

Media release for the Garden Centre Association

North Thames winners announced by the GCA

THE GARDEN Centre Association (GCA) has unveiled its winners for the North Thames region at a presentation yesterday evening (Tuesday, July 22, 2014) at Van Hage, Great Amwell.

Podington Garden Centre scooped the title of Best Garden Centre (GC) and Burston Rose & Garden Centre took home the award for Best Destination Garden Centre (DGC).

Iain Wylie, Chief Executive of the GCA, said: “We had a wonderful awards’ event yesterday at Van Hage, Great Amwell. Congratulations all round to all our members who won awards. All members work extremely hard to ensure they meet our levels of excellence and this is to be applauded. Well done to everyone involved and a massive ‘thank you’ to the team at Van Hage for helping host the evening.

“The awards included Best Customer Service, which went to Burston Rose & Garden Centre, and the Best Environment and Community award was scooped by Poplars Nursery Garden Centre.

“Burston Rose & Garden Centre also took home the award for Best Creativity and Innovation and the Most Improved site was won by Royal Horticultural Society’s (RHS) Hyde Hall Plant Centre and Gift Shop.

“There were lots of other awards presented on the night by our inspector, Ian Boardman, who attended the ceremony, and it was an inspiring and motivational event for everyone involved.”

The full results for the North Thames region GCA area awards are as follows for the GC and DGC categories:

Best Garden Centre: Podington Garden Centre (GC) and Burston Rose & Garden Centre (DGC)

Best Customer Service: Burston Rose & Garden Centre

Best Environment and Community: Poplars Nursery Garden Centre

Best Creativity and Innovation: Burston Rose & Garden Centre

Most Improved: Hyde Hall Plant Centre and Gift Shop

Best Plant Area: Podington Garden Centre (GC) and Burston Rose & Garden Centre (DGC)

Best Restaurant: Squires Garden Centre – Shepperton (GC) and Frosts at Woburn Sands (DGC)

Garden Products Retailer: Sunshine Garden Centre (GC) and Burston Rose & Garden Centre (DGC)

Best Indoor Lifestyle: Squires Garden Centre – Shepperton (GC) and joint winners The Burford Garden Company and Poplars Nursery Garden Centre (DGC)

Best Outdoor Living: Sunshine Garden Centre (GC) and The Van Hage Garden Company – Great Amwell (DGC)

The awards are decided by the results of the annual inspections, which take place at all GCA garden centres. Garden centres have no advance warning about when their inspection will take place and they do not have the option to turn away the inspector.

The Best Garden Centre and Best Destination Garden Centre awards went to the members that scored the highest overall mark in the area in their annual inspections.

The top scoring centres overall, nationally, in both the Destination Garden Centre and Garden Centre categories will be re-inspected before the titles of Garden Centre of the Year and Destination Garden Centre of the Year are announced at the GCA annual conference taking place in January 2015.

Iain added: “There are more award events in other regions taking place this and next week and we’re really looking forward to these too and will be releasing winners’ details after the events.

“The next awards’ night, and our final one in this series, is on Wednesday, July 23 and Roger Crookes will be presenting his findings and presenting awards to the South Thames region at Chessington Garden Centre.”

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 0118 930 8918 or visit www.gca.org.uk.

ENDS

For further media details, 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.

Photograph caption one: A shopper at a GCA garden centre.

Photograph caption two: Iain Wylie, Chief Executive of the Garden Centre Association.

