

THE SPADE

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THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF GARDENERS

UPCOMING DAIRY DATES

DATE	EVENT	VENUE AND INFORMATION
Tuesday 7 July	The Gardens of Eton College	The Master invites members and guests to join him for a special visit to Eton College.
Monday 7 September	Dorset Gardens Tour	A relaxed three-night tour of the Gardens of Dorset.
Tuesday 29 September	Common Hall - Election of the Lord Mayor & Lunch	Eligible Liverymen only, followed by optional lunch. Guildhall, Business attire.
Saturday 3 October	Visit to Epping Forest	Walks and talks in Epping Forest and a chance to view the Elizabethan Hunting Lodge.
Sunday 18 October	Harvest Festival Service	We join the congregation of St Giles' Cripplegate for their annual Harvest Festival Service followed by lunch nearby.
Wednesday 4 November	Autumn Dinner	Our annual dinner celebrating our award winners. Ironmongers' Hall, Black tie.
Tuesday 24 November	New Members' Lunch	A small informal lunch in a City restaurant allowing new members of the Company to meet each other. New members by invitation.
Friday 11 December	Carol Service	A beautiful service of readings and music to mark the festive season, taking place at St Giles' Cripplegate and followed by a reception. Business attire.
Friday 8th Jan 2027	Tradescant Lunch	The Farmers' Club. Court only, Business attire.
Friday 12 February 2027	Annual Banquet	At the Mansion house. White tie preferred (equivalent for ladies); Black tie acceptable.
Friday 12 March 2027	United Guilds' Service & Lunch	We join the other Livery Companies and Guilds for a service at St Paul's Cathedral, followed by an optional lunch.
Monday 15 March 2027 - 20 March 2027	Madeira	A visit to the magical semi tropical island of Madeira. The trip will include the garden of the Palheiro, the Monte Palace tropical garden and special Madiera tasting at Blandy's.
Wednesday 07 April 2027	Dulwich Picture Gallery and Garden	A tour of the Gardens led by Head Gardener Jack Townson, followed by a visit to Dulwich Picture Gallery Collection.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

It has been a splendid year with great individual and group achievements as the Company goes from strength to strength

My year as Master Gardener is coming to an end. By the time you read this, my last Master's Message, I will be back sitting in my garden with a cold drink in my hand and my feet up. My very worthy successor as Master, David Balfour, will be installed, his year already off to a flying start. Looking ahead, we have a wonderful year in prospect and, if you have not already done so, I would encourage you to review the Upcoming Dairy Dates on the opposite page, and make sure they are all firmly in your own calendar.

So much fun!
The past year has simply flown by. It is true what they say – being the Master of a Livery Company is no small thing. It requires a significant commitment of time and effort. But it is so much fun! I commend it to you all. When I look back on my year, it is with a sense of joy. And the most wonderful thing of all has been you; our Liverymen and Freemen. I am so very grateful to you all for your enthusiasm and constant support during my year. It is a memory I will cherish forever. Your Company is in great shape, as these pages attest.

We are known in the City of London as an 'active' Livery, and our calendar has certainly been full of fascinating talks, trips, lunches and dinners. I hope that you have managed to participate in at least some of these.

Outstanding achievements
Our own Liverymen have also been busy! Liveryman Andrew Fisher Tomlin has been awarded the Royal Horticultural Society's Elizabeth Medal of Honour, of which there are only ever 70 in existence at any one time, in recognition of his contribution to international horticulture. Senior Past Master Paul Rochford has been recognised with an MBE for more than forty years of charity work in the horticultural sector. I know that you will join with me in congratulating them both on these well-deserved honours.

Thank you for the support
I would like to thank our new Clerk, Dr Christine Rigden, for looking after us all (and especially me!) over the past year. I have greatly enjoyed working with her, along with Helen Colebrook our

Events & Communications Officer, and Georgina Faulkner our Finance Officer. Throughout the year, all three have been down in the engine room, working hard for the benefit of us all. I am also very grateful to my Wardens, together with the Chairs of our Committees and Sub-Committees. Thank you for your unwavering commitment over the past year, for all you have done and continue to do for our Livery.

Going from strength to strength
My sense is that, as a Company, we go from strength to strength. I look forward to continuing to support our Livery to the very best of my ability, albeit from the backbenches. We have a fantastic new Master and Warden team to take us forwards, and the future is positive. Once again, my thanks to you all – Liverymen and Freemen alike - for making our Company the very best Livery in the City.

I wish you all a restful and happy Summer. With warmest regards,

Robert



SPRING COURT LUNCH

Stationers Hall with its grand banqueting hall and shady courtyard provided the perfect venue for the Spring Court Lunch held on Tuesday 21st April

This ancient Livery Hall is one of the few to have a private garden, where guests gathered in the glorious sunshine. The setting in the hall with dark panelling, bright standards and fresh flower arrangements, provided by Jon and Chris Adams, was simply magnificent.

Late Queen’s centenary tributes

The date coincided with what would have been our late Queens’ 100th birthday and the event included several tributes to Her Majesty. We enjoyed gin and Dubonnet cocktails as an aperitif, and the bespoke menu reflected some personal favourites, the head chef having previously cooked for the late Queen. Freeman Lottie Longman had flown down from Scotland with a spray of lily of the valley to be presented to HM The King later that afternoon. The Longman family has a long tradition of providing bouquets for members of the Royal Family.

Nine new Liverymen welcomed

Jane McNaughton, John Davidson, Eleni Stephenson–Clarke, Brian Jones, Noel Brock, Kathie Coss, Andrew Jasper, Rosalie Pretorius and Richard Jackson.

The Principal guests

Court Assistant Philippa Burrough formally welcomed the principal guests:

Mr Gary Langley: Mayoral Consort, Mr Christopher Newenham: Master Fruiterer, Mr Nick McCrae: Master Needlemaker and his Clerk Fiona Sedgwick, Mr Christopher Riddle: President of the Farmer’s Club, Lady Salisbury: Chatelaine of Hatfield House, Dr Linda Yueh: CBE, Chair of the Royal Parks, an Economist and Financial Forecaster.

Dr Yueh’s response

Dr Yueh gave an eloquent response on behalf of the guests. She was delighted to be at the lunch as Gardeners’ work resonates deeply with her, thanks to its combination of art, science, passion, tradition and public service. That morning she had attended, together with HRH Princess Royal, the formal opening of the new memorial garden in Regents Park, a fitting tribute to the late Queen. Dr Yueh in her role as Chair of the Royal Parks has to consider global resilience for financial markets and gardens. These parks receive 77 million visitors annually and remain free of charge and open to all. This is unnerving for an economist, a combination of high demand and zero income! The importance of having access to nature is now appreciated by all, it being necessary for respite and renewal. Commenting that gardeners and economists require patience when

waiting for growth, she noted that horticulture is one of the few fields where long term investment quite literally can be seen “growing before your eyes.” Dr Yueh congratulated the Company for its work to champion horticultural excellence and encourage education for future generations.

Announcement of The King’s Trophy

In his response, Master Alderman Robert Howard announced a new ‘Royal Award’ to be presented by the Company. His Majesty King Charles III has graciously allowed the Company to create The King’s Trophy. This new award will sit alongside the Prince Edward Award and will be given annually to an individual or team that achieves excellence in sustainable horticultural practices or growing innovation. The first will be awarded at Spring Court 2027. Full details can be found on the Company website.

The Master’s speech

The Master thanked everyone for their support during his term as Master and looked forward to seeing the Company continue to thrive. Special thanks was given to the team at Stationers Hall, the Events Committee, Jon and Chris Adams, Helen Colebrook and Clerk Dr Christine Rigden.



DECLINE AND RESURRECTION

In the final part of our trilogy on the history of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, Georgina Craufurd charts the lean years and subsequent rebirth of the Company

James I's Charter of 1605 (see *The Gardeners' Charter*, Spring issue) successfully encouraged gardeners to grow vegetables to feed London, and over the course of the 17th century London continued to expand out of the confines of the City. But of course, more people needed more food. In the early 18th century Hoxton, north of the City, was an area both for producers of vegetables and fruit and also for growers of plants for the gardens of the new wealthy; these growers included Thomas Fairchild, who created the first man-made plant hybrid (known as Fairchild's Mule).

Market garden expansion

10,000 acres of market gardens (from Barnes upriver to villages like Rainham in Essex) were developed by the Thames, which also provided transport for human waste from the City to put on the land. It was a splendidly 'green' solution, but it probably contributed to the City's refusal to accept the Gardeners' Company as a full equal to the other City Livery Companies until 1910. (The Company's lack of wealth was probably another reason.) The movement westward was given a huge impetus by the opening of the original Westminster Bridge in 1750. Unlike London Bridge, it was not cluttered by houses, shops and animals; it gave easy access to the Houses of Parliament, and important dignitaries moved to the West End to save time and uncomfortable travel. (The Bishops of London, for instance, moved to St James' Square, and only moved back to the City in the late 20th century.) English shoppers (unlike the French) lost the habit of buying in markets, and in the 18th century turned to specialists — greengrocers and florists — and (in the 20th century) to supermarkets. The growing network of canals which linked navigable rivers allowed safe transport, and it encouraged growers beyond the six-mile radius of the City which was controlled by the Gardeners'. Things again changed radically in the mid-19th century because of the railways. They enabled people to commute from the suburbs (which became built over), and they enabled produce to travel far and wide without being damaged. A firm growing strawberries in Lymington used to send its fruit by train to nearby

Portsmouth; from there their produce was sent by rail as far as Glasgow, as well as to Covent Garden.

Gardening periodicals appear

Meanwhile those who ran the City became enthusiastic gardeners for pleasure in their suburban gardens. Societies of 'florists' were founded by amateur growers interested in particular flowers, such as Auriculas and Carnations. New journals appeared, edited by John Claudius Loudon such as *The Gardener's Magazine* from 1826 to 1844. Joseph Paxton (designer of the Crystal Palace) and John Lindley (of the Horticultural Society, founded in 1804) among others founded *The Gardeners' Chronicle* in 1841, later rebranded as the trade journal *Horticulture Week*.

Dwindling membership

Over the 18th century, membership of the Gardeners' Company started to dwindle. The earliest extant Minute Book, started in 1764, records this sorry story. In July 1782 for instance no-one attended the Court meeting at all, and this was repeated over the next forty years. The Company's 'Apostolic succession' was continued at least in theory through the 19th century by a succession of Clerks, and by several generations of the Hipkins family. (It may be best to draw a veil over this.)

Victorian revival

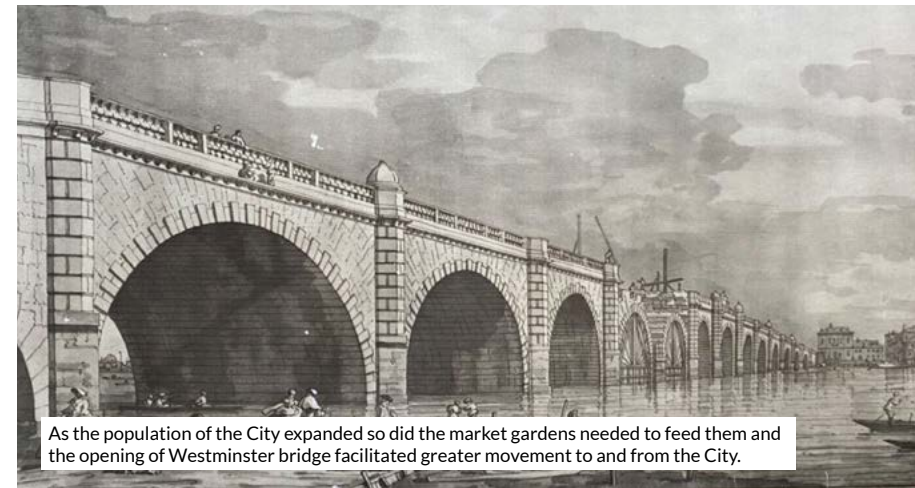
In 1890 things changed. We don't know exactly why, but the Victorians across the spectrum desired to preserve and revive traditions. Three prominent members of other City institutions, two of whom were also Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries of London (FSA), together with the Clerk William Curtis, held a committee meeting on 30th December 1890 because of (I quote): "*the desirability of taking more active steps to develop the Company so as to extend its usefulness*". They set about recruiting new members (fast-tracked to be Assistants), and next year (1891) persuaded the Lord Mayor, Sir Joseph Savory, Bt., DL, JP and MP, to be Master. An important link with the Royal Horticultural Society was made by electing the Rev. William Wilks, its Honorary Secretary and Sir Trevor Lawrence, Bt., KCVO, KStJ, who had been the RHS's president in 1885.

Ernest Arthur Ebbelwhite

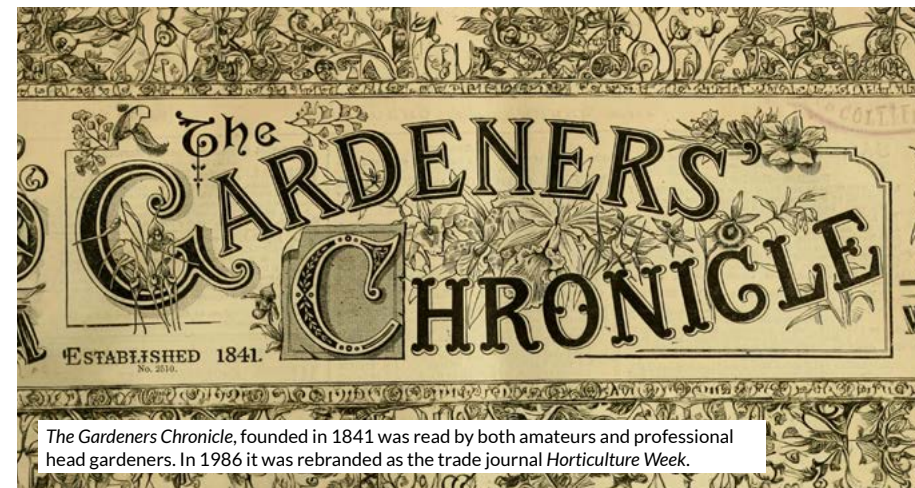
But the crucial recruit as Clerk in 1903 was another FSA, Ernest Arthur Ebbelwhite, who served till 1937. The Company still needed recognition by the City, and from 1903 to 1914 Ebbelwhite retrieved, sorted out and transcribed the Company's records in preparation for a petition for full recognition. He also researched the Company's right to bear arms; these had been used before but had seem not to have been registered with the College of Arms, though a delightful and rather racy version had already appeared in the decorative left-hand margin of the 1616 revision to the Charter a Grant of our Arms with Supporters in 1905 to go with our petition to be a full member of the Livery. (Luckily for us, the City's 1910 decision was 'back-dated' to 1605, which gave us the ranking of 66.)

Resurrection of our traditions

The original committee (now members of the new Court of Assistants) set about raising the profile of the Company with various public events. They revived the tradition of presenting the Lord Mayor with a basket of produce, claiming that this was the 182nd occasion. (There may have been some creative accounting here.) The Company took part in the Lord Mayor's Show. But perhaps the most glamorous was the gift of a bouquet of flowers and a silver basket of Carnations to Queen Mary for her coronation in 1911. This made the City Post twice in June of that year, and Ebbelwhite and the Master, Herbert Bayer, were photographed with the floral arrangements. This has of course become a tradition of the Company; royal brides as well as queens receive gifts of bouquets from us, and most recently Lottie Longman, youngest daughter of PM and Father of the Company David Longman, has received the Royal Warrant as a professional florist. Thus the wheel has come full circle since 1605, with royal recognition; we are proud of having in HRH Prince Edward the Duke of Edinburgh a Past Master who is passionate about gardens, and who has recently hosted a wonderful visit from the Gardeners' to his garden and arboretum.



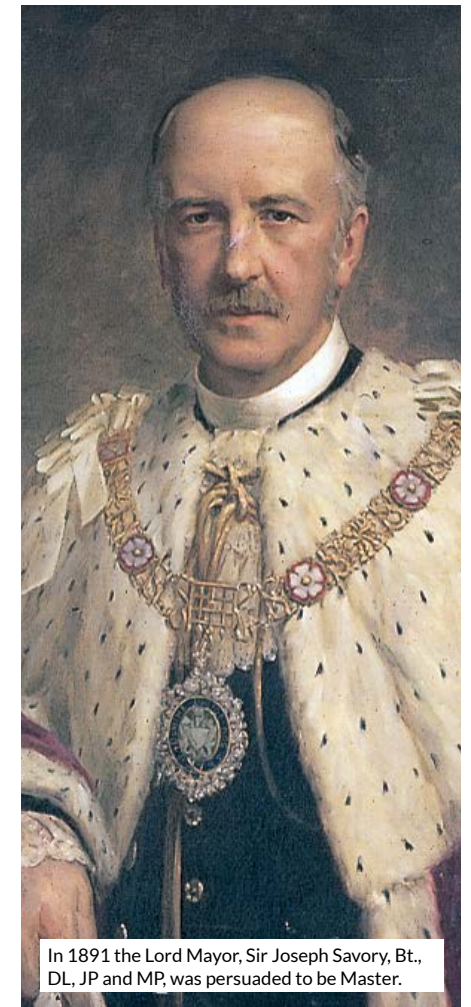
As the population of the City expanded so did the market gardens needed to feed them and the opening of Westminster bridge facilitated greater movement to and from the City.



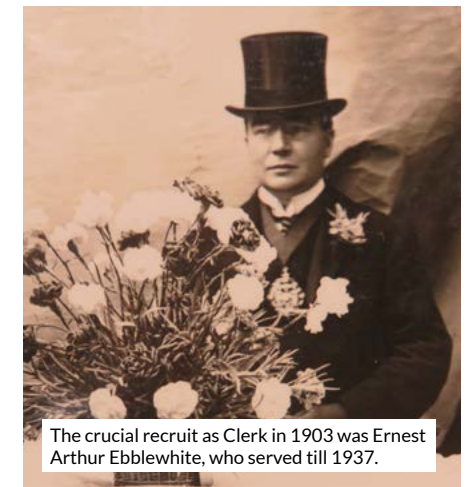
The Gardeners Chronicle, founded in 1841 was read by both amateurs and professional head gardeners. In 1986 it was rebranded as the trade journal Horticulture Week.



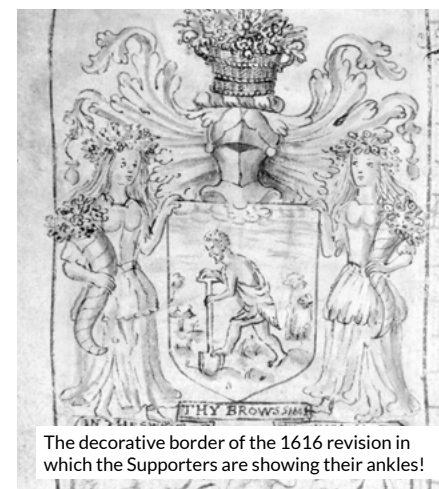
John Claudius Loudon and his family edited *The Gardener's Magazine* from 1826 to 1844.



In 1891 the Lord Mayor, Sir Joseph Savory, Bt., DL, JP and MP, was persuaded to be Master.



The crucial recruit as Clerk in 1903 was Ernest Arthur Ebbelwhite, who served till 1937.



The decorative border of the 1616 revision in which the Supporters are showing their ankles!



The College of Arms produced a Grant of our Arms with Supporters in 1905 to go with our petition to be a full member of the Livery.

A TALE OF TWO GLORIOUS GARDENS

On Wednesday 11th February a group of Gardeners’ travelled to Gloucestershire to visit two gardens. After appalling weather the day before we were lucky to have a dry day and even some sunshine, writes Julie Dowbiggin

Cerney House Gardens

Our first stop was at Cerney House Gardens in the Churn Valley where the house itself has had a colourful history. It was built in 1675 by Sir Thomas Rich, enlarged in 1765 with the white frontage being the extension. It was bought by the Croome family in 1814 who then owned it for 120 years. The next owner, in 1953 was a more famous character, Kenneth de Courcy who knew Edward VIII, various politicians, and was rumoured to have wild parties at the house and was convicted of fraud and imprisoned in Wormwood scrubs!

Garden tour

In the 1980s the Angus family bought the house and today the 40-acre estate is run by their son Nick Angus and his wife Janet. They have nine gardeners and groundsman working both part and full-time. After tea and cake Nick gave us a brief introduction then we were split into two groups and our guide was Debbie who had worked at Cerney for 10 years. The main feature of this garden is the 3.5 acre sloping walled garden which was once a sheep pasture and contains smaller gardens within it. The garden is organic and there is no automatic irrigation so the garden has to look after itself and only new plantings are watered. The South facing border is backed by a wall which was originally part of the old glasshouse. In front of this there are cut flower beds that will contain cosmos, zinnias, sunflowers, tulips, a bee and butterfly border and a hellebore bed which was looking lovely. There are fan trained and espaliered fruit trees, rhubarb, gooseberries and heritage vegetable beds. All of which are harvested and the produce sold in the Potting Shed shop.

Three main gardens

There are three main gardens within the walled garden itself, the Knot , Scented and Medicinal gardens. The Knot garden consists of box parterres and gets planted with approximately 4,000 tulips annually, some of which do get eaten by the squirrels! This garden also contains four lovely old quince trees. Surrounding the Knot garden are trellises that have old fashioned and rambling roses growing over them.

The Medicinal garden

Linking the Knot garden to the Scented garden is a laburnum arch. The area is planted with viburnum, osmanthus, lilac, sarcococca, choisya, daphnes and honeysuckle ensuring fragrance all year round. The Medicinal garden was designed by Nick’s wife Janet who is a doctor and has a keen interest in medicinal plants. There are eight beds relating to different specialisms for example cardiology, dermatology, psychiatry, orthopaedic. Each is planted with herbs and plants that have been, or are used, in these areas and are chosen by Janet herself. There are explanatory notes in each section of the garden which made for interesting reading. E.g Cardiology: contains chrysanthemum (lowers BP, reduces cholesterol). Crataegus: heart strengthening (helps with coronary blood flow). Digitalis: dioxin is obtained from this plant and is used for heart arrhythmia. Psychiatry: Lavender, which helps with anxiety, mild depression and Chamomile for anxiety and insomnia. Outside of the walled garden were lovely swathes of snowdrops, cyclamen and hellebores. At the end of our visit the Master presented Nick with one of our shields and we then headed to the Colesbourne Inn for lunch.



Colesbourne Park

Once fed and watered we made the short drive to Colesbourne Park known as ‘England’s greatest snowdrop garden’ and the home of Sir Henry Elwes, great grandson of Henry John Elwes. Henry was an avid plant collector who started the collection after he found, in 1874, a giant snowdrop in Asia Minor, now Turkey, while on his travels and it was named *Galanthus elwesii*. The collection now has 250 species and cultivars within the grounds.

Revitalising the collection

The collection lay undisturbed for fifty years until Sir Henry and his late wife, Carolyn, began to identify the plants and spread them throughout the gardens by regular division. Sir Henry said Carolyn could identify a snowdrop from 10 yards and it was her passion encouraged by her cousin Mary Biddulph that the garden is a lasting memorial to 30 years of her work. Each snowdrop is planted by hand and because of hybridization new ones are popping up, but Sir Henry said they only get named if they are something special.

How they move the plants

Katie, the Head Gardener showed us three types of *Galanthus-nivalis*, giant and a double. She also explained the different types of leaf-thin flat, wrap around and folded. After the introduction we were split into two groups led by Sir Henry and Katie to tour the gardens. There are 10 acres of garden which look good until the end of May. To help see the inside of the flowers Katie puts mirrors next to the plants and gravel to deter slugs and snails. She explained they move snowdrops in the summer when all the energy has gone back into the bulb to ensure maximum flower the following year. They mark the ones they want to move by putting canes around the clump. The borders are top dressed with sterile compost purely to show off the white of the snowdrops.

Fascinating varieties

The long border contained groups of *Galanthus* ‘Comet’ (*Elwesii*),

double snowdrops G. ‘Jacquenetta’, (hybridization between G. *plicatus* and G. *nivalis* ‘Florence Pleno’) ,G. ‘Diggory’ *plicatus* with its balloon shaped flowers that look like seersucker material. Katie told us about one snowdrop G. ‘Golden Tear’ that was sold for £1800! And about another fascinating snowdrop G. ‘Mrs Thompson’ which can feature anything from three to six petals depending on how it feels! The second part of the tour was taken by Sir Henry who is actually more of an arboriculturist than a galanthophile! He spoke about the trees on the estate and the microclimates that are all over the garden and how they have had frosts in June and August!

Keen arboriculturist

Sir Henry has been planting trees for over 60 years in the arboretum and it includes 11 British Champions e.g *Quercus velutina* (Black Oak) at 28m high. Other trees planted include a *Paulownia*, *Toona sinensis* (Chinese

mahogany), *Cercidiphyllum* cv., redwoods and many more. Among the trees are large swathes of G. ‘Samuel Arnott’ AGM, the biggest collection in the world. It has a honey scent which attracts the bees. Sir Henry explained how G. *plicatus* were planted either side of the path to the church as they flower on Christmas day. They also mass planted G.*nivalis* in the woodland as they seed themselves quite easily. Another variety planted in this area is G. *elwesii* var. *elwesii* – the snowdrop that started it all.

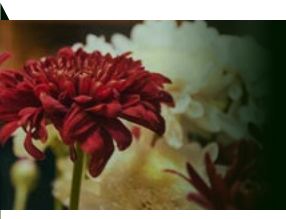
Tea and presentation

After the tour we had a chance to buy snowdrops, then it was tea and cake and the presentation of our shield to Sir Henry by the Master.

Thank you

Thanks on behalf of the company was done by Senior Past Master Bill Fraser OBE before we set off home eager to plant our new purchases.





DORSET GARDENS TOUR - 7TH - 10TH SEPTEMBER

Join the Master for a three-night stay in Dorset, based in Sherborne, and explore a selection of beautiful gardens in the surrounding area.

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SPM PAUL ROCHFORD HONoured

SPM Paul Rochford has been awarded an MBE for services to horticulture in The King's Birthday Honours List writes Gillian Taylor

A member of our Company for 26 years, Paul will be known to many of you and this award is a proud moment not only for Paul and Joseph Rochford Gardens, but for the wider horticultural industry.

Lifelong commitment to horticulture
A fifth generation nurseryman, Paul's career reflects a lifelong commitment to growing, nursery production and the advancement of horticulture. His belief in helping those who are less fortunate and his passion for green spaces are reflected in his extensive charitable work. Under his direction, Rochfords support projects worldwide, including reforestation work by Tree Aid in Uganda and Pipal Tree in Nepal. Closer to home the Garden Museum's Lambeth Green project to transform around five acres into green community space is close to Paul's heart.

Active in committees
Within the Gardeners' Paul was Master in 2016 and as SPM remains active on several committees including work as the longest serving Trustee on the board of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners of London Charity. He is keen to expand the membership of our company to keep it relevant and active in modern times, encouraging those who work in the industry to join.

Future Gardeners
Paul served as a co-founder and trustee of Future Gardeners, now renamed Pathways, an innovative horticultural training charity. Liveryman Mike Fitt told me: "I have known Paul for as long as I care to remember and have always admired his selfless and untiring approach in encouraging and supporting people working in our industry, while seeking no recognition for doing so. His commitment to those beginning their horticultural journey is inspiring and I am proud to have worked alongside him in setting up the Future Gardeners pre-apprenticeship training initiative. Paul is an outstanding

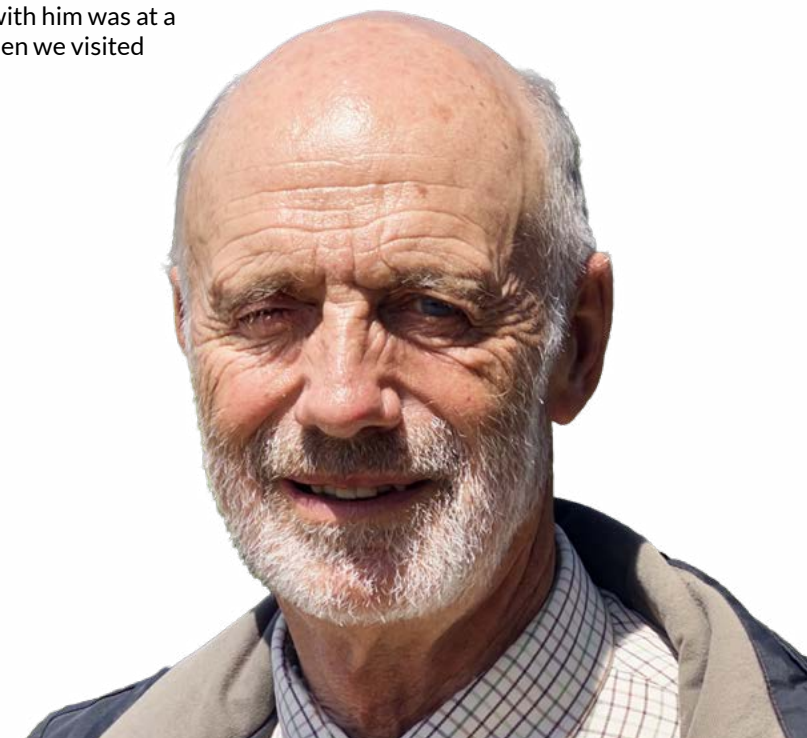
horticulturist who has not only been a key figure in making Future Gardeners the undoubted success that it is but has a passion, generosity and dedication that touches all of those he is involved with, including myself. The award of an MBE is so well deserved and a true recognition of his outstanding service to horticulture."

Special awards
In 2019 Paul was awarded the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association (MPGA) London Spade Award. This prestigious honour was given in recognition of his outstanding contribution to open spaces within London and his support of the MPGA's greening initiatives. His support for the biennial Red Cross Fair and the Veterans Garden in Guildhall Yard, was recognised by the City Livery Club (CLC). The Root and Branch Awards hosted by the CLC celebrate exceptional contribution and philanthropy within the livery movement and the wider community and in 2022 Paul received a Highly Commended Certificate. Paul has been Chairman of the Board of Trustees for Perennial since November 2019 and my initial contact with him was at a Perennial AGM when we visited York Gate garden.

Rose trial support
Observing the roses and discussing their health prompted Paul to invite me to judge at the Rochfords International Rose Trials, an example of his generosity and inclusivity. These trials established by Paul in 2018 following the closure of the Royal National Rose Society site in St Albans, support and inform rose breeders and growers and promote roses to a new generation.

In his own words
In typical understated style Paul told his local newspaper the Welwyn Hatfield Times: "I hope that this is a way to share the things that I find important and that I spend my life doing."

What the trade journal says
The feeling of the industry and anyone who knows Paul is aptly summarised by Matthew Appleby, Editor of the trade journal *Horticulture Week*: "Paul's award is well deserved. He's a legend of the industry and a great guy too who will do anything to help others."



AUTUMN DINNER - WEDNESDAY 4TH NOVEMBER
Ironmongers' Hall
Our annual black-tie dinner celebrating our award winners.

VISIT TO 51, THE CHASE, LONDON SW4

On 16th April we visited 51, The Chase, SW4, the home and gardens of liverymen Rupert Tyler, Chairman of The Garden Museum and Charles Rutherford, Chairman of The Society of Garden Designers, writes Jeanette Roche

Stunning peony

The Chase itself was beautiful with many houses having glorious and long-established wisteria, plus many specimen plants in their gardens. We were welcomed at his front garden by Rupert, with the garden displaying a variety of plants, including an open, six flowered wine-coloured tree peony: a stunning sight which had flowered just two days earlier. This was alongside an enormous *Euphorbia Mellifera* with its fabulous honey scents.

Blaze of tulips

Going through the house and emerging from the high steps at the rear an amazing vista opened before us to the whole garden below. The first impression was brilliant colour from the many tulip varieties, with orange, red, white and pink in great abundance. My favourites were the lilac-tipped 'White Affair', which numbered in hundreds.

Once rampant brambles

Rupert gave an introduction welcoming us to his home and garden, saying he had started the garden by having to clear rampant brambles. He had extremely good neighbours who had offered good top soil from their garden as they were having a tennis court installed. He was thrilled with this because it would enable him to landscape the garden; he was even more thrilled when they offered their plants.

Special trees

Among the trees he planted was a *Wollemia* pine, the 'dinosaur tree', which was gifted to him from The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Rupert's tree is now about 6 feet tall and growing by 1 to 1.5 inches per year. Other trees included an Indian horse chestnut tree (*Aesculus indica*) which he grew from a conker while at Kew; it is now 40 feet tall and stunning. There was also a Tulip tree and a glorious *Cercis* covered in flowers and just starting its heart shaped leaves. Under the canopy of a tree, a two-foot-tall layered apple tree ran alongside of the path through the tulips, hellebores and veronica towards the geodetic dome greenhouse where succulents and newly sown plants were visible. Adjacent to the greenhouse

was a yellow rambling rose and also a table with very welcome refreshments served by our host.

The rear garden

As with the front garden there were more tree peonies, *Euphorbia*, *Laburnum* and lots of underplanting *veronicas*, *achamilla mollis* and *anemones*. At the very rear of the garden there was a raised area, resulting from the gifted soil, with a spectacular metal sculpture of a bull which generated much interest and a photo opportunity. There was also a small area for vegetables and tomatoes, which was bare, awaiting planting, but provided a great contrast to the burgeoning, thriving flower displays of the rest of the garden.

A very different garden

We then moved to a similar house directly opposite which provided a completely different garden. Entering via a side entrance and down a set of steps we entered a small patio, which had been dug out from what was previously a basement, and contained a stepped water garden. Designed by Charles, it was made of pale stone with a triple cascading water feature and included an area for small plants. Up the steps was a formal area of roses, hydrangeas and clematis. A *hydrangea*

quercifolia was interesting with its under-skirt of perfect brown leaves contrasting with the younger green leaves still waiting for its flowers.

Inside the house

Then it was back to 51 to tour the inside of the house, which, according to Google, was built around 1870. It had been extensively remodelled internally from its original configuration by Charles and we were shown many examples of ingenious architectural design, with three or four rooms being converted to one and the clever creative use of materials to facilitate storage space. On each of the five floors there were plants and mini greenhouses: it was a real green space. Our two-hour visit had been an informative and exhilarating experience and the Master, Alderman Robert Howard, thanked Rupert and Charles for hosting the visit and presented them with a Company shield.

There is a blog about the gardens that is well worth viewing and can be accessed on-line via the link below:

<https://thegardengateisopen.blog/2017/05/03/51-the-chase-film-crew-and-tulips-34/>



The first impression was brilliant colour from the many tulip varieties, with orange, red, white and pink in great abundance.



The favourites were the lilac tipped 'White Affair' which numbered in hundreds.



There was a raised area, resulting from the gifted soil, with a spectacular metal sculpture of a Bull which generated much interest.



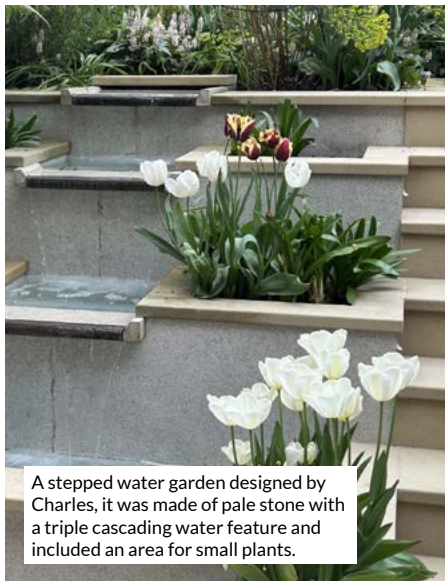
The garden displayed a variety of plants, including an open, six flowered wine-coloured tree peony: a stunning sight which had flowered just two days earlier.



The geodetic dome greenhouse where succulents and newly sown plants were visible.



The Master, Alderman Robert Howard, presents a Company shield to Charles (left) and Rupert (right).



A stepped water garden designed by Charles, it was made of pale stone with a triple cascading water feature and included an area for small plants.



EPPING FOREST - SATURDAY 3RD OCTOBER

Walks and talks in Epping Forest and a chance to view the Elizabethan Hunting Lodge.

GREENING THE SQUARE MILE

Flowers in the City (FitC) which will celebrate its 80th anniversary in 2028 has seen many changes over the decades writes Gillian Taylor

Starting with colourful window boxes initially, the planting displays have now progressed to include permanent perennial and shrub borders, green walls and roof gardens. It is a visible demonstration of the Company's charitable work in the City and members perform several different roles, contributing as committee members, judges or contractors.

Long term commitment

Many members have a long term commitment to FitC. Liveryman Marjorie Dowbiggin was invited to lunch by the then Chair in 2005 after which she returned home with a filing cabinet full of paperwork! Her first tenure as Secretary lasted ten years, she is still serving on the Committee to this day.

Progression in judging criteria

In the past, judging was based on colour and on the judge's discretion. Following input from PM Heather Barrett-Mold's time as Secretary, the judging sheets now have the categories: **Visual Impact, Cultivation Standard, Environmental Sustainability, Horticultural Content, Pollinator Content** and **Site Difficulty**. The Site Difficulty criteria includes the opportunity for stubbing out cigarettes, throwing litter onto plants or plant theft, not factors we often consider in our own gardens.

Senator House

The increased significance of sustainability within horticultural practice has resulted in a shift towards permanent planting schemes. An excellent example of this is Senator House garden, managed by the City of London Corporation. Redesigned between 2017 and 2019 it was transformed from a simple grassed area into colourful, multilayered borders full of texture and interest. The height of the planting allows for areas of seclusion and the provision of habitat. City Garden Manager Jake Tibbetts was delighted that this garden received a Trophy in the FitC awards: "Receiving recognition for Senator House was a significant boost to the team that manage the site. Seeing their hard work acknowledged by peers across the City is deeply rewarding for them. FitC plays a key role in celebrating and raising the profile of

high quality horticulture in the Square Mile and my gardeners are proud to take part."

Pollinator needs

On judging rounds, sites may vary from courtyards of Livery Halls displaying troughs full of brightly coloured plants to larger public spaces with the opportunity for greater variety. Colour is important but for high pollinator interest a wide range of flower shapes and long season of interest are required. Insects can be quite prescriptive in their preferences, some liking flat flowers, others globes, or tubular blooms may be their favourite.

Alive with insects

The Tom Stuart Smith Studio designed roof garden at 25 Cannon Street sets the standard, when visiting last summer it was alive with insects. A veritable feast for the eyes and the pollinators! It also provides an immersive and enriching experience for the office staff who have access. It is widely known that the provision of green space in the urban environment is important for people living and working there, a chance to 'relax and refocus.' On questioning, members of the public gave varying answers as to why they valued these gardens: "Allows escape from tensions at work"; "Small areas of sanctuary"; "Green oases in the concrete jungle"; "Stimulation for all senses". Their statements endorse the value of FitC.

Encouraging the city to be green

As SPM and current FitC Chair Nicholas Evans said: "FitC has been a catalyst to encourage companies to promote green spaces thus enhancing mental wellbeing." FitC Officer Assistant Richard Woodburn covers all the secretarial duties including collation of result sheets, arranging presentation ceremonies and liaising with Trophy winner's representatives from the site and the contractors. He told me: "The programme seeks to reward and encourage the companies and individuals within the City of London who add so much to our daily life with floral displays that are beautiful, diverse and essential....."

This was brought home to me when speaking to 30 Cannon Street's Building Engineer Gary Martin. My judging

team were extremely fortunate to have access to the fabulous roof garden in 2024, the first time it had been judged. It was awarded a Trophy and Gary said the building owner, Romulus, was fully engaged and appreciative: "The whole team was delighted when we won the Skyline Trophy. It was mentioned in the monthly newsletter and helped raise our profile with current clients and letting agents" Rob Neal, who leads the 30 Cannon Street garden maintenance team from the company Willerby, still talks about how excited they were to be recognised. His staff work in all weather conditions and in difficult situations, often unnoticed by the public.

Dedicated judges

Of course there would be no results without the dedicated judges. Why do we judge, in all weathers, clipboards in hand? Liveryman Felicity Brown, a judge of 30 years standing, explains: "It provides the chance to explore the City's architecture and hidden green spaces, be part of a team and raise the profile of gardens for owners and management teams. In essence FitC is a bonus for all concerned: the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, the buildings and the people of the City"

A full history of FitC can be found in SPM David Gollin's and Assistant Sid Sullivan's comprehensive articles that can be found in the Interesting Topics section of the Gardeners' website.



Climate resilient shrub for roof gardens.



Outstanding roof garden example colour pollinator friendly.



Living Wall Trophy Winner 2025.



Roof garden haven in use.



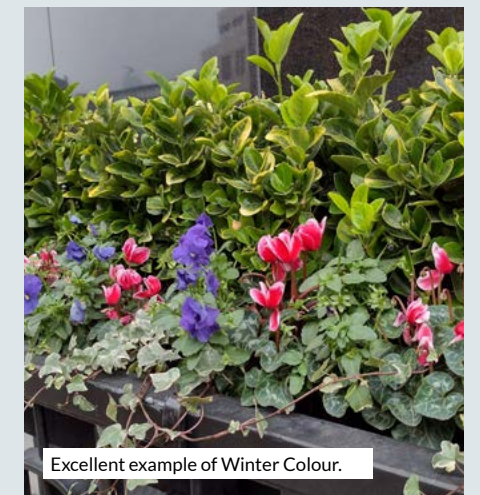
Willerby Landscapes maintained public garden.



A good example of second winter colour.



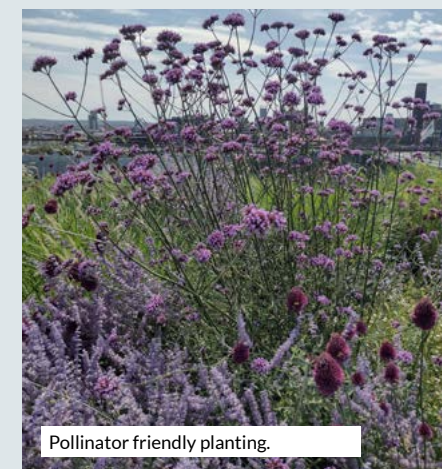
Colourful barrier boxes.



Excellent example of Winter Colour.



Gold certificate courtyard.



Pollinator friendly planting.



Senator House in August.

Education Committee Chairman Jonathan Matheson explains Gardeners' involvement with the annual Livery Schools Link Careers Showcase at the Guildhall

Livery Schools Link (LSL) runs two main events annually: a Headmasters' Conference and the LSL Careers Showcase at the Guildhall. LSL does what it says on the label: it connects the 114 Livery Companies with schools, primarily in the South East, in order to promote them and make school pupils aware of the career opportunities available within the respective trades and sectors. Their stated aim: 'Livery Schools Link works with Livery Companies and schools to benefit young people in education'.

Key role in the Careers Showcase
The Headmasters' Conference took place in the winter. We attended the event at Drapers' Hall, where the keynote speaker was Sir Martin Oliver, the Chief Inspector of OFSTED. The Careers Showcase, at which the Worshipful Company of Gardeners always has a stand, took place over two days in the very early spring. As in past years, Paul Rochford very generously supplied plants, flowering shrubs and trees for the stand. Among them was an *Edgeworthia chrysantha*, in full bloom, which perfumed the hall.

Move to the Great Hall vindicated
We are regularly told that ours is one of the most eye-catching stands: essential when there are often over 1,000 school

children present and around fifty other Livery Companies with stands. In past years, we have only attended the secondary schools day; this year, for the first time, we attended both the secondary and primary schools days. The report on the primary schools day and an additional day at Merrist Wood College is on the opposite page. For those who know the Guildhall well, this year we decided to have a smaller stand in the Great Hall, rather than our usual large stand in the Old Library. This was a wise decision because the Great Hall was packed with enthusiastic young people throughout the day.

A wealth of career opportunities
Our objective is to make accompanying teachers and pupils aware that there are over 75 different careers under the umbrella of 'Horticulture' and to increase inclusivity in the sector. Contact with members of our Schools Outreach Team might be the first time it has occurred to many of the pupils that an exciting career awaits them in horticulture whether their orientation is: creative, scientific, environmental or sporty. Most young people are amazed to hear that, if they are keen sportsmen or women, every major tennis, golf, cricket, football, horse-racing and rugby venue requires career groundskeepers, curators or greenkeepers.

A busy stand
From the start, our stand was thronged with excited youngsters, especially when they learned that Adam Stoter, one of Garden Illustrated's top 20 Horticultural Heroes 2024 and a member of our Schools Outreach Team, was demonstrating how to pot up corms of *Anemone coronaria* to take home. As the Careers Showcase was close to Mother's Day, it solved the problem of what to give Mother — at no cost!

Hard work, but well worth it!
The LSL Careers Showcase serves an additional purpose. It puts us in direct touch with schools we may not have visited and presented to as part of our outreach programme. At the same time, for students already considering a career in Horticulture, it gives them an opportunity to discuss with us the various centres of excellence for higher education.

Big effort, but well worth it
For those involved, it is a long day - we set up the stand the night before and talk hour after hour to groups of pupils about careers in horticulture — but we find it an extremely productive and rewarding day.



Adam Stotar with students on the Gardeners' stand at the Guildhall.



Schools Outreach chairman Jonathan Matheson engaging a young student.



In past years we attended the second day of the Livery Schools Link covering the senior students but in 2026 we added the primary schoolchildren as well, writes Margaret Hanna

Opportunity for Year 6 children
This year it was felt that not attending the first day held for year 6 children was missing an opportunity to engage younger children in something as simple as flowers and vegetables. 'From small beginnings' as the phrase goes. Sarah Counter and I put together a simple display of seasonal flowers, four common herbs and a mixture of home grown and purchased vegetables. The objective was to give the children the challenge of naming everything on the table.

Engaging games
There were many interesting, correct and fun answers to the guessing game! The children were encouraged to pick the leaves of the herbs and smell: mint being the clear winner in this test. Central to the display was the growing

of mustard and cress; illustrating how easy it is to grow something in one week with only a margarine box, kitchen paper and a packet of seeds. Three boxes showed growth over one week.

Free seeds
Over a hundred small packets of seeds were packaged up and given out either to the students or the accompanying teachers who were delighted to have them as growing plants was on the curriculum for the year. The day was well worth attending and the children were very engaged, interested and amusing, something that was commented on by other Livery Companies present.

First event at Merrist Wood
As result of an accidental meeting Sarah Counter had while on the Outreach

visit to the Isle of Wight organised by Mike Fitt, it was suggested that the Company should attend a careers fair being held in conjunction with Merrist Wood and Guildford College, Surrey. As Sarah, Simon Catford and Margaret Hanna all come from the Guildford area an enhanced similar display and format was presented later the same week at the College.

Special needs
The students that attended were principally young people with special needs or from the Life Long skills department. Again they were very engaged and it was most rewarding to see the more withdrawn and shy students respond with pleasure to the flowers, plants and vegetables. The table was voted the 'best at show'.



Margaret Hanna and Sarah Counter manning the stand at the Merrist Wood event: they won the 'best stand' award.



Sarah Counter (left) and Margaret Hann (right) manning the School's Outreach stand at the Guildhall.



Schools Outreach events can be fun too: Simon Catford and Camilla King.



The Schools Outreach stand was kept busy.

HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Any member of the Company can sponsor a grant to help a worthy horticultural cause. This is how a chance encounter lead to a successful charitable grant

In the Spring edition of *The Spade*, Richard Capewell (Chair of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners of London Charity) reminded members of the Company that we should be proactive in looking for suitable projects in need of support from our charity explains Gillian Taylor.

Spotting an opportunity

This rang true with me as I had recently sponsored a successful funding application myself. Attending the Ball Colegrave showcase of plants for sale last summer I was intrigued to see a group of adults with learning disabilities busy placing colourful flags into areas of the display to mark off plants for purchase. This involved both concentration and banter, everyone was enjoying themselves including their supervisors. I joined them at lunchtime and discovered they were from a charity called Growing Places Berkshire, based at Stratfield Saye. They were here to choose their plants for the 2026 summer season, and I was impressed that they were given

this hands-on opportunity. I spoke to Richard and David, two members of Growing Places, and they explained enthusiastically how much working in the garden meant to them and that they were on the board of trustees.

Understanding the project

Being relatively local I arranged a visit, as for me, it is key to assess the 'feel' of any project, irrespective of size. Conversations with staff, volunteers and end-users can be extremely valuable in assessing the quality of the service provided.

A small grant would be a great help

The need for new lightweight and ergonomic equipment was mentioned, and I suggested that they apply for a grant from our charity arm (The Worshipful Company of Gardeners of London Charity) under the small grant (less than £1500) umbrella. I was happy to sponsor this and helped with the application paperwork to ensure that it was concise and clear on how the money would be spent. The application

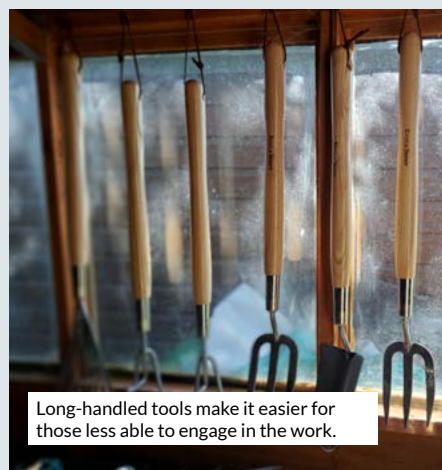
was quickly approved and Brian Stainton, Chair of Trustees sent me the following: *"I am delighted to report that the WCOG has approved funding for a new mower, long handled small gardening tools and workshop tools to support craft work. All our adults have learning disabilities to a varying degree, some have a physical constraint as well which can inhibit their ability to participate in all horticultural activities. These tools are a real success story in that the less able people are now asking to do the work whereas before they would often hold back. The purchases will last for many years to come showing that a targeted investment can make a positive difference. The benefits for the adults with learning disabilities are every day, every week: they love, knowing what to do and working to their routines"*

Why not find a good cause yourself?

I found the application process simple and rewarding. I would encourage you all to look for projects which you can put forward. We have the opportunity to make a real difference to the lives of those less fortunate than ourselves.



Thanks to Gillian's initiative we helped the disabled members of Growing Places to get more usable lightweight equipment.



Long-handled tools make it easier for those less able to engage in the work.



The farm where the clients cultivate their crops.



John is one of the clients who have benefitted.



Each client has their own small 'patch' and they can grow what they wish.

HELP FOR SPINAL INJURIES

CHARITY



In 2023 The Worshipful Company of Gardeners Charity granted £3,000 over three years to the Horticultural Therapy Programme at Horatio's Garden London & South East

Horatio's Garden London is part of the London Spinal Cord Injury Centre, which admits patients from London, Greater London and the South East of England, serving over 240 inpatients and over 1400 outpatients annually, including children with spinal injury. Horticultural therapy is associated with improvements in cognitive, social, physical and emotional abilities.

Weekly sessions

Horticultural therapy sessions held by the Head Gardener Lily Schlieker-Blythe continue to be extremely popular with patients and on average six to eight patients attend these sessions weekly. Gardening sessions have included collecting seeds from the garden to sow as well as transplanting cuttings of *Gaura*, *Buddleia*, *Salvia* and *Aeonium*. Patients have also been using engineering bricks to create a succulent garden and potting up bulbs in the colder months in anticipation of spring. Patients enjoyed getting involved in harvesting fruit, vegetables and flowers to either add as fresh elements to meals on food themed evenings, or use flowers for art activities. Flower arranging has also been a fun activity enjoyed by many patients.

Garden therapy makes a difference

According to Sir Richard Thompson, past President of the Royal College of Physicians: *"One group of holistic therapies that aim to treat the whole person, and has been well researched through surveys and randomised trials is so-called green care, or therapy by exposure to plants and gardening. Several trials have revealed the beneficial effects on mood and mental health of simply observing nature, or even images of natural scenes... Many studies in the UK and other countries concur that higher proportions of green space, especially biodiverse habitats, are associated with less depression, anxiety and stress... Interestingly, the benefit of green space may not be simply related to physical activity, but might rely more on improved social interaction."*

Working on motor skills

The horticultural activities within Horatio's Gardens have given patients the opportunity to work on their fine motor skills as well as encourage a range of motion and upper body

strength. Patients with spinal injury have usually been through a traumatic event and are starting to work out how to live with a profoundly changed life. Patients often feel vulnerable and isolated and these activities become a social platform on which to build connections with other patients, family, friends, volunteers and NHS staff away from the hospital ward.

Learning to cope

The horticultural activities also introduces patients to potential coping strategies for when they leave the hospital and the gardeners encourage patients to take home seeds and plants when they leave. A patient at Horatio's Garden London & South East when asked about the garden said: *"It's benefitted me mentally, physically and emotionally. It's been the best thing for me since being here, I feel less lonely."*

Thank you

Claire Evans, the Trust's Fundraiser said: *"We are incredibly grateful for The Worshipful Company of Gardeners' support of Horatio's Garden London & South East which continues to make a life-changing difference to all who use it by providing Horticultural Therapy sessions in a beautiful and accessible space that helps to nurture patients wellbeing and reconnect with nature."*

PATIENT STATISTICS

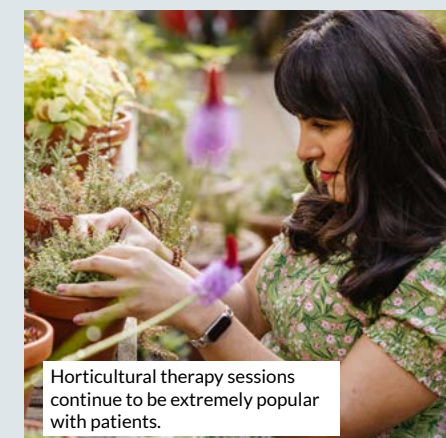
71% of patients surveyed said that Horatio's Garden distracts them from pain.

97% of patients surveyed said Horatio's Garden made them feel more connected to family and friends.

80% of patients surveyed said they use Horatio's Garden at least once a day.

99% of patients said the garden has been helpful for socialising with other patients.

74% of visitors surveyed go to the garden with the person they are visiting every time they visit.



Horticultural therapy sessions continue to be extremely popular with patients.



Patient enjoying a floral design workshop. Gardening helps them to hone their motor skills.



99% of patients said the garden has been helpful for socialising with other patients.



Horticultural activities also introduces patients to potential coping strategies for when they leave the hospital.

A ROYAL RECOGNITION IN HORTICULTURE: APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR THE KING'S TROPHY

The Worshipful Company of Gardeners is delighted to have as one of its Royal Liverymen His Majesty King Charles III who has graciously allowed the Company to create this annual award in his name.



Photography by Hugo Burnand.

The King's Trophy is awarded to an individual or team in professional horticulture that has achieved excellence in sustainable horticultural practices or growing innovation, or other notable successes towards the advancement of horticulture.

Applications covering all aspects of horticulture and horticultural science from individuals, small groups and organisations are encouraged.

The judging panel will be looking for innovations or projects that are effectively complete, or at the point of launch. They are keen to see initiatives that have potential to make a substantial contribution to "move the dial" and to change the way the

industry approaches something in the future. Alternatively this could have a substantial effect on sustainability in horticultural practices in the future.

This might be a product, a new technique, a new way of working or another innovation. The development of it and its "market readiness" should be substantially complete and ready to launch.

Nominations

Nominations can be made by an individual, group, or on behalf of someone. If made on behalf of someone then you will need their permission.

Applications

Please download the application form on The Worshipful Company of Gardeners website <https://www.gardenerscompany.org.uk/awards/king-trophy-1> and email your submission form to clerk@gardenerscompany.org.uk

Timescales

Please submit your application by 1st September 2026 and visit The Worshipful Company of Gardeners website, link stated above, to find the full application details.

They look forward to reviewing your applications.