



20th February 2024

We are family – How the British Garden Centres’ team are the roots of success

The British Garden Centres Group (BGC) is the largest family-owned and led garden centre operator in the UK, with over 60 centres across the country. Its growth has been phenomenal from 10 to 62 sites in four years, cementing its position as the largest and best, family-run garden centre group in the UK.

Humble beginnings

British Garden Centres is a family business that has a humble beginning. The founder, Charles Stubbs, started taking cuttings from plants in gardens and selling them to holidaymakers at a nearby holiday park while he was still a teenager in school. Later, he hired his first team member to continue the sales while he finished his 'O' levels. In 1990, Charles built the first garden centre next to his house, and the business took off from there.

In 2000, Charles and Robert purchased Frosts, their second garden centre, which is now known as the flagship Brigg Garden Centre and serves as the business support centre for the group. In 2019, the group expanded rapidly by acquiring 39 garden centres from Wyevale and eight from Hillview. Today, the British Garden Centres portfolio consists of 62 garden centres.

Growing family

Today, the business now employs over 3000 people. British Garden Centres owes its success to its passionate and knowledgeable team, comprising members from the head office to the shop floor. Each team member is an expert in plants and gardenware, that the company offers. The company takes pride in having the next generation of the Stubbs family, Amy and Abigail, working in the business. Charles’ daughter, Amy, leads the development side of the group, manages the marketing department, and has already made a mark in the company. She started her journey in the business as a pot washer in the restaurants and grew to higher roles in garden centre management, earning the central role she holds now.

Family values

Our family business is built upon a strong foundation of timeless values. We consider integrity, customer satisfaction, and unparalleled commitment to quality as not only business principles but also core family values that



20th February 2024

have been passed down from the Stubbs family and have become ingrained in the BGC family. Our primary focus has always been to provide our customers with the best plant offerings in the market, with a wider range and superior quality than your average garden centre. We also strive to provide our customers with excellent value for their money, ensuring they always get the best deals and the highest quality products.

Employee milestones

The proof is in the pudding they say with British Garden Centres being a people organisation, and the group rely on the dedication and care of everyone who works in stores, head office or distribution. Each employee is a valued and trusted team member. The Stubbs family want all employees to be part of something special and to feel as though they own and operate their own business.

Some of the group's most dedicated employees to be celebrated include **Paula Jane Peach** who celebrates 31 years at the Stubbs' first centre, Woodthorpe. Another example of homegrown talent is **Ben Tomlinson**, manager of the flagship centre, Brigg. In November 2011, at the age of 16, Ben embarked on a week-long work experience stint at Brigg Garden Centre. Following the completion of this initial placement, he secured a weekend position loading compost into customers' cars.

By the age of 19, having left college, Ben began a full-time role as a Sundries and Christmas Assistant. Over time, he progressed within the BGC team, assuming responsibilities as a Till Supervisor and later as a Patio and Christmas Supervisor. After seven years with Brigg, at the age of 23, Ben sought new opportunities and ventured into a Sales Executive role for MINI.

However, his tenure was short-lived due to the onset of the Covid pandemic, which led to closures across industries. During the lockdown period, Ben lent a hand to Brigg Garden Centre, eventually being offered the Centre Manager position at the Gilberdyke Centre, marking his debut in a managerial role. Thriving in this new capacity, Ben remained at Gilberdyke for nearly two years until seizing the opportunity to return to Brigg as the General Manager in November 2021. Reflecting on his BGC journey, Ben could never have foretold that 10 years on from his work experience, he would be the General Manager of the group's largest store.



20th February 2024

Charles Stubbs, Founder of British Garden Centres said: "From a modest start in 1987, British Garden Centres has grown into the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group with 62 thriving locations. With a team of over 3000 passionate individuals, including the next generation of the Stubbs family, we uphold values of integrity and commitment to quality. Celebrating employee milestones, we honour and owe a huge thank you to those with decades of service. Our roots run deep, cultivating a green legacy that continues to provide unparalleled offerings to our customers across the UK."

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Notes to Editors:

About the business:

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group with 62 centres around the country. The group is owned and led by The Stubbs family, who also own and operate Woodthorpe Leisure Park in Lincolnshire. BGC was launched in 1987 with the opening of Woodthorpe Garden Centre by brothers Charles and Robert Stubbs. Since 2018 it has expanded rapidly with the acquisition of 50 garden centres allowing it to grow from its heartland to the business it is now with 62 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 2,700 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, 2 growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres, Woodthorpe Leisure Park, and Woody's Restaurant & Bar.

Social Media

Facebook: British Garden Centres

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