

Perennial News

ISSUE 38 | AUTUMN 2019

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

Perennial's new
support for families
gets thumbs up
pg.4

News from the gardens
pg.14 & 15

Special Events 2020
pg.20 & 21



Helping people
in horticulture
Perennial

Welcome

“Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, close bosom-friend of the maturing sun”.

So starts Ode to Autumn by John Keats, who had a poet’s eye for the natural world. Left to itself of course the natural world delivers wilderness – bountiful, but, well, wild. Gardens, parks, nurseries and sports fields, which provide so much pleasure and benefit to people of all ages and backgrounds, require the intervention, knowledge and hard work of people in horticulture. It is those people whom this autumn issue, and indeed every edition, of Perennial News is about, and here is the latest news on what we are doing to support them.

But it is also about how Perennial's supporters help us to deliver our purpose of building better futures for people in horticulture and their families. In this edition you will find stories of what those supporters have been getting up to across the UK. You will learn how people help us with vital fundraising activities, donations and legacies, by giving time and expertise as volunteers in our offices, gardens and at shows, and by visiting our gardens and using our catalogues and online shop to buy cards and gifts.

We also highlight companies who have chosen to stand alongside us as Perennial Partners. All of our supporters help to spread the word about what we do so that we can reach as many people in horticulture as possible. If you are one of those supporters then thank you. If you would like to become a supporter, then I’m thrilled that you are reading this and please do get in touch.

So far this year we’ve seen a 20% increase in the number of people we are helping compared to 2018 so there is very real and growing need out there. If you know someone who works in horticulture who needs our help, please tell them how to get in touch. They are assured of a warm and constructive response.

I hope you enjoy the magazine.

Warmest wishes,



Peter Newman
Chief Executive



Making an impact

Last year, with your support, we helped 1,469 people and supported them to access over £3.7 million in financial assistance (an increase of over £970,000 in comparison to 2017). To find out more about the difference your support makes, you can find our latest Impact Report on our website here: perennial.org.uk/ImpactReport2018

NEWS IN BRIEF

Spreading the word

This year's 180th anniversary has given us a great opportunity to get out and about and reach more people who need our help. Our award-winning show gardens at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, the RHS Cardiff Flower Show and Harrogate Spring Flower Show reached an audience of over 19.5 million people through media coverage, as well as the 300,000 people who visited the shows, many of whom our team were able to speak to personally. The Silver Gilt medal at Chelsea, as well as the Best in Show at Harrogate and Silver Medal at Cardiff were fantastic rewards for the hard work from everyone involved.



©Jon Barlow

Our gardens also help us spread the word about how Perennial helps people. Both York Gate and Fullers Mill have appeared on BBC Gardeners' World on TV this year, bringing

them to the notice of millions of gardeners and resulting in a 25% increase in visitors. It's been a bumper year for media coverage - we reached more than three times the number of people in the first half of this year compared to the same period last year.

All of this activity has contributed to a 20% increase in the number of people we've helped this year so far plus many, many more learning about our work.

Party with us

As we go to print, this year's Anniversary Festival Dinner is almost upon us! It promises to be a memorable evening in the company of our Patron, HRH Princess Alexandra and our President, Alan Titchmarsh. With the support of headline sponsors the London College of Garden Design and Lumley Insurance, the event will be a highlight of our 180th anniversary celebrations.

Planning ahead, please save the date for our annual Party for Perennial, which is confirmed for 23 January 2020 at Ev Bar on the South Bank in London. As ever, it will be a great opportunity to get together for an evening of fun and fundraising with friends and colleagues. Tickets are available now at perennial.org.uk/party

We couldn't do it without you

This packed edition of Perennial News shows just how much our generous supporters are already doing but we're always interested in hearing from people who'd like to get involved. We organise several challenge events throughout the year and can support you with your own fundraising ideas too, so if you'd like to help raise money, please get in touch.

The boys are back

The Naked Gardeners' Calendar is back for 2020! Our thanks go to all the game gardeners who came up with the idea, organised the shoot and had the bravery to bare all as their way of supporting Perennial. Ideal as a fun stocking filler, the calendar is available now from the Perennial online shop.

Don't forget: you don't have to get naked to support Perennial! We welcome support however it comes and can help you with your fundraising ideas. Get in touch with the team on **0800 093 8510 or email info@perennial.org.uk**



©Wendy Preston



Your industry, your charity



We need to work together to change lives!' explains Anita Bates, Director of Marketing & Fundraising

Up to the beginning of September we helped 20% more people than during the same period last year. We helped 136 children whose families faced real challenges during the school holiday and back to school costs and supported 71 families to prevent a further escalation of financial difficulties. In addition, we've launched an online budgeting tool and as a result supported 757 new people to improve their financial wellbeing.

Our lifelong support is needed now more than ever. People in the industry are facing really difficult times which is impacting on them physically, mentally and financially. It is a challenging and uncertain time and this is affecting people working across horticulture, especially as statutory welfare support bodies are being phased out and funding is being reduced. We can make a difference to someone's life but we need your ongoing support to be there for everyone who needs us.

**Advertise here
from £200!**

Support your industry and promote your business by advertising in Perennial News!

Please call Phil Swainston or Kate Cooney on 0800 093 8510 for more information.

We know there are people struggling who would benefit from our support, if only they knew we were here. We also need to increase the funds we raise to meet the needs of the ever-increasing number of people asking for our support. So we need help from companies of all sizes who work in any field of horticulture. Together we can spread the word to everyone in the industry, and also make sure that there are enough funds to help them now and in the future.



There are many ways businesses can get involved. Our Perennial Partner scheme offers a simple way to regularly support the charity and many encourage their staff to get involved in additional fundraising challenges. By engaging with Perennial, employees learn about the service they could receive from us, and remember us should they need us in the future. As we nurture relationships and build partnerships where Perennial becomes an integral part of the business we've seen that their employees feel able to call us when times get tough.

I love working with so many passionate people who are committed to supporting their colleagues and telling people how we can help.

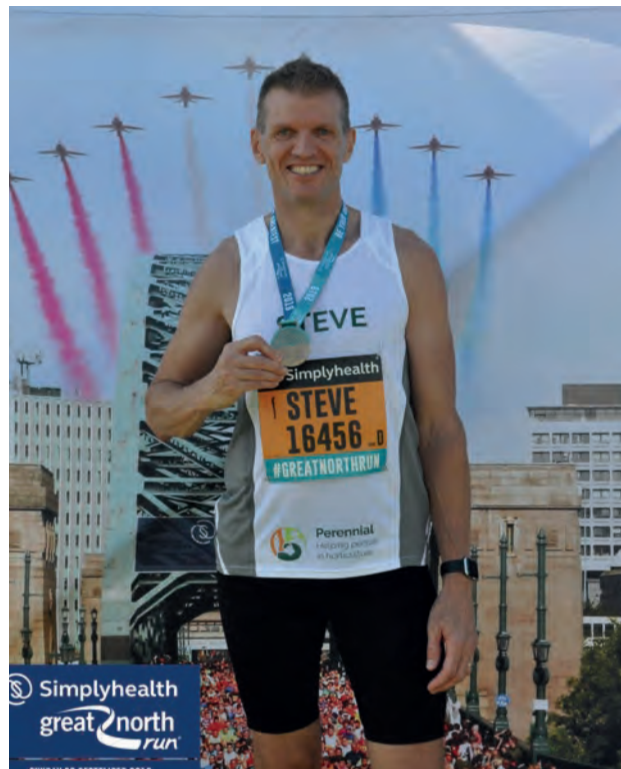
If you're already a Perennial Partner or corporate supporter of Perennial, thank you for your crucial support. By working together we can reach more people and prevent problems becoming crises.

If you want to discuss how your company can get involved and support our work. Please contact me or one of our Corporate Partnership Managers, Kate Cooney and Phil Swainston on 0800 093 8510 or email info@perennial.org.uk.

Steve Harper is a keen supporter

Steve Harper from Bord Na Mona recognises the importance of Perennial in the industry and decided to run the Great North Run for us. He says:

"I've been working in this industry for 20 years and this was an opportunity to give something back. I want to raise Perennial's profile both for people to understand it exists if they need help and also to encourage others from within the industry to show their support."



Going the distance

Thanks to everyone who took part in our first ever Marathon Month during June. The virtual event raised almost £2,000. A special mention goes to our top fundraisers Howard White from CED Stone, Alison Levey and the team from Wildflower Turf, who were continuing their fantastic season of fundraising, after completing the ArcelorMittal Orbit abseil in April.



Kilimanjaro Challenge

Forget the nail-biting trauma of building a show garden for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, the biggest challenge for Kate Gould and Keith Chapman this year was taking on one of the world's most iconic mountains to raise funds for Perennial. They trekked up Kilimanjaro in September and have raised over £9,000 for Perennial.

If you fancy the challenge of a lifetime, please get in touch to find out what bucket list fundraising adventures we have in store for next year.

 **Kingston**
Landscape Group

Proud Perennial Partners



- Commercial soft landscaping
- Grounds Maintenance
- Fencing and Boundary Treatments
- Paths and Paving
- Play Areas and Adventure Trails
- Roof Gardens and Green Walls

- Topsoil and Turf Laying
- Tree Surgery
- Water Features and Irrigation Systems

T: 020 8893 8992

E: simon@klguk.com

W: www.klguk.com

 [KingstonLandscapeGroup](https://www.facebook.com/KingstonLandscapeGroup)

 [klguk](https://twitter.com/klguk)

 [klguk](https://www.instagram.com/klguk)



Perennial's support for families gets thumbs up

Earlier this summer we launched two new ways to support families with school-age children. The 'Stress Free Holidays' and 'Back to School' campaigns, made possible thanks to Perennial supporters, helped 71 families meet the rising costs of school essentials and ease the financial pressure of the long summer break. Many of the people we supported did not previously know about Perennial so the campaigns also helped us reach new people who will receive our support in the long-term.



Julia Hayne,
Director of Services at
Perennial says:

"We know that despite being in work and budgeting carefully, many families are still struggling to meet growing demands on their finances. We're here to ease some of the pressure, taking the stress out of going back to school, and supporting families to find financial solutions that will help them in the longer term."

Perennial supports families where at least one parent or carer works or has recently worked in horticulture. Our professional, friendly team can help people access support towards the costs of food and childcare over the summer break and uniform, sports kit, books and other essential equipment and provision during term time.

According to a report by The Children's Society, the average cost of secondary school uniform, per year per child, is £340. Parents of primary school age children spend an average of £255 per year, per child. Many people simply can't afford new uniform and for those forced to purchase uniform from specific suppliers, the costs can result in debt or the family going without other essentials.

In addition to uniform, school trips are an expense that many families cannot afford. A typical day trip ranges in cost from £10 to £80 per pupil with additional transport costs depending on the school.



FAMILY FEEDBACK

How your support helps people in horticulture

"I don't really know what to say other than 'thank you'. It doesn't seem enough, I feel like I need to say more but I'm a bit stumped. My wife is at work, I've not told her the news yet but I'm betting she's going to make noises only dogs and dolphins can hear when I do. Thank you for letting me give her some good news."

"My husband, the children and I would like to say a massive thank you to you and your team at Perennial for all of your kindness and help. We were working out our bills yesterday and we have little over £50 for food and petrol for the next two weeks. You have helped us so much. I just can't thank you all enough."

"I am relieved and humbled that you have helped us with the children's uniform and shoes. Thank you so much for your support and advice too. It feels financially overwhelming at the moment and we are grateful for this help."

People find themselves in need of help for any number of reasons including redundancy, illness, injury, family bereavement or another life-changing event. There is no one-size-fits-all solution as every person's situation is different, but we're here for everyone working in, or retired from any branch of horticulture.

We want to hear from anyone who needs help accessing local support, choosing childcare options, understanding their statutory rights or applying for a little extra financial help during pinch points of the year such as children returning to school.

The 'Stress Free Summer' and 'Back to School' campaigns are time-limited opportunities offered by Perennial over the school summer holidays but Perennial welcomes all requests for help and support from people in horticulture at any time of year.

Find out more about how we help families at perennial.org.uk/families or contact our team on 0800 093 8543 or email services@perennial.org.uk.

Debt advice at Perennial



Wendy Tozer, Debt Advice Manager at Perennial, says "Debt doesn't discriminate" and a holistic approach is needed to help people manage debt effectively.

Debt is often seen as a taboo subject and not one that many people want to talk about or tackle. One of the most important things to remember about debt is that it doesn't discriminate; it can affect people on a low income who find themselves gradually getting more and more into debt as they try to manage essential household bills, or to someone on a high income who suddenly has an "income shock" - either a big reduction in income or a big increase in expenditure, for example if one of the household suffers sudden illness. Debt is often the symptom of a bigger issue and can also lead to health problems due to the stress of trying to deal with creditors and make ends meet.

Our job is to discuss people's circumstances in depth and then provide advice that is tailored to their particular situation. This includes discussing all the options available to successfully manage debt, helping people to pursue their chosen strategy and giving budgeting advice to help them avoid a future reliance on credit.

Our team of accredited debt advisers are trained to help people understand their situation 'in the round' and work with them to create a plan that's right for them. Once we've worked with someone and agreed a strategy to deal with their debts, we will help them to put it into practice. This may involve us negotiating with creditors to set up payment arrangements, as creditors to write off debts, or making applications for insolvency for the client (such as bankruptcy or a Debt Relief Order). We also make applications to other charities to secure grants. What's great about Perennial's debt advice service is that every person we support has a named debt adviser who is responsible for their case, and they can contact their adviser with any questions or worries.

Our service really came into its own in the case of George (see right) who was struggling with physical and mental illness when he was referred to us. He was depressed and had no idea how he could sort out his debts. His is a classic example of debt being the result of a bigger issue, and a contributing factor in worsening health. George is in much better health now and we're thrilled he's starting to think about the future with more optimism and hope. It's stories such as his that keep us going and remind us why we come to work every day!



“Perennial saved my life”

George Abercromby had worked as a self-employed gardener for 15 years before he had to stop work due to ill health in autumn 2018. He had battled chronic pain to remain at work to try to pay off debts he had accrued, but his money worries only contributed to his ill health and he soon found himself in a downward spiral.

George was referred to Perennial by the welfare rights adviser at his housing association due to rent arrears and other debts. He had not heard of Perennial and didn't know there was a dedicated charity for people in horticulture. He says:

“I was in a real mess at that time. I was in and out of hospital and just couldn't see an end to my problems. I was working as much as I could to try to pay off debts, but it was never enough. I fell into quite a deep depression and started drinking, which only made things worse of course. My whole life had been my work and I found it really hard to come to terms with

my worsening arthritis which meant I had to stop. I just couldn't see a way out, I felt suicidal at times and was just waiting to die.

“Perennial came along and everything changed. My debt adviser talked it all through and gave me advice on how we were going to sort things out. He helped with my bankruptcy claim, he negotiated with the van hire people, the council and other creditors on my behalf and he gave me confidence that we had a plan and there was a way out. I really can't thank Perennial enough. They have allowed me to focus on getting better, safe in the knowledge that I'm not missing deadlines and that the paperwork has all been filled in correctly.

“I'd love to go back to gardening but I need to be realistic about what I can do. Just 6 months ago things were very different for me though so you never know, anything's possible and I'm hopeful I can get back to doing a bit. My generation was taught that if you had money troubles, just work harder, but it's not as simple as that. You could say this year has been a journey and I'm just thankful to have had Perennial with me on it. Perennial saved my life - I know I wouldn't be here today without them.”

You're not alone – if you, or someone you know, has money worries of any kind, get in touch to find out how we can help. Our job is to prevent problem debt as well as deal with it so call our Helpline on **0800 093 8546** or email **services@perennial.org.uk**.

Not just a pretty picture: the enduring importance of charity Christmas cards

Supporters have been sending Perennial Christmas cards since we first started selling them in 1949. Last year we sold over 290,000 cards through our online shop and Cards for Good Causes pop-up shops. This means over the last five years alone our Christmas cards have been sent to more than one million people, many of whom will not have heard of Perennial before.

A huge thank you goes to all our supporters who buy and send Perennial Christmas cards. Not only are you supporting the charity financially, but there's a chance that your Christmas card will change someone's life for the better.



Robert* and his wife contacted Perennial after receiving one of our Christmas cards. Robert was suffering from a health condition and our caseworker helped him claim disability benefits, maximised the couple's income after he retired due to his ill health and awarded an ongoing payment. Sadly Robert has now passed away, but we continue to support his widow.

We can only help people who know about us and know how to get in touch. Please keep spreading the word that Perennial is here to help all people in horticulture. Visit www.perennial.org.uk/shop to purchase your cards and gifts this Christmas.

*client named changed to protect confidentiality.



Festive Facts

The first recorded Christmas cards were sent in 1611 by Michael Maier to James I of England and his son Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales.

The first printed Christmas card was sent by the founding director of The V&A, Sir Henry Cole, in 1843, four years after Perennial was founded. Interestingly Sir Roy Strong CH, who bequeathed The Laskett Gardens to Perennial in 2015, is a former director of The V&A.

In 1949 Perennial (then The Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society) sold its first charity Christmas card. In 2001 a card sent in 1843 by Sir Henry Cole to his grandmother sold at auction for £22,500.

Around £50 million is raised each year from the sale of charity Christmas cards.



The majority of our Christmas cards are sold through Cards for Good Causes. Now in its 60th year Cards for Good Causes opens over 300 pop-up shops across the UK in the run up to Christmas and sells cards for its 25 member charities. Visit www.cardsforcharity.co.uk to find your nearest shop.



A day in the life of...

JULIE SKINNER TRADING COORDINATOR

Julie joined Perennial as Trading Officer two years ago, looking after the day to day running of our trading business, which includes Perennial's online shop, gift catalogues, trade stands at flower shows and shops at York Gate and Fullers Mill gardens.

What does your typical working day look like?

I start by looking at the trading sales and any stock ordering for our shops at Fullers Mill and York Gate. The warehouse volunteers arrive and we go through their jobs which will include counting stock in and out and sending out orders. During the show season I arrange volunteer rotas and order and pack stock to take to the shows. From September onwards it's all about Christmas orders and taking customers' calls. During this time I also attend supplier meetings with our Trading Manager Laura Cloke to start thinking about our range of products for the new year.

What do you love most about your job?

I love how varied the role is but my favourite part is getting the opportunity to visit our two gardens and also working on the trade stand at shows. I'm lucky enough to be at RHS Chelsea Flower show and RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show during the build-up, so I get the chance to look at the show gardens before they open to the public. But the most rewarding thing is when someone visits the trade stand to tell us about how Perennial has helped them or someone they know. It's important to be reminded that our cards and products all help us reach new people.

You've done a 10k run in a heatwave and abseiled 80m down the ArcelorMittal Orbit for Perennial - which challenge was the hardest?!

They were very different challenges as one was mentally challenging and one physical! I would say definitely the 10k due to all the training, and the heat on the day completely knocked me out. The abseil was nerve wracking but it was over very quickly. I'm planning to climb Snowdon in 2020 for my next fundraiser as I enjoy challenging myself and raising money for Perennial.

Why is Perennial's trading arm so important to the charity?

It gives us a great opportunity to spread the word about the great work Perennial does by attending shows and raising funds by selling our products - 100% of the profit goes to the charity. I often get people phoning up to place an order because they have heard about us from a Christmas card they received.

How vital a part do volunteers play?

We couldn't run the warehouse without them. I have seven volunteers who have been coming in on a weekly basis for over two years. The warehouse comes to life when they're in and they have a huge impact on the smooth running of it.

Finally, what products are you tempted to buy yourself?!

I will be buying all my Christmas cards from our new range, plus some stocking filler items.

Working in partnership

Having a presence at garden shows and other gardening events is one of the main ways we raise awareness of Perennial's services and our need for support. We're keen to build on-going partnerships with industry-related organisations to raise funds and capitalise on their networks to help reach more people.

National Garden Scheme

The National Garden Scheme remains our single largest donor and this year gave £130,000 to Perennial. The NGS has been supporting our work for over 30 years now and this long-term partnership has enabled us to help thousands of people working in and retired from all sectors of the horticulture industry.

Scotland's Gardens Scheme

Perennial joined forces with Scotland's Gardens Scheme to host a joint stand at Gardening Scotland in Edinburgh this summer. We were lucky to have Beechgrove Garden presenter and Perennial Trustee, Carole Baxter on the stand every day, which was a big draw for visitors. Perennial has been a beneficiary of Scotland's Gardens Scheme for almost half a century and this partnership is an important way for us to raise awareness in Scotland.



Through this scheme garden visitors in Scotland helped raise £12,500 for Perennial last year. Hand in hand with this, more people have been asking for Perennial's help in Scotland over the past couple of years. To meet this demand we have recruited two more services team members dedicated to Scotland.

Orkney Garden Festival

Perennial was one of two nominated charities for the popular biennial Orkney Garden Festival, which took place in July. Twenty-eight gardens across the islands opened their gates to visitors, including that of festival organiser Caroline Kitchlow. The event raised £5,500 for Perennial and helped raise awareness of the help we can offer people in horticulture on Orkney.



©Nicola Stockent

The Laskett Gardens



Sir Roy Strong CH, describes opening his garden as part of the National Garden Scheme.

"Sunday July 21st was D-Day: the biennial opening of The Laskett Gardens for the National Garden Scheme (NGS). We welcomed 800 people which meant £8,000 for the charities the NGS supports (of which Perennial is a beneficiary).

This was the happiest opening that I can remember not least because I felt this year

the garden, after years of change and replanting, had really 'come together'. That's always a magic moment. Even our new double classic English herbaceous border, only planted up in the spring, looked somehow mature.

At the end of the day we all slumped back in our chairs in an exhausted but happy reverie, glad that we wouldn't be doing this again until 2021."

Visit www.perennial.org.uk to read more from Sir Roy about the garden opening.

The National Garden Scheme is Perennial's largest single annual donor, having donated more than £1.8 million since our partnership began in 1986.

Chelsea – Working together. Inspired by The Laskett Gardens

Our Perennial Lifeline Garden was awarded an RHS Silver-Gilt Medal at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. Marking our 180th anniversary of helping people in horticulture, the garden, designed by Chelsea first timers Colm Joseph and Duncan Cargill, was inspired by The Laskett Gardens in Herefordshire created by Sir Roy Strong CH and his late wife Julia Trevelyan Oman CBE.



©Jon Barlow

Staged as a walk-through exhibit in the Great Pavilion, the garden attracted praise for its innovative perennial rose meadow planting design. This reimagined the classical rose garden at the Laskett Gardens, the garden that is bequeathed to Perennial by Sir Roy. The creation of the exhibit was a true collaboration from many industry partners including major sponsors London Stone, Conquest Creative Spaces and the London College of Garden Design who came together in their support of Perennial. It provided a powerful platform to raise awareness of how Perennial helps everyone working in horticulture and their families when they are struggling financially, physically and personally.

Our thanks go to all those who helped create this wonderful garden representing the 'lifeline' that Perennial has been for so many people over the past 180 years.



©Jon Barlow

Happy^{COMPOST}

Our new range of
PEAT FREE composts

Get in touch
info@thegreengardener.com
www.thegreengardener.com

YORK GATE

one of Perennial's gardens



**From the
Head Gardener -
Ben Preston**

I think all head gardeners are a little biased, but I am truly in love with the little one acre of gardening pleasure nestled on the edge of Adel that was masterfully laid out and created by the Spencer family from the early 1950's. The fourteen garden rooms squeezed into one acre should feel claustrophobic, but clever vistas and intriguing plants take you on a journey that would excite Lewis Carroll. Granite setts, circular mill stones and intricate ironwork draw you from one room to the next, opening new views and unveiling quirky features. The backbone of the garden really is remarkable giving Jack (Senior Gardener) and me the licence to make subtle changes and flex our horticultural muscles.

Our big project this winter will be the overhaul of Sybil's garden. It is the only room to be changed in design since the bequest of York Gate by Sybil Spencer back in 1994. Alistair Baldwin was commissioned for the re-design in 2004 and while the hard landscaping and layout is worthy of the Spencer's fine touch, we feel the planting needs a major overhaul. We have been very generously bequeathed the most wonderful collection of exotic plants from

the late horticulturist Don Vickers. His plants will make up the core of the planting and Jack's collection of aroids will no doubt heavily feature in the understory. Together we have been designing bold and contrasting foliage combinations that will hopefully blow your socks off next summer. *Dicksonia antarctica* (tree ferns), *Tetrapanax papyrifer* (Chinese rice-paper plant) and various species of banana including; *Musa basjoo*, *Musa sikkimensis* and *Ensete ventricosum* 'Maurelii' will provide a dramatic canopy. Miniature Jurassic Park awaits you next spring...

We have now closed for the season following another recording breaking year. We welcomed over 16,500 people to the garden and now have almost 1,000 Friends of York Gate. It's such a pleasure to spread the word about Perennial's work and support through people visiting and enjoying the garden.

The new garden development to secure the long-term future of York Gate is now underway with the launch planned for next spring. With a new garden entrance, bigger café, car park and plant nursery it will allow visitors to enjoy the full benefit of a visit to York Gate. The garden will be opening on Fridays and Saturdays for the first time as well as opening earlier each day. A very exciting winter is ahead, and we can't wait to welcome you all back to the garden in Spring. Happy bulb planting!

OPENING TIMES

1 April - 1 November 2020

Wednesday to Sunday -
11:00am - 4:30pm
(Closed Monday & Tuesday)
Bank Holiday Mondays -
11:00am - 4:30pm

www.yorkgate.org.uk

FULLERS MILL

one of Perennial's gardens



From the Head Gardener – Annie Dellbridge

Fullers Mill is constantly evolving. This year we have been busy with new planting across the garden and we've built a replacement bridge over the mill pond making it wider and more accessible. Now the garden is closed for the winter we will use coir rolls to build a planting area between the new bridge and the Culford stream. We're all looking forward to getting started on this very exciting project.

Since the Spring issue of Perennial News, Fullers Mill has once again featured on BBC Gardeners' World, in their RHS Malvern Flower Show TV coverage. Thank you to local Suffolk nursery Hedgehog Gardens for their kind words on screen about Fullers Mill and congratulations on a stunning Silver Gilt winning display at the show.

My team and I were pleased to open the garden on Sunday 19 May for the National Garden Scheme's Garden and Health Week. We couldn't think of a more perfect setting than our tranquil woodland garden in which to take a stroll and unwind.

The Suffolk Nurseries Plant Fair took place on Sunday 21 July and was the best attended fair to be held at Fullers Mill to date. Thank you to all the exhibitors for their beautiful displays and to everyone who visited and bought plants.

Volunteers needed

Visitor numbers continued to grow throughout the season at Fullers Mill and have reached over 6,000 this year. The team were delighted to welcome so many new faces through the gates.

We would love to grow our friendly volunteer community, ready for reopening in April 2020, so if you live nearby and have a few hours to spare each week please get in touch.

Whether you'd like to help out in the garden or in the tea room, we'd love to hear from you - **email fullersmillgarden@perennial.org.uk** for more information or call **01284 728 888**.

Fullers Mill is an RHS Partner Garden. RHS members enjoy free entry on Wednesday afternoons. Friends of Fullers Mill enjoy free entry on any day we are open. Private visits from groups are welcomed throughout the year by prior arrangement, with guided tours available from staff. We have plenty of parking for coaches.

Tea, coffee and delicious home-made cakes are available to purchase from the Bothy. Plants propagated from the garden are available for sale.

OPENING TIMES

1 April - 30 September 2020

Sunday — 11:00am-5:00pm
Wednesday — 2:00pm-5:00pm
Friday — 2:00pm-5:00pm
(Closed Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday)

www.fullersmillgarden.org.uk

Pension credit changes highlight ongoing statutory support cuts



**Helen Waddington,
Head of Casework
at Perennial,
explains how recent
statutory support
changes are affecting
some older couples**

Since 15 May 2019 some older couples (where one person is of retirement age and the other is still of working age) have not been able to make a new claim for Pension Credit and/or Housing Benefit. Many have been claiming Universal Credit instead.

The government estimates that combining statutory benefits in this way will save the Treasury £395 million in the first three years but in reality this particular change will 'cost' some couples at least £7,300 a year in lost income.

In our experience, nearly all eligible couples were significantly better off on Pension Credit and Housing Benefit when compared to Universal Credit, but the law has changed and we're here to help people navigate it.

This is just one example of the ongoing and wide-ranging social and welfare care changes and funding cuts that we are experiencing and there is continued uncertainty around the full range of benefits available to people from all walks of life. Eligibility rules and criteria are often complex but our expert team of advisers and caseworkers help people of all ages access the support they need and we're always ready to listen to your particular situation and find a solution that works for you.

You don't need to wait until a problem becomes a crisis to get in touch and no problem or worry is too small (or big), so if



you're spending time thinking about how you're going to cope over the next few months, give us a call and we can chat things through.

GET ADVICE

If you have budgeted to receive Pension Credit and are no longer eligible, we can help you. If you think you, or someone you know in horticulture, may be affected by this change to Pension Credit and Housing Benefit, then please get in touch with us by calling our Helpline on 0800 093 8543.

Our easy to use online budgeting tool offers financial confidence and control to people in horticulture and their families at every stage in their career. If you're worried about money why not give it a try?



Work in horticulture? Worrying about your finances?
Our budgeting tool can help..



Tree selection

Learn to choose like a pro with garden designer David Wyndham Lewis

One of the biggest challenges for many people (professionals and amateurs alike) is choosing the right tree. To quote Bunny Guinness: "As with all important relationships in life, it is best not to fall in love with a tree because it looks drop dead gorgeous, far better to get to know what it might be like to live with first, before you take the plunge."

Fortunately, when choosing a tree there are real experts to ask for advice. And yet so many people still go for the showy, loud and entertaining tree, often seen at nurseries when they are putting on their best. We've all been wooed by a cherry tree in full spring blossom without considering its eventual size, habit, suitability for where we want to plant it and even the amount of work that will be needed to maintain it into the future.

As a garden designer I am often asked what tree will be best for many random and various positions. We have so much choice here in the UK and the people who work in the industry hold vast amounts of knowledge that they are very happy to share with you given half a chance.

Trees can be used to solve many problems in a garden such as hiding ugly buildings or framing a great view, but also, and often, they become the main focal point in a garden. So apart from taste, there are a few factors to consider that relate to the garden as well as the tree.

1. What type of soil do you have? If you don't know, invest in a soil testing kit or ask a local tree surgeon to do a soil survey. This will narrow (or broaden) your options and ensure you're choosing wisely. For example, Scots pines prefer a sandy acid soil and won't thrive on limey clay.

2. Where do you want to plant your tree? Some trees can cope with high winds while others prefer a little shelter. Knowing its final position will help you choose.

3. What's the prevailing weather like in your area? Is it mostly dry or wet? Hot or cold? Shady or sunny?
All basic stuff but vital to consider!

You can now finally get to the tree. All tree nurseries are happy for you to visit and they really know what they are talking about. When I was choosing trees for my show garden at the Harrogate Spring Flower Show this year, talking through my ideas and the planting ethos with one of the experts at Perennial Partner Majestic Trees allowed me to consider a wider selection of trees.

But probably the most important deciding factor is 'What do you like?' Garden fashion is nearly as fickle as the couture catwalk so make sure you are not just taking a choice based on what you are told is cool at the time. Trees are an investment in the future, so they're worth taking some time over to ensure you're friends for life.



Fellows help us flourish

©David Seliman

The Perennial Fellowship continues to grow as an increasing number of supporters join up and help make an impact on the lives of people in horticulture.

The regular annual donations made by our Fellows are vital in the long-term and enable us to plan how we can extend our support. One of our Friends from London recently became a Perennial Fellow and here she describes her reasons for joining:

"People of my generation, who grew up in the country or in small rural towns, were always aware of such organisations as the Gardeners' Royal Benevolent Society (now known as Perennial), and the Royal British Legion. Some years ago, a close, very horticultural, friend of mine – we often spent hours gardening together – died suddenly and it was asked at his funeral that instead of flowers we should make donations to Perennial. This I didn't do at the time so when David Lewis approached me about the Fellowship Scheme this seemed to be the perfect way to get involved. I had also been made aware of the good work Perennial does when the father of a close friend of mine, involved in horticulture, died tragically and

Perennial stepped in to help out in many different ways.

"I believe that Perennial's help is needed now more than ever. The fact that support is specific to a certain sector makes it easier for people to know that help is there, but there is still a big job of raising awareness among those who should know about it. I was keen to contribute anyway, but the events for Fellows are that little bit extra that makes it special to be part of."

As well as making a vital contribution to Perennial's work, Fellows enjoy a range of benefits including invitations to exclusive events throughout the year. Fellows events planned for 2020 include a behind the scenes tour of Lords cricket ground and a magical advent dining experience at Barnsley House, Gloucestershire.

If you would like to find out more about joining the Perennial Fellowship visit perennial.org.uk/fellowship or contact David Lewis on 01372 373962 or fellowship@perennial.org.uk

Gifts in Wills change lives

Every person who leaves a legacy to Perennial, however big or small, makes a difference to someone's life.

To find out more about leaving a gift to Perennial in your Will, come to one of our legacy events in 2020.

Following the success of our legacy events this year at beautiful gardens including Stevington Manor and Kathy Brown's Garden in Bedfordshire, we will be holding a series of events across the UK next year.

To find out more contact us on 01372 235434, email legacies@perennial.org.uk or visit www.perennial.org.uk/legacies

Special Events 2020

Our 2019 Special Events, sponsored by Lumley Insurance, proved as popular as ever, with many garden tours selling out and waiting lists filling up throughout the season. We're thrilled to bring you an early taster of our 2020

programme, and to welcome back Lumley Insurance as our 2020 Special Events programme sponsor.

Here's a taste of our exclusive events...

£145



Stavordale Priory

Charlton Musgrove, Somerset, BA9 8HN
Thursday 2 July, 10.30am – 2.30pm

The home of Sir Cameron Mackintosh and Michael Le Poer Trench Esq. Includes a garden visit (to this rarely open venue) and lunch nearby.

An Augustinian Priory until the dissolution of the monasteries, Stavordale Priory has been the home of Cameron and Michael for over 25 years. Beds overflow with richly-coloured perennials with structure provided by tightly clipped box shapes and topiary yews. Michael's birthday arboretum leads to a woodland grove and through to a series of beautiful ponds and lakes.

£80



Canterbury Cathedral Gardens

Canterbury, CT1 2HA
Tuesday 9 June, 10.00am – 4.00pm

Includes talk, tour of gardens and cathedral and lunch in The Lodge.

After an introduction to the history of the cathedral gardens, Head Gardener Philip Oostenbrink will lead a tour through the Precincts and two of the private gardens.

The largest private garden is the two acre garden of the Deanery, which has been a garden for 1,000 years. A large kitchen garden can be found along the original city wall and the main lawn is surrounded by perennials, exotics, mature trees and shrubs.

£80



Combermere Abbey

Cheshire, SY13 4AN
Wednesday 20 May, 11.00am – 2:30pm

Explore a thousand acres of rolling parkland, walled gardens and ancient woodlands alongside spectacular gothic architecture, enchanting waters and a breathtaking Edwardian Glasshouse. Combermere Abbey is steeped in a thousand years of history. Head Gardener, Natalie Angus will introduce us to a slice of bucolic life. The Walled Gardens comprise three gardens and cover five and a half acres. Lovingly restored by the current owners. After the tour, we will have worked up an appetite for lunch at the nearby Combermere Arms.

Friends of Perennial enjoy priority booking on Special Events,
so these preview events may be sold out when Perennial News goes to print. To enjoy priority booking for the rest of the programme, join our Friends of Perennial membership scheme at www.perennial.org.uk/friends.

FROM
£1,995



A journey through Sweden's southern gardens

Malmö, Sweden

Tuesday 26 – Saturday 30 May 2020

A five-day/four-night guided horticultural discovery tour of southern Sweden.

An exclusive, personally guided, Swedish garden extravaganza led by garden designer David Wyndham Lewis and horticulturist John Taylor. Journey through southern Sweden, taking in three historic gardens (Katrinetorp, Norrviken and Sofiero), the Malmö Garden Show, Hällåkra vineyard and cider orchard and Kolonihus communal gardens, all whilst leaving time to enjoy the city and relax in the luxurious Master Johan Hotel.

LUMLEY
INSURANCE LIMITED



We are passionate about protecting the things
you treasure in and around your home

**We'll donate £250 to Perennial
if you take out cover with us***

Contact us: 01285 885885

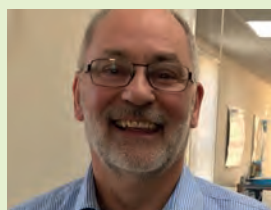
www.lumleyinsurance.co.uk

*With a household policy over £750 plus Insurance Premium Tax

FOR FULL TERMS AND CONDITIONS PLEASE VISIT: WWW.LUMLEYINSURANCE.CO.UK/PERENNIAL

The UK's largest family owned independent broker specialising in private client insurance

It's not all about rattling tins



James Burns, Community Fundraising Manager describes the difference our supporters and volunteers can make.

Since joining Perennial I've tried to meet as many volunteers as possible and so I've spent lots of time in plant creche tents at flower shows and gazebos at community events.

It is great to see that we're shouting from the rooftops that we're here to help anyone in or retired from horticulture and we're looking for as much support as possible to get the message out far and wide. We have a range of opportunities on offer year-round including charity ambassadors, event support, garden maintenance and support via special skills such as photography or social media.

Mike Strachan in Scotland (see below) is an incredible example of how one person can make a huge difference to a community. Not only has he raised over £1,500 for us over the last 12 months via collection tins and local talks, he has also generated so much awareness of Perennial in the Banchory area that we've seen an increase in requests for help as a result.

We can't hope to reach all 500,000+ people in horticulture without everyone who already knows about us telling family, friends and work colleagues, distributing contact cards and ensuring that if someone is struggling to get the support they need, they know we're here to help.

If you'd like to find out more about our plans and available volunteering opportunities I'd love to hear from you.

jburns@perennial.org.uk or call: 07946 055 848
perennial.org.uk/volunteering



A true Perennial Champion

In June, Mike Strachan from Banchory, Scotland received a well-deserved Perennial Champion Certificate from Carole Baxter at Gardening Scotland and has since received a letter of thanks from his local MSP and a mention of his voluntary work for Perennial in the Scottish Parliament. Here he shares why he

volunteers for us and reflects on the difference the charity has made to his life.

"I worked in the local parks department in Banchory for years and loved it. That all changed when my wife had a stroke. I became her full-time carer and had to give up work. It put a huge strain on our finances and soon I found it difficult to keep up with payments.

"Perennial helped me apply for support and ensured all our finances were in order. They advised me on how to cope as a carer and listened to me when I felt things were getting too much. It was such a relief to know someone was there for us and it was so much more than help with the bills.

"When things improved, I wanted to do something to show my appreciation. I phoned the office to ask for some leaflets and donation boxes, and then visited my local shops and sports clubs to ask them to help raise money and awareness. Regularly collecting donations and topping up leaflet stocks makes a real difference to my day and gives me a huge boost knowing I am doing something to help.

"My visit to Gardening Scotland this year was the icing on the cake. It was lovely to meet Carole Baxter and the Perennial team and be reminded that there is life outside Banchory!"

The power of community fundraising

We love to hear about the different ways our supporters choose to fundraise, the more creative the better. Here are some inspiring examples of recent community fundraising for Perennial.

Mazegarden open day

Over seven hundred adults and children visited the wonderful Mazegarden near Chichester for its annual Perennial open day, which raised over £3,300. This is the 17th year that Richard Bushby and Sandra Hamilton have opened their gardens to the public in aid of Perennial and to date they've raised a whopping £36,700.

Steep Open Gardens Weekend

Fifteen private gardens in the Hampshire village of Steep opened their gates for Perennial on 15 and 16 June. Villagers chose Perennial as their charity beneficiary this year, along with the local church, because of the connection between gardeners and Perennial's support for people in horticulture. Over the weekend around two hundred people visited the gardens, raising nearly £700.



Hever In Bloom

Perennial was the chosen charity for Hever Castle's annual garden event thanks to the support of Head Gardener Neil Miller and his team. We had an information stand at the event, so visitors could find out more about what we do.

Summer shows

We also popped along to Capel Summer Show and the Edenbridge & Oxted Agricultural Show earlier this summer. James Burns from Perennial was joined by some fantastic volunteers to sell Perennial merchandise, take donations and talk to people about Perennial and how we help people in horticulture.

ORGANISE YOUR OWN EVENT

We would love to hear from anyone who is interested in getting involved with fundraising and awareness raising for Perennial. If you have time to manage collection tins in your local area or would like to organize afternoon teas, coffee mornings or run a Perennial information stand at local festivals and events, we'd love to hear from you.

If you have an idea for your own fundraising event or activity, ensure it gets off to a flying start with this simple checklist:

BE CREATIVE

Whether it is a sponsored run, open garden, plant sale or something more off the wall, the more fun the better

TELL US

Keep us posted on your plans so we can help you promote them and give you more fundraising hints and tips

JUSTGIVING

Set up a JustGiving page so people can donate easily and securely directly to Perennial

CONTACTS

Email your friends, family and colleagues to encourage them to donate or come along

GET SNAPPY ON SOCIAL

Promote and share your fundraising efforts with photographs and information on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook and remember to tag @PerennialGRBS so we can help you spread the word

Most of all HAVE FUN!

Contact James Burns, Community Fundraising Manager on jburns@perennial.org.uk or call: 07946 055848.

Party for Perennial 2020

Thursday 23 January



Join us for a fun evening of networking and fundraising. Tickets include a glass of bubbly on arrival, some delicious samples of Turkish mezze and the chance to win some incredible prizes in our raffle.

Our venue, EV bar, is located in an atmospheric space under the railway arches close to Waterloo station and South Bank.

Money raised through ticket sales and our raffle will help support people in horticulture and their families who come to Perennial for help.

Price - £25

For more information and to book tickets call Claire Humphries on
01372 384 043, email chumphries@perennial.org.uk
or visit www.perennial.org.uk

Many thanks to the Party sponsor Platipus Anchoring Ltd for making the event possible.



Helping people
in horticulture

Perennial

General Advice Line: 0800 093 8543 | Debt Advice Line: 0800 093 8546
Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5pm | services@perennial.org.uk | www.perennial.org.uk