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Essex Dahlia Society

Dahlia & Plant Sale, Saturday 16th May 2026 – Open to the public from 10am to 1pm at Broomfield Village Hall

58th Annual Show: Sunday 30th August 2026 Open to the public from 1pm At Abercorn Plant and Garden Centre, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford

For further details, contact: John Cullen, tel: 01245 264183

GUIDANCE FOR THE DAHLIA CUTTING CHALLENGE
for Showing in the Autumn Show

1. Aspect: Full sun or partial shade – best is a sheltered position.

2. Soil: Good fertile humus-rich, which is well-drained – most garden soils.

3. Support: 3 bamboo canes placed around the plant (4ft canes best) tied with soft string to form a cage.

4. Watering: Keep plants moist – add a mulch of straw or garden material.

5. Feeding: A general-purpose fertiliser added two weeks before planting – then a general-purpose liquid feed at 2-3 week intervals (Chempack range) until buds form, then a tomato feed to help flowering.

6. Stopping: Remove growing tip in June, then in July remove growing tips of new shoots.

7. Debranching: Remove only wing buds. These are the shoots nearest the main bud you want to flower – this will give you a nice stem to place in the vase.

8. Pests: Aphids will attack new soft shoots – spray with insecticide or squash with your fingers and hose off;
   Earwigs: Place a small section of hose-pipe flat on the ground near plants and every 3-4 days, place the hose over a bucket of water and with a split cane poke them out;
   Slugs: Only a problem when plants are first planted out. Use a very small amount of pellets or try the beer method – place an old plastic pot half-filled with beer in the soil. Empty as soon as you can.

AUTUMN SHOW SCHEDULE
SECTION ONE – FLOWERS
SECTION A
(To be Judged by National Dahlia Society Rules)

Dahlias - All Dahlias to be named. Classes 101-110 may be any variety or varieties

101 Three Medium blooms any variety
102 Three Small blooms any variety
103 Three Miniature blooms ball or decorative
104 Three Miniature blooms cactus or semi-cactus
105 Three blooms pompons
106 Three blooms any other classification
107 One bloom giant or large – any variety
108 One bloom medium – any variety
109 One bloom small – any variety
110 One bloom miniature – any variety

SECTION B
(Not judged to National Dahlia Society Rules – Dahlias do not have to be named)

111 One bloom grown from a cutting provided
112 One blooms any variety, predominately yellow in colour
113 Three blooms any type or variety
114 Bowl of Dahlias, no fewer than 6 blooms, any foliage - for effect. Please provide your own bowl, 30cm diameter max.
115 One Dahlia head in a saucer

Other Plants and Flowers

116 A single spray of Chrysanthemums grown from cutting provided
117 Three sprays of Chrysanthemums, any cultivar(s)
118 Three blooms of Chrysanthemums, any cultivar(s)
119 One stem of Gladiolus
120 One specimen Flowering or Fruiting Plant
121 One specimen Foliage Plant
122 One specimen Succulent
123 Vase of three Stems of Zinnia, one variety
124 Vase of six stems of Cosmos, one variety
125 Vase of three Annual Asters, one variety
126 Vase of three stems of flowering shrubs – one or more varieties
127 Vase of Michaelmas Daisies/Perennial Asters
128 Penstemon – Three stems, one or more varieties
129 One Rose with own foliage
130 Vase of three Roses, one or more varieties
131 Vase of three stems of cluster flower Roses
132 Vase of Foliage - may include grasses, seed-heads, berries etc

133 Vase of Three stems of Perennials, one stem each variety
134 Vase of Mixed flowers - excluding Dahlias, Chrysanthemums and Zinnias
135 One Flower (single bloom) and one Vegetable
136 One Flower (single bloom) and one Fruit

Note: All pot plants: Container not to exceed 25cm diameter

Walter Harris Challenge Cup & £5 cash prize for highest aggregate in Section One excluding Dahlias

R W Petch Cup & £5 cash prize for competitor gaining highest points in Dahlias (classes 101-115)

Harry Jones Memorial Trophy & £5 cash prize for winner of Class 116

Nick Turner Cup & £5 cash prize for winner of Class 111

SECTION TWO - FRUIT & VEGETABLES

201 Four Apples (Dessert)
202 Four Apples (Cooking)
203 Three Carrots, long pointed - leaf stalks cut to approx. 5cm
204 Three Carrots, stump rooted - leaf stalks cut to approx. 5cm
205 Three Leeks
206 Two Parsnips - leaf stalks cut to approx. 5cm
207 Dish of 4 medium-sized Tomatoes - to be shown with stalks (approx. 60mm dia.)
208 Dish of 6 small fruited Tomatoes
209 Three Onions over 250g
210 Three Onions 250g or under
211 Six Spring Onions (green salad), with leaves and roots
212 Dish of Runner Beans, in fresh condition - 6 pods
213 One Autumn Cabbage, with or without stalk
214 Three White Potatoes, 1 variety
215 Three Coloured Potatoes, 1 variety
216 Six Shallots for pickling, not over 3cm diameter
217 Six Shallots - exhibition
218 One Winter Squash (Not pumpkin or marrow)
219 Two cobs of Sweet Corn
220 3 Beetroot, round, approx. 60-75mm diameter, foliage cut to approx. 75mm
221 3 Chillies, grown from a plant provided
222 Any other Vegetable(s) not in Schedule
223 Dish of Raspberries – 10 fruits with stalks
224 Any other Fruit not in Schedule
225 The most curiously shaped Vegetable/Fruit
226 Longest Runner Bean (in green condition)
227 Heaviest Onion
228 Heaviest Potato

229 Heaviest Tomato
230 Heaviest Marrow
231 Longest Carrot
232 Heaviest Pumpkin
233 A vegetable Character (Novelty item made from more than one vegetable)
234 A selection of 5 different vegetables, space not to exceed 77 x 61cm.* (Chosen from classes 203-221 incl. – quantities as listed)
235 A tray of 3 Vegetables, displayed within the confines of a tray 45 x 30cm Chosen from 3 Potatoes, 3 medium Tomatoes (approx. 60mm dia.), 6 Beans, 3 Beetroot and 3 Carrots (without top foliage)

*** Double points awarded for class 234 and 235**

Bill Hayden Challenge Cup & £5 cash prize for highest aggregate in Section Two
BCGS £5 voucher for winner of Class 221
BCGS £5 voucher for winner of Class 234
BCGS £5 voucher for winner of Class 235

SECTION THREE – MASTER GARDENERS

301 The Society Master Gardeners Competition**:**
Vase of flowers. Any one of the following:- 3 Dahlias, 2 Gladioli, 3 Chrysanthemums, 5 Perennials (any variety or varieties) **AND**
Vegetables. Any three of the following:- 6 Runner Beans, 2 Cabbages, 1 Cauliflower, 3 Carrots, 3 Onions, 3 Courgettes, 5 Potatoes (one variety), 5 Tomatoes (approx. 60mm diam., one variety)

The Society Master Gardeners Trophy & £5 cash prize will be awarded to the winner of Class 301

SECTION FOUR – FLORAL & VEGETABLE ARRANGEMENTS

401 A Floral and/or Vegetable Arrangement with accessories "Champions' of the World" **(Maximum size 60cm square)**
402 A small Posy (maximum Diameter 15cm

The Society Challenge Cup & £5 cash prize for the best Floral/Vegetable Arrangement in Section Four

SECTION FIVE - COOKERY & PRESERVES
(See the GUIDE TO EXHIBITORS on Pages 9/10)

Cookery

501 Six Mince Pies
502 Fruit Pie cooked on a deep pie dish, with a rim, with pastry on top only
503 Leek and Cheese Flan - short crust pastry
504 Six Brioche buns **– recipe provided**
505 Victoria Sandwich, with jam and buttercream filling
506 Six Breakfast Bars
507 Six Chocolate Brownies

Preserves

509 One jar Stone Fruit Jam
510 One jar of any other Jam
511 One jar of fruit Jelly
512 One jar Pickled Onions/Shallots
513 One jar Chutney
514 One jar Pickles

Trading Centre Cup & £5 cash prize for highest aggregate in Section Five

SECTION SIX – PHOTOGRAPHY

601 Doors
602 Looking Down
603 Through the Gap
604 Trees
605 Reflections

All photographs to be unframed, max size 8"x 6" (20cm x 15cm). Mounts must not protrude more than ½" (1.25cm) from edge of photograph.

** All photograph subjects must be original

Chairman's Challenge Trophy & £5 cash prize for highest aggregate in Section Six

The Ken Searles Cup & £5 cash prize for the member gaining the highest aggregate in show.

THE ANGEL

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Broomfield Cottage Gardeners' Society Committee would like to thank THE ANGEL for their hospitality in enabling us to hold our Committee Meetings in their warm and friendly establishment.

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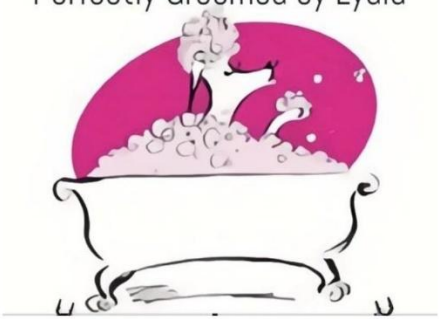
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