

# Local Gardener

## GCA Plant Area Workshop success at Ball Colegrave

September 5, 2016



THE GARDEN Centre Association (GCA) held a successful Plant Area Workshop at Ball Colegrave this summer (2016).

The event was attended by plant area managers, buyers and supervisors and was facilitated by GCA inspector, Roger Crookes.

Iain Wylie, GCA Chief Executive, said: “Our Plant Area Workshop was a big hit with the delegates. I’d like to thank all the participants including Roger and our hosts Ball Colegrave for their enthusiasm on the day. We all found the experience highly motivational.”

Attendees included a mixture of plant area staff and managers from GCA member garden centres, some with decades of experience and others quite new to the challenges and opportunities.

Roger explained: “Actually the less experienced delegates helped us develop one of the key themes of the day – how do we successfully engage less experienced, less confident, younger customers?”

“The discussion groups seemed to work really well, demonstrating the usual GCA friendly openness and generated numerous ideas and observations around key opportunities for increased sales of plants, improved linked selling and ‘recipe retailing’, sub-categorising,

simple signage, using ‘living labels’ and developing a unique strength or specialism for each plant area.”

Participants were also given the chance to view the displays of plants in the Ball Colegrave summer showcase.

Roger added: “The displays and discussion were truly inspirational. Most encouraging for me was to see all the action plans being generated for each delegate to take back their garden centre, but also a whole raft of ideas and suggestions for how the GCA could further develop the Plant Area Forum in the future as it keeps plants at the heart of its focus.”

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. Alternatively, please visit [www.gca.org.uk](http://www.gca.org.uk), log on to [www.facebook.com/pages/Garden-Centre-Association](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Garden-Centre-Association) or follow the organisation on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/GC\\_Association](https://www.twitter.com/GC_Association).