

Advice: Handicrafts Section, Summer 2024

Your entries don't need to be perfect. Don't be afraid, just 'have a go'!

The more entries the better the show.

- Check that your entries comply with all the requirements mentioned in the schedule.
- Please don't hesitate to ask the Show Secretary if there is anything that you don't understand. breamgardeningssociety@gmail.com
- **Optional title cards** will be available to **highlight key features and techniques** in your exhibit.
- **Space allowed: 50cm x 50cm, height unrestricted.**
- Exhibits may be folded or stacked to fit within the space allowed but will be unfolded for judging.
- Handicraft items **must not** have been **exhibited at any previous BGS Show.**

Design

- All items should be safe and fit for purpose.
- **Toys and clothing for babies and children** must meet specific **safety requirements**. *'On with the Show: An NFWI Handbook for Exhibitors, Judges and Show Committees'* provides some great advice. Alternatively, contact the Show Secretary for further information.
- All items should be pleasing to look at. Consideration will be made of shape, scale, proportion, balance, colour and texture.
- Practical items should be pleasing to handle and use.
- Originality will be rewarded.

Materials

- All materials should be appropriate for the design and intended purpose.
- Items of hard craft should be properly conditioned.

Techniques

- The quality of the workmanship is the most important judging criteria.
- Where the reverse side of a piece is visible, the **neatness and quality of workmanship on the back will also be examined**. (For example, the reverse side of an unframed cross-stitch piece.)
- Difficult techniques will garner additional credit.
- Items incorporating a variety of techniques may also receive additional credit.

Finish and presentation

- All items should be clean and neatly presented.
- Many **soft crafts** should be finished by **dampening, blocking and pressing** etc. However, they should not be over-handled and their **original texture should be maintained**. For more information on the finishing of specific soft crafts, contact the Show Secretary or consult the handbook referenced above.
- There should be no adhesive visible on the top surface of any crafted item.
- In general, **mounts and frames** may be used, but these should be **modest** and not dominate your work. Please contact the Show Secretary if you wish to check the suitability of your frame.
- Items, such as bags, may be **lightly stuffed** to emphasise their shape.
- **Small props** may be used but these shouldn't overwhelm or distract from your crafted item. If in any doubt about the suitability of your props, please contact the Show Secretary.

Craft-specific advice

- *'On with the Show: An NFWI Handbook for Exhibitors, Judges and Show Committees'* provides some great advice for exhibiting many different crafts. However, there may be some slight differences from the class instructions provided in our Show Schedule - the **BGS Show Schedule**, and the advice notes below, **should always take precedence**.
- For further advice on the judging criteria for specific crafts, please contact the Show Secretary.

Knitting, Floral

- Any hand-knitted item with a floral theme or design.
- **Other techniques**, such as crochet edgings or surface embroidery, may be incorporated but this **must be noted on a title card**. (Available from the steward.) The basis of the floral design must be knitted.
- Yarn and tension should generate a fabric suitable for the intended use.
- Tension should be consistent and create the desired texture.
- Pay particular attention to any edges and seams. Check that all loose ends are neatly darned in.
- **Clothing for babies and young children** should not include long ribbons, cords, drawstrings or similar. Fastenings and embellishments should be very firmly attached. Clothing and blankets for babies should not have an open knit structure that would allow small fingers to become trapped. Contact the Show Secretary for further information.

Crochet, Beret

- **Other techniques**, such as knitted ribs or surface embroidery, may be incorporated but this **must be noted on a title card**. (Available from the steward.) The basis of the design must be crocheted.
- Tension should be correct, matching hook size to yarn. Yarn and tension should generate a fabric suitable for the intended use.

- Tension should be consistent and create the desired texture.
- Pay particular attention to any edges and seams. Check that all loose ends are neatly darned in.
- **Beret for a baby or young child:** Any “stalk”, bobble or embellishment should be very firmly attached. Contact the Show Secretary for further information.

Needlecraft, Floral

- Made using any hand-stitched technique. For example, cross stitch, embroidery, tapestry or ribbon embroidery.
- You may combine different techniques within a single piece.
- Additional embellishments may be worked into the piece.
- Your piece of floral needlecraft may be ‘standalone’ or incorporated within another item of soft or hard craft. Alternatively, your entry may be mounted and/ or framed but not glazed.

The Great Bream Sewing Bee

- A summer garment, for an adult or a child **made from two repurposed pillowcases**.
- Some additional embellishments may be added but the two pillowcases must form the basis of your garment.
- **Clothing for babies and young children** should not include long ribbons, cords, drawstrings or similar. Fastenings and embellishments should be very firmly attached. Check the finished garment very carefully to ensure that no pins or needles remain. Contact the Show Secretary for further information.
- Hand or machine stitched.
- An overlocker may be used.
- The design and scale should be appropriate for the weight and pattern of the fabric.
- Opens and fastenings should be well placed, neatly inserted and functional.
- Darts, pleats, gathers and tucks etc. should be evenly placed.
- Remove all tacking threads.
- Be careful to avoid creating hem or seam impressions when ironing.
- Tissue paper, or similar, may be used to shape the garment when displaying.

Quilting, stained glass

- Any item of patchwork or appliqué that uses fabric strips to replicate the effect of leading in stained-glass windows.
- Hand or machine stitched.
- The design should stand out from the background and be well balanced.
- Any wadding, if present, should be appropriate for the intended use and have a balanced distribution.

- Even stitches and correct fabric tension are key features.
- Patchwork or appliqué panels can be finished with piped, turned-in or bound edges. Alternatively, panels may be incorporated within another item of soft craft or stretched and mounted as a picture.

Drawing and/ or painting

- A class that **specifically examines drawing and/ or painting skills** - other artwork should be entered in the **Artwork class** below.
- The judge will consider factors such as focal point, balance and composition, perspective, colour and tonal range, and use of materials.
- Modest mount and/or frame allowed.

Artwork

- A class that examines **artwork which doesn't qualify for the Drawing and Painting class**.
- Created using techniques other than traditional drawing and/ or painting skills. For example, print, collage, mixed-media, cyanotype or printed digital art.
- **List the main techniques used next to your piece.** Title cards are available from the steward.
- Where appropriate, the judge may consider factors such as focal point, balance and composition, perspective, colour and tonal range, and creative use of materials.
- Modest mount and/or frame allowed.

One and two piece sticks

- Shaft and handle should be made entirely by the entrant.
- A one piece walking stick should be made from a single piece of wood.
- A two piece walking stick should be made from a separate wooden stick shaft and a handle joined together. The handle should be made from wood or other natural material.
- Spacers are allowed.
- End caps are allowed on thumb sticks.
- Sticks may be entered with or without any type of ferrule.
- The maker's name, or other identifying feature, should not be visible on any part of the stick.
- The choice of wood, and other natural materials, should influence the design. Naturally occurring colours, grain, faults and knots could all become features of the design.
- Care should be taken when finishing the piece to enhance the grain or show the design to best advantage.
- For further advice or inspiration, [The British Stickmakers Guild](#) has an extensive literature list and photo gallery.
- A rack for displaying the sticks will be provided.

Papercraft, floral

- Any item of papercraft with a floral theme.
- Made using one or more papercraft techniques. For example, quilling, parchment craft, origami, découpage or paper engineering.
- **Other techniques and materials may be incorporated** but the basis of your design should be crafted from paper.
- For advice on the judging criteria for specific papercrafts, please consult *'On with the Show: An NFWI Handbook for Exhibitors, Judges and Show Committees'* or contact the Show Secretary.

Hard craft, floral

- Any item of hard craft with a floral theme.
- Made using one or more hard craft techniques. For example, ceramics, modelling clay, beadwork, enamelling, glasswork, woodwork or metalwork.
- You may enter sugar paste flowers in this class.
- **Other techniques and materials may be incorporated** but the basis of your design should be crafted from a hard material other than paper.
- For advice on the judging criteria for specific hard crafts, please consult *'On with the Show: An NFWI Handbook for Exhibitors, Judges and Show Committees'* or contact the Show Secretary.

Waste not want not: rags

- Any item made using a **rag rug technique(s)**. The rags should be taken from **previously used fabric**.
- For example, a rag rug, wall hanging, cushion, decorative wreath, table mat or table runner, draught excluder, seat pad or bouquet.
- For possible techniques and inspiration see www.raggedlife.com/pages/rag-rug-techniques
- If your item is to be used as a rug or mat, it should be made from durable material and be robustly constructed. It should lie flat with no wavy edges.
- If you make a square or oblong rug or mat, exact corners demonstrate extra skill.
- **Plaited or rolled techniques:** Plaits should be tight to generate body. Twists should be consistent to produce a clear pattern. Joins and ends should be unobtrusive. Unless they form part of the design, stitches should not be visible on the surface.
- **Hooked or prodded techniques:** Dense but not overpacked. The 'tufts' or loops should be of a consistent length unless the variation in length is integral to the design.