

**Media release for the Garden Centre Association**

# **GCA announces regional award meetings**

THE NATION'S Garden Centre Association (GCA) members will find out who has come out on top in its annual inspections this year at regional award meetings taking place this July (2017).

Garden centres are encouraged to attend the event in their area and to bring as many of their team members along as possible.

Iain Wylie, Chief Executive of the GCA, said: "Our annual inspections are drawing to a close and early feedback is looking positive, but if members want more information on how they fared they will need to go along to their nearest area awards meeting.

"During each meeting the inspector for that particular area will present their findings from the area, highlighting best practice and new ideas, and will announce all the category winners."

The Wales & West region award meeting will take place at Monkton Elm Garden & Pet Centre near Taunton, Somerset on Thursday, July 13 and the inspector attending is Andy Campbell.

Roger Crookes will be presiding over the North West/North East regional meeting on Wednesday, July 19 at a venue still to be confirmed.

The Midlands region will meet at Planters, Tamworth on Tuesday, July 25 with inspector Alyson Haywood, while the South Thames region will meet with Michael Cole at Castle Gardens in Sherborne, Dorset on Wednesday, July 26.

On Thursday, July 27, Gordon Emslie will present his findings at the North Thames meeting at Ayletts in Hertfordshire.

The Scotland and Northern Ireland area awards meeting will follow later in the year on September 7 at Klondyke Mayfield with inspector Gordon Emslie.

Iain added: "Our round of annual inspections started in March. 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 and they do not have the option to turn away the inspector. 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.

“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.”

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 01244 952170. Alternatively, please visit [www.gca.org.uk](http://www.gca.org.uk), 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, please call Porcupine PR on 01278 446801 or email [Cherry@porcupinepr.co.uk](mailto:Cherry@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:** Staff from Brimsmore Gardens with their awards during a previous Wales & West regional award meeting.

