

The Horticulturist



Project Giving Back: Gardens for good causes

PLUS Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Charter | Chilean plants | Celebrating Plant Heritage | Urban trees | AGM 2024

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Cover The National Autistic Society Garden
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Government recently published its response to the House of Lords Horticultural Sector Committee's report 'Sowing the seeds: A blooming English horticultural sector' published in November 2023. The full reports are available online (<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/648/horticultural-sector-committee/publications/>) and the CIH was part of the original consultation.

The response was positive in its support of Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) delivery, the 'test and trial' with the Landworkers Alliance and the Apprenticeship Levy extension – there will be a broadening of rules for the use of the levy, removal of some of the current number limits. However, there are issues which still remain to be addressed and there are significant challenges facing multiple parts of the horticultural industry.

The need to promote and develop the growth potential of the sector and its contribution to the overall UK economy, together with significant potential to achieve net zero targets, still needs further attention. The current bleak news on local government funding and slashed budgets for greenspace management make grim reading and is difficult to understand given the awareness of the positive value of parks and public open space to health. Read the full article on the CIH website (www.horticulture.org.uk).

I recently had the opportunity to meet with friends in Singapore at the Botanic Gardens and Gardens by the Bay. I was again inspired by both institutions but also saw first-hand the practical and tangible results of the vision of a 'City in Nature'. Since the 1960s the planting of trees, and the strategy to grow, naturalise, connect and restore gardens, parks and green spaces is a model to learn from and adapt. The evidence-based correlation and connection to the well-being of the population is something to emulate.

Looking forward, the International Society for Horticultural Science 'Green Cities 2024' seeks to advance the science of greening our cities by sharing the latest research on green infrastructure and soil-plant-water-atmosphere relations and Felix Lowe the CEO of Gardens by the Bay is one of the excellent plenary speakers in what should be a fascinating and important event.

Some brighter news is the progress made with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter (reported on page 8). Attracting, developing and retaining talent is fundamental to creating an industry which has ambition and purpose and this is a really welcome development which the CIH fully supports.



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Write for *The Horticulturist*

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You will notice that *The Horticulturist* is printed on 100% recycled paper. This is the second phase of our efforts to protect our environment and complements the recent introduction of the compostable sleeve.



PLANT CONSERVATION Chilean plants play an important role in our gardens. **Martin Gardner** has been involved in their conservation at various botanical garden sites in Scotland and also in Chile. Here he outlines the history of these plants and why they need conservation.

Chilean plants: cultivation to conservation

When we think about the extraordinary range of stalwart ornamental plants that have graced British and Irish gardens for the almost 200 years, species introduced from across the temperate world including those from western North America, Asia (principally China, Japan, and Korea) and Europe, come to mind. We need to bring into focus the important role that Chilean native plants have played. Indeed, Chilean visitors to the UK are often pleasantly surprised to see just how many familiar plants from Chile are commonly cultivated in parks and gardens and then they realise that is not just the famous monkey puzzle tree that has found its way to our shores.

Frequently seen Chilean species include *Berberis darwinii*, *Buddleja globosa*, *Crinodendron hookerianum*, *Corynabutilon vitifolium*, *Desfontainia fulgens* and *Embothrium coccineum*. Although they may not be great in number compared with Asian garden plants, nevertheless they have established a prominent place in our gardens. More recently, especially through the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE), the range of species introduced from Chile, some of which may test the parameters of our fluctuating winter climate,