

Local Gardener

Is Stratford-upon-Avon ‘to be or not to be’ home to GCA’s January 2018 conference?

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THE GARDEN Centre Association (GCA) has announced that the location of its annual conference is to be Stratford-upon-Avon (January 21 until 24, 2018).

The GCA’s annual event will be held in the birthplace of William Shakespeare, Stratford-upon-Avon, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel from January 21 until 24.

Iain Wylie, Chief Executive of the GCA, explained: “It will be hard to top last year’s annual conference, which took place in the picturesque St Andrews in Scotland, as it was such a success but this year we have chosen a location that is steeped in history, Stratford-upon-Avon.

“We are thrilled that the conference will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. It is set in beautiful landscaped gardens next to the River Avon and for the entirety of the conference we will have the usual mix of top quality speakers, analysis of inspections and garden centre best practice and announcements of competition and awards.

“We will be announcing more details shortly and information on how to book in due course via our website www.gca.org.uk, but for now, be sure to keep the dates free in your diary.

“Briefly, the schedule for the conference will be as follows:

- Sunday – Greenfingers Challenge Cup

- Monday – inspection and competition round ups plus keynote speakers – based around operational issues. A themed evening dinner, networking event for garden centres and associate members.
- Tuesday – a day of strategy with keynote speakers on subjects such as the economy, challenges facing business and direction of future market trends with an emphasis on maintaining and enhancing profitability. In the afternoon there will be the supplier exhibition. In the evening we will host our Annual Gala Dinner and awards presentation.”

The GCA represents nearly 200 garden centres nationwide. Through sharing information and its inspection programme the GCA helps members to achieve high standards in customer service, plant quality and reliability.

For further information, please call 01244 952170. Alternatively, please visit www.gca.org.uk, log on to www.facebook.com/pages/GardenCentreAssociation or follow the organisation on Twitter at www.twitter.com/GC_Association.