



# Environmental Horticulture and Landscaping

## Industry Insights 2026



# The Horticultural Trades Association

## About Us

hta.org.uk

About Us

*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.*

# 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

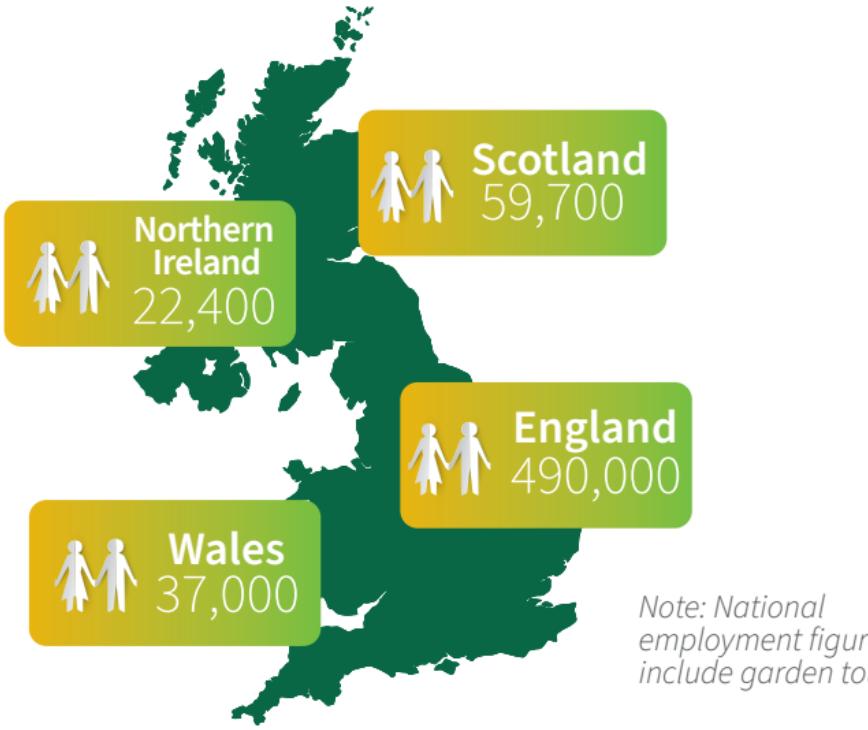
## Economic Footprint

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:

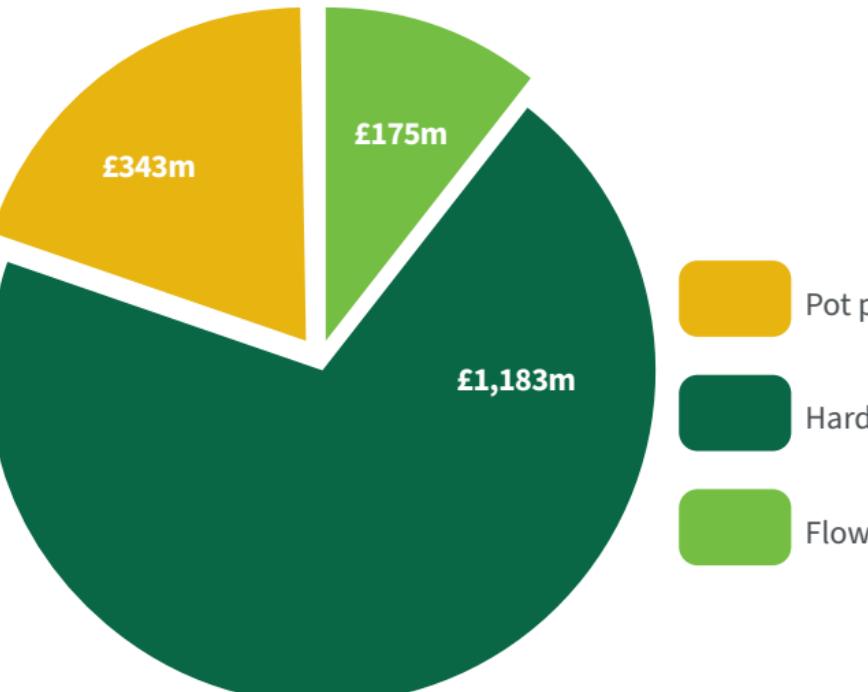


## International Trade

In 2024...



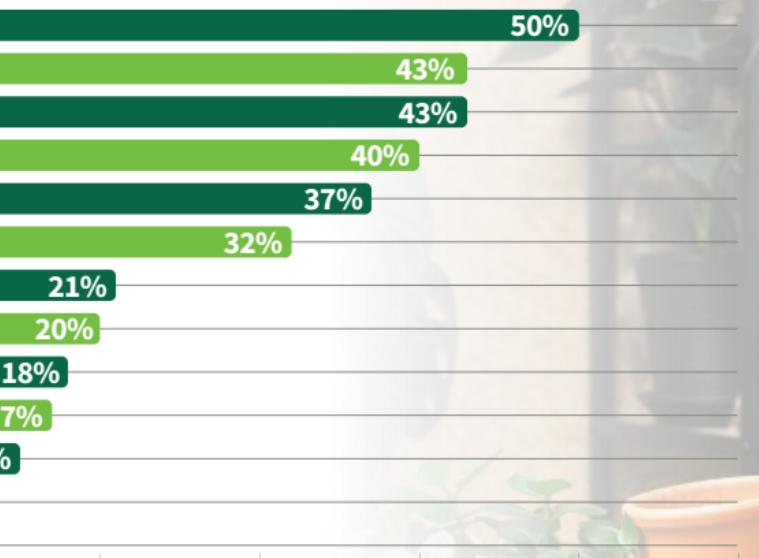
## Market Size Plant Production



- Pot plants
- Hardy ornamental nursery stock
- Flowers and bulbs



## Market Size Garden Retail

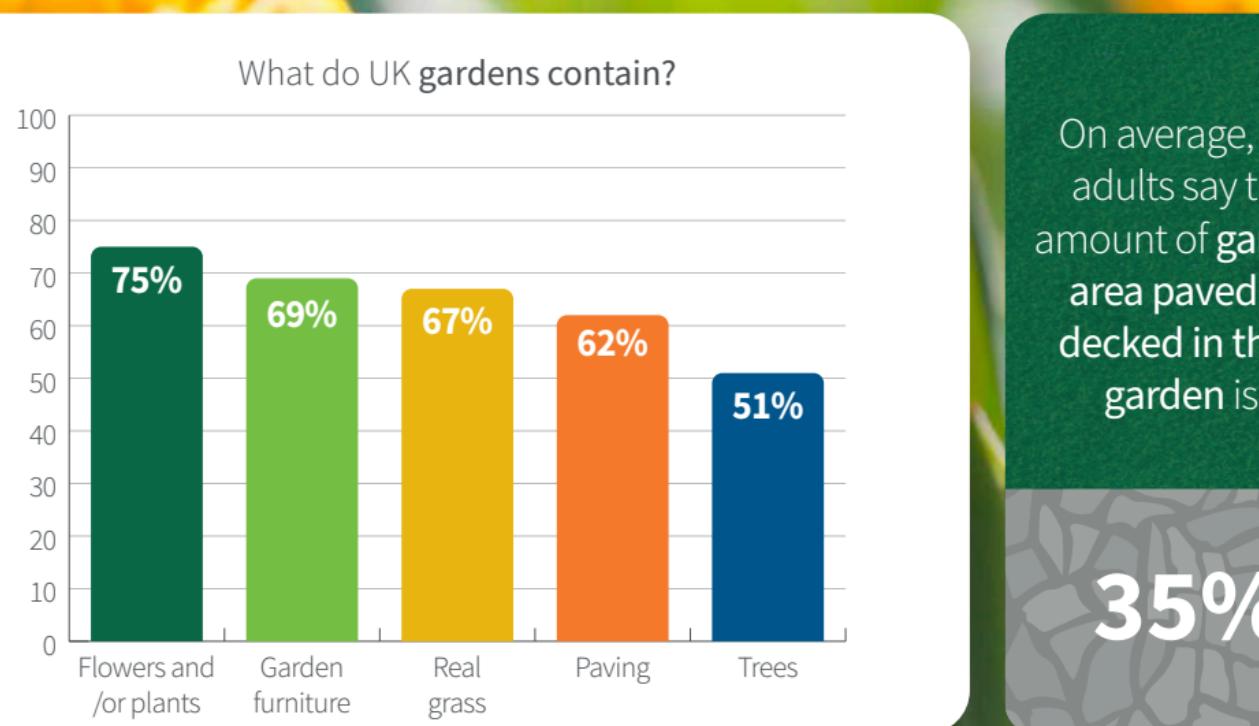
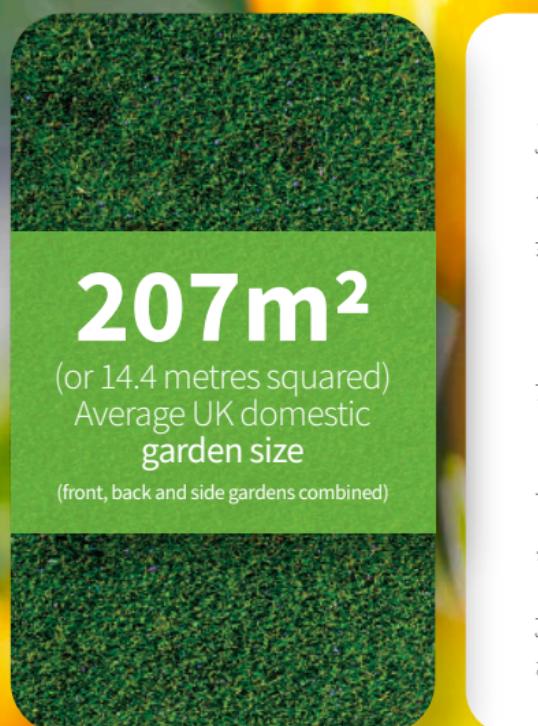


% of UK adults who were active in the market in 2025  
(i.e. they claim to have spent something on a category)



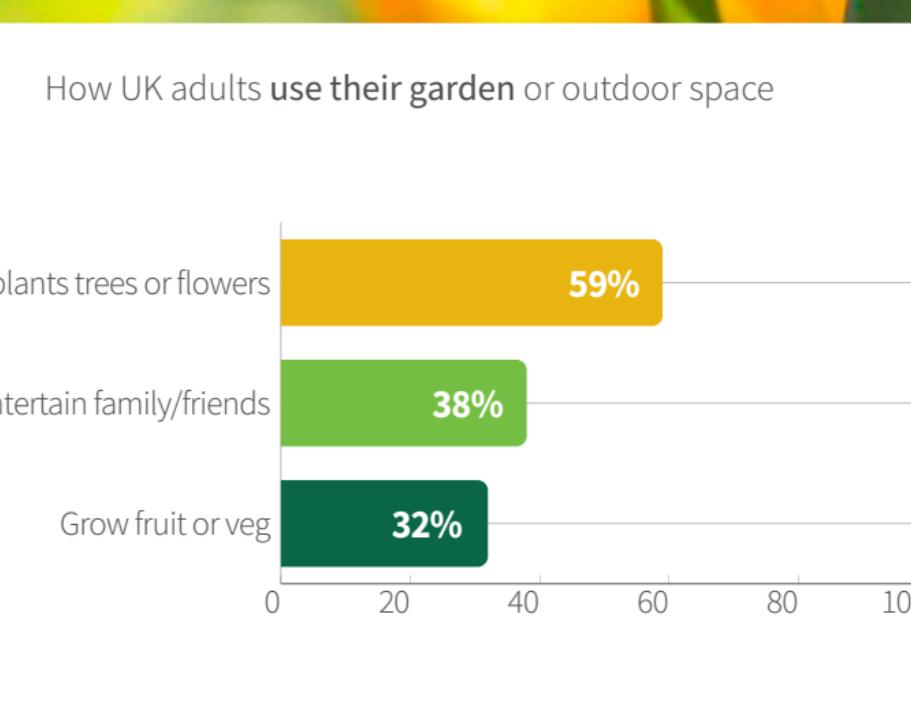


# The UK Garden



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

**35%**



Gardening Frequency (UK adults)

**31%** regular gardeners

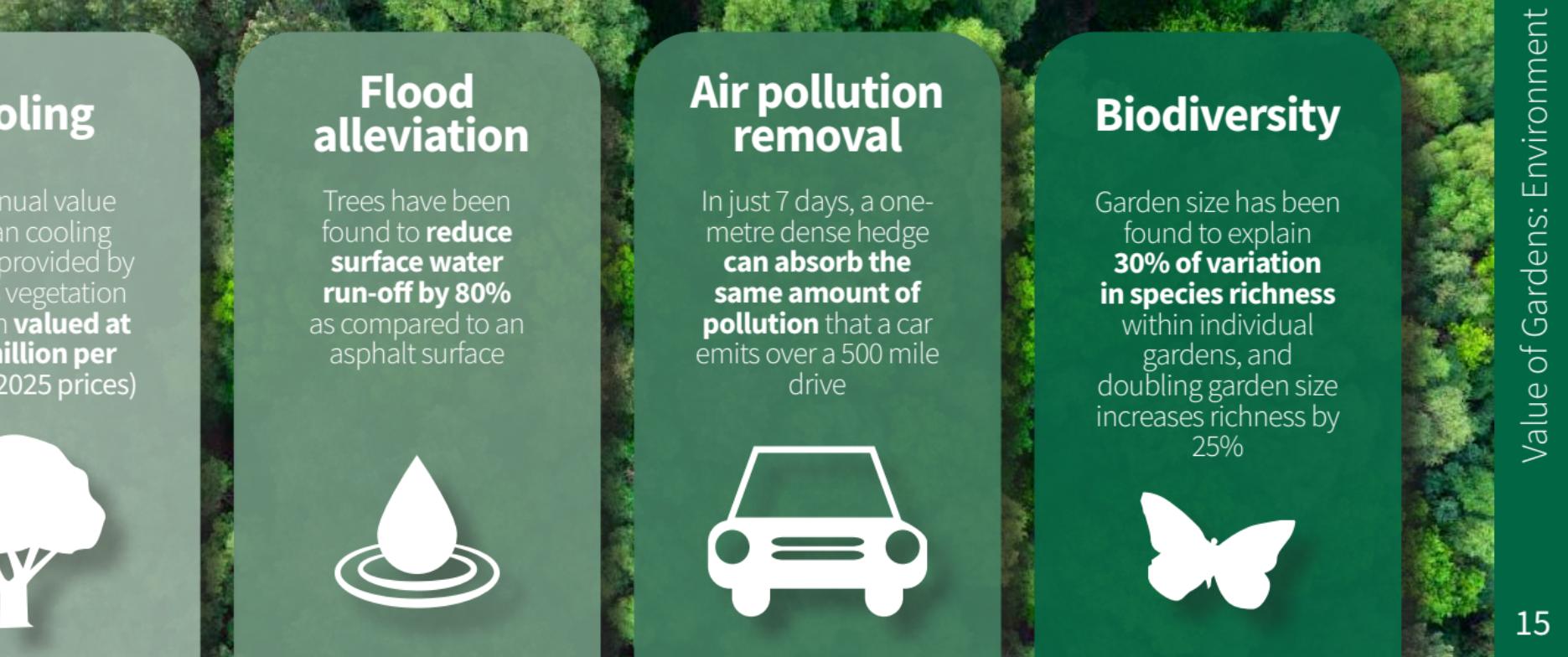
**10%** occasional gardeners

**47%** of over 55's are regular gardeners

## Value of Gardens To the Economy



## Value of Gardens To the Environment



# 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.



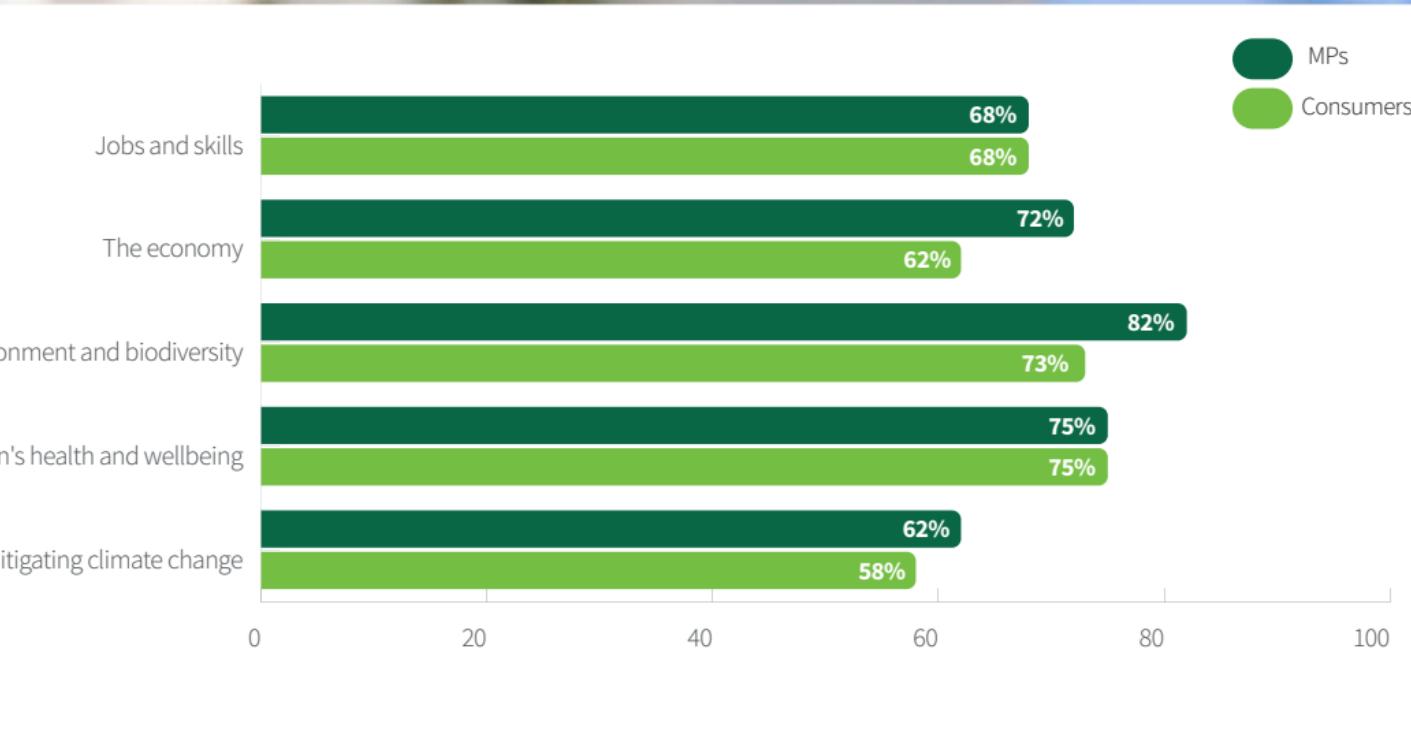
### Children's Development

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

Recommendations

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

Recommendations

6

Make green spaces a priority for healthier and wealthier communities. A minimum garden density of 295%, 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**

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