

# horticap

*Growing Together*



Supporting and educating  
at Bluecoat Wood Nurseries

[www.horticap.org](http://www.horticap.org)

*Autumn Issue*  
2021



**Hello...** and a very warm welcome to the Autumn edition of the Horticap Newsletter. There has been so much going on here since the last newsletter that it's hard to know where to start!

**As the photo** above shows, there were smiles all round, despite the difficult weather conditions, as teams of our students, under the direction of Instructors, worked hard to prepare the driveway and extend the car park in order for the whole area to be tarmacked. Regular customers familiar with the previous uneven ground, have been very complimentary about the brilliant new surface, and as part of the continued development of the site in general, everyone agrees it looks wonderful and is a vast improvement!

**Our renovated Nature Trail** has opened to the delight of everyone who has visited. New structures have been installed which have proved an instant hit and familiar ones welcomed back. It has been lovely to see and hear mini (and not so mini!) performances on The Stage, whilst Sky View offers a different and tranquil perspective of the world.



Our thanks go to Banks Community Fund for their generous grant of £5,000 towards the renovation.



Not only are we all busy with potting on, weeding, crafting and essential jobs around the nursery, but we are also well into our preparations for the festive season.



**We are delighted** to include a Christmas section in this newsletter featuring our lovely shop, and Victoria has that vital Christmas Tree and Wreath information on the back cover. For those of you who love our wreaths so much, as you appreciate the personal touch that our students give to them, the good news is that they will be available once more.

**Most importantly** however, is that more of our students are returning to Horticap to continue their valuable work and contribution to both Horticap and the local community. As a **Social Enterprise**, Horticap provides training opportunities through investing our income to continually improve and develop our facilities for the benefit of our students. So every plant, wreath, Christmas tree and gift you buy, or that latte and brownie you enjoy, really does make a difference!

**We would like to thank you all for your continued support through 2021!**

*The Horticap Team*



# Around & About



Following the re-surfacing of the car park, work continued on designing and creating interesting and attractive areas surrounding the car park and Nature Trail pathways. Look out for this newly created and fabulous stone water feature and rockery that Jack and Simon built and are rightly so proud of!



**Our chickens** are very happy now they have got an extension to Cluckingham Palace! Tom and his crew have been busy making the fencing to go around the new area, which will give the chickens more space to roam and the chance to enjoy the company of all our visitors.



Why not buy a bag of chicken food from the shop for them and enjoy feeding them?

**The re-landscaped gardens** are taking shape and nearing completion. The students have been working hard to prepare the ground in order to lay new paths and create a beautiful new garden! We can't wait to see the finished result!

**The skills** that have been demonstrated by our talented students in re-landscaping the gardens are many and varied as we are sure everyone visiting will appreciate. The gardens will provide a really lovely environment for visitors of all ages to enjoy.



# A Royal Encounter at the Great Yorkshire Show!

**HRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall** came to visit the Great Yorkshire Show this year. Prince Charles is the Patron of this annual event in Harrogate.



**Their visit** included a walk around the horticultural part of the show, and we were thrilled when they stopped to admire the Horticap Show Garden and have a chat with Phil and Steve. They were both very interested in Horticap, with Prince Charles being particularly interested in how we teach our students gardening skills. As a long standing advocate of sustainability, he commented on our success at going peat free wherever possible.

**Those of you** who are familiar with our show gardens will know that our unique papier-mâché characters, made by Helen and our students always feature, and this year was no different! We thought it would be nice to have our patron, Alan Titchmarsh's character join us on the stand, along with two mice from our Wallace and Gromit show garden. Phil decided that it would be fun to rename them Charles and Camilla. They loved them, with The Duchess honouring us with a photograph with her namesake. Phew!



**The Royal visitors** recognised our Patron's model easily! Phil told them that Alan was a superb patron and does a lot to promote Horticap. The Prince replied that he knew him well and that he was a "good chap".

**It was a brief but memorable visit and we have written to thank them for stopping by.**

**We also asked if they would like to come and visit Horticap one day... and at Horticap we never say "never"... so watch this space!**

WE WORK CLOSELY WITH YOU TO ADVISE ON SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS AND PROCESSES, MINIMISING WASTE THROUGH INNOVATION FROM THE INKS AND PAPERS WE SOURCE TO THE WAY WE MANUFACTURE AND DELIVER. TEAM HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABSOLUTELY COMMITTED TO REDUCING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF PRINT.  
**GREEN IS GOOD**

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**“We aim to help students extend their knowledge and skills, through structured training using professionally qualified staff and volunteers”**

The training that our students receive from Horticap Instructors and Volunteers ensures that they have every opportunity to engage in all activities. Some prefer to be out and about in Harrogate working on our contract work, whilst others enjoy staying on site and working in the nursery, gardens or workshop.



At Horticap we often get requests for items to individual specifications such as this wood store, which was a special order for a customer. Requests like this have also included wheelie bin and bike stores, composting bins and bee hive stands. We love the challenge of creating bespoke pieces!



**As we move into the autumn and winter seasons and gardens need less attention, the perfect opportunity arises to increase productivity in the workshop...and keep a little warmer!**



Our workshop is full of equipment, enabling our students to develop their woodworking and creativity skills. The range of items made in the workshop is impressive, from bird houses and feeders right through to fencing, raised beds and planters. The smiles show how much our students enjoy being in the workshop!



**Here is a selection of items made by our talented students in the workshop! Some are for sale and others you will see around the garden.**

Please enquire at the shop if you have a special request for any woodworking.



**... and of course, nothing goes to waste at Horticap, as shown by Michael who uses the off cuts of wood to split and bag up for sale in the shop as kindling.**

# Christmas is on its way...

... and we are all looking forward to that special time of year here at Horticap! If you haven't experienced Horticap during the Christmas period, you really don't know what you are missing. As shop Supervisor it's always my aim to make the shop festive, warm and welcoming. This year will be no exception as we have some lovely Christmas gifts, decorations and something out of the ordinary available to buy.

**We have new lines** from our ever-popular Fair Trade, Black Yak collection; hats, gloves, shawls and introducing some lovely bright and chunky woolly socks perfect for keeping feet cosy over winter. As always, we have a stunning selection of decorations for sale. Our wooden and natural designs are already proving popular, as are the beautifully decorated traditional glass baubles.

**Specially chosen choice gifts** to fit everyone's budget are available alongside special hand made products made by our students and volunteers including, due to popular demand, our crocheted Christmas trees made from recycled wool. The Horticap Christmas Cards of which we have 4 designs are now on sale alongside our ever-popular recycled Christmas Cards and selling fast, so be sure to get in early.

**We have many artists** selling their work within the shop with all commission from sales benefitting Horticap. Local artist, James Owen Thomas, is exhibiting some of his work from October through to

December. His work is based around the ethics of recycling using discarded scratch cards and other recycling materials to create colourful imagery of landscapes and the natural world. On the weekend of 4th and 5th December, James will be available for informal 'Meet the Artist' sessions to talk about his work and show the processes he uses.



This year we have introduced work by 'Starbeck Men's Shed' who are part of Claro Enterprises, a mental health charity.

Their woodwork is made from recycled wood donated by the mouse man himself Robert Thompson. Using the off-cuts of oak, items such as chopping boards, door stops, and more intricate pieces are now available to buy.



**Our new gift vouchers** are available to buy too and can be used in both the shop and Hopkins@Horticap. Valid for one year they are the perfect gift idea!



**Finally, a big thank you** from me and all the shop staff to our regular and new customers for your continued support during the past 18 months of challenging times. It has been heart-warming to see so many regular faces returning, and making things feel a bit more normal!

**Remember all profits made from our sales go directly back into the charity and as we transition into an even more ethically responsible charity I'd love to hear from any local artists and artisans who would be interested in exhibiting or selling their work through our shop.**

**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!**

**Carol Sowden**

Shop Supervisor

## Key Dates for your Diary...

**6th December: Wreath Orders close  
(but will be available to buy from the nursery)**

**4th October - 24th December: James Owen Thomas Exhibition**

**4th & 5th December: Meet the Artist  
James Owen Thomas 12-3pm**



How did your sunflower seeds grow? We were delighted to receive your photos of the sunflowers that have been grown from our seed giveaway.



We always love to see what our students have been growing at home. This is James who has been busy looking after his sunflower.

Elliot from Leeds is clearly very proud of his sunflower!

We were very pleased to get the photos that Philippa sent us. She wrote "Very many thanks for my sunflower seeds. I've never grown them before and it has been hugely enjoyable. They really do bring a little bit of sunshine into the garden even on a cloudy day".



Don't forget that the sunflowers you grow in the summer become a valuable food source for the birds in winter. Some birds will peck the seeds directly from the plant, but the seeds can also be harvested and mixed with fat to provide energy rich fat balls for the birds to enjoy during the colder period!

# NO IFS, NO BUTS. LAW, FAIR + SQUARE.

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We would like to say a big **THANK YOU** to trustees Carolyn and Martin, who in September resigned from Horticap's Board.

**Carolyn** has been a trustee for 9 years, having been a volunteer since 2007. She has made an enormous contribution to Horticap, with specific responsibility for coordinating our volunteers. We couldn't be happier that Carolyn is going to continue to volunteer with us.

**Martin** has done fantastic marketing and fund raising work for Horticap, especially throughout the pandemic, in the three years since he became a trustee. Martin has promised that he will continue to pop in and visit us to help with Christmas trees!

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We wish  
you all  
a very  
**Happy  
Christmas**  
From everyone  
at Horticap

**Wreath Prices:**

12" Wreath: £20.00  
Heart Wreath\*: £25.00  
(\*A limited number will be available to order)

**Christmas Tree Prices:**

4 - 5ft £42.00  
5 - 6ft £43.00  
6 - 7ft £48.00  
7 - 8ft £54.00  
Over 8ft (available to order) from £80  
3 - 4ft Potted Trees: from £35.00

Our Local Delivery Charge is £5.00

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