is happening in the picture to SSL.Marketing@sanctuary.co.uk

Tips for taking great photographs

Resolution

To get a clear, crisp image, take photos at the highest possible camera setting. Photos should be around 3MB. Anything with KB on the end of the file size is too small.

Lighting

Always avoid photos where the main light source (windows, the sun, lights) is coming from behind the subject.

Focus

Check the subject is in focus. If your digital camera has an LCD screen, you should be able to see if the shot is in focus. On most smart phones, the focus is often controlled by tapping the part of the image you want focused on screen before pushing the shutter button.

Composition

Try to ensure that you can clearly see what is supposed to be the feature of the photo and that anything of interest is in the picture, so that your photos relate to what you are doing. Take several photos, both vertical and horizontal so that there are plenty to choose from.

Getting started

Now you know how the competition works it's time to get planning. Let's keep it real. We know planting and keeping a nice garden costs money. That's why you won't gain any extra points for extravagance in this competition.

Knowing where to start can often be your first hurdle. Especially if you don't have any equipment, seeds or soil. But there are ways to get inspired and options for getting support with costs. Read the **Top tips and ideas** section and use our **Growing Planner** which sets out step by step how to plan what to grow.

If you'd like to enter but are worried about the costs, then speak to a member of staff. It's likely there are others at your service who are in the same situation. Staff may be able to apply for funding, ask for discounts or get hold of some gardening tools and equipment that you can share. We have put some ideas in the **Funding your project** section.

Remember to think about what might get you votes when planning your entry.

Funding your project

Organisations sometimes have funds available to help local community projects, like your gardening project.

They can help to buy soil, plants and gardening tools or simply provide them for you. Sometimes they might be able to donate unsellable items, which may otherwise go to waste.

Before you go any further, think about what materials you need and how much you expect your project to cost (use the **Growing Planner** to help you). Speak to other residents in your service or a member of staff to find out who else is taking part. If you want to ask for donations or funding, it's likely to be more effective if you apply together. A member of staff or manager will be able to help organise a group application or request for you.

Local funding

If you decide you only need gardening tools or materials which **are likely to cost less than £200**, you could try approaching local stores including:

- Wickes, B&Q, Argos and Homebase
- Local garden centres and nurseries
- Local supermarkets: Tesco, Co-op, Sainsbury's, Morrison's, Asda, Aldi and Lidl

Donations and expertise

You could also see if there are any **local environmental Friends Groups or Allotments who could donate you equipment, soil or seeds**. They may be keen to help and you could ask if they would be interested in providing you with their expertise and advice to help you transform your garden.

Client Engagement Funding

Through Sanctuary's Client Engagement Funding, grants of up to £500 are available for projects that support you to develop your skills, in this case it would be horticultural skills for instance growing vegetables. You may also want to consider mentioning the physical and mental health benefits your garden project could provide.

A member of staff will need to apply for this funding on behalf of residents at the service (it would have to support a group of residents) and the applications must also demonstrate:

- Some measure of match funding. Match funding doesn't need to be financial but could be in the form of donated items or volunteer time
- An element of working with the wider community. This could be a peer support role or local allotment society.

For more information speak to a member of staff or email speakup@sanctuary.co.uk

National initiatives

As well as approaching organisations locally some companies run national funding initiatives as well. This sort of request is most suitable if there are a lot of residents at your service participating and you apply for funding as a service. If you think this is a good idea to support you and others with their competition entry then speak to a member of staff about what you have in mind and they can help you to organise an application and make contact with a suitable organisation. Companies get a lot of requests so don't feel disheartened if you don't hear back. It is always worth checking that you are eligible to apply, often applications need to come from registered charities or constituted community or friends groups.

Applying for donations or funding

It's always best if funding applications come from residents – it is your project after all - but speak to a member of staff if you would like to do any of the above to make sure your request is co-ordinated with other residents' requests. You're likely to be more successful this way and staff can help you to write a letter too.

Top tips and ideas

Inspiration

- Free apps such as Instagram and Pinterest can be a good place to start. Use them to research the type of project you want to create or follow professional gardeners.
- Gardening magazines – see if anyone is throwing them out. Cut out the pictures you like and make collages.
- Take a walk – get some inspiration from around you.
- Ask an expert – do you have any relations that like gardening? The best tips are often passed down the generations. Do you know anyone that can help or offer advice?
- Watch gardening videos online or programmes on TV. You might pick up some tips - even if their project is more advanced. Gardening programmes include: Garden Rescue, Love Your Garden and Gardener's World.

Top tips

- Sink a plastic bottle with the end cut off next to thirsty vegetables like courgettes. Pouring water into this get water straight to the roots.
- Rosemary, thyme and sage are perfect for a dry spot with good drainage and can be grown in the garden, in pots or on a windowsill.
- Check the weather forecast so you can plan your time to make sure you water your crop when it's hot and dry.

FAQs

Which part of the garden is best for my plants?

Check plant tags or ask the staff at your local garden centre to find out how much sun a plant requires, then find a suitable place for it. Put the plants where you can see them, so it reminds you to attend to them.

When should I dig the soil?

Digging loosens the soil so roots can grow more easily. Dig only when the soil is moist enough to form a loose ball in your fist, but dry enough to fall apart when you drop it.

How often should I water my plants?

It depends on how often it rains. Plants are begging for water when they wilt slightly in the heat of the day. Water them slowly so the water soaks in to the soil. It is best to water the plants early in the morning to minimize evaporation and give your plants a better chance of dealing with a hot sun. Watering in the evening is also more effective than in the heat of the day.

Chose the right plant for your garden by checking your soil type. Is it light and sandy or heavy and clay? Many plants thrive better in one type than the other.

Do I have enough space?

Don't be tempted by the displays in garden centres and buy too many plants for the space you have. You don't need much space to attract birds and other wildlife to your outside space and you don't need much space to grow small vegetables and herbs. Plant labels will tell you how much room they need.

How do I prevent weeds?

All gardens have some weeds. To avoid harming your flowers, weed your garden by hand. Digging out weeds by their roots will ensure they do not return. Wear gardening gloves for this if you have them.

What is compost?

Compost is the natural process of recycling organic material such as leaves and

vegetable scraps into rich soil. Putting compost on your soil helps to keep it hydrated and feeds the vegetables and plants you grow. You can buy compost, but you can also make your own with garden waste such as grass trimmings and leaves and as well as fruit and vegetable peel, which may otherwise just go in the bin.

Ideas for your project

Let the soil settle

To increase populations of earthworms and beetle larvae, including cockchafer, don't dig your garden soil unless you're planting. Lay compost on top to provide habitat for invertebrates and foraging for blackbirds and robins

Create corridors

Plant up bare ground and open areas to connect all parts of your garden. This will encourage invertebrates and young frogs and newts, such as the smooth newt, to move around.

Help pollinators

Having a range of nectar-rich plants will bring local butterflies to your garden, but you also need to think about providing the habitat and foods for caterpillars that are likely to live there.

Nesting spaces for birds

If you don't have suitable trees or hedges for birds to nest in, or want to supplement them, put up nest boxes for birds to use.

Growing plants

Growing plants in pure compost can cause problems with water retention and stability as well. While it may be tempting, planting in pure compost is not a good idea. That's not to say you shouldn't plant in compost at all. Just an inch or two of good compost mixed with your existing topsoil is all your plants need.

Use of compost

All soils can be improved with the addition of compost. Spread the compost in a thick layer on top of exposed soil.

Keeping plants alive

Don't over-water, cut off dead flowers, use good dirt and remember different plants need different levels of light.

Somewhere to reflect

If you have open space do you want to be able to sit and reflect on your achievements or just have some quiet time on your own.

Get creative with a pallet

Save money and give an old pallet a new lease of life with this clever recycling idea to make a vertical pallet planter.

You will need: an old pallet, landscape fabric, staple gun

Step 1 Prepare your pallet

Smooth the slats with sandpaper then decide which way is up. Cover the bottom, back and sides with landscape fabric, pulling it taut before stapling it in place. Leave the front and top open.



Step 2 Plant into the gaps

Lie the pallet face up. Slide 12 plants into the top opening to keep the compost in place. Pour a bag of compost on top of the pallet and push it between the slats. Repeat with a second bag. When the pallet is full, start planting from top to bottom.

Step 3 Water and feed

Leave the pallet flat on the ground for a couple of weeks, watering regularly so the roots can establish and hold all the plants in place. Feed and look after plants according to packet instructions.

Ideal for tumbling tomatoes, strawberries and herbs.

Sow herb seeds

Grow your own herbs from seed for a steady supply of flavoursome leaves.

Herbs are easy to grow and don't take up much space. Grow them in a trough, patio containers or in an old bucket with drainage holes. While some herbs can be sown directly outside where you want them to grow others should be started off indoors. Harden off indoor-sown seedlings by gradually acclimatising them to outdoor life over 10-14 days.



Basil: Sow little and often, indoors, two seeds per cell and thin to the strongest.

Great with: Italian style food



Chives: Sow indoors or outside, keeping soil or compost evenly moist.

Great with: Potato salad



Coriander: Sow indoors. Hates root disturbance so sow in a pot that you can put outdoors.

Great with: Curry



Parsley: seed is notoriously slow to germinate. Sow indoors for warmth.

Great with: Greek style food



Marjoram & Oregano: Sow indoors with warmth in pots or trays.

Great with: Italian style food



Dill: sow indoors from early April or outside in May.

Great with: Seafoods and salads

Compost

Compost is crucial for all gardens as it helps your plants get the essential nutrients to grow and thrive. Making your own compost is affordable and helps reduce waste which would otherwise end up in a landfill.

You will need: a bin, suitable waste



Step 1: Prepare your bin

Make sure your bin is large enough! Too small, and you won't be able to add enough materials which will make the mix unbalanced especially when adding waste that slow down the composting process such as grass clippings.

Step 2: Put the right stuff in

Any organic material will be fine! Good things to compost include vegetable and fruit waste, teabags and grass cuttings. If your mix is looking wet and slimy, don't be afraid to throw in some cut up paper, egg cartons and loo roll tubes to suck up excess moisture and thicken the heap, and if it's looking too dry add more wet materials. Also, give layers a try – alternate between a layer of soft and moist material (e.g. new leaves, fruit and vegetable peelings, grass clippings) with a layer of drier materials (e.g. dry leaves, twigs). Avoid using any meat or dairy products as these will attract unwanted pests and smells. Don't forget to turn the compost heap regularly and water it if required!

Step 3: Get the best out of your compost

When your compost is ready you will have a dark brown soil-like layer with a spongy texture at the bottom of your bin. Spreading the finished compost onto your flowerbeds greatly improves the quality of the soil by helping it retain moisture and stopping weeds from growing. It also reduces the need to use chemical fertilisers and pesticides!

Top tips

- Keep a pail in the kitchen for collecting compostable waste – when it's full, just add it to the heap.
- Use two compost bins rather than only filling and collecting compost from one – as one bin is composting away, add fresh material to the other.
- DIY your own compost bin by getting **creative with a pallet**.

The hum of the bumblebee

What better way to introduce nature to your garden than making a welcoming habitat for bees?

Gardens are very important for bees. Likewise, bees are also extremely important for gardens. Bees need flowers for nutrition, and flowers need bees for pollination. You can never have too many!



We often undervalue nature and what it does for us. It would cost farmers billions to pollinate our crops without bees. Our food would cost a lot more to produce and our economy would suffer. Bees are in decline due to the destruction of their natural habitat.

Bees are most active from March to September and are a sign of a healthy environment. They need nectar from very early spring until early winter. The nectar feeds the adult bee, while the pollen is collected to feed the young. Honeybees and bumblebees live socially and are led by a queen bee.

Easy ways to help bees

Flowers of all colours will attract bees, but they can see the colour **purple** most clearly. Growing lots of purple plants, such as lavender, alliums, buddleia and catmint will attract more bees to your garden. Choose flowers with pollen that bees can get to easily. Tubular- shaped flowers such as foxgloves, honeysuckle and snapdragons are the favourite feeding places of bumblebees.

Save the bees

- Bees need water, especially on hot days. Make sure there is a water source in your garden.
- If you see a bee that looks like it's dying, it could just be tired or cold. You can help to revive it by making it an energy drink - mix two tablespoons of sugar with a tablespoon of water and place it next to them
- Urban bees are essential too. A window box has great value to city bees!
- Choose local British honey to support beekeepers. Some say that eating local honey can also help hay fever
- It's easy to create accommodation for bees – try a bundle of hollow plant stems or dry logs

Create your own unusual containers



It's time to think outside the flowerpot. In this competition, you will score extra points for using unusual and creative containers for your plants. Look for waterproof household items that would otherwise go to waste. We have provided an example for you, which you are welcome to try yourself. Here's how to transform your old wellies into plant containers in six simple steps:

- 1) Clean the wellies with soapy water and dry with a cloth or old towel.
- 2) Remove any insoles and make a few little holes in the bottom for water drainage
- 3) Put a few pebbles at the bottom of the wellies (helps water drainage)
- 4) Fill your wellies with compost from the toe to a few inches from the top
- 5) Plant seeds by pressing them lightly into the soil and top up with more compost
- 6) Give them a good water and place in sunlight (check seed packet for directions)

Good luck!

