***THACS***

Tewin Horticultural Arts & Crafts Society

**GUIDANCE NOTES FOR JUDGES**

**Introduction and purpose**

There has been some confusion and inconsistency with some aspects of the judging at previous *THACS* shows. These *Guidance Notes for Judges* aim to address those issues.

**Background**

We hold two shows each year, each involving six or seven judges. The judges are not the same each time, so we have several judges who could be judging the various subjects at different shows. This is an extremely fortunate position for *THACS* to be in! However, different judges have different approaches and this has caused some inconsistencies in the way that position awards have been made. This in turn has caused some misunderstandings and confusion amongst the exhibitors and visitors. I believe that this issue will be eased if we could establish a more consistent approach. In preparation for the *THACS* Autumn Show in 2018, we produced our first Guidance Notes for Judges and issued it to all of the judges for that show. It was generally well-received and used so now we will ensure that this guidance will be offered to all the other judges too.

**Guidance**

If there are a sufficient number of exhibits in any category, I would like judges to award a first, second, third place and Highly Commended wherever appropriate. Ties for any of the positions are undesirable but sometimes inevitable. The awarding of joint positions should be minimised and the number of exhibitors sharing any position should be no more than two whenever possible. If joint positions are awarded for first or second places, the remaining awards should be made as if there had not been any ties. For example, if two exhibits share first place, the next best exhibits should be awarded second place, rather than third. A written comment from the judge concerning the quality of the exhibit is welcome but not obligatory.

In order to maintain standards, judges have the right to withhold prizes. Indeed, that is embodied in one of the show rules: -

 “The Judges’ decision is final. The Judges shall have the right to withhold prizes where entries are insufficient, or are considered unworthy, so that no undeserving exhibit obtains a prize.”

However, I urge you to use the right to withhold prizes with discretion. These are only small village shows, so the standards of national shows are not applicable. We wish to recognise and reward achievement of the exhibitors, even when just judged in comparison with the other exhibitors (rather than against a quality standard).

**Thank you**

These guidance notes are just intended to improve clarity and consistency in the judging at *THACS* shows, so please do not take this as criticism or lack of appreciation. Far from it: -all of our judges perform their roles voluntarily and without payment, they generously put their experience and expertise to such good use at our shows and our shows would not be possible without them. Thank you very much!

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