



horticap 
Growing Together



Supporting and educating
at Bluecoat Wood Nurseries

www.horticap.org

Issue 3 2024

Hello and welcome to our Newsletter!



Well, what a wonderful and varied year 2024 is turning out to be. Our celebrations are continuing, with some exciting events still to come and we hope you enjoy reading about some of them. As always, we have been overwhelmed, and grateful for the generosity of our supporters during this special year.

But of course, Horticap is all about the students that attend and work hard both on and off site. As you walk around Horticap, we hope that you see the progress that is happening, from improving the greenhouse space for customers to upgrading parts of the site that the students, staff and volunteers use. Much of our storage space is elderly and quite restrictive, so old poly tunnels are being refurbished and access improved. In fact, upgrading access and work conditions around the site has been a priority this summer, and we are

delighted that the new drainage system and concrete pathway at the front of the blue greenhouse will prevent the flooding that has happened over the past couple of years.

Callum has been making sure that our Nature Trail paths have been kept clear and accessible, and this has been reflected in everyone enjoying this magical space safely. We love to welcome guests to Horticap, and feedback suggests that this feeling is reciprocated. Don't forget that the Nature Trail, featuring our famous Bunny Hut and Fairy Village, is open every day to visitors of any age, and is free! Taking in a drink and a bite to eat in Hopkins, and buying a gift from the shop too makes for a lovely trip out, and continues to support Horticap.

Just sometimes though, we have sad things to face and this year is no exception. We learned of the passing of Keith Felce, who worked as an Instructor until his retirement a few years ago. Sadly, we also have had to adjust to life without Wayne, one of our wonderful students who died unexpectedly. We were honoured to attend both funerals and offer our condolences to both families.

Looking forward into the new growing season, we have seen the back of the summer bedding and hanging baskets, which have been enormously successful again. We have taken delivery of our autumn bedding plants which the students are busy potting on, and the shop, Hopkins and the blue greenhouse are thinking ahead to (dare we say it?) the festive season. You see, Horticap never stops!

Everyone at Horticap would like to thank all our supporters enormously. As a charity, all contributions make a massive difference!

The Horticap Team



40km for 40 years of Horticap



Instructor Tom has decided that he would like to contribute to Horticap's fundraising in this special 40th year, by challenging himself to complete a 40 km run. Tom has worked at Horticap for many years and it is a cause very close to his heart. All donations and contributions will help Horticap to continue its work in supporting our students, all of whom have learning and other disabilities. The run, taking place on Tuesday 10 September, will be much easier for Tom if he knows he is raising lots of money!

Please donate via the QR Code or visit
<https://gofund.me/6b591534> if you are able, thank you!



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Bingo at Horticap

It was **eyes down** for a full house at our recent Bingo Night, and what a night it turned out to be! Held for the benefit of our fabulous (and very competitive!) students, their families and carers, the evening went with a real swing.



These type of events are an important, and lovely way for Horticap students and their friends and family to get together socially. Not all of our students see each other at work, and this gives them the opportunity to catch up and maintain their friendships. It is also fantastic to see our facilities being used in an increasingly diverse way.

Student Focus - Mark

Mark has been attending Horticap since March 2010, quickly establishing himself as a capable and helpful student. He loves being part of Horticap, and he is always first to ask if he can help at the Harrogate Flower Shows and the Great Yorkshire Show.

His attention to detail, cheery nature and infectious laugh is appreciated by our visitors, and when Hopkins opened, Mark was first in line wanting to work in there! There can be no doubt about his love of Horticap, and his contribution to Hopkins.



Mark was thrilled to be awarded the Peter Hopkins Award at our recent ceremony, recognising his achievements.



Otley Road
Beckwithshaw
Harrogate
HG3 1QL
Tel: 01423 522876

We were all filled with sadness when we learned of the death of one of our wonderful students. Wayne had been with us since 2011, and our days were always filled with happiness on the days he attended. He enjoyed many activities here, from making a wooden planter in the workshop to potting on bedding plants, to baking scones in the café.



Wayne and Hannah particularly shared a very special relationship, always looking out for each other and enjoying break times together. Wayne loved the fun and variety of work in the greenhouses, where he liked to work best. He particularly liked to see Erica and Steve teasing each other about which group he should be in, as they both wanted his company in their group...and for good reason as his contribution to both the work and atmosphere was positive.

Wayne's wicked sense of humour was very engaging and we all benefited from his company. He made Erica a "pinky promise" that he would never leave Horticap, and we all know he hasn't really. His memory will always remain!



His final journey was from Horticap, courtesy of the Coop Funeral Services. One of our volunteers, Craig, who knew Wayne very well, works there, and understood the importance of Horticap to Wayne, and Wayne to the students, staff and volunteers who were his good friends. It was a privilege for us to attend his funeral, and celebrate the life of such a wonderful man who is remembered with a great big smile.



The West Wing, Horticap's arts and crafts space, is proving to be a wonderful facility for our students. With a range of activities to explore, the sound of music and laughter is lovely to hear, and the brightly coloured artwork a joy to see. And sometimes, the peace and tranquility that the room inspires is just what is needed!



Visitors to Horticap cannot avoid seeing the importance of art both around the site, including the wonderful installation in the Nature Trail of textile covered cubes hanging in the trees. We also love to invite local artists to display their work upstairs in Hopkins, and there are always some lovely pieces of art to buy from the shop. This enthusiasm is shown by the impressive number of entries for our 6x6 silent auction.



The Art of Recycling

An exhibition by **James Owen Thomas**

Environmental Artist, Tree Council Force for Nature Ambassador
and COP26 One Step Greener Ambassador

Art created from recycled materials



At Horticap, Otley Road, Harrogate, HG3 1QL
Dates: 30th September – 22nd December 2024

It is with this in mind that we welcome artist James back to Horticap

Horticap welcomes back local award winning Environmental Artist James Owen Thomas for another exhibition, showing new work produced over the past two years.

Entitled the 'The Art of Recycling' this exhibition will highlight his talent for recycling single use products such as scratch cards, old leaflets, product packaging and fabrics into works of collage art.

Original pieces and prints, as well as cards will all be for sale.

Come and meet James on these weekends: 19th and 20th Oct and 7th and 8th December 2024

The Horticap 40th Anniversary Cocktail Party

With the on-going celebrations for our 40th anniversary year, Friday 5th July saw many ex-staff, trustees and volunteers attend our Cocktail Party. Following some pretty poor weather, we were fortunate to have a sunny and warm evening, which allowed our guests to enjoy a lovely social get together and reunion in the garden. They were able to reflect on the 40 years of Horticap's progress, while enjoying excellent canapés from Hopkins, refreshing cocktails by Eller's farm, as well as music and a roving magician.



Alongside the party, a number of our longer serving students took centre stage and drew the winning tickets for our Grand Raffle. It's fair to say that the quantity and quality of prizes have been very well received! We offer our heartfelt thanks to the many people and organisations that were so generous with the prizes donated to us for our fundraising.



Another busy year for shows!

Horticap is very lucky to have such prodigious local shows for us to attend, and we are also very lucky to have an army of volunteers who give their time to make it all happen.

This summer has seen us return to The Great Yorkshire Show, where Nora and Gollum made an appearance in our garden, and the troughs planted by the students graced the President's Box which looked amazing. Setting up this show, and running it, really does require 'all hands on deck' and we are very grateful for everyone's support.

Once again, Trustee and volunteer Alistair represented us at Weeton Show, along with Weeton Show President, our very own Phil Airey!

Victoria, Jamie, Mark and Alistair joined Instructor Steve at the MG show at Pateley Bridge, where Victoria managed to enter a rather lovely dog in one of the classes.



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GERMANY 2024

For many years now, small groups of our students have been invited by Leeds and Skyrack Lions, to enjoy an exchange trip to Germany.

This July saw six Horticap students benefiting from this programme, and what a time they all had. Here is just a small snapshot of their adventures!



Day 1 was an early start with an early start and drive to Manchester airport for the flight to Frankfurt, and then a drive to the Deula Hotel in Witzenhausen. The photo above shows the team: Paul and Beth (Horticap Instructors) Sam, Hannah, Alicia, James, Jamie and Dominic (students), accompanied by Lion's Gail and Peter Sandeman with Lion President David Homewood.

The itinerary was full, varied and pretty demanding, meaning all the students had personal challenges to overcome, which they all did with self-determination and maturity. As an example, this was Sam's very first flight!



Day 2 was spent in Witzenhausen where an annual Cherry Festival takes place. Our students had the privilege of meeting the town's Mayor and the festival's Cherry Queen, and having a go at the German Championship in cherry pit spitting! Later there was horse riding.



Day 3 saw the group barefoot walking on Mount Meissner, sailing on Lake Werravalley and the honour of being invited to a BBQ, and watching the Euro final, at the Bad Sooden-Allendorf President's home!



Despite the disappointment of the football result, what a fantastic day!

Day 4 saw the group going for a walk through Hann-Munden in the morning with a visit to a Balance Fitness Studio after lunch.



The evening activity included a short hike to Tillyschanze where they explored a tower and then had dinner.



Day 5 was a very varied day with the first visit being to the Bergwildpark at Germerode. After lunch at the park, the group took in an ice-cream parlour at Eschwege before enjoying dinner and entertainment at Kochsberg Hotel.



Day 6 included a walk around Melsungen and a fun pedal boat session on the River Fulda. This was followed by an interesting visit to Stickerei Sattler to see some embroidery.



Day 7 and the final full day of this trip. The morning, and lunch, was spent at Hanstein Castle, with a swim in the afternoon.



Day 8 was busy too, with packing up and checking out of the hotel, and the long journey home. The group arrived back in Harrogate very late, and very tired, but they had all had the most amazing time!



The success of this wonderfully varied trip was down to many things. Experience from previous exchange visits was evident, but the care and attention to detail by all the Lions groups involved was exceptional. We are particularly grateful to David, Peter and Gail, who organised the trip from this country and whose kindness was appreciated by all our students. We are also grateful to the Lion's groups of Bad Sooden-Allendorf, Hann-Munden, Eschwege and Melsungen, whose hospitality was both welcoming and very much appreciated.

Thank you to everyone involved!

Continuing our memories as part of our 40th Anniversary year, we move on to look at 2004 to 2014

With student numbers now in the mid 40 attending each week, this decade saw an expansion of facilities for our students and a growing number of visitors to the site.

A new modern glasshouse took shape occupying an area previously used for growing Christmas trees. This was used mainly for growing seasonal bedding plants and was equipped with thermal screens, automatic ventilation, moveable benches, a wood fired heating system and water harvesting.

A few years later a dedicated education building / office was built. We were thrilled that Alan Titchmarsh agreed to become Horticap Patron and he officially opened our new building.

2008 saw a visit to Horticap from the Duke of Gloucester leading to the delivery of compost bins by a group of staff and students to his home in London. The following year we celebrated our 25th anniversary.



With our nature trail now developing, a new purpose built bird hide was installed by our students in the wildlife area so increasing the visitor experience. Alongside a new vegetable garden.

Along with our glasshouse wood burner, other environmental issues were addressed including a wind turbine, the provision of a recycling building where students could work on recycling pots, chopping logs to sell and use in our heater. Also additional rainwater storage tanks.

Once again poor weather particularly in 2012 took its toll on some of our tunnels and buildings.



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Celebrating our Volunteers

We cannot stress enough how important our volunteers are to every part of Horticap, and it is true to say that the charity simply couldn't manage or exist without them. The expertise, passion and willingness to do virtually anything that is asked of them is remarkable, and we thank them all very much! This edition introduces Pauline and Viv and first of all, Caroline.

"The reason for volunteering is definitely because of my mother, Anne Moore who was there at Horticap's beginnings in 1984.

At that time, she was President of Harrogate Inner Wheel Club, and through Rotarian Alan Ravenscroft, she heard all about this new charity that provided a sheltered workplace for adults with learning difficulties.

The aims and objectives resonated with Mum as her only sibling Tom, who had struggled with mental health difficulties in adult life, had recently died. Along with her Inner Wheel friends they held a large raffle at the Harrogate Spring Flower Show, then in the Valley Gardens. Later that same year they held another money raising event at the Yorkshire Agricultural show. Together with the money from the earlier raffle, they were able to buy Horticap's first greenhouse. For the next 35 years, the Inner Wheel Club always remembered Horticap in their fund-raising activities. By end of 1984, Mum was on the Board of Horticap along with John Wooton (former manager of Marks & Spencer) and John Green. Over that time, she worked tirelessly to help and promote Horticap. She was instrumental in approaching Alan Titchmarsh to be Horticap's patron in 2003, for securing funding from Charitable Trusts to improve the site, and countless talks and fund-raising events. After her death we planted a crab apple tree in her memory in the garden to commemorate and celebrate her long association with her favourite Charity.

I moved to Harrogate in 1994 and soon became a volunteer helping initially in the green houses making hanging baskets with students. In November 1995, along with some friends and Mum, we held the first Art Show in the Wesley Chapel. This became an annual event and over the next decade we welcomed artists to show their work whilst raising a total of £35,000 for Horticap. Our biggest event was a Fashion Show at the Cairn Hotel in 2008 raising £8,000 which was a lot of money then. After Covid, we reformed the committee and to date we have run Christmas flower demonstrations, 3 fun quiz nights, a Grand raffle and a Celebration Summer Garden party, raising £15,000.

Raising funds for Horticap is ongoing for us, as is working with the team in the café where I have weekly workouts carrying trays of food and drink up the stairs!

From me I guess it is all about embracing my Mum's vision and continuing what she helped to start 40 years ago."



20 years at Horticap for Pauline



"It's been a great privilege to be part of the Horticap family for over twenty years. Of course there have been many changes during that time, not only staff but buildings too. When I joined there was a large wooden building which housed the shop and store room. Students used the mess room and locker room, and wooden buildings which still survive. The office and board room were housed in the two porta-cabins in the yard.

We worked mainly with a group of students in old poly tunnels, one of the two large wooden greenhouses or the gardens. However, the buildings really didn't matter, it was the students who were important...and still are! Horticap is not only a place of work and training, but a place of fun and friendship. It's a family.

We've shared lots of celebrations together over the years as the site has gradually developed and our new buildings have taken shape. We've had great garden parties and wonderful fund raising events but our Awards Ceremony to celebrate the achievements of our students comes top for me. It's so good to see each student grow, not only in gardening skills but in confidence and social skills too.

When you join Horticap you become part of the family. Our students are great at welcoming new faces and making you feel welcome.

From helping with plants in my early days, I've been teaching craft skills for many years now. Amongst other things, we've decorated plant pots and china mugs, painted silk scarves, made mosaic tiles, sewn cushions and recycled hundreds of greetings cards. All of which our students are proud to see go on sale in our shop.

The Horticap symbol is appropriately a tree, growing steadily and setting down its roots. So to celebrate our new building, our students both designed and made a large mosaic tree which is now hanging up on the wall looking over our lovely café.

With your help and support Horticap will grow!"



Viv joins the greenhouse team on Fridays



“The seed was sown when I heard a talk from a member of Horticap at the Women’s Club about 35 years ago. Sometime later I was working at the college where students with learning difficulties were taught life skills, and I was impressed with the friendship, support of one another and the joy they engendered.

Years later at work, we had to fill in our assessment forms and the final question was, “Where would like to find yourself in five years’ time?” (or words to that effect) and that was a light bulb moment for me. In my upcoming retirement from full time occupation, I wanted to become a volunteer at Horticap.

Fortunately, I saw an advertisement for volunteers at, yes you’ve guessed it, Horticap! It was 2005, and after an interview in a converted shipping container, also known as the office, I was accepted as a volunteer, and after the necessary check, was invited to commence volunteering in 2006.

What a wonderful place to be, learning from students and the knowledgeable staff about horticulture. After instruction from two of the hanging basket creators, the students decided that it would be best if I collected the layers of plants for them, (46 in total which was the prescribed formation) as I did not come up to their standard or speed, in the hanging basket area! I was given many tasks, filling pots and trays for plug plants to be inserted, or to strip seed trays for potting on, watering the plants, tidying and cleaning the benches, sweeping the floor and helping decorate the Christmas wreaths.

Their knowledge of which size of container or pot to use was brilliant, and I only had to ask them in order to find out which pot to fill with compost, ready for them to pot up the plants. Tidying the pots on the rack was an ongoing task and not the favourite job of everyone!

When we worked in the greenhouses we had time to chat with the students about their likes and dislikes. I was impressed with their knowledge of pop music, culture, singers and groups, films (particularly the James Bond series) and of course football, which was discussed and argued over, along with other chit chat.

The site is unrecognisable now compared to 2006 with the new heated greenhouse, sales centre, smart office and wonderful cafe facilities, not to mention the car parking area. The cafe and shop have given the students further work experience opportunities. The excitement of the students when they are wearing their white t-shirts to work in Hopkins is palpable.

Many volunteers have contributed, as have committee members. This has taken Horticap to a whole new level, giving the students a safe haven to work to their best level, and to meet and work with fellow students under the guidance of skilled staff.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of this successful enterprise.”



2005
Simon & Jonathan



2009
Hannah & John



2010
Alex & Mark



2011
Timothy

**We are proud to present
our Students who
started in the third
decade, and who are
still attending Horticap.**



2011
Andrew & James



2013
Liam & Hannah



2013
Jack

We are proud to present
our Students who
started in the third
decade, and who are
still attending Horticap.



2014
Conor & David

Andrew, our very own Olympic Star!

The 2024 Paris Olympics has been such a talking point in the Mess Room. We have all enjoyed the achievements of the Olympians, and our students have had fun running their own Olympics on Facebook! However, we also discovered that we had our very own Olympic superstar in our midst, who has competed around the world in three Special Olympics. Student Andrew was so proud to bring in his many medals, and some photos of him competing. Andrew has also excelled at kickboxing, and is rightly proud of his many medals in this discipline too!



Andrew works very hard onsite and offsite at Horticap, and likes the discipline of being kept busy. It is clear that his dedication to both train and perform at a top level in gymnastics and kickboxing are transferable skills that make him such a valuable member of the team here!



Dates for your diary

Tues 10th Sept
Tom's 40 km
fundraising run

Monday 30th Sept to
Sunday 22nd Dec
Art Exhibition
by James Owen
Thomas who will be
holding two
"Meet the Artist"
weekends
19th & 20th Oct
7th & 8th Dec

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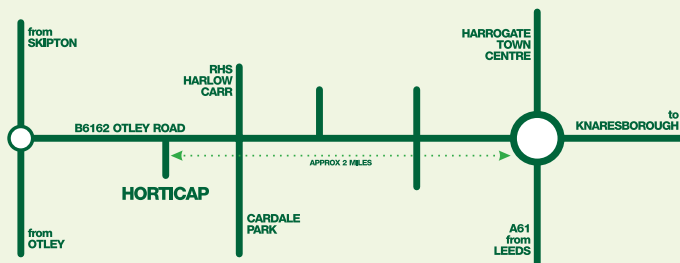
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