

**PRESS RELEASE: May 2023**



## **Sunshine brings record visitors to BBC Gardeners' World Spring Fair at Beaulieu**

**Sunshine, Showcase Gardens and springtime shopping were just some of the highlights enjoyed by a record 23,000 green-fingered visitors at the BBC Gardeners' World Spring Fair at Beaulieu the last weekend of April. Exhibitors returned in their droves for the Spring Fair's third year, with more than 150 exhibitors on site to provide a unique shopping experience.**

Headline sponsor Hillier Garden Centres' stunning Secret Garden had the wow factor, with visitors entering through high hedges to find raised beds packed with swathes of colour from hundreds of beautiful plants and trees, including brand new varieties launched at the show. The organisers are proud and delighted to announce that Hillier will continue its support as headline sponsor for the BBC Gardeners' World Spring Fair at Beaulieu for the next three years.

Chris Francis, of Hillier, said, "It's been a fantastic experience to be part of the BBC Gardeners' World Spring Fair since its launched in 2021, in an area of the country that is so close to our roots. We are delighted to announce that we will be an integral part of the event going forward for the next three years, and we look forward to more gardens, more plants and more inspiration that we, and the Spring Fair, will bring its visitors in the years to come."

There was inspiration for every kind of garden, outdoor space and window box imaginable at Beaulieu, with a stylish and tranquil Nordic Retreat by The Landscape Service, a Theatre of Greens by award-winning designer Paul Stone (a celebration of veg, with delicious specimens to admire and a stage for talks about all things 'grow your own'), Beautiful Borders by local garden designers, charities and groups, College Gardens by local horticultural students, and floral displays by specialist nurseries and growers, not to mention Beaulieu's own gardens, grounds and attractions – all of which were included in the ticket price.

Plot to plate and thrifty gardening were key themes for this year's Spring Fair, and there were more experts, workshops and opportunities to learn on site than ever. Over the show weekend, BBC TV presenters Frances Tophill, Arit Anderson and Adam Frost, and the editors of BBC Gardeners' World Magazine were joined by well-known gardening personalities, plant experts and influencers, all sharing practical tips and advice for successful home growing.

In a new and exciting collaboration for 2023, chefs and kitchen gardeners from the New Forest's The Pig and Lime Wood Hotel hosted live food and drink demonstrations in the restored Victorian Kitchen of Beaulieu's Palace House and 'alfresco' at the Theatre of Greens.

BBC Gardeners' World presenter, Frances Tophill, presented awards to the best of the Spring Fair's showcase gardens, floral features and displays, which were assessed by a panel of horticultural and garden design experts. Winners were: **Best Showcase Garden** (Platinum Award) - *Nordic Retreat* by Southampton-based The Landscape Service; **Best Beautiful Border** (Platinum Award) - *Not all those who wander are lost* by Furzey Gardens and Minstead Trust; **Best College Garden** (Platinum Award) – Alison Firth and horticulture students from Kingston Maurward College, Dorset; **Best BBC Gardeners' World Magazine Subscriber Border** (Gold Award) - *A Sensory Soak* by Bridget Lloyd and Tiffany Passmore from Go Botanical in the New Forest; and **Best Floral Display** (1<sup>st</sup> place) - New Forest Hostas & Hemerocallis.

A tempting range of street food outlets kept visitors fed and watered in style throughout the Spring Fair weekend, with bandstand entertainment to get the toes tapping, and the BBC Good Food Market offered tasty eats and treats to sample and take home.

**Rachel Poletti-Gadd, Portfolio Director - Gardening Division at Immediate Live, organisers of BBC Gardeners' World Events, said:** "What a fantastic weekend of spring gardening fun we had at Beaulieu! We are delighted to continue working with Hillier. Being able to develop the Fair together for another three years really is the icing on the cake. It was wonderful to see so many people enjoying themselves, getting inspiration from the gardens and displays, wearing the floral crowns they'd made at one of the workshops, learning more about growing their own food, and taking home some gorgeous new plants and great ideas for their gardens. We can't wait to do it all again next year!"

The BBC Gardeners' World Spring Fair returns to Beaulieu on 3 – 5 May 2024. If that's too long to wait, BBC Gardeners' World Live takes place at the NEC Birmingham from 15-18 June 2023, and the BBC Gardeners' World Autumn Fair takes place at Audley End, Essex from 1 – 3 September 2023.

Tickets available at [bbcgardenersworldlive.com](http://bbcgardenersworldlive.com). Transaction fee applies.

ENDS

#### Notes to editors:

For further information, interviews or pictures, please contact:

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Press accreditation for BBC Gardeners' World Live is open. To apply for a pass and for more information on the show, [please click here](#)

**BBC Gardeners' World Live, 15 – 18 June NEC Birmingham** | [bbcgardenersworldlive.com](http://bbcgardenersworldlive.com). Event contact: [ssr@immediate.co.uk](mailto:ssr@immediate.co.uk).

Thursday 16 June 9am – 6pm

Friday 17 June 9am – 6pm

Saturday 18 June 9am – 6pm

Sunday 19 June 9am – 5pm

Co-located with the BBC Good Food Show Summer.

Book tickets: [bbcgardenersworldlive.com](http://bbcgardenersworldlive.com)

**Details correct at time of print.** BBC Gardeners' World events are organised and presented by Immediate Live (the trading name of River Street Events Ltd). The Gardeners' World logo is a trademark of BBC. © BBC. Licensed by BBC Studios.

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