

Committee Report:

Akers Way – Best in Show Conclusion

Date: 2nd October 2025
To: Leisure & Recreation Committee
From: Andrew Briggs – Ops Manager
Subject: Akers Way – Best in show
Council Priority:

Introduction

This report provides an update on the trial allotment judging initiative conducted at Akers Way allotment site over the 2025 growing season. It summarises the outcomes, assesses the effectiveness, and offers a recommendation for future application across other sites.

Background

As agreed by the Committee earlier this year, a test and learn judging framework was introduced to:

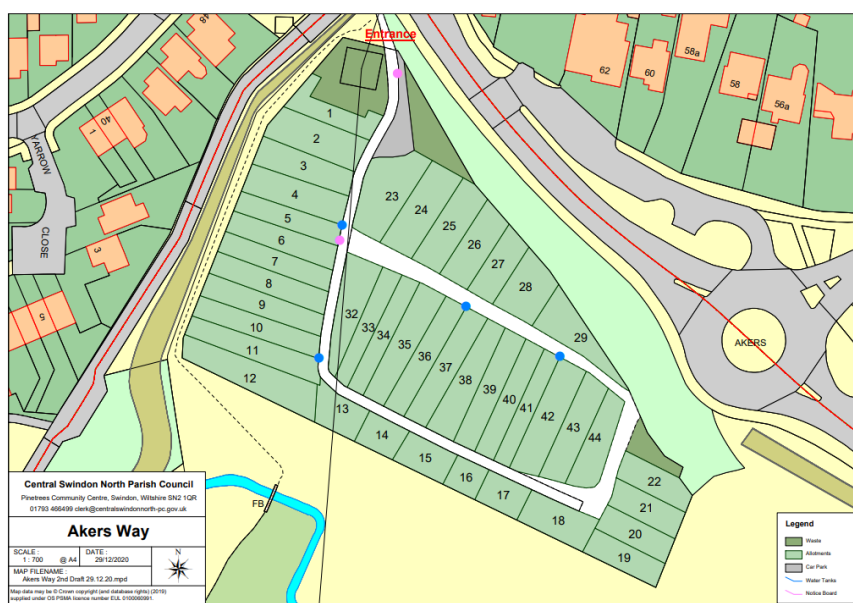
- Recognise and celebrate good allotment practice;
- Encourage cultivation, maintenance, and community pride;
- Trial a consistent and transparent judging method.

The scoring framework assessed all active plots at two points during the growing season (April and August), with specific awards for Best in Show, and Most Improved.

This was the first time such an evaluation system was piloted in the parish.

There are 43 tenanted plots at the Akers Way site, all in varying conditions of cultivation.

The first assessment was completed on 21st May and the 2nd on 4th September. These were slightly later than planned due to various scheduling issues.



Award Results – Akers Way Site

Best in Show – Winner

- **Plots 5, 6, and 7**
- **Total Score: 177 / 200**
This entry was noted for outstanding crop quality, strong environmental practices, and excellent plot management.

Runner-Up

- **Plot 20**
- **Total Score: 176 / 200**
Although a runner up prize was not initially planned, the margin between first and second place was just one point, and the overall standard of Plot 20 was exceptional.
- Considering this, it was deemed appropriate to award an honorary 'Runner Up' prize, recognising the high quality and effort shown.

Most Improved Plot

- **Plot 28**
- **Improvement Score: 55 points (April to August)**
Plot 28 was vacant upon first viewing. Upon the follow up inspection, the new tenant has carried out significant amount of work, showing a significant transformation, marking it as a standout for improvement.

Allotment Judging Awards – Prize Details

- The Best in Show and Most Improved winners will receive:
 - A trophy
 - One year's free allotment rent for the 2026/2027 tenancy year.
- The Runner Up (Plot 20) will receive:
 - A Runner Up trophy, recognising the exceptional quality and close scoring in the final judging.

These awards are intended to celebrate and acknowledge the outstanding effort, cultivation, and community contribution of our plot holders.

All awards will be presented at the Pride of the Parish event in February 2026.

Evaluation of Judging Pilot

The judging process:

- Was well received by plot holders and encouraged engagement.
- Provided consistent, objective scoring through a simplified rubric.
- Helped officers identify and celebrate successful growing practices.
- Created a sense of friendly competition without additional cost or disruption.

Officers found the structured approach practical and repeatable, and feedback from the judging panel indicated clarity and fairness in scoring criteria.

Recommendation

Considering the success of this pilot, it is recommended that:

The same judging format be applied to a second site during the 2026 growing season.

This will further validate the scoring system, promote site to site consistency, and ensure more plot holders across the parish can be involved and recognised.

A shortlist of candidate sites will be presented at a future meeting for Committee consideration.

Thank's extended to the judging panel (Cllrs and Officers), allotment holders at Akers Way, and members of the Leisure & Recreation Committee for supporting this successful pilot.

Winner Trophy



Runner up Trophy



Most improved Trophy

