

**Media release for the Garden Centre Association**

# **Bookings up at GCA Plant Area Forum at Ball Colegrave with more places now available**

THE GARDEN Centre Association (GCA) is hosting its second annual GCA Plant Area Forum for plant area managers and plant buyers at Ball Colegrave in July (July 20, 2017).

The event on July 20 will once again be facilitated by GCA inspector, Roger Crookes, who is also the organisation's Ruxley Rose plant area competition judge this year and believes passionately in the power of plants.

Iain Wylie, GCA Chief Executive, said: "Our first Plant Area Forum last summer was a big hit with all those who attended. It was a highly motivational day and this year's event promises to be just as inspiring. Bookings, so far, this year are ahead of last year's, but we can now take more people if others would like to join us.

"The day will give delegates the chance to see the Ball Colegrave trials grounds and the opportunity to network with like-minded people from garden centres across the country. The event includes a comprehensive agenda covering ways of maximising plant sales, stock management and benchmarking sales."

Delegates will be asked to share ideas and information, discuss the challenges they face, as well as analyse sales and profitability and discover potential opportunities.

There are still some places, which cost £79 per person, available for the event and members can find a booking form on the GCA website [www.gca.org.uk](http://www.gca.org.uk) or contact the GCA office direct on 01244 952170.

"All the delegates will be asked to carry out some pre-Forum homework because part of the day will include a session to benchmark key performance indicators to help people assess their own centre's performance against others. They'll share information and come away with new ideas and be challenged to think differently.

"Using the information they bring, delegates will analyse the space occupied by a category in relation to the value of sales for that category. So, it might be that we find some plants occupy a great deal of space but that doesn't justify the sales they generate or vice versa. It promises to be an enlightening and profitable day all round.

“It’s also a wonderful opportunity to see the Ball Colegrave trial grounds in all their summer glory, be one of the first to see their new introductions for 2018 and the day offers the chance to network with colleagues from centres from all around the country.”

GCA Plant Area Forum for plant area managers and plant buyers takes place at Ball Colegrave in Oxfordshire on July 20 from 10am until 4pm. Food and refreshments will be provided.

To book you place, please call 01244 952170 or visit [www.gca.org.uk](http://www.gca.org.uk). For more details of the GCA, please log on to [www.facebook.com/pages/GardenCentreAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/pages/GardenCentreAssociation) or follow the organisation on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/GC\\_Association](https://www.twitter.com/GC_Association).

**ENDS**

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

**Photograph caption:** Delegates at last year’s GCA’s Plant Area Workshop at Ball Colegrave (Iain Wylie, GCA Chief Executive at the far left).

**Notes to editors:**

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.

