



A year with the RHS 2018



Ornamental
horticulture
supports some
570,000 jobs.

Game-changing year

Sir Nicholas Bacon, RHS President, on visible developments and vital work progressing behind the scenes



‘...£24 billion supporting 570,000 jobs was in some quarters regarded with incredulity, but just shows that something we are aspiring to achieve is worth more than we ever could have dreamt.’

Too hot, too cold, too wet, too windy: every year the weather impacts to a greater or lesser degree on the outdoor activities of the Royal Horticultural Society. But every year we seem to overcome the dire predictions of impending gloom – 2018 was no exception.

As we deliver the significant development programme, we still have to make sure the everyday job of running the charity with its varied and fascinating activities isn’t forgotten. Last year, at RHS Garden Hyde Hall in Essex, we completed developments of the Clore Learning Centre and its Adam Frost-designed landscape, and the Winter Garden. All those who visit feel the whole horticultural environment has been enriched. Besides which, the restaurant should apply for a Michelin Star!

As I experience first hand the major building works progressing at RHS Garden Wisley, Surrey for front of house and RHS Garden Bridgewater, Salford in and around the Walled Garden, I marvel and am so proud that all the staff are motivated to deliver these game-changing and, dare I say, historic developments which will serve the RHS well for years to come. Of course, we get excited by those projects we can see arising out of the ground, or providing a much more exciting horticultural experience. But there are many aspects of the work we do that are not so obvious.

The RHS and NHS have a partnership in the crucial area of mental health. The outward visible sign was the RHS Chelsea Flower Show garden being relocated to the Camden and Islington NHS Trust. Less apparent, but in the long term so much more significant, is the belief that plants and gardening can be so important for mental health.

The science programme, incorporating plant health, biosecurity and partnerships with other research institutes, illustrates the growing importance of RHS Science. Subjects investigated last year include slugs, *Xylella* and research regarding the effect of digging on the human frame.

The Ornamental Horticultural Roundtable Group commissioned Oxford Economics to investigate the economic effect of horticulture to the UK economy. The answer of £24 billion supporting 570,000 jobs was in some quarters regarded with incredulity, but just shows that something we are aspiring to achieve is worth more than we ever could have dreamt. The Flower Shows excelled in the good weather (too hot for some at RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show!), and at RHS Chatsworth Flower Show the setting, overall floral effect and great feedback contributed to an impressive season. A few more visitors would have made the Director General, who was brought up nearby, that much happier.

Underpinning all these developments is fundraising. There is an ambitious target of £40 million. Last year we reached and surpassed the midpoint; that was a triumph. We also achieved a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, our first in many years. I thank very sincerely all our funders, large and small, a huge thank you.

Congratulations to the Cornish city of Truro for winning the top spot in the 2018 national finals of Britain in Bloom. Environmentally conscious volunteers showed remarkable imagination in overcoming extreme weather challenges, and it was inspiring to meet all the finalists at the awards in Belfast.

As we move into another year I begin my last as RHS President. Achievements have been great, particularly welcoming our 500,000th member, but there is still much to do to complete the largest development programme in the history of the RHS, while maintaining the energy required to run a successful charity.

A handwritten signature of Sir Nicholas Bacon in black ink.

Sir Nicholas Bacon,
RHS President

Forging ahead

Sue Biggs, RHS Director General, looks forward to an exciting future with horticultural opportunities for all



‘RHS Garden Bridgewater will showcase beautiful horticulture, inspire thousands of people, and be a treasured resource for the many varied communities in and around Greater Manchester.’



We are now halfway through a key period in the Society’s history. In 2014 we announced our 10-year, £160 million investment in the all-important future of horticulture. Underpinning it is our commitment to inspire everyone to grow for the good of our health, our environment and learning how to be better gardeners and custodians of our green planet.

The first phase of our transformation at RHS Garden Wisley in Surrey is the June opening of a new entrance that puts spectacular horticulture at the forefront. The arrival landscape, designed by Christopher Bradley-Hole, features an avenue of 100 beautiful cherry trees that lead you to and through the new Welcome building. Our visitors, more than a million last year, will find wonderful new facilities including a very large outdoor plant centre that supports and champions British growers and specialist nurseries, and an indoor shopping treasure trove that includes a glasshouse packed full of indoor plants and gardening delights.

RHS scientists are committed to supporting Britain’s 27 million gardeners and finding solutions to reduce the impact of some of the biggest environmental challenges facing us today, from extreme weather conditions to pests and diseases. So we are now fundraising to build the first National Centre for Horticultural Science and Learning, at Wisley; we are especially grateful to the players of the National Lottery who enabled the National Lottery Heritage Fund to award us a grant of almost £4 million to kick this off but we still have more millions to raise. The build will begin this year and is due to open in 2020.

Our new RHS Garden Bridgewater in Salford reached a key milestone when the 170-year-old wall surrounding the 4.4ha (11 acre) walled garden was finally restored in early 2019, thanks to a £5 million grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation. We need to raise the final £5.5 million to open the Garden in late summer 2020, so it can showcase beautiful horticulture, inspire thousands of people, and be a treasured resource for the many varied communities in and around Greater Manchester.

We continue to promote the benefits of gardening for health and wellbeing to help tackle depression, anxiety and social isolation. With funding from Salford Primary Care Together, we are working alongside partners Swinton and Salford University to deliver and evaluate an innovative social prescribing programme at RHS Garden Bridgewater – a first for the RHS.

We are thrilled to have the support of HRH The Duchess of Cambridge who this year co-designed the ‘RHS Back to Nature Garden’ for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show to inspire all generations to connect with nature and gardens, and enjoy growing plants. After Chelsea, most of the garden went on to the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival before much of it finds a permanent home at an NHS Mental Health Trust, as part of our ongoing partnership with NHS England.

New horticulture at all of our Gardens continues to bring fresh inspiration for visitors. At RHS Garden Hyde Hall in Essex the colourful Winter Garden and a new ‘riverbed’ in the Dry Garden are highlights, while at RHS Garden Rosemoor in Devon, a Cool Garden designed by Jo Thompson opens this year to complement the Hot Garden, and show how landscapes can help manage high volumes of rainfall.

This year RHS Garden Harlow Carr in North Yorkshire is celebrating 70 years of development as a garden since the Northern Horticultural Society began trials there in 1949. After amalgamating with the RHS in



Our vision for the new
National Centre for
Horticultural Science and
Learning (top left); Curator
Marcus Chilton-Jones
(above left) leads
volunteers at Bridgewater;
the beautiful Main Borders
(above) at the now 70-year-
old Garden at Harlow Carr.

2001, Harlow Carr has continued to create new horticulture each year, including banks of its iconic Himalayan blue poppies.

Beyond our science, Gardens and Flower Shows, our work will continue to promote the value of plants and nature to young people, the next generation of gardeners, with more than 38,000 school and youth groups involved in our Campaign for School Gardening and our inspiring Green Plan It for secondary school teenagers. RHS Britain in Bloom, the UK's largest horticultural campaign, has helped 300,000 community volunteers to transform their neighbourhoods for the better, as you may have seen on the second BBC TV series about some of these amazing people. I hope our Greening Great Britain campaign will get more of us to plant, nurture and enjoy more trees, shrubs, flowers, fruit, vegetables, herbs and house plants in whatever space we have. Last but not least, we will be continuing to pressurise the government to invest in the future of horticulture in this country, a valuable and important industry to be proud of.

I want to thank all our staff, volunteers, partners, funders and, of course, our members. The highlight of this year has been welcoming our 500,000th member in February, an achievement we're very proud of because without our members none of the above would be possible. With this unrivalled support, we have continued to grow, and our membership already exceeds 510,000. But I still hope we can persuade more of Britain's 27 million gardeners to join us and help fight for the beauty and power of our plants, our gardens and our unique green planet.

We truly value all your support – with it we can try our hardest to inspire everyone to grow for a greener, healthier and happy future.

Sue Biggs CBE,
RHS Director General

What the RHS does

We may be well known for beautiful Gardens and world-famous Flower Shows, but our charitable work covers horticulture in all its forms, carried out by enthusiastic, expert staff – with the aim of inspiring everyone to grow



We currently have four Gardens open 364 days a year for visitors, with our fifth, RHS Garden Bridgewater, in development and opening in 2020.

In addition to the 2 million-plus visitors to our Gardens, our horticultural work reaches many more. Key to our work is the support for UK gardeners and sharing knowledge and expertise through our network of Affiliated and Plant Societies, RHS Partner Gardens, face-to-face and online advice, allotment visits and events held by our Plant Committees. Our free events support Plant Societies and their work, and helps them share their passion and expertise with others.

We support UK nurseries by promoting new plant introductions in our trials, through *RHS Plant Finder*, the RHS Chelsea Plant of the Year competition and our Shows Exhibitor bursary to encourage new nurseries to attend a Flower Show and display their work.

Sharing our passion is a key charitable aim and we do this by talking to gardeners and the horticultural industry through our Plant Trials, the Award of Garden Merit, in the monthly *The Garden* magazine, books and *RHS Grower Guides* which offer in-depth information on particular groups of plants.

Getting future generations hooked on gardening is vital and we do this through our apprenticeships, qualifications, bursaries, PhDs, RHS Green Plan It challenge for secondary schools, and social media campaign #MyGreenOffice. With our Campaign for School Gardening we bring horticulture directly into the classroom by helping schools use gardening as a tool to deliver the national curriculum.

Reaching more people with our Gardens and Shows



The BBC films at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show and many of our other Shows and Gardens. Our Flower Shows are enjoyed by millions of people across the globe thanks to free-to-air television.



Shows that inspire and excite interest

Each year, hundreds of thousands of visitors and several millions of television viewers are entertained and inspired by our world-renowned Flower Shows, which showcase the best and latest in horticulture.

Our inspirational Flower Shows are held at Chelsea and the Royal Horticultural Halls in central London, Hampton Court Palace in Surrey, Bute Park in Cardiff, Tatton Park in Cheshire, and Chatsworth, Derbyshire.

In partnership with Three Counties Agricultural Society we help stage the RHS Malvern Spring Festival in Worcestershire, and contribute content to the Malvern Autumn Show.

Helping to green up communities

Core to our charitable mission and our scientific research is the work we do with communities. We help increase skills, improve employability and help bring positive social, environmental and economic benefits. We continue to bring communities together through gardening, giving people access to nature via green spaces and inspiring the next generation of gardeners. Through Britain in Bloom and It's Your Neighbourhood we promote environmental awareness and good gardening in local communities around the UK.

Extensive links to schools, garden clubs and our network of Affiliated Societies help us to reach people of all ages in all regions, and support the national and international network of gardeners. We also encourage gardening in prisons through the Windlesham Trophy competition, helping to change people's lives.



‘The RHS Campaign for School Gardening continues to encourage children to connect with nature, grow plants and their skills.’



What the RHS does

Education for everyone

We aim to share practical knowledge and inspire those of all ages and abilities to develop an interest in plants and gardening.

The RHS Campaign for School Gardening continues to encourage schoolchildren to connect with nature, grow plants and grow their skills; it now has more than 38,000 members.

Our established qualifications offer learning for all levels of student, from the RHS Level 1 Certificate, (accessible to beginner gardeners and a first step in vocational training for professional horticulturists) to the degree-level Master of Horticulture (RHS). The RHS is an Awarding Body recognised by the Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulations, ensuring accessibility to RHS qualifications through colleges and other partners. With UK partner universities we support PhD students, and at our Gardens we offer practical training for students through the RHS School of Horticulture and RHS apprenticeships.

As well as these more formal studies, we hold lectures and workshops in our Gardens and around the country to further connect our visitors with topics that inspire and delight them.

Passing on our knowledge to all

To ensure we are accessible to gardeners wherever they may be and at any time of day, we ensure we continually offer accurate and informative gardening information on our website (rhs.org.uk). Increasingly we are sharing our knowledge through social media streams and in print, with 18.9 million unique users during the year on the website.

We publish a monthly magazine for members, *The Garden*, as well as two quarterlies, *The Plantsman* and *The Orchid Review*, and horticultural books to keep

Passionate about the science behind plants

The RHS is the recognised centre of excellence for horticultural science, collections and advice. In the last year we have continued to implement our Science Strategy, which will help equip people with the knowledge they need to garden successfully now and in the future.

Our scientists, advisers and information specialists in the Science and Library teams are committed to helping gardeners improve and develop their horticultural skills, as well as to identify, provide and promote solutions to major horticultural and environmental issues. We carry out scientific research into plant health, environmental horticulture and botany for the benefit of people who want information to help them garden. We also provide evidence-based horticultural advice and information through our extensive Libraries and Collections. It means we can provide evidence to government and lead the debate on issues influencing horticulture, gardening and the environment.

Our Science Strategy is based on:

- **A global knowledge bank for gardening and garden plants**
- **Plant health in gardens**
- **Gardening in a changing world**
- **Plant science for all: people, plants, planet**

members and the wider public informed about the latest skills, design and practice of horticulture.

Our fortnightly series of RHS Gardening Podcasts received 9.5 million downloads in 2018, almost double the number from 2017. The podcasts bring thousands of listeners up to date with topical tips, the latest ideas and advice from the RHS. In autumn 2018, *The Garden Podcast* was launched: this shines a light on selected articles in *The Garden* magazine.

Extensive coverage of our Shows is also enjoyed on free-to-air television, local radio, websites and across hundreds of different social media platforms.

We want as many people as possible to benefit from our work, whatever their means – whether free access to our huge knowledge base through our website and Libraries or free open days and educational trips to our Gardens, to offering bursaries to help out those studying horticulture. The gardening public and the horticulture industry across Britain reap the benefits of our Plants for Pollinators scheme, while our Plant Trials programme demonstrates which garden plants are good enough to earn the Award of Garden Merit. And we offer financial and practical support for community gardening through the RHS Campaign for School Gardening, Britain in Bloom, Greening Great Britain and our many links with local horticultural societies.

Looking after our members

We wouldn't be able to do all that we do as a charity without the support of our half a million members, our generous donors and those who leave us legacies. This enables us to carry out much of our scientific, educational, heritage, art and outreach work.

RHS members benefit from a range of services and activities: free entry for themselves and a member of their family to the four RHS Gardens; members have free entry at selected times to the 207 Partner Gardens; reduced admission prices to our Shows; a monthly magazine; and personal gardening advice services. Our membership is open to all and we endeavour to keep membership subscriptions at an affordable level.

There are excellent shopping opportunities in our four Gardens, at our Flower Shows, and online. Sales through our plant centres, gift shops and bookshops generate much-needed revenue for the charity. We believe RHS Garden Wisley offers the best selection of horticultural books and plants in the UK. We also earn income by licensing the use of images from the Lindley Library Collections.

All income generated by these means supports our charitable work so millions can continue to grow through having plants in their lives.

Sharing our unrivalled Collections

RHS Libraries hold collections covering five centuries of gardening history and science.

The Lindley Library in London is open every weekday; the Garden Libraries at RHS Gardens Wisley and Harlow Carr are open seven days a week. These hold the finest horticultural collection in the world, both historic and contemporary, including books on gardening, artworks, photographs and the personal archives of a number of notable gardeners and garden designers. Everyone can use these for free, while RHS members can borrow books from the extensive lending collection. Exhibitions, events and activities bring these collections to life, so we can share them with even more visitors.

Our insect collection of more than 24,000 specimens is both a historical record as well as a working collection. With plant health security becoming increasingly important, our collection is proving to be of national significance.

The RHS Herbarium at Wisley holds an internationally important collection of 87,600 dried and pressed plant specimens. This is a valuable record of garden plants and one of only a few in the world dedicated to ornamental plants. Our Herbarium of preserved plant specimens is used for scientific study around the world; its records make it crucial to the conservation of garden plants.



For highlights of our work this year, turn to page 19

Bringing our Vision to life

By investing in the future of horticulture, we are ensuring everyone, for generations to come, can take pleasure and revel in the beauty of plants, gardens and green spaces, reconnecting them with nature

It is an exciting time in the history of the RHS as major projects that have been in planning for many years finally come to life.

Back in 2013 we announced that the RHS was making a landmark £160 million investment in the future of horticulture over a 10-year period, and we identified seven projects. Our investment is allowing us to bring the joy of gardening to millions more people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds, and benefit their health, happiness and wellbeing. We believe our plan is the most significant and exciting since the RHS was established 215 years ago.

We are delighted that some projects have now been finished and we are already seeing the positive difference our work is making to people's lives. Nowhere is this more obvious than at our new fifth site RHS Garden Bridgewater where, through their work, volunteers are reporting life-changing experiences while helping to create this exciting new garden for the North West.

Over the next four pages you can see how our projects are progressing and greatly enhancing our work as a charity, to strengthen and grow communities and the lives of individuals, build a more resilient society and support biodiversity and the natural world.





In 2013 we launched seven projects to deliver our £160m investment into the future of horticulture

- 1 RHS Garden Wisley**
An extensive programme including a new Welcome building and visitor experience; a new National Centre for Horticultural Science and Learning; world-leading new gardens designed by Christopher Bradley-Hole, Matt Keightley and Ann-Marie Powell; and restoring Wisley village
- 2 RHS Garden Bridgewater**
Our exciting fifth Garden in Salford, Greater Manchester with gardens designed by Tom Stuart-Smith, Charlotte Harris and Hugo Bugg
- 3 RHS Garden Harlow Carr**
Restoration of the Harrogate Arms as well as the historic landscape to the Bath House and spa
- 4 RHS Garden Hyde Hall**
Including a new Learning Centre, events and restaurant building, an enlarged Welcome building and beautiful new gardens designed by Adam Frost
- 5 RHS Lindley Library**
Increased conservation and sharing of our heritage Collections
- 6 Community Outreach**
Transforming more lives across the UK through the power of plants, and bringing gardens and green spaces to cities
- 7 Horticulture Matters**
Raising the pride in, and profile of, professional careers in horticulture



A year of many milestones

Every day we are driven by our desire to invest in the future of horticulture because we believe plants, gardens and reconnecting people with nature can make a positive difference to everyone

INVESTING IN BRIDGEWATER

100,000 BRICKS

A walled garden like no other

We completed the mammoth project to restore the 170-year-old wall surrounding the 4.5ha (11 acre) Weston Walled Garden at RHS Garden Bridgewater. Around 80 percent of the 100,000 bricks were restored and reused. The work was funded by the Garfield Weston Foundation which has provided our largest charitable gift (£5m) to date.





500,000 MEMBERS

Half a million members now share our passion for gardening

More than 500,000 people are now members of the RHS – the highest number in the 215-year history of the Society. This means we can share the joy of gardening, nature and the great outdoors with more people than ever before.



INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES

38,347 CHILDREN'S VISITS

Our four Gardens are seats of learning and homes for horticultural inspiration

To bolster our teaching provision and welcome more communities we opened the Clore Learning Centre at RHS Garden Hyde Hall in June. Through our free educational visits programme we welcomed more than 38,000 pupils to our four Gardens to enjoy learning outside of the classroom.



School visit for our Royal designer

Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cambridge visited King Henry's Walk Garden in Islington, London, an It's Your Neighbourhood group, part of the Britain in Bloom campaign. The visit highlighted the Duchess' work with landscape architects Andrée Davies and Adam White to design a wildlife- and family-friendly garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2019. The 'RHS Back to Nature Garden' promotes the benefits of being outdoors and encourages everyone to reconnect with nature.

INVESTING IN WISLEY

Welcome building and plant centre at Wisley

RHS members enjoyed behind-the-scenes tours during the construction of the new Welcome building at RHS Garden Wisley. Opening in June, it will mark the completion of our first stage of the ongoing investment at Wisley. As well as an enlarged café, new restaurant and an extensive horticultural bookshop, there is an exciting new plant centre, including an area dedicated to British-grown plants and independent nurseries.



INVESTING IN HYDE HALL

Hyde Hall's new winter wonderland

The Winter Garden at RHS Garden Hyde Hall opened in 2018 in time to show off the beauty of the cold season. It is a celebration of bold winter colour from stems, leaves, barks and berries, and unusual shapes from coppiced willow, grasses and dried flower stems.

Dogwoods (*Cornus*) bring rich reds and bright yellows to winter gardens from their colourful stems. The Hyde Hall Winter Garden has 100 different selections which are being studied as part of an RHS Plant Trial; the best will earn the RHS Award of Garden Merit.



5 million MAGAZINES

Keeping members informed from the comfort of home

Throughout 2018 we mailed out more than 5 million copies of *The Garden*, our monthly membership magazine which keeps gardeners up to date with the latest gardening trends. We also worked to replace the plastic used in the wrapper with more environmentally friendly, recyclable paper.



INVESTING IN LIBRARIES AND COLLECTIONS

£4 million GRANT

Digitising our herbarium collection

Thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and players of the National Lottery we have been able to photograph 86,000 herbarium specimens so they can be digitally accessed for free by everyone in the future. The grant will also help us to move the physical collection to the new National Centre for Horticultural Science and Learning when it opens in 2020, ensuring we can continue to support plant conservation and plant diversity for years to come.



INVESTING IN HORTICULTURE MATTERS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION



Elevating horticulture in Parliament

We work closely with the Ornamental Horticulture Roundtable Group to promote horticulture at government level (above: RHS Ambassador Alan Titchmarsh MBE talks to Michael Gove, Secretary for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs at the 2018 RHS Chelsea Flower Show). In addition, two important reports in 2018 highlighted the financial and environmental importance of horticulture. Data showing the industry in 2017 generated £5.4 billion for HM Treasury and supported 568,700 jobs, now provide convincing arguments to sustain and build the UK's horticulture industry.

19 APPRENTICES

Across our five Gardens we now have 19 apprentices working as RHS employees on a two-year contract. Primarily for 16–19-year-olds, the course gives each apprentice an understanding of the different aspects of our Gardens (from lawn care to vegetable growing) and equips them with the experience and confidence for future employment or for further study.



Helping you grow

Thanks to the breadth of our work, people from all walks of life can develop their careers, build confidence and improve their health

Emily Marston

RHS Horticultural Apprentice, RHS Garden Harlow Carr, North Yorkshire

My apprenticeship at Harlow Carr began in 2017. It has given me a wide range of resources and opportunities for personal development. I'd previously felt uncertain about my career path – I tried university life, but quickly decided it was not for me. I lived in Birmingham doing temporary jobs and volunteering, but I kept coming back to gardening. I thought about doing a horticultural apprenticeship for five years, but I wish I'd acted on it sooner.

Importantly, the apprenticeship also offers a living wage, allowing me to study and put money towards evening classes and driving lessons. It has also massively increased my confidence; I'm now comfortable working independently and leading volunteers.

I've been offered a place at Wisley to study the RHS School of Horticulture Level 3 and 4 Diplomas, so I can continue with my horticultural learning – helping me towards my ambition of designing and building sustainable urban landscapes.



Gail Hovey

Science College Project Manager, RHS School Gardening Team of the Year 2018, St Gregory's Catholic Science College, Harrow

I've seen first-hand the difference school gardening can make to the lives of older pupils and our relationship with the local community. Pupils have also benefited from a greater sense of responsibility for the world around them, and from a change in perception of young people among our neighbours.

We took part in the RHS Green Plan It garden design challenge in 2017 and students then raised money and found resources to create their garden for real. Now more than 50 young people regularly care for the space, using it to learn about nature and relax between lessons. The garden is used for teaching across the curriculum, from science to English, art and history.

Our relationship with the community has blossomed as we now garden and plant in our nearby park. We plant bulbs each autumn and enlist the help of local primary students. Students also maintain a flower bed at the park's entrance, conduct litter picking events and, with residents, have cleared and replanted the banks of the brook running through it.

Our gardening club students were crowned RHS School Gardening Team of the Year 2018, in recognition of their incredible efforts.





Ian Clements

Buildings and Restoration Volunteer, RHS Garden Bridgewater, Manchester

After a severe stroke a few years ago I was told I'd never work again, but volunteering at RHS Garden Bridgewater is the most significant thing I've done for my recovery. It also means I'm contributing to a project I feel passionate about.

After my stroke I heard a guy from the RHS talking about how people who have had life-changing experiences through illness can get something positive from growing things. I went straight home and planted mint and chillies!

With my colleagues, I now repair and repurpose small buildings including the old Scout Hut as a base for volunteers. It's a coincidence that my grandfather came to work and recuperate at Bridgewater after the First World War. We have both experienced 'life-changing' events. Bridgewater runs deeply through my family history and I think of it as a place of healing.

'I now repair and repurpose small buildings including the old Scout Hut as a base for volunteers.'

Geraldine King

RHS Britain in Bloom Judge and Estate Gardens Manager, Chiswick House and Gardens Trust

Meeting passionate people and learning about the successes, trials and community spirit of a place is really rewarding for me in this voluntary role as a Britain in Bloom judge. I have also been a regional judge for 21 years. The opportunity to guide, encourage and share my knowledge to help the groups, and take away ideas I have gained from the judging experience, is so valuable to me.

While out visiting it spurs me on to see how the different communities integrate nature, flowers, trees and plants with their historic and natural landscapes.



MARK WASILEWSKI

'...community spirit of a place is really rewarding for me in this voluntary role as a Britain in Bloom judge.'



Ula Maria

Former RHS Young Designer of the Year 2017 and now independent garden designer

I worked for a number of landscape architect practices before I won the RHS Young Designer of the Year 2017 at the age of 24. Winning the competition kick-started my own garden-design business; so many great opportunities followed from the media exposure. It showcases your work and helps you develop your portfolio. Show gardens are unlike anything else I had done – from initial concept to completion, it all happens so fast! There's not much room for error and you have to solve problems on site as soon as they occur. But that has given me confidence and I feel nothing is impossible now.

I've met so many incredible and inspiring people since taking part in RHS Shows. I really can't think of a better community to be a part of: everyone's so supportive and friendly. I'm so excited about all the amazing opportunities that are yet to come.





Gardens

RHS Garden Wisley, Surrey

- ❖ A substantial addition to the Garden of a 75m (250ft) long Wisteria Arch of 70 plants will drip with dark purple to light mauve flowers each May.
- ❖ To celebrate winter and early spring colour, we opened the reinvigorated Heather Landscape with its renewed collection of more than 1,000 heather cultivars.
- ❖ First-class horticultural displays and plants for sale welcomed 47,000 visitors in September to RHS Garden Wisley Flower Show.
- ❖ During December almost 63,000 people enjoyed evenings of colourful illumination at Winter Glow event.
- ❖ Construction of the Welcome building and the new horticultural services yard continued apace.
- ❖ Supply of all-important tea and cake was boosted with the opening of the Stone Pine Café close to the Heather Landscape.

RHS highlights from 2018

Some of the remarkable and varied achievements from our many teams within the Society

RHS Garden Harlow Carr, North Yorkshire

- ❖ Water features, dry-stone walling and new planting with year-round interest reinvigorated the popular Edwardian Garden.
- ❖ A new Rock Garden was linked to our Streamside by fresh plantings, to extend horticultural interest.
- ❖ Storytelling and workshops were offered as part of the October half-term *Room On The Broom* event.
- ❖ To enhance the visitor experience, we refreshed our welcome area with improved facilities for families and visitors with disabilities.
- ❖ We hosted three live television broadcasts and, with local children and BBC TV's *Blue Peter*, created a woven-willow ship.
- ❖ More than 14,000 visitors enjoyed the RHS Garden Harlow Carr Flower Show across three days in June.

Blue Himalayan poppies and candelabra primulas (below) are signature plants of Streamside. The Blue Peter willow ship (below left) was created by willow craftsman Phil Bradley.



RHS Garden Bridgewater, Greater Manchester

- ❖ We started the monumental task of restoring the 1 mile (1.5km) wall surrounding the 11 acre (4.5ha) Weston Walled Garden. During the work we cleaned and salvaged 80 percent of the original bricks.
- ❖ To provide a beautiful space for wildlife and visitors, we started desilting the historic 1.6ha (4 acre) lake, removing 100 years' worth of leaves and debris.
- ❖ Rare breed Berkshire pigs have been used – in an environmentally friendly way – to turn over the soil in what will be the new orchard.
- ❖ Working with more than 20 organisations from the health and social care arena, we have put a design into place for a wellbeing garden to promote mental and physical health.
- ❖ Landscape architect students Stella Yang and Karsan Karavadra, from Manchester Metropolitan University, won a nationwide competition to design a garden at Bridgewater.



It could take between 11 and 23 months for the lake that we have drained and desilted to naturally fill back up.



RHS Garden Rosemoor, Devon

- ❖ Using trunks and branches from the Garden and collections of lush ferns and foliage plants, the Rosemoor team created The Stumpery, a 91m (300ft) long path of textural curiosities.
- ❖ We launched Rosemoor Live – a mix of live music, theatre and gardening talks. It included a recording of BBC Radio 4's *Gardeners' Question Time* and a talk from RHS Ambassador and garden designer Adam Frost.
- ❖ Work began to create a new Cool Garden designed by Gold medal-winning garden designer Jo Thompson.
- ❖ During seven months of the year we welcomed record numbers of visitors. Across the year more than 230,000 people came to Rosemoor to enjoy the beauty of our Devon garden.
- ❖ To enable us to bring even more varied and exciting attractions to the RHS Garden Rosemoor Flower Show, which attracted 8,092 visitors across three days in August, we welcomed Atkins Ferrie Wealth Management as our show sponsor.



RHS Garden Hyde Hall, Essex

- ❖ The new Clore Learning Centre is at the heart of Hyde Hall's development. More than 3,700 children and adults made use of it within the first six months of it opening in July.
- ❖ More than 120 members were welcomed to the RHS Annual General Meeting in June – the first major event hosted at newly opened Gardeners Rest and Hilltop Lodge.
- ❖ In response to growing popularity, an extra day was added to the RHS Garden Hyde Hall Flower Show. More than 28,500 visitors enjoyed this August event.
- ❖ In time for frosty weather, we opened the new Winter Garden to highlight the best of the cold season, from autumn foliage and berries to sculptural seedheads and shrubs.
- ❖ We shared the Garden's horticultural features and new developments with a record 338,000 visitors.

Education

We provide world-class learning and qualifications

- ❖ We connect 6 million children with nature and gardening through our Campaign for School Gardening. Its dedicated website (schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk) recorded 203,385 users and 1,149,436 page views.
- ❖ To inspire young people while learning, 38,347 students came to our Gardens as part of our educational visits programme.
- ❖ We created opportunities to learn while working at RHS Garden Bridgewater with two new apprenticeship positions starting in 2019.
- ❖ Our 32 work-based level 3 & 4 students successfully passed the Diploma in Horticultural Practice course.
- ❖ Reflecting the demand for learning at degree level, we operated, for the first time, a waiting list for MHort applications. In 2018, 40 students newly enrolled.
- ❖ Career changers and individuals with a keen interest for gardening were able to take advantage of RHS Qualifications at 98 sites across the UK and Ireland.
- ❖ We have 19 apprentices working across our four Gardens.
- ❖ In our annual competition to celebrate school gardening, 15-year-old Ellie Micklewright from Newport Girls High School Academy Trust, Shropshire was crowned RHS Young School Gardener of the Year. Matthew Willer, a history teacher from Reepham High School, Norfolk, was RHS School Gardening Champion of the Year, and St Gregory's Catholic Science College, Harrow, won RHS School Gardening Team of the Year.



Ellie Micklewright (top), the 2018 RHS Young School Gardener of the Year; Wisley students (above) work on their allotment; 2018 MHort recipients (right) celebrate their graduation.



RHS Flower Shows

Putting on the world's most respected gardening events

- ❖ Through horticulture we connected with an estimated 2.1 billion people across the world via 4,527 items of international media coverage for RHS Chelsea Flower Show.
- ❖ More than 617,000 people were shown new ways to garden and grow plants through visits in 2018 to our 11 RHS Flower Shows.
- ❖ Free entrance to our Flower Shows at our four Gardens is a benefit of being an RHS member. More than 90,000 people visited these Shows during 2018 to see and buy the best plants and gardening tools from local and national experts.
- ❖ Our Floral Marquees and Chelsea's Great Pavilion are at the heart of British and international horticulture. Across our Shows they cover more than 3ha (7 acres).
- ❖ Our core visitor audience is aged 35–65 years. However, our Flower Shows attract visitors of all ages and children go free.
- ❖ Leading nurseries were RHS Master Growers in 2018: Dibleys (Cardiff); Avon Bulbs (Malvern Spring); D'Arcy & Everest (Chatsworth); Hampshire Carnivorous Plants (Hampton Court Palace); Roualeyn Fuchsias (Tatton Park).



Central to RHS Flower Shows are beautiful plants displayed in Show Gardens and floral marquees (left and below), staged in magnificent settings (right).



Our fabulous RHS Flower Shows spanned the gardening season

13–14 Feb
RHS London
Early Spring
Plant Fair

6–7 April
RHS London
Orchid Show
and Plant Fair

13–15 April
RHS Flower
Show Cardiff

10–13 May
RHS Malvern
Spring Festival

22–26 May
RHS Chelsea
Flower Show

6–10 June
RHS
Chatsworth
Flower Show



in 2018

2–8 July
RHS Hampton
Court Palace
Flower Show

11–12 July
RHS London
Plant and
Art Fair

18–22 July
RHS Flower
Show Tatton
Park

29–30 Sep
Malvern
Autumn Show

2–3 Oct
RHS London
Harvest Festival
Show

27–28 Oct
RHS London
Urban Garden
Show



Communities and outreach

How we help people, of every age, across the nation to grow

- ❖ We enriched and enhanced the lives of 6 million children, and our total number of Campaign for School Gardening members passed 38,000.
- ❖ To bring gardening to millions of children, we trained 1,031 educators.
- ❖ More than 3,400 gardening groups and hundreds of thousands of individuals across the UK are involved in RHS Britain in Bloom.
- ❖ Together, surveyed Bloom groups have transformed more than 1 million sq m of derelict land, and 73 percent said it helped foster a greater sense of community.
- ❖ Television viewers – around 670,000 per episode – were treated to a behind-the-scenes look when BBC2 broadcast *Britain in Bloom* in 2018.
- ❖ We hosted a youth engagement day for 15 young people at RHS Garden Wisley to explore attitudes to green space and wellbeing.
- ❖ Public spaces were improved with more than 5,000 plants planted via our Community Support Programme.



Residents take part in the Community Planting Day on the Sheerwater Estate in Woking, Surrey.



The chance to grow giant pumpkins excites many children, especially competition winners from Deer Park Primary School (far left) in Derbyshire.

Diverse communities from rural towns to cities took part in Britain in Bloom and used plants and gardening to enhance their spaces. Winners in 2018 were Truro, Cornwall (left).

- ❖ A total of 560 young people at 92 secondary schools designed green spaces for their school or community as part of Green Plan It programme, our youth-led garden design challenge. With the help of 101 mentors, 75 percent of those young people were inspired to garden more in the future.
- ❖ Around 3,000 schools took part in our pilot I Can Grow programme, which helped young people discover the benefits of gardening. For primary schoolchildren, wildlife was the most important issue; for those in secondary schools it was wellbeing.
- ❖ Children in more than 100 schools were involved in Monster Pumpkins, a competition to grow plants using record-breaking pumpkin seeds supplied by RHS Garden Hyde Hall. Pupils from Deer Park Primary School in Chesterfield were crowned winners with their 110kg (17 stone) fruit.
- ❖ In delivering workshops and courses, we worked with 349 new partners.
- ❖ More than 10,000 schools and groups took part in our Big Soup Share, turning their home-grown produce into soup to share with others in their community.
- ❖ Salford Women's Centre was one of many groups to have transformed their space with plants to bring colour, wildlife and scent, achieved with help from staff at RHS Garden Bridgewater.

‘Fifteen episodes of BBC TV’s *Britain in Bloom* brought the work of communities and groups – as they used plants to make their villages, towns and cities more beautiful – to an even wider audience.’



Our hardworking staff are behind new and improved areas, features and planting at the ever-changing RHS Gardens.

Volunteers, employees and a growing membership

The people who make our work possible

- ❖ Special events were hosted to thank our 1,650 volunteers who donated 82,184 hours across all departments.
- ❖ To recognise volunteer commitment we introduced a Long Service Award. It was given to 307 volunteers working with us from between five and 30 years.
- ❖ In 2018, in consultation with specialists, we formed a plan to boost the diversity of our staff at every level. We continued to promote diversity and inclusion in the industry, through our Gardens, events, through schools and communities and to Parliament.
- ❖ All our staff can now expand their training using our Tool Shed learning management system. Introduced in February 2018, it has been accessed by 937 staff and 170 volunteers.
- ❖ To promote staff health, wellbeing and social opportunities, we ran a Wisley Wellbeing Week in October.
- ❖ To break down the barriers associated with mental health issues, we signed the Time to Change Pledge.
- ❖ We implemented changes to improve the experience of those just starting work at the RHS.
- ❖ Through Gift Aid we boosted income via membership by £3.2 million.
- ❖ In May 2018 we welcomed 11,674 new members: our best month for recruitment on record. Across the year 89,301 joined the RHS.
- ❖ During 2018 we recruited 654 Life Members – we now have 7,659.
- ❖ We encourage the next generation of gardeners with our Student Membership. We now have 6,737.
- ❖ More than half of our members enjoyed visiting one of our 200-plus RHS Partner Gardens across the country and abroad during 2018.



Volunteers and RHS staff are crucial to the smooth running of our Society. We have 1,300 volunteers at our Flower Shows.

Science and Collections

Sharing our unrivalled knowledge and expertise

- ❖ To ensure gardeners get the most up-to-date information from RHS Gardening Advice, we published 53 scientific edited and peer-reviewed papers in environmental horticulture, plant health and botany.
- ❖ With 14 UK partner universities we supported three BSc, one MSc and 16 PhD students.
- ❖ To help protect UK gardens from pests and diseases, we invested in three new members of staff to implement our six plant-health principles and to guide best practice.
- ❖ RHS scientists sequenced the entire chloroplast genome for the daffodil species *Narcissus poeticus*. This ground-breaking science will help with plant identification and in selection and breeding of daffodils for gardeners.
- ❖ We staged five exhibitions at the Lindley Library, London, to bring our Collections to life and share them with more people.
- ❖ We hosted short courses, study days and tours of our Libraries at Wisley, Hyde Hall and Harlow Carr.
- ❖ A major project with funding from The Pilgrim Trust and the Charles Haywood Foundation enabled us to conserve our collection of fruit drawings by William Hooker. This is part of our work to preserve the nation's gardening heritage.
- ❖ We provided evidence at the All-Party Parliamentary Gardening and Horticulture Group inquiry into the future of the UK horticulture industry, and for the *The Economic Impact report on Ornamental Horticulture and Landscaping in the UK* published in October.
- ❖ *Worth a Thousand Words* was an August exhibition to show off a selection of recent acquisitions including Norma Gregory's water-colour of rhubarb roots (above right).



Our ongoing innovative scientific work is backed by historic horticultural Collections. RHS Libraries preserve and share collections of artworks and books, and constantly acquire new works.



‘We have 14 UK partner universities. In 2017 we supported three BSc, one MSc and 16 PhD students.’



RHS Plant Trials judge flowering plants, fruit and vegetables. Awards of Garden Merit are given to the best performing ones.

Horticulture

Plants and the horticultural industry are at the heart of what we do

- ❖ More than 30 RHS Plant Trials included in excess of 8,000 individual plants, helping gardeners choose the best plants for their gardens.
- ❖ The RHS Master Grower scheme highlighted the work of specialist nurseries at RHS Flower Shows.
- ❖ *Begonia Sweet Spice Bounty Coral* was voted favourite out of 84 new summer-flowering plants. More than 3,000 votes were cast in these People's Choice Awards.
- ❖ To support horticultural careers and promote working in a 'green environment' we launched the social media campaign #MyGreenOffice, so people could share images of their outdoor or glasshouse work space.
- ❖ We provided financial support for around 100 applicants through the RHS Bursaries Scheme, to help professional gardeners and students fulfil their dreams of travel and to expand their education.
- ❖ More than 2,700 Affiliated Societies benefit from their alliance to the RHS.
- ❖ RHS Chelsea Plant of the Year 2018 was *Hydrangea Runaway Bride Snow White* ("Ushyd0405"), winner of our competition to celebrate new plants.
- ❖ Across our four Gardens we have more than 249ha (617 acres) devoted to the growing of ornamental and edible plants.

'We found 44,847 different types of plants growing in our four Gardens in a count that took place during August.'



Begonia Sweet Spice Bounty Coral was the pick of visitors.

Media and Communications

Informing and sharing our work with RHS members and the world

- ❖ We mailed out more than 5 million copies of *The Garden* to members in 2018. It is in the top 15 largest-circulation magazines in the UK.
- ❖ Book sales in the year across all our titles reached 250,000.
- ❖ To encourage more people to receive the benefits of gardening we revamped our online community hub. Within its first year it received 305,500 page views.
- ❖ To improve promotion and understanding of our RHS Science Strategy, we concluded phase one of an update to the online science hub.
- ❖ For those new to horticulture we now host 26 step-by-step guides of easy-to-achieve gardening projects – an increase of 12 this year.
- ❖ Our website recorded almost 100 million page views in 2018, peaking at 1 million during the week of RHS Chelsea Flower Show.
- ❖ Our podcasts receive on average 792,000 downloads a month, almost double the number from 2017.
- ❖ Winners and finalists from thousands of entries into the 2018 RHS Photographic Competition were displayed throughout the summer at our four Gardens.
- ❖ To help visitors more easily plan and explore all parts of RHS Garden Rosemoor, we updated its online content.
- ❖ Our self-published books included *RHS Plant Finder 2018*.
- ❖ *I Can Grow A Sunflower* won silver in the Junior Design Awards.
- ❖ To attract and enthuse gardening newcomers, we published *How to Garden if You're New to Gardening* with inspiring and practical projects to improve their outdoor space. Since its publication in 2018 we have sold more than 34,000 copies.
- ❖ We published two new Garden Guides for RHS Garden Wisley and RHS Garden Hyde Hall. These attractive booklets help visitors enjoy and remember their visit.

‘We had 11 of our books in the top 20 of gardening titles and 37 in the top 100.’



Priyank Dhmi's picture of a damselfly on a flower bud (right) took third place in the Welcoming Garden Wildlife category in the 2018 RHS Photographic Competition.





Investing in horticulture

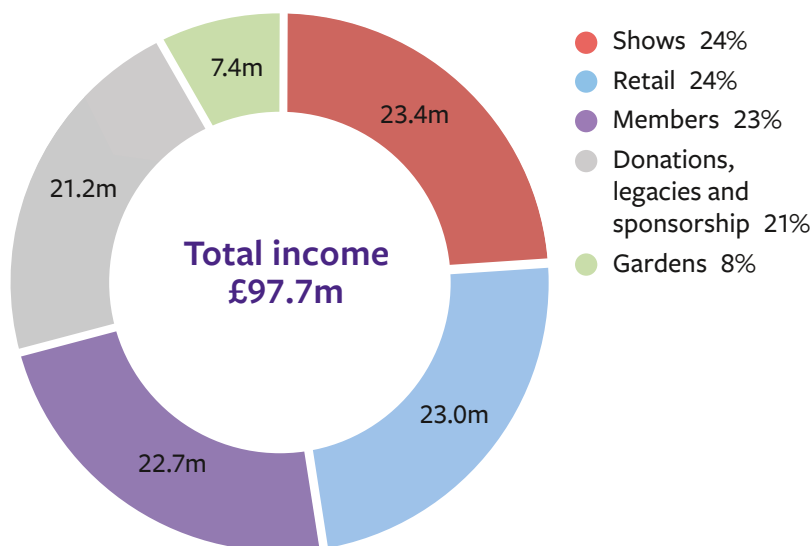
Membership is the cornerstone of the RHS and we value the support given by each of our 502,666 members. Membership accounts for 23 percent (£22.7m) of our total income and represents a major source of funds to reinvest in our charitable work

Where our income comes from

Donations, legacies, grants and fundraising are key, enabling us, as a charity, to improve the lives of many people through horticulture and gardening. This year, income from these streams increased to £21.2m, including donations of £7.5m towards the Strategic Investment Programme. Fundraising has been a major priority and will remain a key focus over the next few years.

All four RHS Gardens collectively welcomed more than 2 million people. An increase in gate receipts and catering helped income reach £7.4m (2017/18: £7.2m), up 2.9 percent. RHS Shows represent 24 percent of RHS income, and increased to £23.4m (2017/18: £22.7m).

Other important income streams are retail operations at the four RHS Gardens, gala nights at the Chelsea and Hampton Court Palace Flower Shows, advertising in *The Garden* magazine and hiring of the Lindley Hall. At £23.0m they represent 24 percent of the total income.



Where our income goes

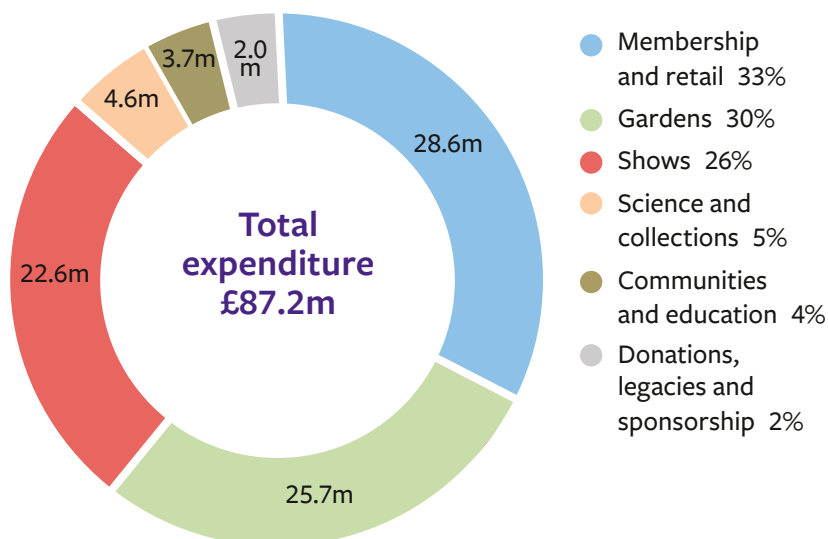
This year we spent £87.2m (2017/18: £84.9m), an increase of £2.3m which included spending of £4.6m on our Strategic Investment Programme.

Expenditure on gardens and horticulture increased to £25.7m (2017/18: £25.0m) with continued investment to ensure our world-class Gardens are maintained, improved and developed.

RHS Shows costs increased by £0.4m, and membership and retail expenditure increased by £1.0m. Expenditure on science and collections was up £0.3m as we continue to recognise and reward talent to ensure the future of great scientists.

Communities and education expenditure increased by £0.2m with additional support for the RHS Campaign for School Gardening.

We are now into the second half of our Strategic Investment Programme which has delivered considerable enhancements at Rosemoor and Hyde Hall, and the opening of the new Welcome building at Wisley in June 2019.



‘We used our surplus of £10.4m to invest in the future of horticulture, science and collections, in communities across Britain helping to celebrate the power and beauty of plants.’

Leaving a gift makes a difference

Fundraising – from individuals through to corporate donors – is vital for the lifeblood and work of the Society. Leaving a legacy, a gift in one's will, enables us to make the UK a greener, healthier and happier place, and ensures future generations can enjoy plants and gardens

As a charity, the RHS receives donations from gifts in wills, where our supporters generously decide to leave us money in the form of a legacy. These gifts vary from large to small. They form the backbone of our annual donation income which enables us to continue and expand our work.

During the year we received £2,676,550 in legacy donations and we appreciate every gift. Most are 'unrestricted' which means we, as a charity, can spend them where the need is greatest, something we value highly as it means the gifts can support a variety of our work, across our Gardens, and other projects. Some supporters have chosen to leave money to a particular RHS Garden, or an area of our work.

Unrestricted funds – helping every area of the RHS

On average about three quarters of legacy gifts help pay for the following work:

- ❖ At least one horticulturist at each RHS Garden. With our Gardens welcoming more than 2 million visitors each year, our horticultural staff help gardeners provide diverse plant collections, examples of innovative and attractive planting design and good horticultural practices.
- ❖ A member of the science team, based at our laboratory at RHS Garden Wisley. Through our scientific work we help gardeners identify pests and diseases, and help understand climate change and environmental challenges.
- ❖ The RHS Green Plan It Challenge is a bespoke project designed to engage children in secondary school education. Across 10 weeks they work with a horticultural mentor to design a community space, giving them a chance to develop their creative skills while adopting an understanding of the importance of green spaces and nature for people and the environment.
- ❖ A horticultural student at each RHS Garden. Training the next generation of horticulturists is one of the best ways we have to share the best in gardening. We support 16 PhD students and invest more than £1 million a year on training at our Gardens through the RHS School of Horticulture.
- ❖ Horticultural projects at RHS Gardens. Each year we replant, improve and create spectacular horticultural displays, from planting tens of thousands of spring-flowering bulbs to specimen trees.

'We invest more than £1 million a year on training at our Gardens through the School of Horticulture.'



With your support we can continue to help horticulturists graduate from the RHS School of Horticulture (top) and involve more schoolchildren in the RHS Green Plan It Challenge (above).



Helping gardens and gardeners grow

New Rosemoor attraction

Long-time member Rosemary Nash of Somerset left a gift in her will to RHS Garden Rosemoor, Devon.

Rosemary's gift helped buy plants and trees for The Stumpery, a new addition to Rosemoor completed in 2017. This curious landscape for shade-loving plants includes 60 rare and unusual ferns planted as individuals and in groups, and a large, elegant, bamboo fern (*Coniogramme japonica* 'Flavomaculata' AGM) from Japan.



The Stumpery's 91m (300ft) path winds through curiosities collected from the Rosemoor estate.

The next generation

Established to help fund students at the RHS School of Horticulture, based at all four RHS Gardens, the Rodney Charles Wallace Fogo Prize offers a cash prize each year. Rod was a Life Member of the RHS, with a passion for photography.

The School of Horticulture provides world-class, accredited training and practical understanding, knowledge and skills in horticulture. We train more than 30 students a year giving them opportunities to transform their lives and support horticulture. Many become the leaders of the future horticultural world. Funding from legacy gifts such as this one ensures we can continue to deliver this training, and expand it.

Thank you to all those who left us a valuable legacy

Pamela Maisie Abbott
Jacquelyn Gay Akhurst
Valerie Bache
Gladys Edith Banks
Clifford Stanley Barham
David Michael Bennett
Arthur Bishop
Joyce Evelyn Bishop
William Thomas Blundell
Margaret Breakell
Graham John Stafford Brough
Megan Cant
Jean Elsie Carder
Michael Stewart Ross Collins
Sheila Cowan
Kathleen May Dodson
Enid Ovena Dyer
Mair Elizabeth Enoch
Michael Fitzgerald
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Victor Lewis French
Richard Neville Gartside
Barbara May Gay
Brian Wilfred Grout
Trevor Anthony Hadley
David William Hand
David Richard Hutcherson
Odette Simone Laker
C Margaret Lancaster
Joyce Irene Mansell
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Alan Francis White
Mark Edward Withers
Michael Charles Wright
Joan Mary Young
Dorothy Young



We are grateful for the generous gifts, donations and bequests from members and supporters.

If you would like to support the RHS, please contact developmentoffice@rhs.org.uk or telephone 020 7821 3125. rhs.org.uk/supportus

For a copy of the *Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements 2018/2019*, please either contact The Secretary at the address below, email secretary@rhs.org.uk or download from rhs.org.uk/annual-report

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