

Me & My Job - Iain Wylie, chief executive, Garden Centre Association

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Iain Wylie, chief executive, Garden Centre Association - image: GCA

How did you get started in the industry? I began working at a garden centre during the weekends while I was at school. I then studied for a BSc in horticulture and business management at university.

What does your typical day involve? There is no such thing as a typical day and that has always been the case since I've been involved in the industry. It's one of the reasons I love it.

What takes up most of your time? My role is to work for the benefit of all Garden Centre Association (GCA) members, so that takes up the most of my time. There isn't one task that dominates but it's important to remember that everything I do should bring the members a benefit.

What is the best aspect of your job? The variety and being part of this wonderful, friendly and progressive industry — getting the opportunity to visit members' centres and speaking to their owners and managers.

And the worst? I'd love to visit every member more frequently than time and distance allows.

What is your greatest achievement at work? Our GCA Grow initiative and the GCA Conference in Blackpool haven't been a bad start.

How do you wind down after a hard day at work? I enjoy listening to music at home or going to concerts — and an occasional glass of wine.

What does the future hold? I try to look at the pot as half full rather than half empty, even when the rain gauge is overflowing. Putting the weather aside, I see a good future for garden centres. People will still want to shop at this type of outlet even with the increase of online retailing. There are many smaller centres growing and making their presence felt. We see many joining the GCA, which in turn benefits their businesses as they grow.