

# Annual Report 2024



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# President's Welcome

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## Welcome to the Annual Report for 2024

One of the key aims of the Institute is to represent the horticultural profession. The importance of serving the diverse membership of the Institute whilst promoting the value of horticulturists in providing solutions for many of the current challenges facing the planet has increasing importance.

The food we eat, the open spaces we enjoy, the therapeutic importance of gardens and nature, the scientific research using the best science in the face of increasingly unpredictable weather patterns all lead us to the theme of our conference held at Kew Gardens: *Horticultural Solutions for the Planet – plants and horticulturists securing our future*. We were privileged to hear from industry leaders who demonstrated the best of the profession and being hosted and welcomed in the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, one of the most biodiverse places on the planet for plants added a whole extra dimension to the day. My sincere thanks to Richard Barley and the Team at Kew for their superb support of the day, I would also like to take the opportunity to wish Richard all the best for his return to Australia where I am sure he will be making his mark on the profession again.

All of this in the 40th Anniversary Year of the creation of the Institute and none of the work we do is possible without the Council of Trustees, the Management Board and Helen Sessions, our Membership and External Relations Manager who have worked tirelessly throughout the year. My sincere thanks to them and the Branch Chairs and Committees who represent our membership in the UK and Ireland.

We continue to have excellent secretariat support from the British Growers Association from Rachel Kemp, Andy Smith and the wider team who continue to support all we do.

I commend this Report to all



**David Richardson CHort FCIHort  
President**





# To promote the profession of horticulture and the professionalism of those working in the industry

Support and advocacy for the profession of horticulture has continued strongly throughout 2024, through planning and delivery of well-attended career events such as **'Grow North'** at Harewood House near Leeds in May. In September the first Grow Careers South event **'Roots Into Horticulture'** event at Chiddingstone Castle in Kent organised by Caroline Halfpenny, Helen Sessions & Sally Anne-Rees. Finally **'Grow Scotland'** in Edinburgh in November. Each of these provided opportunities for people starting out in careers, or for career-changers to hear from a range of horticultural experts, and to gain a better understanding of the diversity of choices within the professional field of horticulture. Our thanks go to everyone involved in organising these successful events.

Advocacy for the profession was also provided through Landex and Lantra, with support for the production of a careers video for the land-based sector, to ensure that horticulture was appropriately represented. CIH also provided judging for Landex and Lantra **Land-based and Environmental Learner Awards** for horticulture, landscaping, green-keeping and floristry.

National and Branch Committee members attended events at various land-based colleges and other institutions around the country, giving students the opportunity to ask questions, and also to understand better the benefits of supporting the CIH as the key umbrella organisation for the profession. The Committee is also mindful of the important role of the CIH in advocating for the development of 'Green Skills' for future

decades as outlined in the United Nations' priority for sustainable and resource-efficient societies.

Support for the **Young Horticulturist of the Year Competition** has continued across all regions who have organised and held their own regional finals, with the winners going on to the national final which was hosted at Hestercombe House and Gardens, near Taunton in Somerset. The winner of the final quiz was Jonathan Zerr (finalist from the Eastern Region) won the YHoY title for 2024. We are excited that the 2025 final will be held at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens near Belfast.

In the Ireland branch, Committee members attended the Garden Landscape Amenity Sports Turf Trade event in July, in support of the CIH stand. The role of the CIH in supporting professional horticulture was communicated, and the benefits of membership were outlined to numerous attendees. A conference promoting the profession and career opportunities was held at University College Cork in June, co-hosted by Munster Technological University and CIH.

Finally, the **40th Anniversary Conference** was hosted at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew in 2024. The programme was brimming with outstanding speakers who represented leaders from across the breadth of professional horticulture.

**Richard Barley MBE CHort FCIHort**  
**Vice President**



*Clockwise from top left:* Delegates assembled for careers talks. Matthew Wilson MCIHort delivering the keynote address. Trevor Nicholson MCIHort leads a tour of Harewood's Himalayan Garden. Delegates speaking to some of the 20 trade and industry stands. Graham Smith MCIHort representing LBS Horticulture. Students exploring the latest in battery-powered horticultural equipment.



**GROW North**  
**Harewood House, May 2024**





## To act as an authoritative body; consulting with Government and other policy making bodies on matters of interest or concern to professional horticulturists

We continue to be the authoritative body on an extensive range of matters which are of concern to the horticultural industry.

We were called upon to give evidence to the UK Government Department of Education (DoE) Curriculum and Assessment Review; Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Committee on Education and Careers in the Land-based sector and continue to be tier two members of the **Environmental Horticulture Group** (EHG) and The Education and Employment Subgroup of the EHG, contributing to cross sector lobbying and input into joint calls for evidence and sharing of information on the Institute for Apprentices and Technical Education (IFATE) and Skills for England developments.

Helen Sessions has ably represented the Institute in many of these bodies and serves as Vice Chair for the **'Access All Areas'** Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter, which champions EDI across the horticulture and landscaping industry.

As a member of the **OFQUAL Employer Handbook** Helen also contributed to work for both IFATE and OFQUAL disseminating information and providing sector guidance on professional horticulture.

The Institute continued its collaboration with the TIAH Careers and Employment subgroup and two **Trailblazer Groups** (who have responsibility for writing the standards that underpin apprenticeships and T Levels in England) and the Plumpton College Horticulture Strategic Liaison Board.

The development of skills through formal education for students of all ages is a vital part of sustaining the profession. The Institute has a loud and well-respected voice in these areas.

Eastern Branch Chairperson Malcolm Catlin MCiHort is the Project Director of the biosecurity certification scheme **'Plant Healthy'** and the Institute continues to be a partner in the **'Plant Health Alliance'** attending the regular meetings and engaging in the development of this key area of professional interest and concern.

In Ireland the CIH contributed to the **national sustainable soil management group** to set future EU policy on urban and rural soils. EU policy on the value and importance of soil will have profound implications for European and world horticulture, ecology, and environment. In this forum the CIH has an opportunity to promote, shape and understand future policy.

The Irish Government's **Horticulture Industry Review** (Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine, DAFM) included consultation with Joseph Croke CHort MCiHort, Chair of the Ireland Branch, as part of its key stakeholder engagement activity. Ireland Branch Members attended regular meetings held by DAFM regarding the Industry on the island of Ireland including a summary review of horticultural education and the challenges within the sector, conducted by previous CIH President Dr Owen Doyle CHort FCIHort. It is hoped that this work prompts funding to support the marketing of horticulture and attract more entrants into horticultural education.

**David Richardson CHort FCIHort**  
**President**



# To confer recognised status upon professionally qualified and experienced horticulturists

The Chartered Institute of Horticulture recognises the outstanding professional achievements of horticulturists at all stages of their careers. Achieving Chartered horticulturist status remains the pinnacle of professional standing; demonstrating attainment of the highest calibre of professional standing and signalling a commitment to ongoing professional development. In 2024 Chartered status was achieved by: **Chris Wardle CHort MCIHort**, **Jonathan Cansdale CHort MCIHort**, **Jonathan Zwinkels CHort MCIHort** and **Romain Bardin CHort MCIHort**.

Fellowship of the Institute is awarded by Council to individuals who have achieved high levels of professional achievement or who have made a significant contribution to the industry. In 2024 Council ratified the Fellowships of **Chris Collins FCIHort**, **Stephen McCallum CHort FCIHort**, **Richard Barley MBE CHort FCIHort** and **Michael Higgins CHort FCIHort**.

The President's Award for 2024 was presented to **Michael Fitt OBE FCIHort** by President David Richardson CHort FCIHort. The Award recognises Michael's distinguished horticultural career within the Royal Parks and particularly for his ongoing commitment to arranging the Royal Parks Guild's 'Discovery Day'. First started as a series of apprentice masterclasses in 2010, it has now grown into an event hosted by leading horticultural establishments, attracting over 225 delegates on the day, including 50 schoolchildren, drawn from local secondary schools, who come along to meet the apprentices and learn about a career in horticulture.

The Institute is proud to recognise and encourage new talent within the industry through our Pam Pointer Prize which rewards outstanding achievements of horticulture students. In 2024 the winner was **Cerys Eleanor**, from Myerscough College who was awarded the opportunity to attend our conference, held at RBG Kew, to further their development and to network with industry professionals.

The Aberconway Award is presented to what is judged to be the best undergraduate horticultural dissertation. A cash prize of £500 established in the name of Lord Aberconway, who contributed personally and financially to the establishment of the Institute of Horticulture. In 2024 the award was presented to **Daniel Jones**, from Writtle University College. Daniel's thesis: '*Fantastic Frass? Investigating the Impacts of Insect Frass on Microbial Activity and Soil Fertility for Sustainable Crop Production*' was selected as the winner after long considerations and deliberation. Daniels experimental work using both fresh and aged black soldier fly frass examined their effects on soil microbial activity and soil fertility.

The Northern Branch awarded its annual commendation to broadcaster and community horticulture champion **Marian Foster**. The presentation was made at the Northumbria in Bloom Awards Ceremony in September 2024 by Branch Chairman Clive Parker CHort FCIHort, in recognition of Marian's longstanding commitment to promoting community-based horticultural initiatives.

The Northern Branch hosted a 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner and awards ceremony at the Bridge Hotel and Spa, Walshford where they presented Commendations to those who have made a significant contribution to the Branch over the past 40 years. Certificates were presented by Immediate Past-President Susan Nicholas FCIHort to: **Tony Thompson, David Beardall, Ian Webster, Peter Hemsley, John Richardson, Alwyn Gornall, Graham Porter, Mike Hirst, Sue Wood, Jason Daff** and **Sarah Owen-Hughes**.

**Jason Daff CHort MCIHort**  
**Honorary Secretary**



# Chartered Horticulturists

David Adlam CHort FCIHort  
Tom Angel CHort MCIHort  
Steve Arnold CHort MCIHort  
Gareth Austin CHort MCIHort  
Romain Bardin CHort MCIHort  
Richard Barley CHort FCIHort  
Ian Barnes CHort MCIHort  
Sue Barnes CHort MCIHort  
Heather Barrett-Mold CHort FCIHort  
Matthew Bartlett CHort MCIHort  
Peter Beagan CHort MCIHort  
Stephen Bernhard CHort (Rtd) FCIHort  
Adam Blunt CHort MCIHort  
Gerald Bonner CHort FCIHort  
Stefan Buczacki CHort FCIHort  
Sarah Byrne CHort MCIHort  
Jonathan Cansdale CHort MCIHort  
Franziska Cheeseman CHort MCIHort  
Brian Cheng CHort MCIHort  
Mark Chester CHort MCIHort  
Christine Ching CHort (Rtd) MCIHort  
Andrew Cotterill CHort MCIHort  
Brian Crane CHort FCIHort  
Joseph Croke CHort MCIHort  
Kenneth Crowther CHort MCIHort  
Steven Cuthill CHort MCIHort  
Jason Daff CHort MCIHort  
Stephen Davies CHort FCIHort  
Geoffrey Deeble CHort MCIHort  
Steven Desmond CHort FCIHort  
David Domoney CHort FCIHort  
Owen Doyle CHort FCIHort  
Gordon Eastham CHort MCIHort  
Gerald Edwards CHort MCIHort  
Caroline Elliott-Kingston CHort FCIHort  
Mark Evison CHort MCIHort  
Anna Eyres CHort FCIHort  
Mark Finnegan CHort MCIHort  
Andrew Fisher Tomlin CHort FCIHort  
Emanuel Flecken CHort MCIHort  
Marcus Forster CHort MCIHort  
Edward Freeman CHort MCIHort  
Charles Funke CHort FCIHort  
Malcolm Giles CHort FCIHort  
Francis Gordon-Alleyne CHort MCIHort  
David Gregory CHort MCIHort  
Frank Hawkins CHort MCIHort  
Dorothy Hayden CHort MCIHort  
Patrick Hegarty CHort MCIHort  
Michael Higgins CHort FCIHort  
Simon Higson CHort MCIHort  
Colin Hindmarch CHort FCIHort  
Joseph Howarth CHort MCIHort  
Elaine Hughes CHort MCIHort

Simon Jones CHort MCIHort  
Donal Kearney CHort MCIHort  
Miranda Kingston CHort MCIHort  
David Knott CHort FCIHort  
Ching Man Lau CHort MCIHort  
Boaz Leung CHort (Rtd) MCIHort  
Hoi Chi Li CHort MCIHort  
Patrick Loh CHort MCIHort  
Gerald Luckhurst CHort MCIHort  
John Marsden CHort MCIHort  
Andrew Maskell CHort MCIHort  
Glynis Maynard-Bligouras CHort (Rtd) FCIHort  
Valerie McBride-Munro CHort MCIHort  
Stephen McCallum CHort MCIHort  
Ian McDermott CHort MCIHort  
Bryony Mills CHort MCIHort  
Susan Minter CHort FCIHort  
Paul Mooney CHort MCIHort  
Leigh Morris CHort FCIHort  
Harold Mycock CHort MCIHort  
John Nicholls CHort MCIHort  
Lewis Normand CHort MCIHort  
Margaret Norton CHort (Rtd) FCIHort  
William Notcutt CHort MCIHort  
Colm O'Callaghan CHort MCIHort  
Clive Parker CHort (Rtd) FCIHort  
Mark Pollard CHort MCIHort  
Colin Quinney CHort MCIHort  
David Richardson CHort FCIHort  
James Robinson CHort MCIHort  
Barbara Segall CHort FCIHort  
Helen Sessions CHort MCIHort  
Mark Shaw CHort MCIHort  
Bernard Sheridan CHort MCIHort  
John Shropshire CHort FCIHort  
William Simpson CHort (Rtd) FCIHort  
Colin Skelly CHort MCIHort  
Francis Squires CHort MCIHort  
Paul Stacey CHort MCIHort  
Lynn Stevens CHort FCIHort  
Duncan Thomas CHort MCIHort  
Kelly Thompson CHort MCIHort  
George Thorburn CHort MCIHort  
Nigel Thorne CHort FCIHort  
Peter Thurman CHort (Rtd) FCIHort  
Stanley TSUI Ka Hing CHort MCIHort  
Chris Wardle CHort MCIHort  
Richard Wassell CHort MCIHort  
John Weir CHort FCIHort  
Tom Wood CHort MCIHort  
Claire Woods CHort FCIHort  
Ching-tin Yu CHort (Rtd) MCIHort  
Jonathan Zwinkels CHort MCIHort



# To promote educational and training opportunities and encourage the development of all disciplines within horticulture

The Eastern Branch began the year with a tour of the winter gardens at **Anglesey Abbey**. Gardens Manager Kevin Tookey led the tour including the famous winter walk, featuring winter staples including coloured-stemmed dogwoods, *Sarcococca*, *Viburnum* and a collection of snowdrops.

**Cardiff Parks Central Nursery** was visited by the West Midlands & South Wales Branch, Kevin Thomas led the tour of the facilities that produce some 30,000 bedding geraniums grown from seed, as well as hardy nursery stock and mature trees. Following a networking lunch at the on-site café members enjoyed a talk on the history of **Bute Park**.

In June the Northern Branch visited to the **Lower Ure Conservation Trust** and their Nosterfield Nature Reserve Nursery, where they produce plants for wetland restoration projects on the lower Ure. Afterwards members had a guided tour of the **Himalayan Garden & Sculpture Park** with the Head Gardener Joel Dibb.

The South East Branch held its Annual Branch Meeting at the **Museum of the Home** in July. Housed in former almshouses, built by trader Robert Geffryre, Gardener Heather Stevens, explained the museum's gardens which reflect different planting styles throughout the ages. Starting with a 1500's knot garden, a Stuart garden with many medicinal and culinary plants. The Georgian garden reflected the greater use of the garden for recreation and entertainment, The Victorian garden was bold with colourful bedding and the 1900s is reflected in an Edwardian cottage garden with drifts of soft colour.

Despite the heavy July rain the Northern branch members enjoyed a very informative guided tour of **Wynyard Hall Gardens** in July. The tour was led by the Head Gardener Mark Birtle who explained how the pleasure gardens were redeveloped with mild-steel raised beds, gravel paths, formal hedges, raised water fountains, a water rill, pergola softened with herbaceous planting and numerous David Austin roses.

In August Northern Branch members were invited to view the recently re-opened gardens at **Raby Castle** by Garden Manager Dickon Harding. The redevelopment has seen the overhaul of the gha site connecting the remodelled Walled Garden with newly landscaped meandering walkways; creating a year-round visitor attraction.

**Biddulph Grange** was the venue of successful visit for North West & North Wales Branch Members. Paul Walton provided a detailed guided tour of the gardens originally created by Victorian industrialist James Bateman.

The Ireland Branch study tour took place in the greater Belfast area. With a mix of amenity, social & therapeutic and commercial horticulture visits, meticulously planned and delivered by the local members of the Ireland Branch committee. The first visit was to **Horatio's Garden Northern Ireland** at the Spinal Cord Injuries Unit, Musgrave Park Hospital followed by a visit to **Roy Lyttle's Ltd**, expert growers of Leek, Onions and Scallions. The first day ended with a tour of **Bangor Castle Walled Garden**. Second day visits were to **Dundonald Nurseries** and Garden Retail, followed by a visit to the **Big Tree Project** at Lisburn and Castlereagh an important initiative in biodiversity and finally, an exceptional visit to **Hillsborough Castle Gardens**.

Eastern Branch members and guests met at **Raveningham Hall Gardens**, Norfolk in September for a tour of the gardens, following an introduction by its owner Sir Nicholas Bacon. The gardens and park are protected by woodland which provides shelter for the herbaceous and mixed borders, wildflower meadows and rolling lawns. Across the border in Suffolk the group visited **Somerleyton Hall Gardens** to tour the gardens with Head Gardener Simon Gaches. Here the gardens are set over 4.8ha and include a sunken garden, rose garden, parterre and arboretum.

The Northern Branch's Annual Branch Meeting was held at Auckland Palace in September. The palace forms part of **'The Auckland Project'** an exciting initiative to redevelop Bishop Auckland as a centre for culture and tourism. Before the meeting members enjoyed a tour of the palace gardens, including the extensive Walled Garden with Curator Andy Nesbitt.

Scotland Branch members travelled to Strathmore to meet Des Cotton, Head Gardener at **Glamis Castle** who conducted the around the estate's gardens. The ancestral home of the Bowes-Lyon family, the estate features a Victorian Arboretum, Italian Garden, Walled Garden and a woodland areas complete with a fernery.

**Jason Daff CHort MCIIHort**  
**Honorary Secretary**







## To co-operate with other bodies on matters of common concern

Collaboration remains at the heart of our strategy, enabling us to strengthen ties with industry bodies, related charities, educational institutions, and fellow professional organisations.

Throughout the past year, we have developed partnerships that advance education, research and inclusion. In collaboration with **PlantNetwork**, we delivered a series of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) training sessions, culminating in a neurodiversity research webinar in summer 2024.

Additionally, we joined forces with the **Institute of Chartered Foresters** to host four presentations exploring cutting-edge research on tree breeding and urban tree planning. Helping our respective members keep abreast of best practice and the latest research.

Working with the **Irish Tree Council**, we supported three research lectures during Irish Tree Week, contributing to industry engagement and knowledge-sharing around the importance of current tree research. Meanwhile, the **David Robinson Memorial Lecture** in Ireland brought together students and professionals at Kildalton Agriculture and Horticulture College. In partnership with **Bord Bia** and **Teagasc**. Attendees had the opportunity to tour the facilities, receive an update on currently research and hear from speakers Niall McCauley and Oliver Schurmann.

Engagement with land-based colleges remains a priority. In the South East, we connected with colleges across the region, ensuring The Chartered Institute of Horticulture maintains a strong presence. Each college in the area was offered a commemorative mulberry tree to mark our 40th anniversary.

We supported **Plumpton College** during their three-yearly OFSTED review, offering professional body insight into their horticultural provision.

Our Northern Branch has been active in promoting horticulture through partnerships with organisations such as **North of England Horticultural Society**, at the Harrogate Spring and Autumn Flower Shows, CIH members staffed the joint advice bureau, providing guidance and support on gardening and horticultural careers.

Our Eastern Branch collaborated with **Perennial** to reinforce links with this vital charity, including hosting a visit to Fullers Mill Garden, a property owned by Perennial. This relationship was also strengthened by participation in Perennial's Trade Associations Day at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Across all regions, we continue to promote and support the horticultural profession, leveraging sponsorships and partnerships to deliver impactful events such as GROW careers events and the Young Horticulturist of the Year competition. These collaborations reflect our commitment to advancing the sector while addressing shared challenges and opportunities. We thank all of sponsors who made these events possible in 2024.

**Helen Sessions** CHort MCIHort  
Membership and External Relations Manager

### Supporters in 2024

John Chambers Wildflower Seed, Wykeham Mature Plants, North of England Horticultural Society, East Riding Horticulture, APL, BALI Chalk Fund, Perennial, Animal and Plant Health Agency, Working for Gardeners Association, The Nurture Group, Stockbridge Technology Centre, Lantra, Palmer Nurseries Ltd, Yorkshire Gardens Trust, Barnes Associates Ltd, Husqvarna, Biobest UK Ltd, Johnsons Nurseries Ltd, LBS Horticulture, Yorkshire in Bloom, Id Verde, STIHL, Harewood House Trust, Chiddingstone Castle, Lantra Scotland, Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh, SRUC, Growforth, The MacRobert Trust, Scotland's Garden Scheme, The Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society, Professional Gardeners Guild, BALI, Horticultural Trades Association, Scottish Rock Garden Club, ICL, The Scottish Government, Blooming Green, The Glasshouse Project, Hillier Nurseries, Outdoor Room, John Innes Centre, National Trust, Pershore College, Reaseheath College, Scone Palace, Sparsholt College, Hestercombe House & Gardens, Bulldog Tools, PlantNetwork, Bord Bia, Plant Names Simplified, Barcham Trees, Cherry Lane Garden Centres, Easton College, Hardy Landscapes, Shropshire Horticultural Society, Percy Thrower Trust.

# To disseminate information on matters affecting the profession and provide opportunities for discussion amongst horticulturists

Facilitating the exchange of knowledge and encouraging discussion among horticulturists remains a key objective of the Institute. This year, we achieved this through conferences, committee meetings, social media outreach, publications and targeted webinars.

Regular branch committee meetings have been an essential platform for regional collaboration and planning. Held both online and in person, these meetings have helped branches stay connected with members, share industry updates and plan activities. Highlights include Ireland's combination of four virtual meetings and one in-person meeting during their annual study tour, the Northern Branch's monthly Zoom meetings, and the North West Branch welcoming a new committee member dedicated to building strengthening ties with the education sector.

Social media continues to play a significant role in sharing updates and engaging with members. Branches actively use platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X to promote events and share information. For example, the South East Branch uses these channels to maintain regular communication with members. **The Members Forum** on LinkedIn has also provided a valuable platform for promoting discussions, sharing information, and highlighting sector opportunities and upcoming events. These efforts have been particularly important in supporting **Social and Therapeutic Horticulture (STH)** initiatives.

Our work in STH demonstrates the power of digital engagement in fostering meaningful discussions. Quarterly webinars on topics such as Green Social Prescribing, STH in

palliative care settings, and evaluation methods have attracted strong participation. A dedicated STH webpage on the CIH website now hosts updated research and best-practice resources, further encouraging professional dialogue and growth in this expanding field.

Publications and lectures have also been central to our efforts. Barbara Segall CHort FCIHort, the award-winning editor of **The Horticulturist**, produces three outstanding editions of the professional journal each year, featuring the latest research and industry updates. Branches regularly contribute reports and articles to *The Horticulturist*, highlighting key events and initiatives.

Examples of engaging educational opportunities include the Ireland Branch's David Robinson Lecture, held at Kildalton College, and the Northern Branch's **lecture by Naoko Abe** on "Cherry Ingram" at Teikyo University in Durham.

In 2024, CIH celebrates the 40th anniversary of its founding. The celebrations began with our conference **'Horticultural Solutions for the Planet'** at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in October. This biennial conference focused on the future of horticulture over the next 40 years and how the industry is evolving. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed their time, knowledge, and expertise to make the anniversary conference a truly exceptional event.

**Helen Sessions CHort MCIHort**  
**Membership and External Relations Manager**







# Financial Report 2024

Total income in 2024 was £175,488. Net Membership fees were £138.7K which was a 2% increase on 2023. The other main areas of income were sponsorship from Shropshire Horticultural Society for the YHoY final of £13.3K, YHoY heats £3K, Conference £10.7K, the Horticulturist £4.2K, and Sponsorship, Webinars, Grow careers of £3.3K

Expenditure was £174.1 K which was higher than budgeted in many areas arising from continuing inflation and IT development. The main items of expenditure were Secretariat charges of £55.6K, Membership and External Relations manager £45.5K, Horticulturist £22.2K, YHOY heats £4.6K, YHOY final £11.8K, Accountants and Insurance £6.7K, IT and Database £9.3K, Conference £7.7K, Trade Shows, Grow Careers £2.3K Sponsorship and Membership of other organisations £2.4K and Miscellaneous £6K.

Thus, we recorded a surplus of £1.4K on our day-to-day activities in 2024.

The value of our CCLA account increased by £8,191 in 2024 to £168,075 whilst the value of our NFU Investments increased by £10,881 to £138,013.

Our overall financial position at the end of 2024 showed a balance of £364K which is £20.4K better than the end of 2023. So, overall, our financial position is strong with very significant reserves.

The Management Board continues to closely monitor the financial position of the organisation and continue to develop plans to increase revenue whilst controlling expenditure and ensuring that it contributes to the capacity of the Institute to deliver an enhanced professional service for the membership. The full audited accounts for 2024 will be published on our web site.

Membership fees were increased on average by 2% in 2024.

## Charitable and Public Benefit

The Charity Commission requires all charities to make an annual statement as to the way their activities benefit the public. The Institute considers that the promotion of Chartered status provides both the horticultural industry and its members with added professional status as more members become 'Chartered Horticulturists'. The collaborative work of the Institute with key organisations ensures both the Institute and the industry has a voice on the wider stage. The Trustees are mindful of the Charity Commission Guidance on public benefit.

## Reserves Policy

The Chartered Institute of Horticulture's policy concerning the level of cash and investments is to have funds available to: meet liabilities as they fall due; meet emergencies and build up investments over a period with the aim of providing an additional income stream to cover its activities. The Trustee's free reserves target, at a minimum, is to cover the full cost of operating the Institute for 3 months. The current level of free reserves held is significantly in excess of the Institute's Reserves Policy.

## Risk Management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

**Gabriel Roe FCIHort**  
Honorary Treasurer

# Regional Branches

Our 8 regional branches operate autonomously with a local committee and representation on the CIH Council of Trustees. Branch Officers are elected at Annual Branch Meetings

## Ireland

- Chair: Joseph Croke
- Secretary: Michael Hagan
- Treasurer: Paul Fitters
- YHoY Organiser: Sandra Austin

## North West & North Wales

- Chair: Gareth Manning
- Secretary: Rob Mackey
- Treasurer: Susan Nicholas
- Membership Secretary: Helen Baxter
- Branch Correspondent: Richard Lewis

## Scotland

- Interim Chair: Victoria George
- Vice-chair: George Gilchrist
- Membership Secretary: Fiona Sanderson
- Treasurer: Neil Woodcock
- Secretary: Vacant
- ECH Representative: James Douglass

## Northern

- Chair: Clive Parker
- Vice-chair: Helena Glassup
- Secretary: Jason Daff
- Treasurer: Andrew Jackson
- Membership Secretary: Robin Costello
- YHoY Organiser: Cailean Stewart

## Eastern

- Chair: Malcolm Catlin
- Vice-chair: Ted Smith
- Treasurer: Anja Schmalfuss
- Secretary: Fran Suckling
- ECH Representative: Amber Hine

## West Midlands & South Wales

- Chair: Kelly Baker
- Secretary: Paul Mann
- YHoY Organiser: Josh Egan-Wyer

## South West

- Chair: Vacant
- Treasurer: Vacant
- YHoY Organiser: Chris Bird

## South East

- Chair: Gerry Edwards
- Treasurer: Bernard Farrell
- YHoY Organiser: Michelle Brandon
- Events coordinator: Marie Shallcross
- ECH Representative: George Morris



# Branch Updates

## Scotland

The Scotland Branch had a much more successful year in 2024. We saw improved member engagement for events, held more events than previous years, and had a number of new members joining the committee. This will be my last year on the committee, and I was pleased to see this improvement hopefully the start of a better momentum for the branch, before I hand over the reins. In 2024, I took on James Douglass, 2 times YHoY Grand Finalist, as my 'apprentice' Regional Organiser in 2024 and in 2025 will hand over the reins to him fully. James has made a superb job of jumping straight in and I look forward to hearing about James' achievements for moving the YHoY forward in Scotland in the future.

If it was possible, 2024 saw the most successful Grow Careers yet, and this proves to be one of the most popular horticultural event for students across Scotland, and with a growing online audience, this will continue to grow. I want to thank George Gilchrist for all his efforts in organising the event, this is no mean feat, and praise is definitely well deserved

**Victoria George MCIHort, Interim Branch Chair**

## Northern

We have had a very successful year largely down to the quality and professionalism of our highly proactive committee with numerous events and visits including our very first horticultural careers event 'Grow North' at Harewood House in May 2024. Thanks to Jason Daff, Trevor Nicolson and all the staff and supporters at Harewood and the employers and enterprises that helped us with this event.

We also celebrated the Institutes 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary spectacularly with a celebratory branch dinner and awards ceremony at The Bridge Hotel & Spa organised by Andrew Jackson. In November we hosted a lecture on Collingwood 'Cherry' Ingram at the Teikyo University Durham by Naoko Abe and a tree planting festival at Thorp Perrow Arboretum in Bedale North Yorkshire with Faith Douglas,

In particular I'd like to thank Jason Daff our secretary and Andrew Jackson our treasurer who have managed the affairs of the Northern Branch and guided and monitored the author through the choppy waters of 2024!

**Clive Parker CHort FCIHort, Branch Chair**

## South East

The South East Branch has now finished its rebuild and now has active and committed Committee. The Committee is comprised of members from various sectors of the horticultural industry and we are particularly delighted to have a representative of Young People in Horticulture. Many thanks to everyone who attended the ABM at the Museum of the Home.

**Gerry Edwards CHort MCIHort, Branch Chair**

## Ireland

Horticulture is alive and well but not without challenges in the Ireland region 2024. We enjoyed very successful meetings at GLAS, IPSAM and our YHoY final as well as an incredible two day study tour around Belfast. I would like to thank everyone on the Branch Committee who have helped to organise events throughout 2024. Personally, another highlight was the CIH Conference in Kew that I felt was outstanding, representing the best of industry and the solutions it can offer to meeting the planetary problems.

**Joseph Croke CHort MCIHort, Branch Chair**

## North West & North Wales

The branch has a good core of committee members but external commitments on key members means that the energy required to run a dynamic branch is lacking. There is a restructuring of the committee planned and I have indicated my desire to step down as Chair at an appropriate moment in 2025.

We have a number of events in the pipeline for 2025 which will hopefully encourage more members to get involved.

**Gareth Manning FCIHort, Branch Chair**

## West Midlands & South Wales

Following a very busy year in 2024 we have been greatly saddened by our Branch Chair Kelly Baker standing down from both Branch and CIH duties to attend to domestic matters. Kelly was a dedicated chair and member, giving everything that was asked of her. This is a big loss for the branch and the CIH as a whole and we all hope everything works out well for her.

During the year members had enjoyable, social and educational visits to Gloucestershire Royal NHS Gardens, Highnam Court Gardens, Bute Park and nursery, Green Jams nurseries and The Old Court nurseries and Picton Gardens. A big thank you to everyone involved in organising these excellent venues and to those who attended. Continued thanks go to Josh Egan-Wyer, David and Keri Butt, and Felicity Weeks for supporting Kelly and the Branch throughout the year with YHoY and events.

We are hoping to encourage more members to take an active role in the branch as we currently only have 2 committee role holders and 2 supporting committee members.

**Paul Mann MCIHort, Branch Representative**

## South West

The South West Branch is currently being revived, in 2024 members in the region met virtually to discuss the possibility of revitalising the branch and to plan events for 2025. Members are encouraged to volunteer for committee roles to revive the important work in the region. Please contact the secretariat for further information on volunteering opportunities.

## Eastern

The Branch continues to maintain a full and active committee with an eye on succession. The appointment of a specific Events Coordinator in November is allowing a fuller programme of events to be arranged for 2025. The list is likely to include a renowned grower as well as a leading botanic garden, to cover a breadth of interests. Recent visits have also attracted some newer members who have not previously attended as well as some long-standing members who haven't attended for some years.

It is hoped to follow up on the topics discussed at our 40th Anniversary tree planting, namely attracting more people into the profession and on biosecurity developments during the course of 2025.

**Malcolm Catlin MCIHort, Branch Chair**



## Organisation & Governance

Council, as the governing body and trustees of the Institute as a registered charity, is responsible for all policy decisions and actions taken by the Institute. This work is governed by the Institute's Royal Charter, its associated Bye-laws and such policies as are deemed necessary.

Council meets at least twice a year (in 2024 Council met three times: in March, July and November) in order to agree and monitor progress on the Institute's strategic objectives.

The day-to-day management of the CIH is undertaken by the Management Board. Invitations are circulated to members to nominate corporate members to be elected to the Council of Trustees and voted on by members at the next Annual General Meeting. Consideration is made to any skills gaps present within the Council when recruiting new trustees. Trustees receive training on their legal obligations and those of the Charter and Bye-laws through use of a Trustee handbook and Charity Commission guidelines.

## Council of Trustees

**President:** David Richardson CHort FCIHort

**President Elect:** Richard Barley CHort MCIHort

**Honorary Treasurer:** Gabriel Roe FCIHort

**Honorary Secretary:** Jason Daff CHort MCIHort

**Immediate Past President:**

Susan Nicholas FCIHort

**South East:** Andrew Cotterill CHort MCIHort

**Eastern:** John Cappalonga MCIHort

**West Midlands & South Wales:**

Paul Mann MCIHort

**North West & North Wales:**

Gareth Manning FCIHort

**Northern:** Jason Daff CHort MCIHort

**South West:** Vacant

**Scotland:** George Gilchrist FCIHort

**Ireland:** Joseph Croke CHort MCIHort

**Edible Sector Representative:**

James Simpson

**Education Representative:**

James Wagstaffe MCIHort

**Early-Career Horticulturist Representative:**

Claire Mitchell ACIHort

**Social & Therapeutic Horticulture Rep.**

Sue Jeffries MCIHort



# Trustees Elected in 2024

## Sue Jeffries MCIHort

Sue is a social and therapeutic horticulture (STH) practitioner with 17 years' experience of developing and delivering projects to a wide range of people and organisations. Currently working for Lancashire Wildlife Trust as a Community Horticulturist based at The Greenhouse Project in Blackburn where she delivers a nature and wellbeing programme and organises mentoring and volunteer gardening sessions.

In 2023 Sue published her first book *'Designing, Planting and Using a Therapeutic Garden'* providing a practical guide on designing therapeutic gardens as well as ideas for therapeutic activities. During her career she has worked with a range of adult groups, children and those with additional needs. Her aim is to help improve wellbeing and health outcomes through using gardens, nature and growing spaces. Sue has been a member of the Chartered Institute for 12 years and is the Chair of the Social and Therapeutic Horticulture Special Interest Group.



## Joseph Croke CHort MCIHort

Joseph is a lecturer at Munster Technological University, Cork Ireland. He is the Programme Director for the BSc (Hons) in Horticulture program, teaching on a number of horticulture and agriculture modules as well as undertaking research with final year honours students. Joseph holds a Bachelor of Agriculture Science Honours degree in Commercial Horticulture from University College Dublin and is currently completing the writing of a PhD at University College Cork focussing on somatic embryogenesis of Pelargonium. He achieved Chartered Horticulturist status in 2016 and currently serves as the Ireland Branch Chairperson.



## James Simpson

James Simpson is the Managing Director of Adrian Scripps Ltd., previously the company's Technical Director he is now responsible for whole business management and strategy. A keen passion for innovation and the introduction of technology across the business, has put Adrian Scripps Ltd. at the forefront of some of the sector's leading developments including varietal innovation, robotics and automation, environmental enhancement and innovation in production techniques across our horticultural crops. He is an Honorary Assistant of Worshipful Company of Fruiterers and a Director of British Apples and Pears trade association for top fruit.



## Young Horticulturist of the Year

Hestercombe House and Gardens near Taunton was the venue for the 2024 Grand Final which saw competitors from across our 8 regional branches battle for the coveted title of "Young Horticulturist of the Year" and the Percy Thrower Travel Bursary of £2500 to enable them to further their horticultural interests.

The winner was Jonathan Zerr from Helmingham Hall and Benton End in Suffolk where he is working towards his aspiration of managing historic plant collections and fostering cultural heritage and biodiversity within a historic garden setting

Second place went to James Douglass and third was taken by Lawrence Weston. It was acknowledged that runner up Frank Cooke from North-West North Wales, was, at 16, the youngest ever finalist in the competition, and we expect great things from him in the future, so keep your eye out for this budding star!

The competition is made possible thanks to the generous support of the Shropshire Horticultural Society and the many regional sponsors and host venues who continue to support us.

I would like to thank the YHoY Action Group, Regional Organisers and volunteers who help to make participation in the competition a rewarding experience for everyone.

**Victoria George MCIHort**  
**National YHoY Coordinator**



Young Horticulturist of the Year: Jonathan Zerr



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**Independent Financial Examiner**

Helen Furlong FCCA  
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British Growers Association  
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