

# Why I... #lovehorticulture

Garden designer **Rae Wilkinson** explains how a career in horticulture has been so important to her health and mental wellbeing

**P**lants and green spaces have provided a source of sanctuary, tranquillity and wonder for me throughout my life. As a child growing up in London I would seek out corners of our garden to cultivate, and cycle to the local churchyard to sit under the trees and admire the roses. My grandfather loved to tell the story of how, as a young child, I would disappear for hours to be found under his blackcurrant bushes, my face stained with juice and my hands full of flowers. I dreamed of a life in the countryside surrounded by greenery, and I am very lucky to have now fulfilled that dream in my adult life.

After I left art college I worked in environmental conservation, and then as a landscaper, which finally opened the door to the world of gardening. Having experienced some struggles with my mental health and wellbeing in my twenties, gardening was a revelation to me. Working with plants and having my hands in the soil provided the most grounding and healing space I had ever found myself in. The satisfaction of being out in the elements transforming and tending gardens, then watching them grow and evolve brought me great joy. I immersed myself in the amazing world of gardening, and over the years this has led me back to being creative again as a garden designer.

Through working in the industry, I have met so many wonderful people whom I feel deeply privileged to share a passion for plants and green space with. The most wonderful thing is that I never stop discovering new and exciting knowledge about plants and how they thrive, which brings me constant joy. I also get to bring some of that joy to other people through my work, which is one of the most satisfying elements of working with gardens.

“THE MOST WONDERFUL THING IS THAT I NEVER STOP DISCOVERING NEW AND EXCITING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PLANTS AND HOW THEY THRIVE, WHICH BRINGS ME CONSTANT JOY”

## RAE WILKINSON

DIRECTOR, RAE WILKINSON GARDEN AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN



Tweet us @ProLandscaperJW and tell us why you love horticulture using the hashtag #LoveHorticulture