



Environmental  
**Horticulture**  
and Industry Insights  
2025



# The Horticultural Trades Association

## About Us

hta.org.uk

*The Horticultural Trades Association (HTA), founded in 1899, represents the entire environmental horticulture sector in the UK, with over 1,300 garden businesses among our members. Our diverse membership includes retailers, wholesalers, growers, manufacturers, and landscapers, providing comprehensive representation for the industry. As a member-centric organisation with no shareholders, our primary focus is to support our members.*

*We operate within a group and committee structure that includes the Association of Professional Landscapers and technical grower committees. This structure allows us to address critical industry issues and advocate on behalf of our members. Additionally, we maintain international ties with our counterparts overseas.*

*Our tailored business support offers training, eLearning, conferences, and market research designed to cater to businesses of all sizes and ensures they have the tools and knowledge needed to succeed.*

*We run the National Garden Gift Card Scheme, the UK's longest-standing garden consumer promotion, which drives around 2 million annual visits to garden centres. We also facilitate connections between garden centre suppliers and customers through trade shows, advertising, and sponsorship opportunities.*

*We take pride in our industry's contributions to the economy, environment, health, and wellbeing. As such, we actively advocate for these interests with the government and policymakers across all four nations. As a core member of the Environmental Horticulture Group, we collaborate with partner associations and groups representing the diverse spectrum of environmental horticulture, from domestic gardeners to large landscaping firms and the tree and forestry sectors.*

# Environmental Horticulture

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## What is Environmental Horticulture?

*Environmental horticulture is the production and business of cultivating flora (plants, trees, seeds, bulbs, grass, etc.) for commercial, environmental and health advancement. This sector generally encompasses the following specific activities:*



Ornamental plant production



Retailing of garden products, plants and cut flowers



Arboriculture



Garden tourism



Supply of garden goods



Landscape services

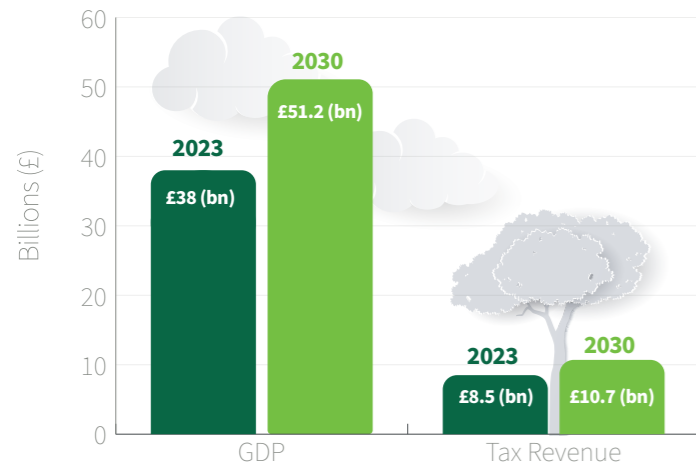


Wholesale of garden products, and flowers

# Economic Footprint

Environmental horticulture boosts the UK economy, contributing to tax revenue and GDP, and is key to driving green growth

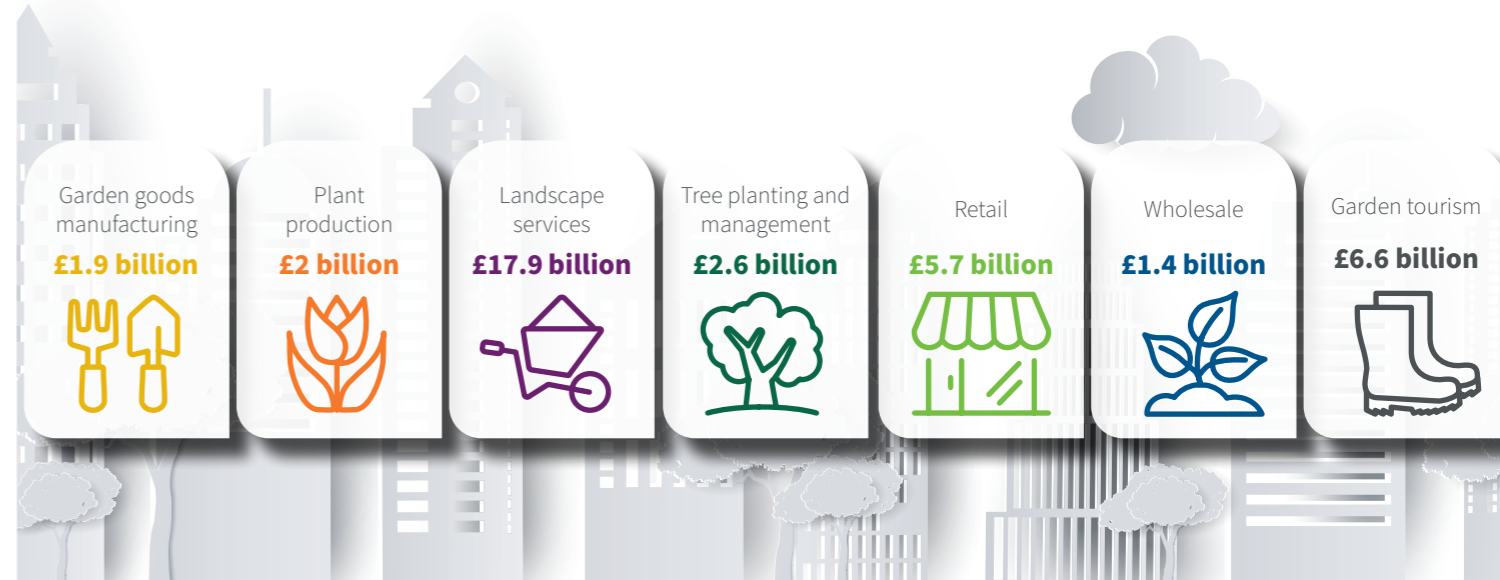
If we unlock the potential of UK environmental horticulture, the green growth potential is:



2023 GDP footprint (excluding tourism) by UK nation

# Economic Footprint

Subsectors within the industry support GDP contributions of:



# Employment

In 2023, the environmental horticulture industry supported the employment of **722,000 jobs in the UK**



Note: National employment figures do not include garden tourism

Each of the subsectors **directly** employed:

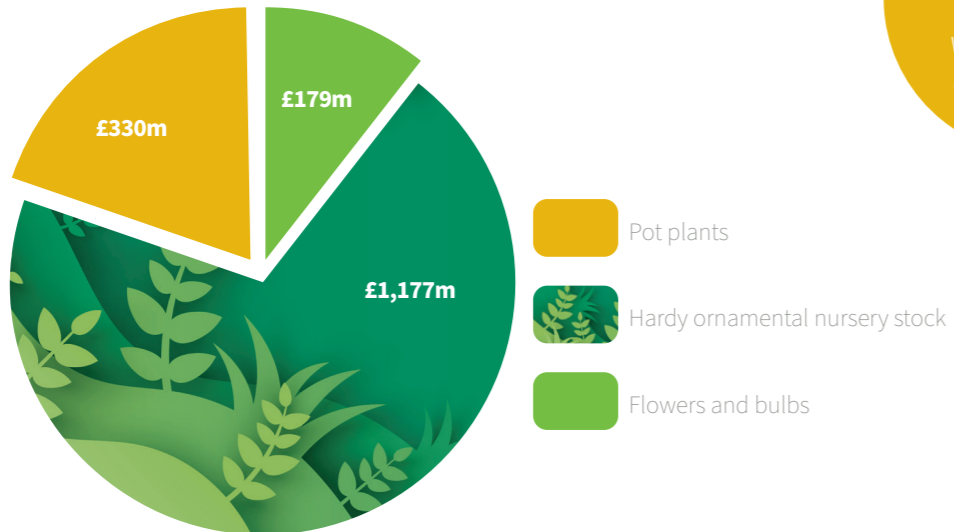


# International Trade

In 2023



# Market Size Plant Production



In 2023 environmental horticulture production was valued at **£1.7 billion**

# Market Size Garden Retail

Channel share by £ value by product category (2023)

	DIY	Garden centre	Supermarket	Internet	Mail order	Elsewhere
Outdoor plants	16%	56%	8%	11%	4%	5%
Houseplants	20%	37%	23%	9%	9%	10%
Seeds	13%	32%	13%	23%	12%	7%
Bulbs	14%	38%	12%	19%	11%	7%
Plant pots	20%	46%	6%	13%	3%	12%
Garden chemicals	31%	25%	13%	19%	2%	12%
Compost	26%	46%	12%	7%	1%	8%
Lawnmowers	25%	11%	3%	30%	2%	28%
Garden furniture	17%	15%	4%	39%	7%	18%
Barbeques	26%	13%	17%	31%	2%	12%
Tools	29%	18%	6%	32%	3%	13%

**RECEIPT**  
**UK Consumer Spend in 2023**

UK consumers spent approx. **£9 billion** on garden retail products in 2023

**£2 BILLION SPENT ON OUTDOOR PLANTS** with 58% of UK adults active in the market

**£700 MILLION SPENT ON HOUSEPLANTS** with 46% of UK adults active in the market

Garden centres hold the greatest share for plants and core gardening, whilst the internet leads the share for garden furniture, BBQs and tools.

## Garden Centres Visits

**203 million** estimated visits to garden centres in 2024

**68%** of UK adults said they visited a garden centre at least once in 2024

On average, each UK adult visited a garden centre **3.8 times** throughout 2024

UK adults that went to a garden centre visited on average **5.3 times** throughout the year



## Garden Centres Catering

**148 million** estimated visits to garden centre café/restaurants

On average, each UK adult visited a garden centre café/restaurant **2.8 times** throughout 2024

UK adults that visited a garden centre café/restaurant, on average visited **4.7 times** throughout 2024

**56%** of UK adults visited a garden centre café/restaurant in 2024

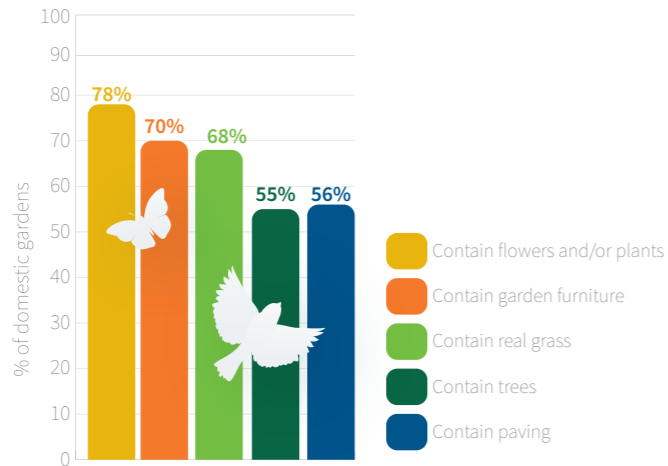


# The UK Garden



**14.7m<sup>2</sup>**

the **average size** of UK domestic gardens (front, back and sides)



Items contained in UK domestic gardens and outdoor spaces

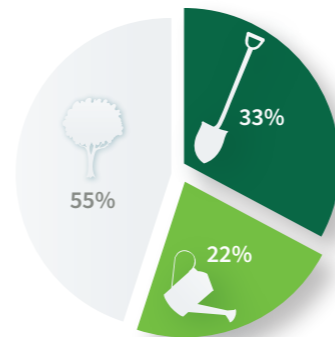


The combined size of the UK's domestic gardens is equivalent to around

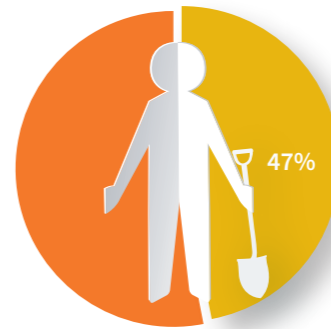
**1/5**

of the area of Wales

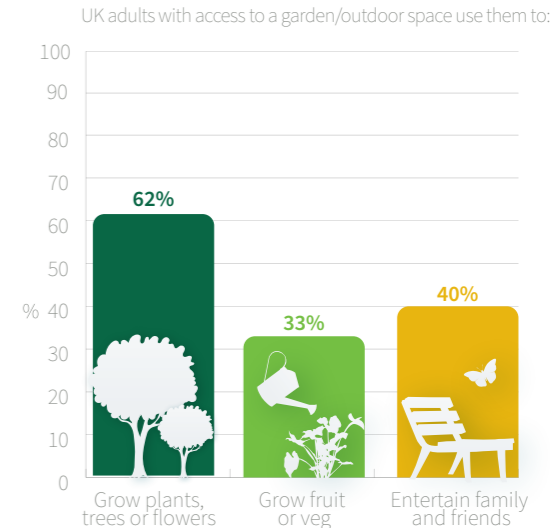
# UK Gardeners



55% of adults enjoy gardening as a hobby: 33% regularly, 22% occasionally



47% of over 55s are regular gardeners



UK adults with access to a garden/outdoor space use them to:



UK adults

Regular gardeners



- Exposure to plants has been shown to **boost happiness, productivity, concentration** and improve symptoms of dementia
- 85% of UK adults agree gardens and **public green spaces benefit their state of mind**; and 80% their physical health
- 78% of MPs believe the **environmental horticulture industry benefits the nation's health & wellbeing**
- Up to **200 calories** are burned by doing 30 minutes of gardening
- Roughly an estimated **50,000 life years** are prevented from being lost annually due to nature-provided air pollution removal services
- Natural greenery has been shown to **boost office productivity by 15%**

## Benefits of Green Spaces to the Environment

Environmental horticulture contributes  
**1.7% of the UK's total GDP,**  
**but only 0.63%**  
of the UK's total carbon emissions

Increasing inner-city tree coverage from  
11% to 30% was found to  
**lower temperatures**  
**by 0.4°C on average,**  
**and up to 5.9°C in some areas**

The air pollutant removal services  
provided by vegetation  
was valued at  
**£2.7 billion**  
in 2022

**29.5%**  
of the UK's urban  
areas are comprised  
of residential gardens

Urban heat regulation  
services provided by vegetation  
were valued at  
**£824 million**  
**in 2022**

## Benefits of Green Spaces to the Environment

## Seen to be Green?



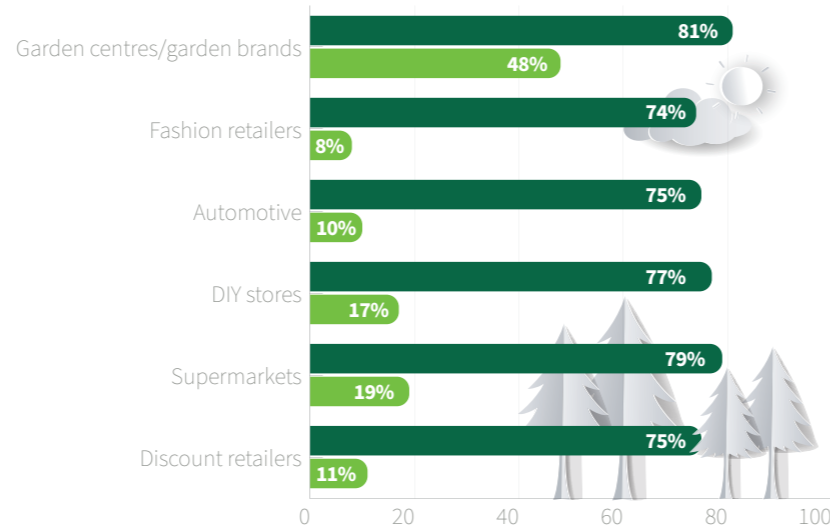
### % of UK adults

who think it's important for the following brands to be environmentally friendly



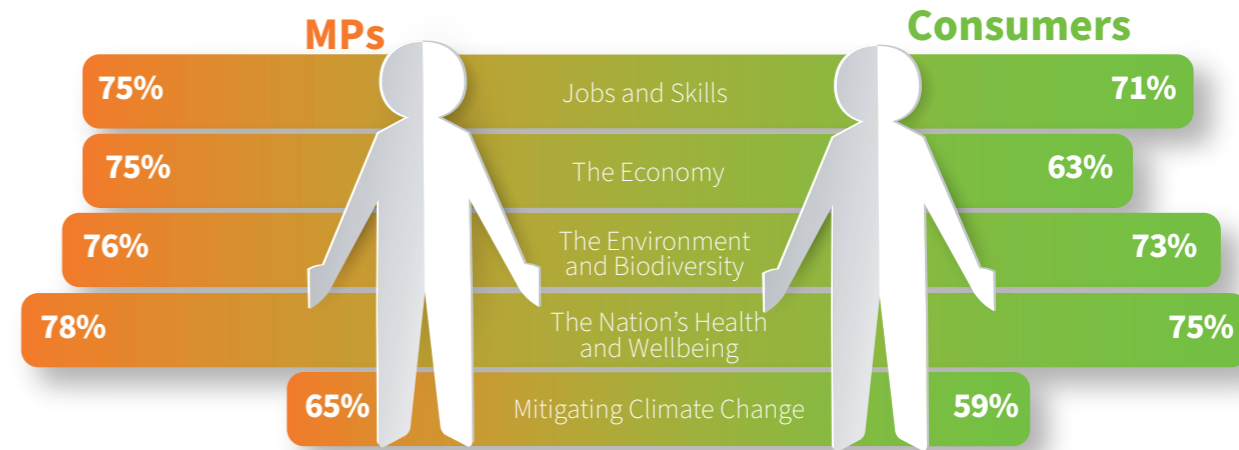
### % of UK adults

who think that the following brands are currently environmentally friendly



## Industry Recognition

MPs and consumers think environmental horticulture is beneficial to the UK in the following areas:



## Environmental Horticulture

Recommendations to unlock green growth for the economy, environment & communities

- 1** Government action on current UK border friction, oversight on all border and trade policies affecting UK horticulture, and delivery of UK-EU plant health agreement based on mutual recognition.
- 2** Growers need time and support to transition to successful peat-free growing without risking business closures or reduced UK flora production. A level playing field with European growers, who can still use peat, is essential for competitiveness.
- 3** Deliver a comprehensive environmental horticulture strategy supported across government and industry, focusing on growth and innovation by establishing an Office for Green Spaces.
- 4** Work with UK horticultural experts to deliver a world-class plant health regime to safeguard a thriving UK horticultural sector and the UK's natural landscape for future generations.
- 5** Pause and consult on the Autumn 2024 budget tax increases for businesses relating to National Insurance Contributions and the National Living Wage, which will cost HTA members £134m; and Agricultural and Business Property Relief.

## Environmental Horticulture

Recommendations to unlock green growth for the economy, environment & communities

- 6** A Horticulture Strategy should be developed with the government, collaborating with the industry and utilising HTA research and the House of Lords Horticulture Committee Report.
- 7** Review water use grants and funding to encourage SMEs to invest in reservoirs and rainwater capture technology for environmental and economic benefits.
- 8** Ensure gardening is included in the school curriculum and funding for further education land-based courses is provided to develop the next generation of skilled horticulture workers in the UK. There is currently a significant shortfall.
- 9** To ensure that garden density remains intact while constructing 1.5 million new homes, there needs to be a minimum of 29.5% garden density in all new developments. This is essential for preserving green spaces, especially in urban areas.
- 10** Utilise flora and gardens in health and wellbeing for patients and care providers to support recovery, including as a policy solution for social prescribing.

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**The Value of Plants Report** [hta.org.uk/value-of-plants](http://hta.org.uk/value-of-plants)

**Mission Green Growth Reports** [hta.org.uk/missiongreengrowth](http://hta.org.uk/missiongreengrowth)