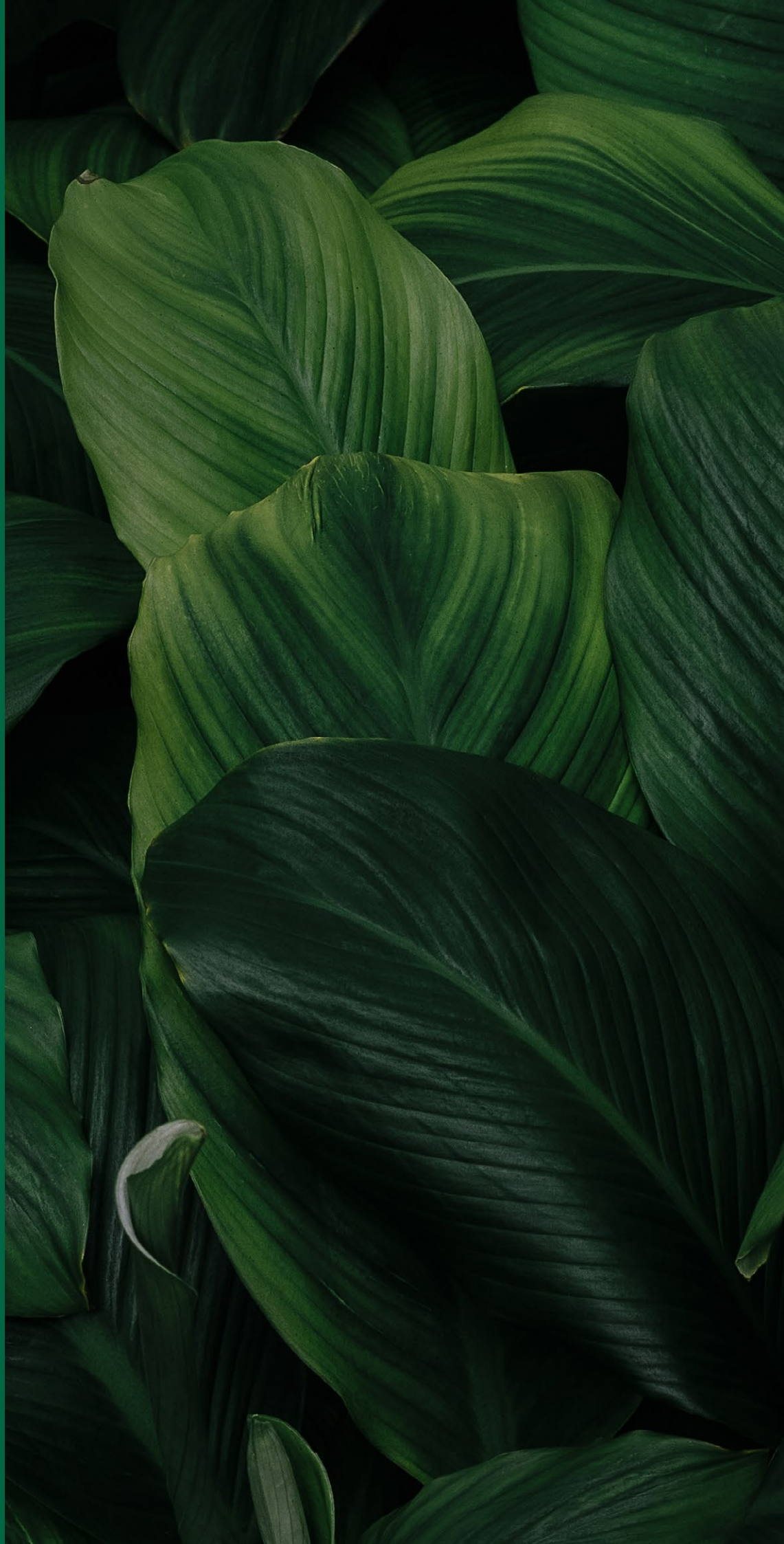




Annual Review 2025



President's Statement

As I approach the end of my first year as President, I would like to begin by thanking past President, Alan Down and the incredible board we have here at the HTA for their support for my smooth and seamless transition from Vice President to President, and of course, to the members who have been so welcoming and supportive.

It has been a whirlwind 12 months. With my first week as president, I was straight into the inaugural FutureGrow Expo, which showcased cutting-edge technology set to revolutionise productivity and sustainability in the horticultural industry. Followed shortly by a full schedule of HTA Council and board meetings, and parliamentary events. I have been privileged to have some incredible opportunities to visit inspiring businesses and people this year. There has been significant 'behind the scenes' progress too, from appointing talented new key personnel and some positive changes to the National Garden Gift Card scheme, which will be explained further throughout the annual review. Our association continues to grow from strength to strength.

One of the standout moments this year was at our flagship event, the National Plant Show, where we saw a record number of 137 qualifying entries into the New Plant Awards – a true reflection of the innovation, creativity and skill within our industry.

The HTA board continues to evolve, and I would like to say a huge thank you and goodbye to Adam Taylor, Matthew Bent and Brian Fraser, all of whom have dedicated their time and expertise well beyond their required terms. Their contribution has been invaluable, and as we embark on a formal recruitment process for new board members, it is encouraging to see a new pipeline of passionate ambassadors stepping forward.

I must also pay tribute and give thanks to our Chairman, James Barnes, who will be standing down at the 2025 AGM. Over the past six years, and particularly through the challenges of COVID, James has guided the board with dedication, wisdom and resilience.

Looking ahead, I would like to welcome Stan Owen, our new CFO, to the board as we continue to build a strong future for the HTA and our members.

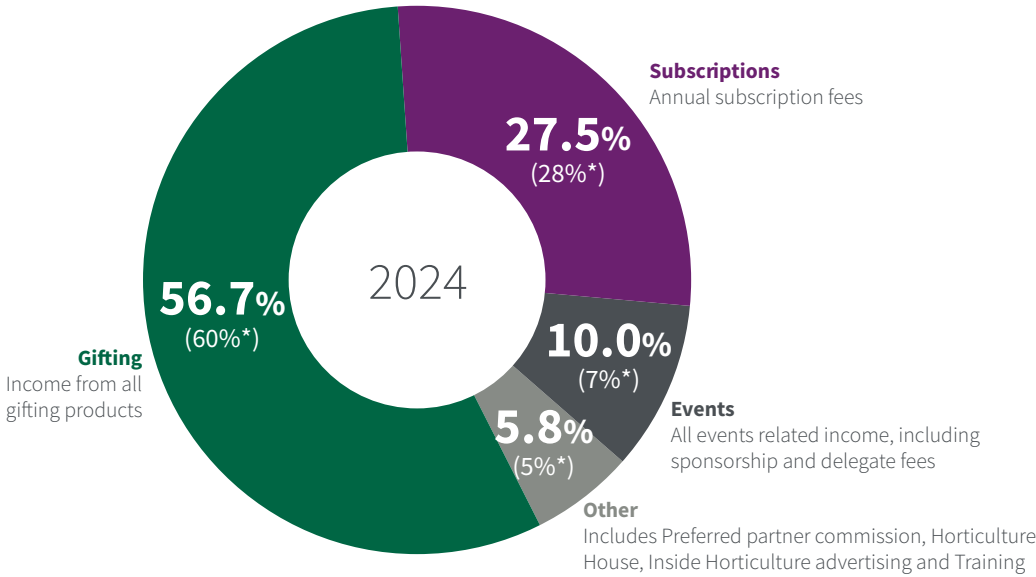
Will Armitage
HTA President



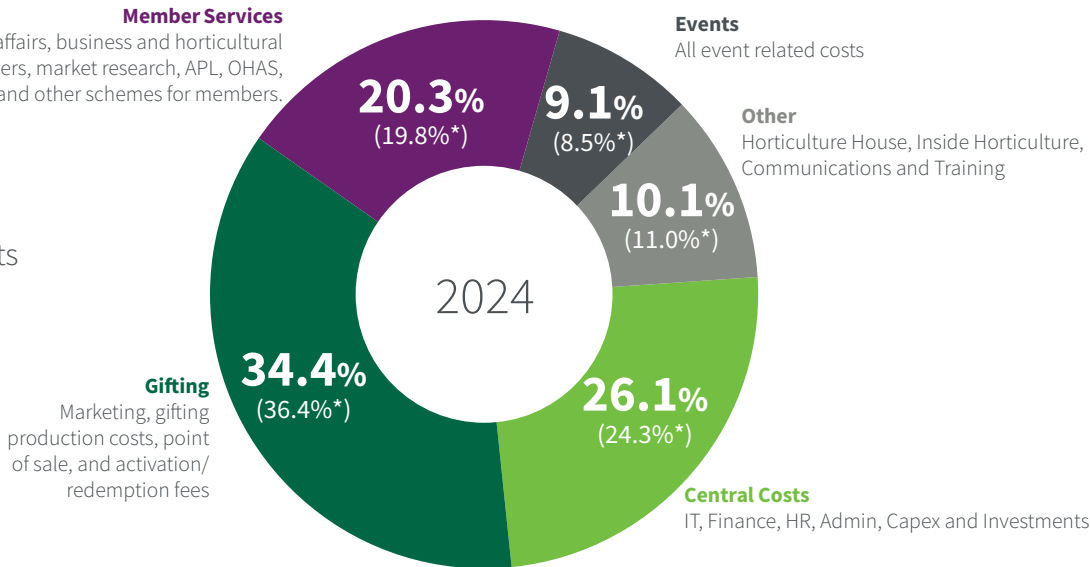
“ One of the standout moments this year was at our flagship event, the National Plant Show, where we saw a record number of 137 qualifying entries into the New Plant Awards.

Finance

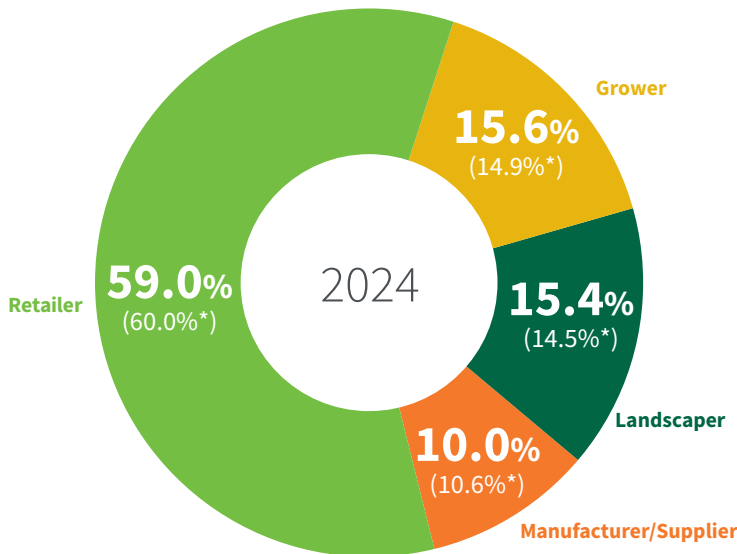
Average total income
2022-2024
£5.669m



Average total costs
2022-2024
£6.395m



Member
Subscription
Revenue breakdown
by sector in 2024



*These are 2023 percentages

Chairman's Statement

2024 should be recognised as a celebration of 125 years of your Association's existence. Of helping our members flourish. Our memories are sometimes short, particularly when we have basked in the warmest, driest spring since records began.

But looking back I'm not sure that 2024 will be remembered favourably by our membership from a trading perspective being one of the wettest on record with gardening sales negative in the year and a change of Government that brought about a very significant financial impact – in the short term through an increase in National Insurance charges and the long term Inheritance Tax increases.

Notwithstanding, and continuing a historical theme, your association has risen to these challenges and lent into supporting its membership. Over the past five years, we have played a role in rolling back the restrictions during Covid, saving the industry an estimated £276m and have been able to face into an unprecedented era of restrictive post-Brexit regulation and legislation with some successes. Our political engagement has never been more comprehensive, and importantly, our ability to be proactive rather than reactive never better. Our ability to collect and analyse data has improved immeasurably, and this has enabled far more insightful research and support for policy initiatives.

Over the period since 2019, we have built our net revenues from circa £4.0m to £5.7m, allowing an additional £1.7m to be spent on member support and services. Whilst underlying net assets have grown from £1.0m to over £2.2m. Our gifting proposition continues to grow and has a far greater understanding of its benefits amongst members.

“ Under the leadership of our CEO, we have a very strong senior leadership team bolstered by the recruitment of a new CFO in the first quarter of this year.



The content and feedback from the conference have demonstrated how far the confidence and strength of the association has shifted.

Under the leadership of our CEO, we have a very strong senior leadership team bolstered by the recruitment of a new CFO in the first quarter of this year. Changes to our membership services team have significantly improved our whole member engagement.

Financials

Our aim as a not-for-profit membership association is to maximise the benefits to all members, to match our income with our expenditure, and thus to breakeven or declare a small surplus each year at the operating profit level.

From a balance sheet perspective, the HTA Board takes a very conservative approach to matching our liabilities with our assets and to building our net assets in line with the growth of our business and to a level that gives us cover for a “rainy day”. In particular, we consider the potential detriment of a market value reduction in investment values at year end.

In 2024, your association's activities generated a loss before tax of £141k. This is the final year of our gift card

breakage share with our historic partner, and without this payment of £469k, our underlying result would be a positive one and one ahead of plan. Having built our net assets up to £3.4m in 2021, we have allowed ourselves to operate at a deficit in order to increase our service proposition to members while at the same time financing our breakage commitments. From 2025, we should be operating at breakeven.

I would like, as always, to explain the trading result in a little more detail. Our total revenues increased by £1.4m to £6.6m in the year. This is accounted for by gifting income increasing by £1.2m from £2.8m last year; by membership subscriptions increasing by £110k to £1.7m, and other income increased £90k to £949k. Other income includes a growing contribution from HTA Events offset by a reduction in Preferred Partner commissions.

Although gifting sales were on a par with the previous year, despite the weaker trading environment, gifting income was well ahead, mainly due to the termination of the breakage share agreement, reducing from £886k last year to £469k this year. It is the ongoing contribution received from gifting revenues, some 63% of income in 2024, that allows us to maintain and expand the range of activities that we carry out on behalf of our membership, and we have continued this into the current year.

Cost of sales at £938k is £43k higher than the prior year and relates mainly to the cost of running the gifting scheme, in particular, increased gift card activation fees as part of the migration away from paper vouchers. Other direct expenses include production costs and merchandising.

Administrative expenses, including depreciation, increased by 19% £1.0m to £6.5m. There were a number of key initiatives within this expansion, in particular related to headcount and the strengthening of the senior leadership team, and the flow through of new hires made in 2023. The full year impact of these costs at £527k is the key driver behind this year's increase. Alongside the corresponding operational cost associated with higher staff levels, other notable variances include a £48k contribution to the new HCP construct; increased event costs, in the main, the HTA conference and a higher contribution to maintaining our IT functionality.

This £6.5m expenditure is effectively our investment in services to members, and I hope that you will all continue to see the profile and status of your association grow and evolve. This has been particularly prevalent in the success in lobbying government around the key issues in particular, the introduction of border controls. There have

“ I know the HTA is well-positioned to act and react on your behalf on all the issues that get in the way of growing your businesses sustainably.

of course, been many other initiatives that we have been engaged in, and these will be reported on in more detail throughout this Annual Review.

The net impact of interest income, investment income and capital gains in the year was another positive at £664k. The change is due to recovery of investment portfolio values as marked to market at the year end and a continued rise in bond income due to the impact of higher interest rates impact. The association's investment strategy is conservative, with 75% of the portfolio invested in high grade bonds. This does not mean that volatility doesn't exist in any one year as history has shown, albeit as portfolio bond assets are held to maturity, historic losses and gains will not necessarily be realised and will naturally reverse over time.

Net assets for 2024 were forecast to decrease substantially, given our budgeted expenditure and the continued release of shared income to our historic gifting partner. I am pleased to report that net assets have remained relatively stable at £2.2m.

I know the HTA is well-positioned to act and react on your behalf on all the issues that get in the way of growing your businesses sustainably and I would like to thank all our staff for their dedication and the effort they have put into serving all our members.

On a personal note, this will be my last report as Chairman, as I will be retiring at our forthcoming AGM in September.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time representing our industry, and I would like to thank all of those who have helped and supported me over the past seven years. I do believe that your association is in a stronger, more influential and respected place.

James Barnes
HTA Chairman

CEO Statement

2024 saw the beginning of our 3-year strategy, Grow 2026. The strategy's first year saw a focus on setting KPIs and building foundations for growth on three main areas: Membership, Income and Share of Voice, whilst ensuring resilience in our people and infrastructure.

During 2024, we were able to set benchmarks for performance and set out new ways of working to deliver more for members. We reshaped our member-facing team to be geographically based and recruited an additional Member Engagement Manager and an additional team member to support growth in our Association of Professional Landscapers. Alongside this, we launched a programme of regional events which were free to all members, focusing on knowledge transfer, networking and policy discussions.

As James Barnes articulates in his chairman's report, 2024 was the final year of our breakage agreement with EML, where we forecast to make a planned loss. 2025 is budgeted to break even and to build resilience and consolidate the expansion in services and people we saw in 2024. Our finances were diversified by launching the sale of National Garden Gift Cards in supermarket malls – to reach new demographics of consumers and

increase footfall into our members' businesses and lock in consumer spend in our sector. We believe diversification into the malls will drive resilience in our gift card scheme, which underpins HTA finances along with member subscriptions. In 2025, this channel is outperforming expectations and, crucially, indicates the spend is incremental to existing channels.

2024 saw some internal systems change to an upgraded accounting system, and in early 2025, an upgrade of our CRM system. Both these changes were designed to build resilience and better performance. Work is continuing in both these areas to further develop our systems to provide better services to members.

The workstreams delivered in 2024 were essential to give us a strong foundation for 2025. A year I have described as building sustainability, resilience and growth in our delivery on behalf of our members:

The reshaping of our membership team in 2024 has led to significantly increased engagement with 40 regional events throughout the year and many more APL cluster meetings, all well-attended by members across all our categories. Our membership satisfaction score has been consistently increasing year on year. Whilst there has been consolidation in retail businesses, which has impacted our overall member numbers, I'm pleased that other categories are on target as more businesses are seeing the benefits of HTA membership.

We invested in our public affairs function, and 2024 saw the HTA grow in recognition and support in Westminster and devolved governments. We have rented out a small office in Westminster to ensure we have a base to operate out of – an office which has been used by staff and members alike in our increasing visible activity in Parliament. This growth in our representation and share of voice was instrumental in enabling us to deliver a massive win for our sector in 2025, with government indicating it will work towards an SPS agreement inclusive of plant health. We have lobbied on this as a priority, given the post-Brexit border changes have added huge cost and uncertainty to horticultural businesses. This influence in government is down to the foundations laid in 2024 and the relationships formed by staff and our engaged members who have hosted political visits. We have continued to lobby and meet with government and all political parties to try and find ways of mitigating the significant impact the changes to National Insurance, Inheritance Tax, and National Living Wage announcements will have on all our members. We have joined forces with other organisations all with the same concerns, and it has been an ongoing frustration that there appears to be intransigence from government on this issue – particularly when, in our sector, this is already impacting and reducing plans for growth and employment. We have made clear that this is not an agenda for growth. We are continuing with this lobbying as we are on a number of issues – from peat to water resilience. Our work with the Environmental Horticulture Group (EHG) continues, and this is another important way of ensuring the HTA's voice is heard politically.

Our public focus has been to make the case for green infrastructure – something that all our members will benefit from – whether it be gardens, public spaces or city centres. The benefits of plants and trees are increasingly important as we face more erratic weather. This 'ask' is already having some cut through politically, and we

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continue to urge government to set up an office for green spaces to work across government departments to ensure that all aspects of the UK factor in green infrastructure – either to create it or to capitalise on the benefits of it.

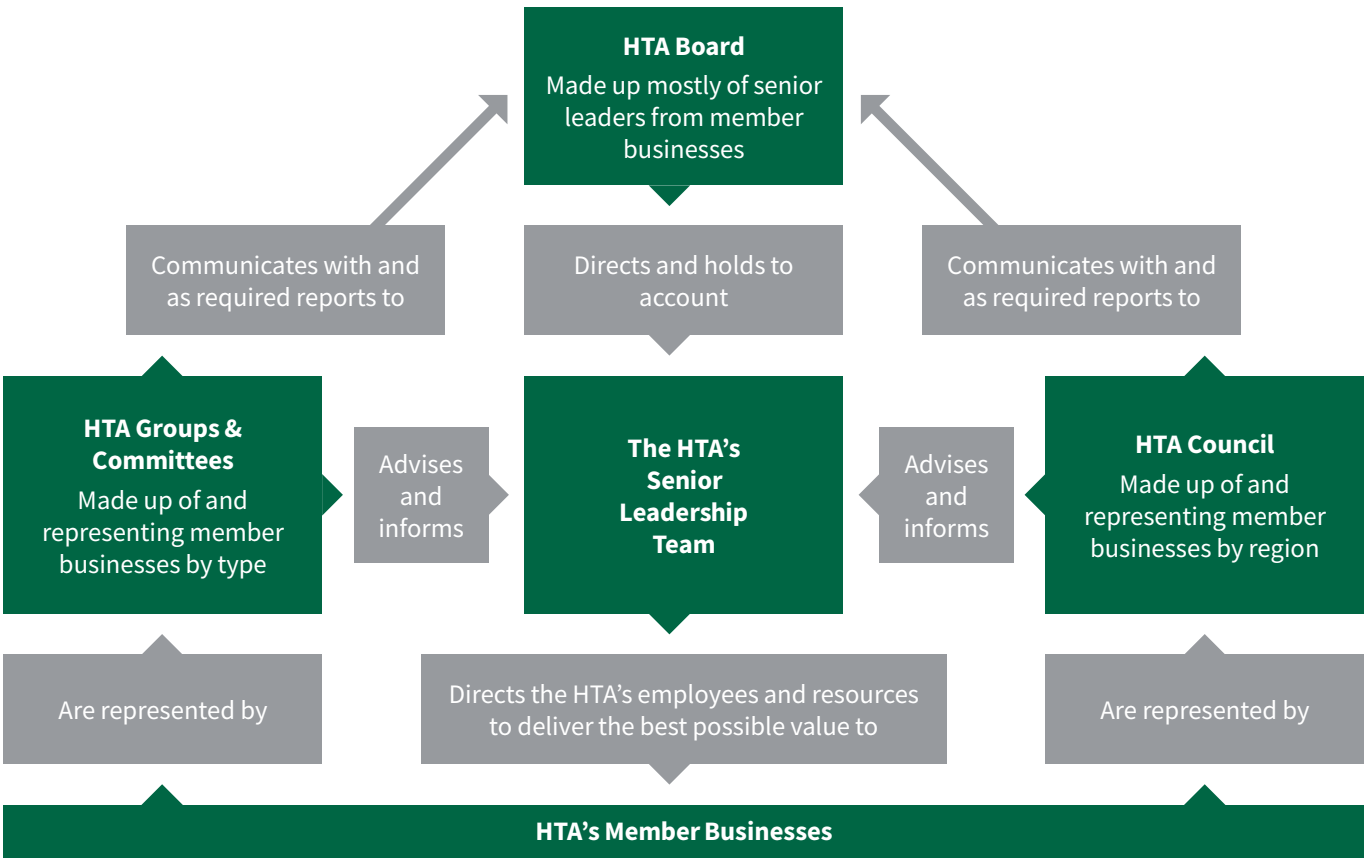
Our staff team have demonstrated expertise and innovation over 2024 and into 2025. Our events, including the HTA National Plant Show and Association of Professional Landscaper Awards, are growing year-on-year, and we continue to evolve and build on the research and insights we are offering to our members. To further support our staff team, we launched a new values framework: Member focused, Inclusive and Collaborative, Trust and Innovation (MITI) and I have been pleased to see those values come to life in all the work we do for our members. Member focus is core to our purpose, to support existing members and to work to create a regulatory and policy environment where all our members can flourish.

Fran Barnes
HTA CEO



Governance

As an association, we support and nurture our industry to ensure a robust and sustainable future. For over 125 years, we have represented and supported our members on issues impacting the sector. We give our members a platform to promote their business and develop relationships with suppliers and customers. This is embedded in the association’s governance and leadership, which is summarised below.



HTA Board

The HTA Board is made up of HTA members; it directs our affairs and acts as the guardian of our members’ interests. The Board holds the executive senior leadership team to account for delivering on the vision and mission of the HTA whilst providing strategic oversight to ensure the sound use of the association’s financial resources. The board comprises the President, Immediate Past President, the Vice President, and other non-executive directors from member horticultural businesses. The CEO, Finance Director and Chairman from the HTA’s executive team sit on the board and are statutory directors of the HTA.

Our Non-Executive directors are passionate about seeing the industry succeed. They have the same general legal responsibilities as any other director of a company, but work in a voluntary capacity. Appointments are made by the board following a review by the nominations committee. Appointments will be senior industry figures, usually working in businesses within the HTA membership. Our board includes directors from different sectors of membership, and has a good balance of skills, knowledge and experience from across the horticulture industry. Appointments are ratified at the HTA’s AGM. The HTA is fully committed to the elimination of unlawful and unfair discrimination and promotes this through its Equal Opportunities policy.

HTA Board Members:

	Will Armitage HTA President Business & Retail Consultant
	Alan Down HTA Immediate Past President Down to Earth
	James Barnes HTA Chairman
	Fran Barnes HTA Chief Executive Officer
	Stan Owen HTA Chief Financial Officer
	Adam Taylor HTA Non-Executive Director Taylors Bulbs
	Brian Fraser HTA Non-Executive Director Oakover Nurseries

	Geoff Caesar HTA Non-Executive Director Allensmore Nurseries
	Jane Lawler HTA Non-Executive Director Lawler Associates
	Matthew Bent HTA Non-Executive Director Bents Garden and Home
	Mike Burks HTA Non-Executive Director The Garden Group Ltd
	Neil Grant HTA Non-Executive Director Ferndale Garden Centre
	Vicky Nuttall HTA Non-Executive Director The Garden Industry Manufacturer’s Association (GIMA)
	Mark Pitman HTA Non-Executive Director Wildlife World

Member Committees

Cultivating Inclusion in Horticulture

The strength of horticulture lies in its diversity, whether you're a small family-run nursery, landscaper, amenity/retail supplier or work for a large commercial operation, your perspective is vital.

At the HTA, we have member-led committees which represent specific sectors of membership, ensuring the needs of our sectors are met by what the HTA does. Committee members volunteer to attend two to three meetings a year, either virtually or in person. Our meetings provide an ideal opportunity to network with other businesses and share insights into the ground-level issues affecting all areas of horticulture, whilst contributing to new HTA projects and initiatives, as well as the HTA's overall strategy.

The HTA's strength as a trade association comes from the passion, expertise, and collaboration of our members.

We are committed to fostering an inclusive community where every voice is valued and heard.

The committees representing different sectors of membership are:

- Association of Professional Landscapers
- Amenity Suppliers Committee
- Retail Suppliers Committee
- Ornamentals Management Committee
- Tree and Hedging committee
- Retailer committee
- Council (representing HTA's regions)

We also convene member committees and working groups to help guide our work in key areas, such as development of the OHAS scheme, cross-border trade, and technical aspects of plant production.

“ Although new to the horticultural sector, I was impressed by the passion and energy of my industry colleagues and wanted to get involved in strategic steering of important topics. I quickly gained an appreciation of the guidance and support the OMC offered, as well as their real-life examples of how specific interventions or mechanisms could support their interests as well as those of the wider membership base. It has helped build my industry knowledge, enabled me to benefit from the deep experience of my committee colleagues, as well as providing excellent networking and best practice sharing opportunities. Being part of the OMC has been a worthwhile investment of my time and enabled me to offer a contribution to this fantastic industry.

Melanie Asker, Greenwood plants – Ornamental Management Committee member



“ Being part of the HTA's OMC and ASG is a real privilege. It's a chance to meet with like-minded growers and suppliers, to share practical experiences from the nursery, and to help shape how our industry responds to current challenges. From borders and trade to plant health, biosecurity, labour, and sustainability, the conversations are rooted in the day-to-day realities of horticulture. It's rewarding to be part of those discussions – and to play even a small role in forming the HTA's position on key issues and contributing to the voice that represents us to policymakers and government. In recent years, the HTA has made great strides in government engagement, and we're starting to see the results of that hard work. The government listens to the HTA, and DEFRA now regularly seeks its opinion. Committee meetings are grounded in shared experience and focused on securing a brighter, healthier future for UK horticulture.

Guy Massey Rochfords – Ornamental Management Committee and Amenity Suppliers Group member



“ As the former Garden Centre Association Chairman, I have joined the recently formed HTA retail committee to represent the GCA. I think it is really positive that this committee has been set up and it is good way to highlight the challenges that retailers face, come up with solutions to address them and ensure we work together across the industry. As the Managing Director of The Millbrook Garden Company in Kent I have found it extremely useful to understand more about the inner workings of the HTA and the valuable work they are doing on our behalf to highlight the importance of horticulture to the wider economy.

Tammy Woodhouse, The Millbrook Garden Company – Retail Committee member



“ My tenure as chairman of the APL has provided me with a unique platform to connect, work alongside and learn from passionate individuals who share a commitment to excellence. Being granted the opportunity to advocate for our profession has enabled me to contribute toward influencing policies that benefit not only our members but also the environment and the consumer.

Dave Strows, Artform Landscapes – Chair of the APL Committee



Member Satisfaction

The voice of the member is at the heart of what we do

The surveys and member consultations we conduct are vital to keeping HTA informed about the issues that matter and ensuring we can effectively represent you as members.

We run a weekly member satisfaction survey, providing all member contacts with an opportunity every ten weeks to raise a specific issue or let us know what we're doing well. We ask for a simple score out of ten and a supporting comment, which is shared with HTA staff every week to ensure the voice of the member is at the forefront of our decision-making. Our management team and Council also review the key themes and patterns on a regular basis throughout the year.

We've focused over the last year on strengthening connections with all of our Committees (including HTA Council), ensuring these forums are optimised to represent the voice of the member and guide HTA activities.

The more comprehensive survey we ran in collaboration with Family Business UK and CBI Economics on the impacts of the changes to inheritance tax from the Autumn Budget, along with our quarterly Business Barometer poll, enabled our Media team to generate significant national coverage on the impacts and challenges for our sector. Meanwhile, our peat usage consultations have guided the development of our technical support for members and armed us with data to evidence the great work our sector is doing to improve sustainability and resilience.

To everyone who's taken the time to give feedback or input on a specific issue or research survey, thank you – it really does make a difference in improving and shaping what we can deliver for your benefit.



The Association of Professional Landscapers

In 2025, the APL proudly marks its 30th anniversary, celebrating three decades of commitment to exceptional standards in landscaping. The APL is the only landscaping scheme operator of TrustMark, a government-endorsed initiative that promotes professional trades to consumers.

A thriving community stands at the heart of the association, bringing members together for mutual support. Regional cluster meetings have been held throughout the year to connect like-minded individuals to share experiences and advice.

“ Being a member of the APL has been a game-changer for my business. I have constant support and access to advanced technical help, contract guidance and support, design advice and business development direction – all of which have been key to the growth of me as a Designer and the scale of my business.

Adam Vetere Landscape & Garden Design



Phil Tremayne
APL General Manager



Simon Abbott
APL Regional Manager



National Garden Gift Card

Gifting Performance

National Garden Gift Card sales in 2024 achieved £38m and exceeded the prior year's record high by £300k or 0.8% marking another solid performance. 2024 was the first year where no paper vouchers were distributed or sold into the market, with £4.4m of sales in 2023 migrating to gift cards or eGift cards in 2024. The programme is now 100% operated on an electronic gift card payment processing platform, with 87% being supplied as physical cards and 13% being supplied as eGift cards.



The migration away from paper vouchers mainly impacted the retail member channel, where historically the paper voucher proposition was strongest, and it was satisfying to see the expected migration to card-based solutions come to fruition. From a sales channel perspective, the member retailer and direct-to-consumer online channels experienced sales volatility throughout the year, impacted by adverse wet weather conditions in the first half of the year, market consolidation, and weakened member and consumer confidence into the second half, resulting in a -1% outturn to 2023. Sales in our business-to-business (B2B) channel continued to perform strongly, achieving growth of +24% by 2024. October 2024 also saw the launch of gift card sales into the supermarket gift card mall channel with Tesco, Morrisons and Waitrose delivering £191k of new incremental sales by Christmas Day.

The proposition and channel mix of the gifting programme continues to change in line with the UK gift card market, with 21% of sales now being contributed by non-garden centre origin, particularly the fastest growing market segment of B2B.



Strategy and Outlook

When the future of gifting is considered, the value and contribution of the programme to our retail membership remains front and centre of decision-making and planning. 2024 has been another strong year, both in terms of activations and redemptions of card values, and the acquisition of new consumers into the horticulture sector. The core aims of the programme will remain the locking in of gift card values and consumers to the sector, and to achieve this, we will need to continue to extend our proposition and functionality across our existing sales channels and into new channels when these are identified.

We will continue to focus and develop new initiatives to ensure that the programme delivers for members and meets the expectations of consumers in a digital age. We will continue to align our functionality with the best gift card schemes operating in the UK market.

Over the past two years, we have transformed the programme from operating three different platforms: paper vouchers, legacy cards, and current cards. Now that we operate on one single card platform, fulfilled either in physical card form or digital e-gift card, we are well placed to extend the proposition to new sales channels, customer groups and markets.

We would envision that the share of programme sales being from non-retail members growing to 30% over the coming two years, with digital e-gift card share accounting for over 20% of the value of circulation. The main drivers of these changes will be the continued growth of our proposition in the B2B market, where digital gifting is the preferred solution, and as we extend our presence and execution in the supermarket mall space, where we currently only have 50% market penetration.

The retail segment of HTA membership has and will continue to experience increased structural change. The consolidation of the sector by a smaller number of large retail operators offers the HTA both a challenge in terms of competing national coverage and an opportunity as more nationally recognised brands are included in the programme. By having over 1,000 participating retail outlets, National Garden Gift Card can continue to be the national choice for horticultural gifting across the broadest demographic and propositional offering in the market.

Key projects for 2025 and 2026 will be the simplification and refinement of the programme's back office financial management and reconciliation processes, the communication of the programme's positive financial contribution to our retail membership, and the continued build and reinforcement of the National Garden Gift Card brand and proposition execution to consumers.

Member Engagement

Member Engagement Team

Our Member Engagement team are here to support our members and help them to get the most amount of value from their HTA membership. The changes made last year to bring membership together on a regional basis rather than business type have been incredibly positive and have provided the ability to focus communication, activity and interaction on bringing regions together rather than talking to segments individually. This has seen improvements in understanding regional needs and variances as well as better execution across WhatsApp, regional newsletters and Council representation.

Contact details for your region's member engagement manager can be found on the HTA website.



Tim Bell
Head of Member Engagement



Jo Gildea
*Member Engagement Manager,
South West England*



Neil Cummings
*Member Engagement Manager,
Scotland, Wales, Northern
Ireland, and Northern Ireland*



Jeremy Costello
*Member Engagement Manager,
South East*



Martin Simmons
*Member Engagement Manager,
Central England and Yorkshire*



Regional Events

The key focus for our member engagement team this year has been to deliver our fresh, new regional events programme, which gives members the opportunity to meet the HTA team and understand all the ways in which we can support our members, alongside being able to network and gain support from each other.

In 2024, we welcomed 400 delegates from across 160 member businesses to at least one of our 13 events. This has far exceeded our expectations, so we have upscaled to deliver 40 events in 2025. The topics covered have been varied, ranging from catering, sustainability, retail crime and the cost of doing business. Our fantastic members have been incredible hosts showcasing their businesses, delivering insightful tours and providing refreshments which are out of this world. The support from members in both hosting and attending these events has been amazing to see, together we are creating something really unique which harnesses a community of support and a network of opportunity.

In 2024...

we welcomed
400
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Events



HORTICULTURE THE CONFERENCE

Horticulture, The Conference was held at the ICC in Birmingham on 25 September 2024, focusing on Business Resilience, Consumer Behaviours, Workforce Planning, Technology and Healthy Plants for the Future – Keeping our industry Pest & Disease Resilient. The event featured a top lineup of speakers, including AI expert Dr Daniel Hulme, who shared his vision of how AI will transform business and the workplace. Meteorologist and former BBC weather forecaster Peter Gibbs shared his insights at the annual dinner following the conference.

The 2025 conference will take place on Thursday 25 September at the Barbican, London.



The awards were announced at Horticulture, The Conference, celebrating excellence in UK nursery production, showcasing the highest standards in quality, service, innovation, and sustainability practices. Among the top winners were Majestic Trees, which took home the Blooming Marvellous Employer and Life Beyond Peat awards; David Austin Roses and Double H Nurseries jointly won the Plant Producer award, while Provender Nurseries won the Inspirational Business award.

Notable individuals were also recognised, including Henil Vashi from Robin Tacchi Plants Ltd, who won Young Grower Under 35, and Richard Pavey from Majestic Trees, who received the Best Staff Member award.



Landscapes by Design received Supreme Winner at the 2025 awards, which took place on Friday 14 March at the Brewery in London. The event, hosted by APL General Manager Phil Tremayne alongside garden designer Peter Donegan, with special guest speaker Pip Probert, recognises and celebrates the outstanding landscaping carried out by members of the APL. Landscapes by Design took home the Supreme Award for their outstanding entry 'Apollo'. This exquisite luxury entertainment garden was meticulously crafted to deliver an unforgettable experience, seamlessly blending sophistication and comfort.

The 2026 event takes place on Friday 13 March at The Brewery.

56
member companies
entered

115
projects
across

20
categories



The Association of
**Professional
Landscapers**
AWARDS 2025

We welcomed over 350 members of the garden press and media to The Garden Press Event in February. Organised jointly with GIMA, the event featured 100 exhibiting companies at the Business Design Centre in London.



The coveted Best New Product Award, which saw 44 companies enter 72 products, was won by The Dipping Tank Company for the second consecutive year, this time for its innovative new accessories designed to enhance the storage of harvested rainwater.

The Best Stand Display Award was presented to HSK Gardening and Leisure, marking an exciting milestone for the company's first appearance at the event. The 2026 event will take place at the BDC on Tuesday 17 February.

“It's amazing to receive this award, and to win it two years in a row is incredible! Last year, we were recognised for the core idea of our product, which offers a new way to store harvested rainwater. This year, we've been honoured again for the innovative accessories that make it even better. My heartfelt thanks to everyone who voted.

**Andrew Cousins from
The Dipping Tank Company**



FutureGrow Expo welcomed 26 exhibitors to the event held in October 2024, at Stoneleigh Park. 165 delegates came along to experience cutting-edge technology demonstrations, set to revolutionise productivity and sustainability in the horticultural industry. With an impressive lineup of exhibitors, they displayed the latest advancements in technology, including a smart tree inventory labeler, tree grading machines, automated tree planting systems, non-chemical weed control technology, camera guiding weeding machine and much more.



The 14th National Plant Show, saw 157 companies taking 260 stands at the biggest event yet, providing those businesses with an opportunity to showcase everything from seeds, bulbs, house plants and a wide range of garden plants to labelling and product information, growing media, display benching and machinery to over 1,100 visitors over two days in June.



Frank P Matthews took the double win for the HTA New Plants Awards and was awarded the Visitor Vote. The tree specialists also took home Best in Category – Trees, and Best in Show, for their tree Prunus Sumaura Fugenzo Japanese Lantern.

“The 2025 HTA New Plant Awards were nothing short of extraordinary, with a record-breaking number of entries pre-judging – around 150 – making it our biggest year yet. What made it even more special was the incredible diversity across all categories, from houseplants and bedding to trees, shrubs, climbers and more. The quality was outstanding throughout – a real testament to the innovation and skill of UK growers.

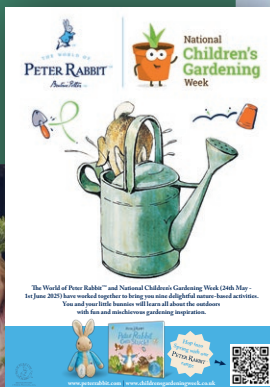
Pippa Greenwood HTA Horticulture Manager



Engagement

Engaging the next generation of gardeners

We supported National Children's Gardening Week for the third year through our partnership with The World of Peter Rabbit. We also collaborated with Lee Connelly – 'the UK's leading children's gardening educator' – on his 2025 UK School Gardening Tour, sponsored by National Garden Gift Card. Reaching selected schools nationwide, the tour aimed to inspire 10,000 young gardeners and highlight the role of gardening in education and child development.



Ambassador outreach

We have partnered with Michael Perry (Mr Plant Geek), who is helping showcase the full value of HTA membership, going on his own journey of discovery. As an ambassador, he's supporting outreach to potential new members while deepening engagement with current members.



Social and content creation

We've realigned our marketing team to place greater emphasis on digital engagement, with a dedicated focus on social media and content creation to better connect with members and amplify our voice across platforms.



Industry collaboration

We're working with the Retail Committee to create a gardening promotional calendar, helping the industry align on key messages throughout the year.

Media & Influence

The Voice of Environmental Horticulture

In 2025, we strengthened our role as the trusted voice for UK environmental horticulture across national, regional and trade media. Our proactive strategy secured 2,150+ pieces of coverage and 180+ direct media enquiries, including 30 national stories placed, 26 direct engagements with national journalists, and 113 member and stakeholder media interactions.

We led media attention on post-Brexit border issues – highlighting cost, delay, and biosecurity risks – with coverage in The Guardian, Financial Times, BBC Radio 4, RTÉ News, The Independent, and more. These efforts contributed to securing an extension on the plant passport easement and maintaining pressure for a UK-EU SPS agreement. Our team responded to key policy developments – from private member bills on green spaces and the peat debate, through to the Autumn budget announcements impacting our members – amplifying the sector's voice in politics and press.

Major campaigns like our work surrounding the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, National Children's Gardening Week and the National Plant Show and the New Plant Awards which were featured in The Sun, continued to grow public reach and recognition. As did our work with Middlechild Productions to get the new YouTube channel 'Gardening with Alan Titchmarsh' off to a flying start with HTA member involvement as well as special preview video at the Garden Press Event. As a result, the HTA is now widely regarded as a credible, go-to source on the issues that matter to our sector.



“A powerhouse of plant-lovers at the heart of the industry.”

Camilla Basset-Smith

The Daily Telegraph

Gardeners to pay more for flowers after Budget tax raid

GARDENERS are being forced to pay more for roses, plants and other garden centres or risk losing their jobs, it has been claimed. The Telegraph reports that the Budget has led to a 10% increase in the VAT on garden centres, which will mean that gardeners will have to pay more for their plants and flowers. The article also mentions that the HTA is now widely regarded as a credible, go-to source on the issues that matter to our sector.



Media Impact at a Glance

2,150+
media mentions

180+
media requests handled

30
national stories placed

26
national journalist
engagements

113
member/stakeholder
media interactions

3
media training sessions
delivered to members
and staff

Member Value



Research and Insights

Over the last year, we've continued to develop our business benchmarking offer for members – moving our BIS & RDF schemes over to a new platform and for the first time launching sales benchmarking for Growers. Starting initially with our Grower Groups & Committees, the new system will soon be home to Wages & Labour, Financial and Grower Inputs benchmarking studies, significantly streamlining the experience for members with all benchmarking accessible in a single place within the HTA website login infrastructure.



We continued to expand the analysis performed on the garden centre sales data within our Garden Retail Monitor (GRM) system, including understanding the sales growth opportunities from link selling as part of the Plant Retail Success initiative. Together with insights on how consumers shop the plant area, these resources provide tips for improving sales effectiveness that the whole supply chain can benefit from.



We launched a library of mini-Market Insights reports covering the latest HTA research on market size, as well as consumers and their gardens. We intend to keep these regularly refreshed as new data becomes available.

At our conference, we launched the sequel to Value of Plants – the Value of Gardens, featuring new analysis on our annual consumer survey data illustrating the relationship between garden size and spend. We intend to use this with policymakers to ensure gardens and green spaces are prioritised in new housing developments and urban areas.

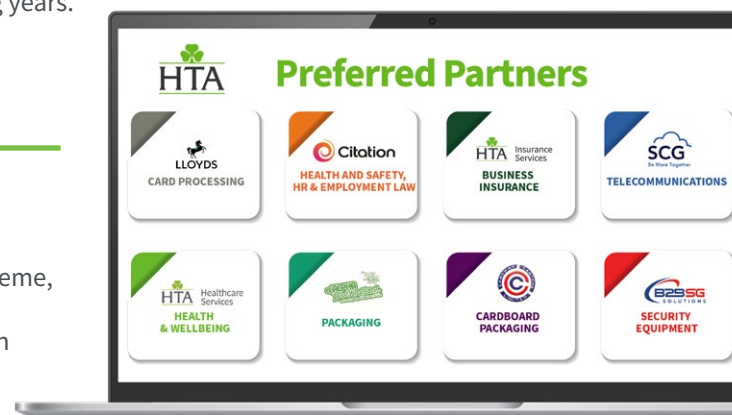


We are accelerating our role in R&D for the sector by building relationships between researchers, universities, technology providers and our members. We have spent 2025 working with these organisations to identify research projects which could be funded by ADOPT grants from the government, and the planned release of around £500k of funds held by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board for the ornamentals sector. These funds present a major opportunity to fund research that will help our growers make a step change in productivity, competitiveness, and sustainability in the coming years.

Preferred Partners

It's been another successful year for the Preferred Partnership Scheme, which continues to help members reduce their business operating costs during these challenging times. The scheme offers benefits in various areas, including packaging, security equipment, health, safety, HR and employment law, health and wellbeing, insurance, card processing, and telecommunications.

We continue to review current partners and check their offers against the market to ensure members can access the best deals. The HTA will receive a commission fee based on a successful referral. The amount of the commission will depend on the type of order placed. Full details will be provided by the Preferred Partner before entering into the transaction.



Learning and Development

Our e-learning platform, The Hub, has continued to provide cost-effective learning opportunities for our members. We now offer over 75 e-learning courses on horticulture, compliance, retail, catering and soft skills, all offered on an annual subscription basis.

Our flagship courses 'Basic Principles of Ornamental Nursery Management' and 'Using Garden Plant Protection Products Safely' continue to attract a high number of users. We have also worked in partnership with DEFRA and the Plant Health Alliance to update Module 1 of the 'Introduction to Plant Health' programme.

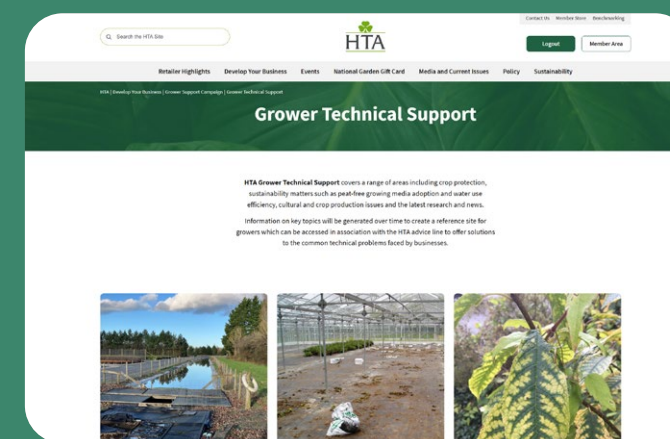
New courses added to the Hub this year include 'Understanding UK Waste Legislation' and our new 'Cyber Awareness and Resilience' programme featuring ten modules including: Handling Data, Responding to a Cyber Attack and Phishing.

We have also launched Discover, a brand-new area on the Hub designed to support members' managers and supervisors. Whether someone is new to managing or wants to grow their leadership skills, Discover brings together some of the best resources available – all in one easy-to-access space. Resources include a mix of short videos, TED Talks, podcasts, articles and self-assessments, making it easy to learn in a way that suits different roles and learning preferences.



Current topics in the Discover section include:

- Leadership vs Management
- First-Time Manager
- Coaching Skills
- Emotional Intelligence



Grower Technical Support

As with previous years, the provision of a programme of technical workshops and masterclasses around the country from spring to autumn, along with the nursery advice line facilitated by Zest-Sustainable ICM, forms the mainstay of technical support for grower members. Supporting this is an ever-increasing number of in-house created technical webpages summarising previous events but also focusing on key cultural topics such as pest, disease, and weed identification, crop protection, growing media selection (including information regarding the transition to peat-free growing media), water use, crop nutrition, and nursery hygiene. HTA support



for Horticulture Crop Protection Ltd (HCP) has been instrumental in ensuring the ornamentals sector has access to as wide a range of plant protection products as possible. This support has been both financial and technical in nature, with important input coming from the HTA Ornamentals Technical Committee and in the formation of the HCP Ornamentals Sub-Group, to manage crop protection matters on behalf of the whole sector. The HTA are also closely involved with the RHS Peat-Free Fellowship, assisting with vital information dissemination to industry on matters concerning the transition to peat-free growing media.

Leadership and Influence

New Government, New Challenges

Launching the HTA's manifesto at the start of 2024, put horticulture ahead of the game for the General Election. Working with members, a full programme of engagement was implemented across the UK to educate and engage on environmental horticulture. With MPs visits to HTA members now nearly weekly, and our biggest ever 'Plants in Parliament' event, the importance of what HTA members do is now getting well understood by policy-makers and politicians in Westminster and beyond. The HTA team maximised key opportunities – with HTA events, the Chelsea Flower Show and new partnerships, meaning the HTA team is frequently speaking at parliamentary events, committees and meetings.

The significant impact of the triple-whammy of costs that the Autumn Budget of 2024 delivered to businesses across the sector saw the HTA team immediately launch a new campaign. Building on its strong work to reach outside of DEFRA, the team secured an early meeting with Treasury Ministers on Inheritance Tax and employment costs. This work continues, and the HTA is a firm, robust and evidence-based voice calling for change on what is impacting members most.

In 2024...

615

Political engagements,
61 with ministers

286

Parliamentary
mentions

13

Policy
Wins

59

Publications



Inheritance Tax changes a 'lose-lose' – costing UK 1,300 sector jobs, slashing investment, and draining treasury tax revenues



Proposed reforms impacting the environmental horticulture sector are expected to shrink the UK economy by £143 million.

What You're Saying News Sport Business Money Opinion Ukraine Travel Health Lifestyle Culture

Gardeners pay more for flowers after Reeves's tax raid

Gardeners say National Insurance increases are forcing them to cut staff hours and push up prices

22

Borders & Trade

The HTA team has led the charge in the UK and is working with international partners to get the impacts of border barriers on the sector understood. In May 2025, this culminated in a shift in policy, with the HTA securing plants and plant products at the heart of the new UK-EU reset. With a new SPS agreement on the horizon, the HTA team are running a comprehensive programme of direct and daily member support, external engagement in the UK and EU, and formal submissions and evidence.

The 10 workstreams respond to what we hear are the key to supporting our members:

1. Future SPS agreement
2. Current BTOM and border
3. GB-Northern Ireland Trade and the Windsor Framework
4. CITES
5. Plant Passports
6. Plant Health Fees
7. Trade & Exports Strategy
8. International engagement
9. The HTA's new Trade Advisory Group
10. Associated regulatory issues such as PBR, INNS



Grower Jonathan Whittemore, Johnsons Nurseries and chair of the HTA's Ornamental Management Committee (OMC) commented:

“Many growers will welcome the prospect of the removal of friction and burdens associated with cross-border plant trade becoming a reality. Johnsons alone has been hit by the financial and time demands of border checks and certification, which have not boosted our top priority of biosecurity but increased risk, uncertainty and disruption. We are looking forward to the details of what any new SPS arrangement in our sector will mean. We are grateful for the ongoing work of the HTA, which has been the leading voice for horticulture in lobbying for this change.

Retailer Neil Grant, Ferndale Garden Centre and chair of the HTA's Retailer Committee commented:

“Garden centres and their customers have seen prices rise and choice reduced as a direct result of the trade barriers we now have with European suppliers. We know of many retailers who report that inspection delays have led to damaged, unsalable stock, as well as staffing issues around ever-shifting delivery times, all of which add costs to garden centres across the UK. Lifting trade barriers should boost our range of plants and products and how quickly we can get them. We are very positive on the HTA's ongoing advice, guidance and advocacy on EU-UK trade. We are looking forward to seeing the outcome of this hard work benefit UK garden retailers and their customers.

Landscaper Dave Strows, Artform Landscapes and chair of the Association of Professional Landscapers Committee, commented:

“Landscapers and designers who deliver gardens and green spaces have experienced delays, damaged goods, and increased costs as a result of trade barriers for the plants and materials they need. Any step that reduces the risks and costs cannot come soon enough, and means we can deliver even better gardens for our clients. Many APL members have been sharing their experiences and challenges with the HTA, who have lobbied hard for an SPS agreement; this is a huge achievement for the HTA and APL.

Leadership and Influence

Mission Green Growth and Green Spaces

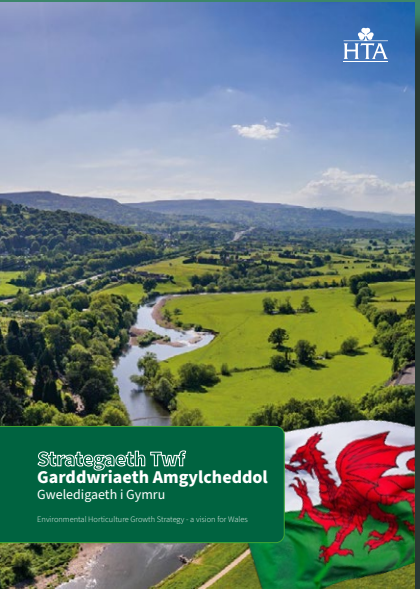
The value of gardens, green spaces and green infrastructure is well-known to us in the sector but getting those in power to understand more is a top priority. With green growth and green spaces core to the government’s mission-led approach, the HTA has seen its asks, manifesto and voice land well in the corridors of power. The HTA ask for an ‘Office for Green Spaces’ manifested itself in a Green Spaces Bill being tabled by Caroline Voaden MP. Whilst the bill might not pass due to timing, it has given a new platform for the discussion in Parliament around why horticulture matters.

Playing a leading role in the Environmental Horticulture Group (EHG), the HTA led on the delivery of two EHG and Oxford Economics reveal that the environmental horticulture industry has the potential to support GDP contributions worth **£51.2 billion** and create **763,000 jobs** across the UK economy by 2030, representing a **45% growth** opportunity with adequate government support. Oxford Economics’ research found that the sector—including UK gardens, landscaping, and arboriculture—contributed £38 billion to GDP and supported 722,000 jobs in the past year.



Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland

Our presence and engagement in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland has grown in impact over the last 12 months. From a tour in Northern Ireland, to the first ‘Plants in the Senedd’ event, to ministerial praise in Holyrood, the HTA team have worked closely with members in these locations to build up a closer relationship and awareness of the top challenges their businesses face and also opportunities. The HTA are working on manifestos ahead of next year’s Scottish and Welsh elections and getting more MPs to host visits and engage in events.



Jim Fairlie MSP, Minister of Agriculture and Connectivity of Scotland

“ I was pleased to attend the HTA parliamentary reception and speak about my engagements with the horticulture sector over the last several months, which the HTA helpfully arranged. Environmental horticulture is a diverse sector and I have developed a real sense of the sector’s important contribution to the environment, the economy and the Scottish population’s wellbeing. I very much welcome HTA’s ongoing engagement with the Scottish Government, in identifying where the sector and Scottish Government can work together to achieve shared ambitions.



Environmental Impact

HTA Carbon footprint for 2024: 77.3 tCO2e (location-based)

Over the past year, the HTA has achieved a 14% reduction in location-based energy emissions (Scope 2) – a reflection of the impact made by the solar panels, which have contributed 75,000 kWh of clean energy consumed by the HTA to date. Compared to the UK Grid, this is an estimated carbon impact of 14.4 tonnes since the installation in July 2023.

Year	TCO2e	TCO2e per employee	Change from previous year
2022	82.4	2	+18%
2023	83.4	1.9	+1%
2024	77.3	1.1	-6%

In addition to this, we produced a how-to guide for our members on investing in Sustainability, continued to provide opportunities for members to engage with Planet Mark, and fought for confirmation from Defra that, from 31 March 2026, all non-black, recyclable PET or PP plastic plant pots will be accepted in household kerbside recycling in England.



Your Association in 2024



397

people attended HTA regional events to connect, engage and learn



Over 2,000

items of media coverage to raise awareness of environmental horticulture and our members



Drives 2M visits in store

Gift cards given 1M times a year

Locking in almost £40M

future consumer spend into member garden centres



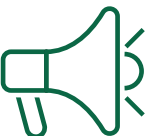
110

committee volunteers representing members



2,336

visitors bringing the industry together



286

parliamentary mentions raising the profile of the sector

Over



430

responses to the HTA satisfaction survey were received and circulated to HTA staff, ensuring we listen to the voice of our members



34

occasions members met at Business Improvement Scheme (BIS) meetings to share knowledge and create business development opportunities



More than 760

member businesses benefited from HTA market research

283



political engagements advocating for members' needs to parliamentarians



844

completed e-learning courses, enhancing professional development

121



APL Awards entries to recognise and reward the high standard of landscaping



59

policy publications to update members and stakeholders on policy changes HTA asks of government



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