

Media release for the Garden Centre Association

Has your inspector called yet?

GARDEN centres who have not yet had their Garden Centre Association (GCA) annual inspections will receive a visit soon (up to and including June 19, 2015) says the leading industry organisation.

Since March member garden centres have been assessed across all departments and awarded an overall score. Those who have not yet had their visits will do so very soon.

Iain Wylie, GCA Chief Executive, explained: “The inspectors are reporting back so far that they are delighted with what they are seeing and that standards are especially good this year, particularly at the top end.

“We are urging all garden centres yet to be visited to be prepared for their inspection. Inspectors drop in unannounced and you can’t put them off and ask them to come back another day. Inspections cannot be delayed or deferred because of any ongoing display or building work – customers see this when they visit! Garden centres will not lose marks because of such activities provided they are carried out safely and disruption is minimised with the customer in mind.

“The results of the inspections form the basis for many GCA awards, including Destination Garden Centre of the Year, Garden Centre of the Year, Area Winners, Highly Commended and Most Improved Garden Centre. The top 10 centres will receive a Garden Centre of Excellence Award and all centres scoring 75% or above receive the Highly Commended certificate.

“We’d like to wish everyone the very best of luck. GCA garden centres always have high standards and we’re really looking forward to seeing all the wonderful initiatives people have put in place this year to help enhance their offering.”

This year’s inspectors are: Liz Hutson, Andy Campbell, Ian Boardman and Roger Crookes.

On arriving at a garden centre the inspector will make him/herself known and will proceed with the inspection alone, before delivering a feedback session of approximately 45 minutes.

Through sharing information and its inspection programme the GCA helps members to achieve high standards in customer service, plant quality and reliability.

Will Armitage, Chairman of the GCA, said: “Many GCA members have said that the unique annual inspections and constructive feedback sessions are one of the biggest benefits of membership. It is a fantastic motivational and management tool and really keeps staff on their toes, making sure they are always doing their absolute best.

“Garden centres receive no advance warning about when their inspection will take place. It is all about making sure they are offering a consistently excellent service and improving their customer service standards, which is what all GCA garden centres must do to remain members.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity to shine and to share your good practice with other members and the industry as a whole.”

For further information, please call 0118 930 8918. Alternatively, please visit www.gca.org.uk, log on to www.facebook.com/pages/Garden-Centre-Association or follow the organisation on Twitter at www.twitter.com/GC_Association.

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For further media details and photographs if required, please call Porcupine PR on 01278 446801 or email Rachel@porcupinepr.co.uk. Alternatively, please contact Iain Wylie, GCA Chief Executive on 07843 633408 or email Iain@gca.org.uk.

Photo caption: GCA Inspector, Andy Campbell, conducting one of his inspections recently.

