

Guidance Notes to Prepare your Entries for The Warkworth Show

A number of our Show Judges have kindly listed some of the points that they take into account when judging entries into some of the sections which appear in The Warkworth Show Schedule.

The Sections are:

HANDICRAFTS, including Quilting, Embroidery, Cross stitch, Crochet, Knitting, Machine-made articles, and Soft toys

PRESERVES & HONEY, including Chutneys, Jams, Marmalades, Jelly, Lemon curd, Honeys, Fruit Spirits, and Wine

BAKING, including Bread, Scones, Swiss roll, Cakes, Pastries, and Shortbread

Guidance Notes for HANDICRAFTS

Quilting

- Guidance is the same for a large quilt or a small item
- Use of appropriate fabric
- Good colour co-ordination
- All points matching when piecing
- Quilting should have even stitches throughout
- The fabric should be mitred at corners and even
- The back should look neat whether stitched by hand or machine
- Clean condition

Embroidery

- Stitches not pulled too tight
- Colours blended well
- Well pressed on reverse (If this is done on a thick surface such as a folded sheet, it will help the embroidery not to be flattened)
- Clean condition

Cross Stitch

- Crosses must all be lying in the same direction
- No loose ends or knots
- No missed stitches
- A good tension
- Clean condition
- If framed, the fabric should have been well stretched and straight in the frame

Crochet

- An even tension so that it will keep the shape
- Thread ends should be well finished off with no ends showing
- Press into shape if required
- Article must be clean and unwashed

Knitting

- Nice even texture and tension
- Patterns and stripes must be matching at the sides and at the front if in a cardigan
- Buttonholes should be evenly spaced
- Buttons should be in the right place
- Button bands should not be too long or pulled when attached
- Clean, unwashed and unworn

Machine-made article

- Use of an appropriate fabric for the item
- Machine tension should be correct
- Stitching should be straight
- If unlined, edges should be neatened or a French seam used
- Lining should be of the correct size and neatly attached

Soft Toy

- Knitted with an appropriate yarn
- Stuffed enough to keep its shape
- Anything attached should be firmly attached so that a child cannot pull it off
- Eyes should be embroidered rather than attached
- Neatly sewn up with no loose ends

Guidance Notes for
PRESERVES and HONEY

Chutney

- Label should state whether hot or mild
- Jar filled to 4mm from top
- Colour even throughout
- Consistency reasonably firm and uniform
- No large pieces of onion, skin, cores or stones
- No air bubbles or free vinegar
- Flavour blended well
- Benefits from being made at least 3 months (or more) before exhibiting

Jam or Marmalade

- Flavour and aroma are the most important
- Plain glass jar, clean and shiny
- Appropriate seal, either a plain twist top or waxed disc and cellophane cover
- Correctly labelled with type of fruit and date made
- Label applied neatly to the jar
- Good colour appropriate to fruit used
- No visible gaps or scum apparent through glass
- Jars well filled to within 5mm of top of jar
- Fruit properly cooked with no tough skins
- Good consistency, not too runny, not too stiff
- Flavour appropriate to fruit used
- Fruit taste should predominate over sweet sugary taste

Jelly

- Clean sparkling jar
- Filled to the top
- No mould on the top
- Clear label with fruits used and date made
- Jelly brilliantly clear
- No pulp or scum
- Even colour with no air bubbles
- Perfect set – keeps shape whether turned out or on a spoon
- True fruit flavour

Lemon curd

- Clean sparkling jar
- Filled to the top
- Label with date made
- Bright colour
- Spreadable consistency – not too runny
- No egg spots or pieces of egg white – indication of good egg mixing and sieving
- No lemon pulp – juice sieved
- Zest finely grated
- Strong lemon flavour but not bitter
- Not a greasy taste

Honey

Honey should be presented in clear, clean glass jars with screw tops - jars should be screw top 454g/1lb. It's a good idea to replace lids with new ones when setting up on Show Day and clean the glass.

Runny Honey:

- Should be as clear as possible
- Bright colour
- No foreign bodies (bits of wax etc.) and try to remove any "scum" (air bubbles) from the surface
- Appropriate viscosity to show water content is a correct percentage
- Taste appropriate to forage plant

Set Honey:

- Even granulation / consistency / crystallisation
- Clean surface
- Easy spreadability (make sure that set honey is not too hard for sampling)
- Good taste and aroma - the bees are in control of that, but check that no chemical (Eg thymol) can be detected

For comb, chose frames that are evenly capped (all over the frame) drawn from new and unwired (if possible) foundation

Fruit Spirit / Wine

- Is it according to schedule?
- Must be presented in a clear glass bottle
- It should be sealed but easy for the judges to open
- Bottle filled to within 12mm / ½ inch of the seal
- Clearly labelled with type, year of making and indication of sweetness (if it's wine)
- Colour bright, characteristic and clear
- No sediment
- Aroma well rounded and pleasant
- Enjoyable taste
- Balance and flavour are the most important

Guidance Notes for **BAKING**

Bread

Appearance and presentation:

- Well formed and shaped
- Not over risen
- Cooked with an even colour
- Good crust

Inside, volume and crumb:

- No holes
- Good volume
- Evenly stretched crumb
- These are all indications of the kneading process and gluten development

Flavour:

- Not too yeasty – this would indicate over proving
- Enough salt for taste and gluten formation

Speciality Bread

- Clearly labelled as to what kind of bread is to be judged: eg sourdough, which has a tighter texture and volume and a distinctive sour alcohol flavour due to long rising and natural yeast development
- Speciality flour: eg rye and spelt have lower protein content therefore will not have a light airy texture and volume
Focaccia, ciabatta, challah
- Flavoured bread, flavour must be stated
- International or regional breads have traditional shapes and flavours
- Expected appearance, construction and flavour is dependent on the technique and flour used

Scones

- Use a plain cutter for cheese scones, a fluted one for sweet scones
- Usually schedule asks for 4 – but do check
- They should be even in shape, colour and size
- Should stand erect, flat on top with a 'crack' around the middle
- Texture light and springy – more like bread than cake
- Good flavour
- No folds or cracks on the bottom

Dropped Scones

- Schedule usually asks for 4 – always check
- All the same size and colour
- Light and spongy
- Both sides the same colour
- When torn in two, the bubbles should be the same all the way through
- Taste sweet but not over sweet

Swiss roll

- Texture should be even, no toughness or pockets of flour
- Sides and ends trimmed neatly
- Light golden colour, with a light sprinkling of caster sugar
- Carefully rolled with no cracks, join underneath
- Not overfilled with jam
- Jam not soaking through
- Delicate flavour

Decorated Chocolate Cake

- If only decoration is to be judged, the cake will not be tasted
- Check the schedule to check if only the top is to be decorated or also the sides
- Icing and decoration should be appropriate
- Design should be pleasing and in proportion to the size of the cake
- Decoration should be neat and consistent over the whole cake
- It should show some skill in the method chosen

Victoria Sandwich Cake

- Bake as specified in the schedule – one tin and cut, or two tins
- No cake liners
- Pale colour, well risen and evenly baked
- No cooling rack marks on top
- Top flat without large air bubbles or crumbly edge
- Cut so that both halves have the same thickness
- No sugar dusting on top
- Fluffy, airy texture
- Traditional filling raspberry jam, sufficient, evenly spread and not sinking into the cake
- Delicate characteristic flavour with no strong flavour predominating

Gingerbread Loaf

- Gingerbread improves if made a few days before cutting and tasting, up to a week
- It should be cooked in a loaf tin, not a round cake tin
- Tin should be neatly lined, not with a preformed fluted paper liner
- The top should be flat and glossy – a peaked or cracked top could indicate too much raising agent or the oven was too hot
- Colour can vary from pale to dark depending on sugar and treacle used
- Texture should be open and uniform, spongy but moist
- Flavour distinctly ginger even if other spices have been added
- If stem ginger is added, this should be well chopped

Pastry

- Normally shortcrust unless otherwise stated in the schedule
- Unless stated otherwise in the schedule, the use of wholemeal flour, or part wholemeal flour, is acceptable particularly for savoury items
- Butter gives a better flavour than margarine
- All pastry should be rolled to the correct thickness for the item
- Evenly baked
- Pastry base should be evenly cooked through
- Texture should be typical for type of pastry
- Any egg wash used should be even all over
- Edges of pastry should be tidily finished as appropriate
- Taste good with right levels of saltiness or sweetness for item being judged
- Fillings should be in the right proportion and fill the pastry case to a good level
- No off flavours from out-of-date butter, margarine or flour
- Choux pastry should be golden brown, well risen and puffy, hollow and dry inside

Shortbread

- Check schedule for presentation – in the round, fingers or pieces
- Neat even shape and smooth
- Pale golden colour
- Not over or under cooked
- Approx. ½ inch thick
- Crisp texture
- Buttery flavour
- May have caster sugar dusting