1: Key Facts

Name: RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show (outdoors)
Show Category: Built show gardens, sales, entertainment, food
Location: Hampton Court Palace, Greater London, UK
Venue: Hampton Court Palace gardens
Gross Floor Area: 34 acres (13.75 hectares)
Origins: 1990
Theme: Three zones or themes: grow, escape, inspire.
There are four show garden themes: show, summer, conceptual and budget gardens
Opening Times: Tuesday-Saturday 10.00-19.30
            Sunday 10.00-17.30
            (Tuesday & Wednesday is for RHS members only)
Ticket Prices: Preview evening 7 July 17.00-22.30 £55 (sold out)
Prices range from £15.00 to £35.00, each full paying adult may bring two children aged 16 and under free of charge to the show. Tickets available at the gate.


Number of Visitors: 140,000 average over past three years

The following figures are from the RHS web site for 2012
Age Groups: ≤ 54 40%; ≥ 55 60% average age 55
Male/female %: 77% female; 23% male
Socio-economic groups: Majority ABC1 (national average of ABC1 is 51%)
  • AB 45%
  • C1 37%
  • C2 11%
  • DE 6%
Reasons for Attendance: No information
Visitor Assessment: No information
Origin of Local Visitors: Majority are from the affluent southeast and home counties. 95% are from the UK
  - Greater London 10%
  - Rest of the southeast 57%
  - Rest of UK 28%
  - Overseas 5%
Home/Garden Ownership: No information
Intention to invest in a garden: No information

3. Exhibitor Facts

3.1 Exhibitors in Escape and Inspire:
  - 11 Show Gardens
  - 7 Summer Gardens
  - 8 Conceptual Gardens
  - 4 Your Garden, Your Budget

3.2 Exhibitors in Grow:
  - 2 Show Feature Garden
  - 12 Plant Heritage
  - 96 Floral Marquee
  - 113 Plant Village

3.3 Exhibitors in Escape:
  - 5 Show Feature
  - 46 Growing Taste
  - 155 Country Living Pavilion
  - 25 Festival of Roses and Floristry
  - 170 Products

3.4 Exhibitors in Inspire:
  - 6 Turf Sculptures
  - 65 Celebrity Theatre – Products

Main Exhibitor Goals and Attainment:
Promotion and sales of their product through a highly visible venue. For gardens, floral displays and products, the goal is a medal, preferably gold, for marketing purposes.

Rating ‘good’ to ‘very good’: No information
Ratings of Target Visitor Groups: No information
Market Positioning: No information

4: Location & Facilities

The show is located within the parkland of Hampton Court Palace within the Greater London Area and covers 34 acres (13.75 hectares). The show ground itself is divided by the great canal with temporary floating bridges connection the two sides.
4.1 **Access:** There is good access by car as well as train, underground and bus. There are limited pick-up points for ferry services along the River Thames from Kingston and Richmond. There is a reduced rate for disabled parking and a park and ride service.

4.2 **Facilities:** The site is well equipped for the large number of visitors including: children's play area, baby changing facilities, banking, bike racks, first aid, gardening advice, information stands, lost children, lost property, meeting point, music & entertainment, plant crèches, plant porters, presentations & demonstrations, restaurants, bars, fast food, toilets

5: **Exhibitions & Show Gardens**

5.1 **Show Gardens**

From [https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/exhibit-at-a-show/submitting-a-garden-design/Gardens-at-RHS-Hampton-Court-Palace-Flower-Show](https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/exhibit-at-a-show/submitting-a-garden-design/Gardens-at-RHS-Hampton-Court-Palace-Flower-Show)

Minimum 100sqm

Show Gardens are the largest category of garden at Hampton Court Palace Flower Show and are located in prominent positions throughout the showground. They are always a very popular and much visited feature of any RHS event and are designed to any style or theme, dependent on the brief set by the exhibitor or client. They might be traditional (in the sense that they could be reproduced in a domestic setting), theatrical (a fantasy or stage set) or thematic (designed to convey a specific message/theme through horticulture). The quantity, quality and variety of plant material are as critical to a garden’s success as the integrity of the design, and the quality of construction and finish. They can be any shape or size to complement the design. A benefit package is available for exhibiting a Show Garden.

5.2 **Summer Gardens**

Size can vary from 24sqm to 50sqm

Summer Gardens are designed to any style or theme, dependent on the brief set by the exhibitor or client. A benefit package is available for exhibiting a Summer Garden.

5.3 **Conceptual Gardens**

Generally a minimum of 25sqm

Conceptual gardens provide a forum for artistic, unusual, provocative and innovative (even controversial) designs that might not otherwise be seen, due to the constraints of established horticultural expectations and practices. The category encourages exhibitors to push the boundaries of garden design and express a level of innovation and creativity as well and exploring new garden design ideas or other abstract artistic concepts. They may be any shape or size. The successful designs receive £6,000 contribution towards their costs, with any further costs met by the exhibitor or their sponsor.

5.4 **Floral Marquee: Selection process**

From [https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/exhibit-at-a-show/floral-marquee-exhibits](https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/exhibit-at-a-show/floral-marquee-exhibits)
To be fair to all applicants, and to offer visitors as wide a variety of exhibits as possible, the individual show managers make initial draft selections. This process takes into consideration a number of factors including:

- Past awards (medal records)
- Support for RHS shows (including Chelsea)
- Balance of/number of applicants in each generic plant category (please note that we are heavily oversubscribed for herbaceous plants at all summer shows)
- Seasonality of plant material
- Encouragement of new exhibitors
- Geographical factors/regional relevance
- After sales service
- Reliability
- Courteous on-site staffing
- Quality of plants offered for sale from sales tables
- Compliance with plant sales regulations

The applications and the proposed allocation lists for the shows are compared, in order to give as fair an allocation of space as possible to exhibitors across the range of RHS shows. The lists are then discussed in depth in order to identify any anomalies. The recommended allocations of space are approved by the Chairmen of the Shows Committee.

5.5 Tradestands

From [https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/exhibit-at-a-show/tradestands-at-rhs-shows](https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/exhibit-at-a-show/tradestands-at-rhs-shows)

Why exhibit at our shows

- Retail your products to a new and targeted audience
- Enhance your customer base
- Demonstrate your products
- Launch innovative products and test the market
- Build brand loyalty and test awareness
- Have your company details published in our show catalogues which are considered an industry bible and are used as an annual gardening reference
- Free live link to your company website
- Participation supported by major visitor promotion campaigns that involve above-the-line advertising, press promotions, direct mail, leaflet drops and marketing on a significant scale.

5.6 Enquire about space

We welcome enquiries from companies and individuals wishing to exhibit horticultural products and services.

If your products or services are not horticulturally relevant please contact Brooks Livermore at Country Living Magazine at brooks.livermore@hearst.co.uk for details on the Country Living Pavilion at both RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show and RHS Show Tatton Park where non-horticultural exhibitors can apply for space.

The following is from: [http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/garden/486873/Out-About-RHS-Hampton-Court-Palace-Flower-Show](http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/garden/486873/Out-About-RHS-Hampton-Court-Palace-Flower-Show) These are useful notes about various aspects for the show gardens and also points on costs
But the Your Garden, Your Budget section could be one of the most useful for anybody interested in redesigning their own backyard.

Four urban gardens costing £7,000, £10,000, £13,000 and £15,000 will be on display – all designed specifically for relaxing and entertaining.

Chew Valley Trees has designed Green Is The Colour, a £7,000 garden inspired by the woodlands and forests of eastern Canada, with screening, privacy and low-maintenance the focus.

The planting scheme combines shades of green foliage with closely planted evergreen trees creating a textural backdrop.

The Bacchus Garden by Jean Wardrop cost £10,000 and was inspired by Titian’s painting Bacchus and Ariadne (1523) and Hampton Court’s Great Vine planted in 1769.

The wineglass-inspired space is filled with blousy blooms to provide a sense of abundance, while tiered pools represent flowing of wine.

Stuart Charles Towner has designed the £13,000 Halo, a Mediterranean garden based on the imagery of a classic Greek island.

A key feature of the garden is a steel blue “halo”, a modern interpretation of a traditional Greek Orthodox Church dome.

Alexandra Froggatt’s £15,000 Garden Of Solitude is designed as a place for relaxation and contemplation, with a sheltered seating area, reflective pool and waterfall, raised borders and trees.

The garden also uses “upcycled” materials such as concrete and wood, and nectar-rich planting to provides a relaxing space that is environmentally friendly.

Other highlights of the show will be the Lest We Forget Garden by Steve Mann of Groundbreaking Projects, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War.

The garden will be a recreation of the trenches and landscape of the Western Front featuring a working First World War tank.

Get a Taste for New England, designed by Charlotte Murrell, celebrates the home of Ocean Spray’s cranberries.

Visitors will see a true cranberry wet harvest with different water areas mimicking New England wetlands and the Long Water will have a floating cranberry harvest installation in the shape of the quintessential English rose.

The Visible Garden, sponsored by Viking Cruises and designed by Stephen Hall, will demonstrate the ways in which we can attract wildlife to our gardens with both native and non-native flowers.

The garden will have native plants in one section and ornamental cultivars in the other – all suitable for bees and hoverflies, highlighting the work of the RHS Plants for Bugs project.
It adjoins the RHS Invisible Garden which showcases the microscopic heroes of our gardens which otherwise go unnoticed.

Look out, also, for The Quiet Mark Treehouse & Garden by John Lewis, designed by David Domoney to blend in with the forest environment.

The focal point is a treehouse dream home that will provide a tranquil and peaceful place free from man-made noise.

6: Associated/Parallel Events

This essentially a self-contained show, that is all aspects of the show take place within the show grounds and within the time span of the show. However,

7: Awards The RHS has an extensive programme of lectures, garden opening, advice facilities, educational courses and other shows in different parts of the country.

7.1 RHS Awards and Judging

RHS medals are given to horticultural exhibits are as a mark of excellence. They are awarded by highly experienced judging panels and come in four grades: the RHS Gold, Silver Gilt, Silver and Bronze medals.
There is no limit to the number of medals that can be awarded within each grade-displays are judged according to set criteria.
The RHS Gold medal can be awarded to any type of exhibit.
If an exhibit is judged to be below Bronze standard, no award is made.
Tudor Rose Awards: Given to the best exhibits in the Floral Marquee and Show

7.2 RHS Hampton Court Flower Show awards

7.2.1 Garden category

- Best Summer Garden
- Best Conceptual Garden
- Best Low Cost High Impact Garden
- Best Exhibit in the Plant Heritage Marquee
- Best Rose Exhibit in the Romance & Roses Marquee
- Best Plant Village Exhibit
- Best Scarecrow (Public Award)
- Best Floristry College Exhibit
- Best Professional Floristry Exhibit
- Best Large Show Feature
- Best Small Show Feature
- Best Marquee Feature
- Best Growing for Taste Exhibit

7.2.2 RHS Judging Garden exhibits are judged on:
Overall impression
Impact, Originality, Theatre, Scale, Objectives
Have the design objectives been achieved
Construction
Material selection, Quality, Workmanship, Finish
Choice of plants
Quality, Colour, Texture, Plant association, Relevance

7.2.3 Floral exhibits are judged on:

- Plants
- Colour and texture, quality, health (pest & disease free), identification, association and relevance, range
- Overall Impression
- Impact, unity, balance and scale, design, colour and texture, finish of the exhibit
- Overall design
- Unity, Balance, Creativity, Spatial awareness

7.2.4 Tradestands are judged on:

- A good quality finish
- Compliance with RHS regulations
- Horticultural enhancement
- A tidy appearance
- Scale endeavour
- Endeavour
- Levels of difficulty in creating display, props, difficulty in growing plants, originality, new ideas

7.2.5 Education exhibits are also judged on an additional category:

- Information/interpretation
- Knowledgeable portrayal, clarity, well researched message, signage, take home message

8: Exhibitor Terms & Conditions

Terms, conditions and contracts are available through: exhibitorapplications@rhs.org.uk
When a request for an application pack is made, the RHS will contact the applicant for a discussion on their proposal.

9: Exhibitor Contracts

As No.8 above

10: Show History
The show was first held in 1990 and created by Historic Royal Palaces and Network Southeast. In 1992 Network Southeast announced that it was withdrawing its subsidy, and the RHS was the successful bidder to take the show over. The first RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show was held in 1993, and it has gone on to become the world’s largest flower show.

- For the first Hampton Court Palace Shows, Network Southeast laid on special trains from Waterloo, and the railway porters all wore carnations in their hats.
- The British Rose Festival was introduced in the second show, in 1991.
- In 1998, a Hampton Court model garden was rebuilt at the Royal Hospital for Neurodisability in Putney.
- In 1998, Leyhill Open Prison won a Gold medal for a garden at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. This incident provided the basis for the film *Greenfingers* (2001), starring Helen Mirren.

11: Marketing

RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show

From https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/exhibit-at-a-show/press-and-pr-opportunities

- **National press**: Highlights included a RHS Hampton Court Place Flower Show Special in the *Daily Telegraph*, a preview of the show in the *Sunday Express*, a feature about the floral marquee in the *Financial Times* and picture stories in *The Guardian*, *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*.
- **Broadcast coverage**: There was 2.5 hours of coverage, in addition to features on *BBC World Service*, *BBC Radio 4 Gardeners’ Question Time*, *ITV West Country* and *BBC Radio 4 Midweek*. More than 23 hours of coverage were broadcast across 24 of the BBC English Regions radio and television stations.

12: Site Photographs

*Photo 1-2*: The Long Water Entrance, the other being the Thames Entrance, has ticket kiosk and show catalogues on sale. Toilets located here and inside the show ground.

*Photo 3*: The Thames entrance means visitors can arrive by car, train or by boat. The train station is on the opposite side of the river.
Photo 4: Temporary hoardings, or barriers, are used to direct visitors as well as prevent unauthorised access. Some information is displayed on the panels.

Photo 5: Temporary steps provide access over the original park boundary walls. Disabled have an alternative access point.

Photo 6: Once past the ticket booths, the visitor is almost assaulted with fast food stands and trade stalls before reaching any of the garden displays.
Photo 7-8: Catalogue map is colour coded to relate to appropriate sections. It is generally too small to be able to refer to easily, particularly within crowded areas. However, there are maps placed around the site but due to the large number of displays they are not easy to use.

Photo 9: Immediately upon entering, the visitor sees trade stands for plants and garden furnishings.

Photo 10-11: The Long Water or canal divides the site into two sections. There are floating bridges connecting the two sides. Numerous restaurants and fast food facilities line the canal. Hampton Court Palace can be seen in the distance in Photo 6.
Photo 12: From the Thames Entrance, the first sets of gardens are the Conceptual Gardens based on the seven deadly sins. These are the most inventive and avant-garde gardens, or more accurately called installations, in the show. The information panel is distinct from panels found elsewhere as it identifies each garden in the group and is within the INSPIRE zone.

Photo 13-14: Gluttony is exposed through oversized cans of baked beans and jelly beans as a statement on our diets. This is more a case of social commentary than garden design and all produced public comment. Note the Gold Medal award and the panel colour tells you that you are in the INSPIRE zone RHS Gold

Photo 15-16: Lust is captured within a ‘glass room’. ‘Flowers are essentially tarts, prostitutes for the bees’ RHS Silver

Photo 17-18: The INSPIRE section also contains turf sculptures by seven different land artists.
There is an extensive programme of presentations throughout the day. These range from detailed information on plants, design and to growing and cooking vegetables.

Talks take place on the hour and usually last 30-45 minutes. Some events are also supported with practical demonstrations.

The Country Living Pavilion is more about life style than gardening. On sale are clothes, crafts, furniture, decorative household pieces and food.

The RHS stand sells various gifts and souvenirs related to the RHS and the show as well as books and gardening tools. It runs a series of talks on gardens and plants.
Photo 23-24: Extensive use is made of TV celebrities, in this case Monty Don the host of the BBC’s Gardener’s World. Filming normally takes place on the day it is shown on TV. There are other TV celebrities from the gardening and culinary world which helps to boost ticket sales.

Photo 25: The World Vision garden inspired by the Ethiopian famine and the development of the Antsokia Valley. It represents the production and export of food and fruit from the valley.

A number of gardens are based on social or economic issues.

RHS Silver medal winner

Photo 26: Jordans Wildlife Garden is an example of a commercial firm sponsoring a garden. In this case, Jordans is a cereal company where their farmers donate 10% of their land to the creation of wildlife habitats.

This is classified as a Show Garden in the INSPIRE section

People’s Choice Best Show Garden & RHS Silver

Photo 27: Just Retirement Garden (clearly for the affluent!) is produced by a garden designer and contractor. This is normally self-funded and is seen as a means of marketing the company.

This is classified as a Show Garden in the INSPIRE section

RHS Silver-Gilt
Photo 28-31: Designated as a Summer Garden in the ESCAPE section, the colour coding between the signage and catalogue is confusing. Hedgehog Street is sponsored by The People’s Trust for Endangered Species, and The Hedgehog Preservation Society. People’s Choice-Best Small Garden & RHS Gold

Photo 32: Trade stalls are mixed with the Summer Gardens. The area is narrow and congested and it is difficult to see the show gardens as a result of the crowds.

Photo 33-34: developed around recycled materials, A Space to Grow, has a living roof, edible plants and a small stage for performances.

Sponsored by Metals, Earl scaffolding, and British Sugar

RHS Gold
Photo 35-36: Halo is in the Your Garden Your Budget category. With a £13,000 budget, the garden has naturalistic planting and the halo is based on the dome of a traditional Greek church. RHS Silver-Gilt

Photo 37-38: Festival of Roses and Floristry Marquee

Photo 39-40: Catering options from sit down to take-away. Pimm’s is a traditional summer alcoholic drink.

Photo 40-41: Alitex aluminium greenhouses won the RHS Best Tradestand, this is equivalent to a Gold Medal.
**Photo 42-43:** Coolings Garden Centre in Kent are first time exhibitors at the show.

**Photo 44-45:** The Quiet Mark Treehouse & Garden is sponsored by John Lewis (department store), Quiet Mark and Lexus. An eye-catching structure but no medal.

**Photo 46-47:** Essence of Australia sponsored by The Royal Botanic Garden Melbourne. The letter next to the RHS Gold Medal states that they also received Best in Show. This is the ultimate award as there is only one given at the show.

**Photo 48:** Reference to the commencement to the First World War
Photo 49-50: Exhibitions and displays of flowers. Most exhibitors also carry stock at the show to purchase and take away.

Photo 51-52: There are two Plant crèche in the show grounds, with porters to wheel barrow purchases to the car park.

Photo 53-54: Specialist societies exhibit rare plants, special collections or those under threat. Plants and seeds are available to purchase and there are demonstrations in the care and management of plants.
13: Organisation and Contacts

Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)
80 Vincent Square
London SW1P 2PE
Tel: +44 (0)845 260 5000
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 09.00-17.00

Head of Shows:
Alexandra Denman Tel: 0845 260 5000
Email: alexdenman@rhs.org.uk

Head of Chelsea & Hampton Court Shows:
Anita Foy Tel: +44 (0)207 821 3652

Head of Tatton Show:
Lucinda Costello Tel: +44 (0)207 821 3328

Website www.rhs.org.uk
Gardens, Flower Shows and Events showcustomercare@rhs.org

14: Sponsorship

Main sponsors:
- The Telegraph: official print media partner and sponsor for the Long Water picnic enclosures
- Ocean Spray: the Long Water cranberry harvest display
- Cunard: in association with the Palace Garden Room
- Pro-Grow: sponsor of the Grow Bandstand
- Country Living Magazine: for the Country Living Magazine pavilion

Perennial: managing the Plant Crèche and cloakroom in Escape
John Deere: official gator utility vehicle supplier

15: Economic Impact

No Information

16: Interviews

The RHS has been contacted, however there has been no reply to date.

17: Summary & Conclusions

17.1 Location & General

The site has excellent access by road and public transport. Road access is well marked to reduce traffic problems. The site itself is level which allows for easy installation of the marquees, gardens and all facilities. Easy access and movement through the site for pedestrians and disabled visitors.
17.2 Exhibitions:

The exhibits and supporting facilities are mixed throughout the site, but the site is divided into two parts due to the long canal. There is a sense that the better exhibits are to the west side of the canal, that is the river side.

- Exhibitions are located within theme zones such as show gardens, summer gardens, floral marquee but also in areas called inspire, grow and escape
- This allows for considerable diversity and interpretation by the exhibitors
- The site is large and there is good signage throughout the site. Easier to understand if you have been to the show before
- In most cases, there is a generous amount of space between gardens and other stands allowing them to be easily seen
- Exhibits are of a high quality. Most are relatively conservative; however the conceptual gardens based on the seven deadly sins are the most thought provoking
- Trade stands and food facilities are located throughout the site
- Many trade stands have produced garden settings for their products and the RHS awards medals for the best ones.
- This encourages a better level of display
- A good informal atmosphere throughout the site even when crowded
- Excellent review on the RHS web site with video clips, links to exhibitors, award winners and tickets for the following year

17.3 Issues:

- There is a lack of seating throughout the site for general resting
- Considering the age profile and the fact that people spend an average of 4 ¾ hours on site, this seems a serious oversight
- Similarly, areas providing snacks and drinks were lacking in seating
- Litter bins were scarce, difficult to find at times
- Maps, separate and larger than the catalogue map, would be easier to use and read
- While children are normally free, there was limited interest for them
- There is no link or joint ticketing to the gardens of Hampton Court; particularly useful for visitors from other parts of the country or from overseas