

Media release for the Garden Centre Association

Garden centres invited to get creative to be competitive

GARDEN centre owners, managers and teams attending the 51st Garden Centre Association (GCA) annual conference this month (January, 2017) will be challenged to become more creative to cultivate a competitive edge.

Throwing down the gauntlet is Professor Gareth Jones, an expert in business culture and creativity, who will be presenting to delegates on Tuesday, January 24.

He began his career as a University academic in Economic and Social Studies at the University of East Anglia before moving to the London Business School, where he joined the Organisational Behaviour Group.

Iain Wylie, Chief Executive of the GCA, said: “During this period he directed the School’s Accelerated Development Programme. At this point the attractions of a ‘real’ job in business proved too great and he joined Polygram, then the world’s largest recorded music company. Appointed as Senior Vice President for Polygram’s global human resources, his responsibilities covered more than 30 countries.”

In 1996 he converted to academia when he became the BT Professor of Organisational Development at Henley where he also served on the Board of Governors.

His most recent job was as Director of HR and Internal Communications at the BBC. He is currently a visiting professor at INSEAD, known as The Business School for the World.

Gareth’s interests are in organisational design, culture, leadership and change. He has published several books and won a prestigious McKinsey Award for the best article in the Harvard Business Review entitled ‘Why Should Anyone be Led by You’.

In addition, Gareth is a founding partner of Creative Management Associates (CMA), a consultancy focussed on organisations where creativity is a source of competitive strength.

Iain continued: “We pick our conference speakers with a view to giving our delegates some thought provoking ideas to go away with. The business climate can be challenging and it’s important that we provide inspiring and stimulating speakers that help our members reach their business goals, and sometimes this is all about going for the unexpected.

“Throughout the conference, the information shared will focus on a wide range of topics, including merchandising, marketing and management. There will also be plenty of opportunities for delegates to network and socialise, and we still have places available to anyone interested in coming along.”

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.

The GCA's annual conference will be held at St Andrews in Scotland between January 22 and 25, 2017. More than 300 delegates are expected to attend the event.

For other information, please call 01244 952170, 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.

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

Photograph caption: Professor Gareth Jones an expert in business culture and creativity who will be presenting to delegates at the 51st GCA annual conference on Tuesday, January 24.