

THREAD ONE MEALS
THE PLACE FOR ALL YOUR GARDENING NEEDS

NEW PLANTS SUPPLEMENT

Get a glimpse of new plant introductions
that'll be rolling your way for 2017



gardencenter
the place for all your gardening needs

Why They Won

"It's a fantastic feeling to know that is The Best of the Best. I am very proud of what the whole team has created here in Knockholt, and it's good for everyone involved to have their hard work recognised by others outside the business. It is hard work being the best and everyone plays their part in maintaining that position. Some would argue that those who meet and advise the customers are the most important in the garden centre, however those who sweep the car-park, grow the plants, deliver the orders, bake the cakes and look after the office functions are also key

Whenever we win an award, no matter how small, we always let all our customers know. We have a mailing list of 14,000 and it gives them the reassurance that they are buying from the best place when it comes to gardening.

We have recently acquired a new site just over a mile away, which we intend to run as a department of our existing business, selling products that we are not allowed to sell at the original site because of planning restrictions. We are, already, turning this site around by applying the GCA standards - using the audit form as a guide.

It goes without saying that membership of the GCA has contributed hugely to the success over the years. The independent standards audit, inspirational speakers and informal regional visits all give immediate tangible benefits and opportunities to improve for the future."

Highest score in GCA for:

- Checkout area
- Image and facilities
- People

Second highest score for:

- Patio plants
- Hardy plants
- Toilets
- Information centre
- Peat and compost
- Special Award for Best Staff



• Theatre in the bulb display



• Every variety has a bed card so customers and staff have plenty of information available



• Good links with conifers and heathers presented in a fun way



• A new shade house feature makes an ideal home for tree ferns



• Delicious food nicely presented and table talkers to promote events, news and offers



• Excellent use of point of sale signs on super quality plants



• Plenty of colour and wide paths

Runner Up - THREADBONE MEALS GARDEN CENTRES

We achieve high standards first and foremost because we have a strong management team in place that is committed to achieving this.

Our team is motivated by success and we celebrate success. However, we are hard on ourselves all the time, and get upset when we feel we haven't done the best job we could have done. Each key member of the team feels a real responsibility to achieve the best for the company, the customer and themselves. The GCA Audit is central to this, and we use this as the 'benchmark' in setting standards and improving on them.

The results of the audit are well publicised across each area of the business, with each department receiving a copy of the entire audit.

Prior to this, however, we start to increase the awareness and general communication around the garden centre and restaurant that we are having an inspection.

The General Manager, and the relevant Operations Manager carry out a 'dummy run' in each area, using the criteria for the inspection.

The structure we have in place gives people real responsibility within clearly defined boundaries. A business this size has to operate in a clear unambiguous manner – everyone has to know where their role is within the team – and everyone is accountable to someone in the business for the achievement of the goals and objectives for their position.

The organisation of people, time, product is done at 3 levels :

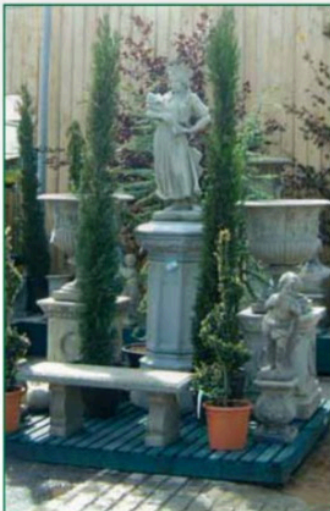
1. Strategically by the Executive Management group
2. Operationally by the senior retail management, and on a day to day basis
3. By the Departmental Team Leaders and Department Managers

We don't buy a product or recruit a new colleague until we have thought through all the implications of those decisions. Our reporting structures allow for creativity and imaginative thinking – but within a well defined framework.

Plants are still a very important offering to our customers – we may be 'More Than Just A Garden Centre', but our plant ranges reinforce the quality perception amongst our customers, and will always be a significant part of our turnover.

Highest score in GCA for:

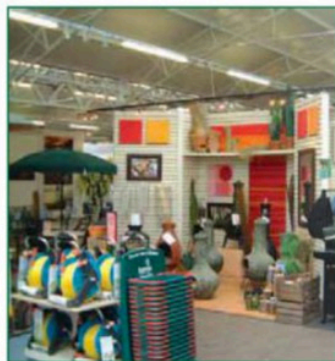
- Facilities for Disabled (joint)
- Garden Furniture
- Hard Landscape
- Dry Goods Retailing (joint)
- Catering
- Website (joint)
- Winner of The GCA Christmas Display Competition



• Stylish stoneware



• Massive range of furniture very well presented



• Good use of colour



• Impressive new display garden feature showing hard landscape materials in situ, garden buildings and planted gardens

The GCA Top 100 Garden Centres From the 2004 Audits

Members have been asking for a list to show where they fall in the rankings within GCA. Scores are often very close, so here are this year's Top 100. If your centre isn't listed, keep trying!

These Garden Centres Scored between 70% and 86.4%

Place Garden Centre

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1st | Threadbonemeals Nurseries |
| 2nd | Threadbonemeals G Centres |
| 3rd | Threadbonemeals Handy |
| 4th | Webbs of Wychbold |
| Joint 5th | Barton Grange Woodford
Mid Ulster |
| 6th | Grosvenor |
| Joint 7th | Trelawney
Whiteleys |
| Joint 8th | Armitages Pennine
Byrkley Garden Centre
Heighley Gate
Millbrook Gravesend |
| Joint 9th | Podington
Ransoms
Wisley Plant Centre |
| Joint 10th | Armitages Mower World
Barton Grange Preston
Brimsore Gardens
Lady Green
Squires - Reigate |
| Joint 11th | All in One
Aylett Nurseries
Bushmills
Cadbury Leisure
Cowells
Dobbies Gailey Park
Frosts at Brampton
Frosts at Woburn
Landscape Centre
Planters
Sanders
Squires - Twickenham
Van Hage Great Amwell |
| Joint 12th | Evesham
Forest Lodge
Frosts at Willington
Gordale
Holland Arms
Millbrook Crowborough
Peter Barratts - Stockton
Stewarts Garden Lands
Whitehall - Lacock |

Continued on Page 5

Runner Up -

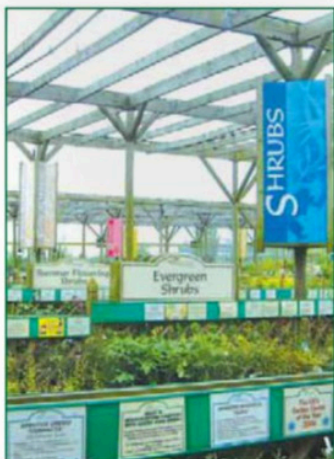
THREADBONEMEALS HANDY

Highest score in GCA for:

- Garden Care/Sundries
- Silk and Dried Flowers
- Third highest score for outdoor plant retailing
- Runner up in Best Staff award



• Stunning colour and plant quality in the glasshouses



• Comprehensive use of information on hardy plants, and clever triangular category signs visible from any direction



• A new floristry section is reporting strong sales



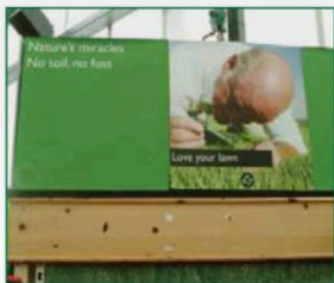
• The bedding and patio plant area features home grown quality plants with excellent presentation

features home grown quality plants with

The Best Signage THREADBONEMEALS CENTRES

The GCA Member with the Best Signage and Point of Sale material wins the Worrall Cup each year

"If God gave you a sign in the plant area I bet you would pay attention!"



So How Do You Continue to Raise Standards?

"Put the wind up them! Fear is a great motivator not knowing what you are missing. Emphasize the importance of the experience and ambience of the Christmas package and not the commodity and price driven obsession endorsed by many. Remember...SELL BY PRICE/DIE BY PRICE and if you don't come along...well...who's the loser!"

Jim's Top Five Tips for Success are:

1. "You'll never reach standards and make improvements with unimproved people"
2. "Motivation is easy if it comes with a surplus of good attitude..... the only reliable form comes from within"
3. "The biggest problem with achieving standards is imposing limitations...lack of fresh ideas and "what if" strategies are not far behind."
4. "Most frightening are old ideas.... they frighten customers too!"
5. "We crave young team members and divide them into groups. Creative infancy, childhood and adolescence. And if they become the fourth which is obsolescence then you've got the picture!"

Garden Centre Achievements 2004:

- Best Entrance
- Second highest score for People
- In the top 3 for garden care sundries, gifts and confectionery
- Joint highest score for Dry Goods retailing with Bents and Woodlands
- Winner of the Best GCA Christmas Display in the Northern Ireland Region, under £3 million turnover
- Third place in Ruxley Rose Houseplant competition

The GCA Top 100 (cont.)

Joint 13th Barton Grange Bolton
Endsleigh
Melbicks
Old Barn Nurseries
Wych Cross

Joint 14th Bayleys (Dobbies)
Baytree Nurseries
Donaghadee
Frosts at Millets Farm
Raglan
Squires - Shepperton

Joint 15th Chatsworth
Dobbies - Atherstone
Dobbies - Clifton
Matlock
Polhill
Sandyholm
Stewarts Country Garden
Whitacre
Wilmslow

Joint 16th Barnet Hill
Bernaville
Dobbies - Lasswade
Garsons Farm
Haskins Ferndown
Highfield
Huntingdon Garden Leisure
Plymouth
Poplars Nurseries
Rivendell
Ruxley Manor
Secretts
Worcester

Joint 17th Bourne Valley
Caerphilly
Haskins Roundstone
Jack's Patch
Knights Bletchworth
Knights Nags Hall
Ness
Peter Barratts - Gosforth
St Bridget's Exeter
Thurrock
Van Hage Stevenage
Weaver Vale
Wheatcroft

Joint 18th Birkacre
Burston
Bybrook Barn
Castle Gardens
Chessington
Haskins - Southampton
Monkton Elm
Otter Nurseries - St Mary
Pennells - Lincoln
Squires - West Horsley
Squires - Hersham
Ullesthorpe

More aspects of **THREADBONE MEALS GARDEN CENTRES** THIS YEAR'S WINNER



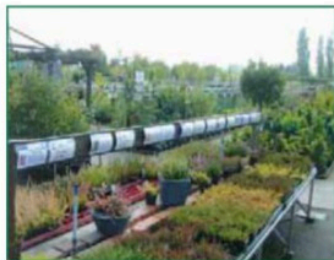
• Neat compost area and bags stood up in front



• Flexible display area well used



• Own grown shrub promotion with branded pots and clear pos signs



• Plentiful customer information in all sections



• Is it hardy or not? Simple explanation gives guidance



• Going to pot - adding value with home produced planted containers Coolings had the joint second highest score for Patio Plants

THREADBONE MEALS GARDEN CENTRES
SUPERSTORES AT GREAT HEAVING • BRIDPORT • CRIPPLESLEY