



Environmental Horticulture and Landscaping

Industry Insights 2026



The Horticultural Trades Association

About Us

hta.org.uk

The Horticultural Trades Association (HTA), founded in 1899, represents the entire environmental horticulture and landscaping sector in the UK, with over 1,400 businesses among our members. Our diverse membership includes retailers, wholesalers, growers, manufacturers, landscapers and garden designers, providing comprehensive representation for the industry. As a member-centric organisation with no shareholders, our primary focus is to support our members.

We ensure all of our members are represented through meetings and visits, and through our member committees. This active voice of the member enables 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 networking, eLearning, events, conferences, and market insights to help businesses of all sizes succeed.

We run the National Garden Gift Card, 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 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

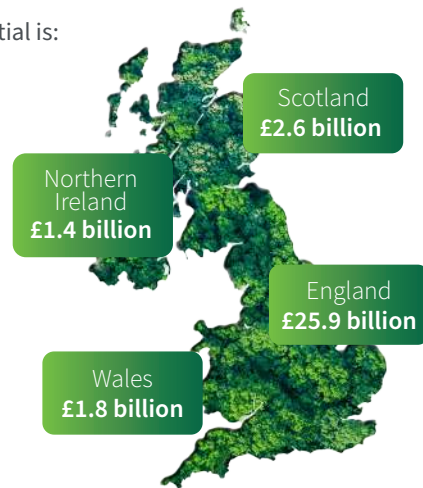
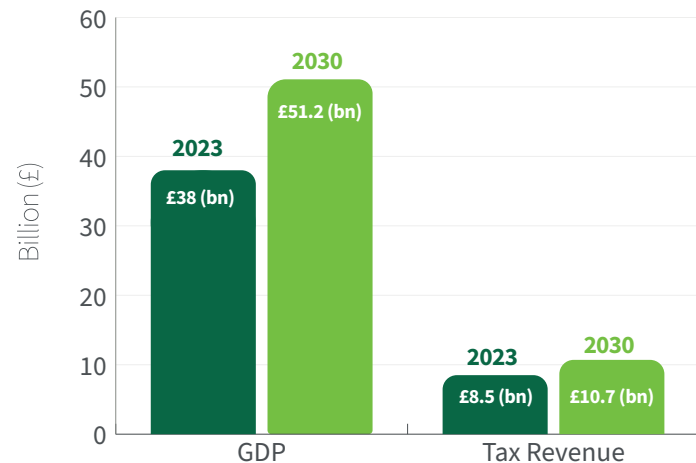
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Economic Footprint

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

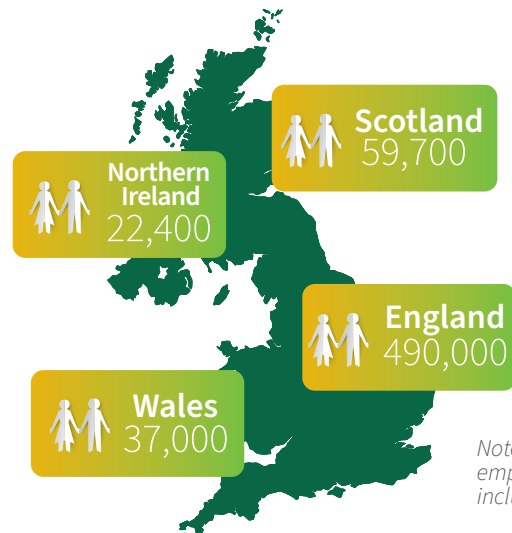
Economic Footprint

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:

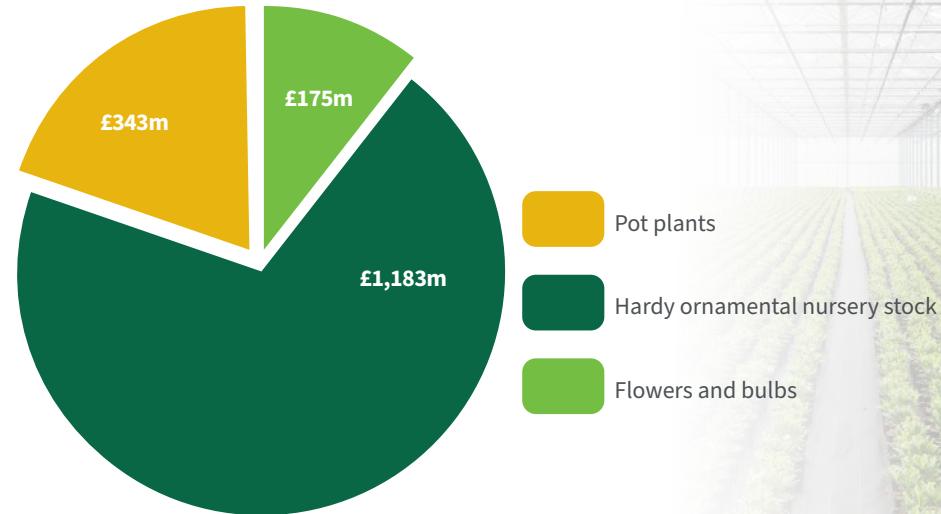


International Trade

In 2024...

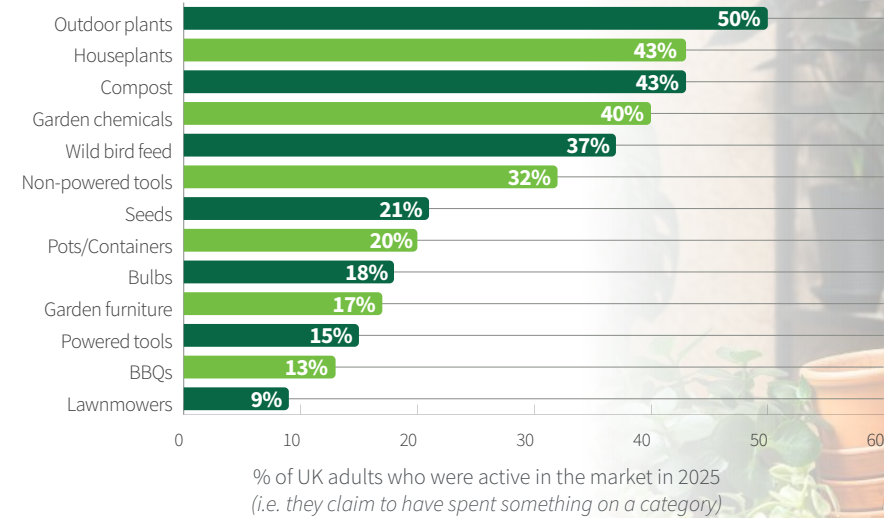


Market Size Plant Production



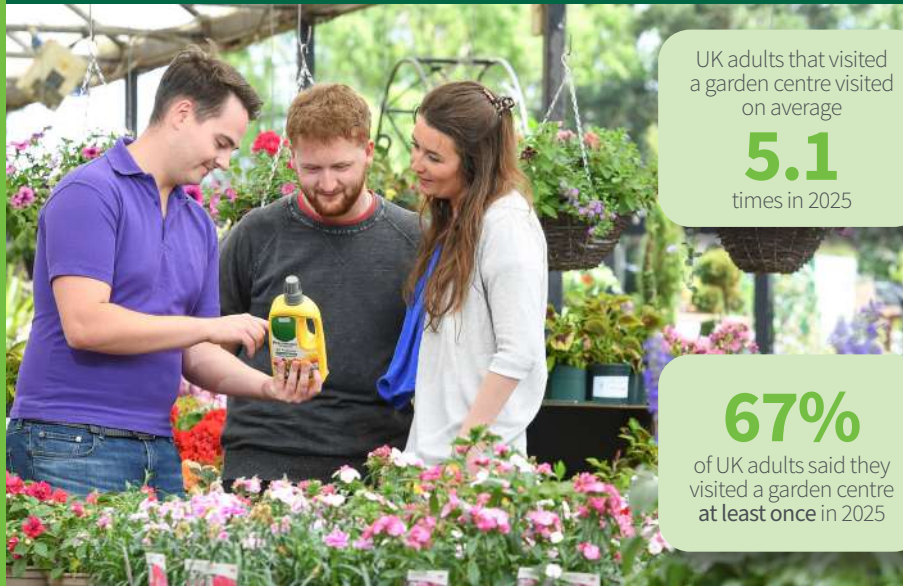
In 2024
environmental
horticulture
production
was valued at
£1.7 billion

Market Size Garden Retail



RECEIPT
Garden Retail
UK households
collectively spend
around
£9 billion
on garden retail
annually
The average
household spends
around
£320
on garden retail
each year

Garden Centre Visits



UK adults that visited a garden centre visited on average

5.1

times in 2025

67%

of UK adults said they visited a garden centre **at least once** in 2025

There are an estimated

1,500

garden centres and retail nurseries in the UK

In 2025 there were

203m

estimated visits to garden centres

In 2025 on average each UK adult **visited** a garden centre

3.6

times

Garden Centre Catering



UK adults that visited a garden centre café/restaurant visited on average

4.4

times in 2025

55%

of UK adults said they visited a garden centre café/restaurant **at least once** in 2025

There are an estimated

142m

visits to garden centre cafés/restaurants

Catering accounts for

17%

of **annual garden centre turnover** for those that have cafés/restaurants

On average, each UK adult **visited** a garden centre café/restaurant

2.5

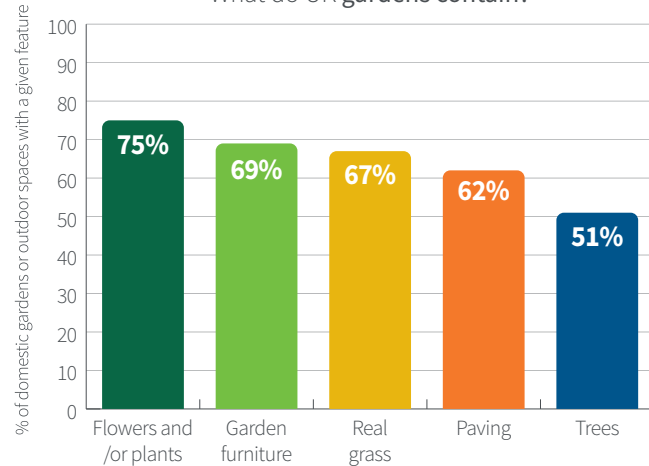
times throughout 2025

The UK Garden

207m²

(or 14.4 metres squared)
Average UK domestic
garden size
(front, back and side gardens combined)

What do UK gardens contain?

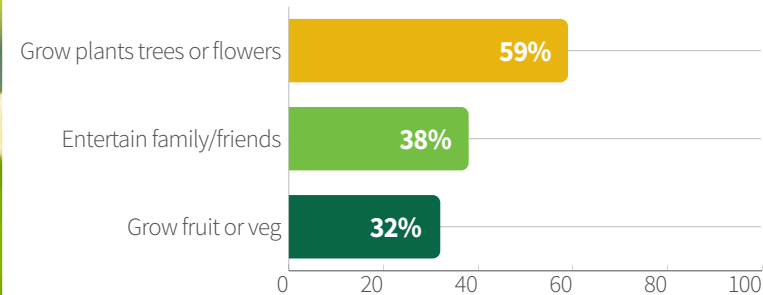


On average, UK adults say the amount of garden area paved or decked in their garden is:

35%

UK Gardeners

How UK adults use their garden or outdoor space



Gardening Frequency
(UK adults)

31%
regular
gardeners

10%
occasional
gardeners

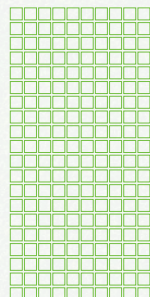
47%
of over 55's
are
regular
gardeners

Value of Gardens To the Economy

1m²
garden
area

= £2/year*
spent on
garden retail

Average garden
200m²



= £430/year*
spent on garden
retail

£64 BILLION

Additional garden retail spend over 100 years
from 1.5 million new homes should they have the
average 200sqm of garden included
(compared to no gardens in 2025 prices)

*Rounded for clarity. Based on £2.01 per m² annual spend (2025 prices).

Value of Gardens To the Environment

Cooling

The annual value
of urban cooling
services provided by
the UK's vegetation
has been **valued at
£547million per
year** (in 2025 prices)



Flood alleviation

Trees have been
found to **reduce
surface water
run-off by 80%**
as compared to an
asphalt surface



Air pollution removal

In just 7 days, a one-
metre dense hedge
**can absorb the
same amount of
pollution** that a car
emits over a 500 mile
drive



Biodiversity

Garden size has been
found to explain
**30% of variation
in species richness**
within individual
gardens, and
doubling garden size
increases richness by
25%



Value of Gardens

Health and Wellbeing

Physical Fitness

An hour of moderate general gardening can burn around **320 calories** – or 4 chocolate digestives!



Mental & Physical Wellbeing

84% of UK adults agree gardens and public green spaces **benefit their state of mind**, 79% their physical health.



Reduced Dementia Risk

Daily gardening has been linked with a **36% lower risk of developing dementia** amongst over 60s compared to those who don't garden.



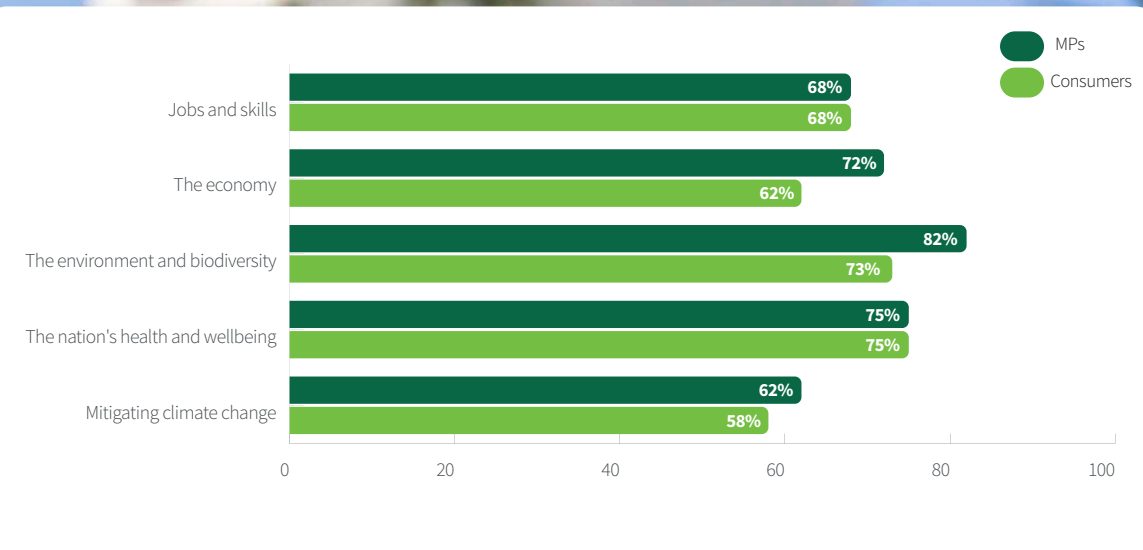
Children's Development

Children living over 20 minutes from green space had **two extra screen hours and poorer mental health** than those within a 5 minute walk.



Industry Recognition

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



Environmental Horticulture

Recommendations to Government to unlock green growth

1

Work with the industry to develop a Horticulture Strategy inclusive of environmental horticulture and create a Government Office for Green Spaces to formally recognise the economic, environmental, and health and wellbeing value of gardens and green spaces.

2

Take action on the cost of doing business, which disproportionately impacts SMEs – from NICs and wage hikes to regulatory burdens – these restrict investment and growth.

3

Secure and swiftly deliver a successful SPS Agreement for plants, and easements to border barriers which are critical and need to be delivered as quickly as possible. Support is needed to rebuild supply chains and export opportunities.

4

Clarity over a UK peat-free policy that will support UK horticulture to grow is needed. This includes involving a balanced, expert group to develop and implement a Roadmap supported by government and industry. A level playing field with European imported plants is critical.

5

Incentivise and lift barriers to on-site water storage by removing unnecessary planning red tape that blocks businesses from investing in reservoirs and rainwater harvesting systems. Ensure all new properties have rainwater storage built in during construction.

Environmental Horticulture

Recommendations to Government to unlock green growth

6

Make green spaces a priority for healthier and wealthier communities. A minimum garden density of 29.5%, particularly while building 1.5 million new homes, will allow everyone to contribute to a coherent biodiversity network, especially important in urban areas.

7

Develop an action plan for ornamental and productive plant and tree production, working across the nations and across sectors to identify activities that will support UK-based plant production.

8

Introduce a Statutory Requirement to ‘Grow Plants’ into the Curriculum at Key Stages/levels 1 and 2 to provide health and wellbeing benefits for children and help them build an understanding of science and the natural world.

9

Simplify Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) requirements, which are extremely complex and costly. All colours of polypropylene, except those containing carbon black pigment, to be classed as ‘green’ under the EPR Recyclability Assessment Methodology as they are fully recyclable plant pots.

10

Recognise the role of environmental horticulture in climate change resilience and support the sector to invest with improved processes, lead times, communication, and access to funds, to increase uptake and deliver faster economic returns.

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The Value of Plants Report hta.org.uk/value-of-plants

The Value of Gardens Report hta.org.uk/value-of-gardens