



13th August 2025

From Lincolnshire fields to the nation's gardens – Britain Garden Centres turns 35

From a single site in Woodthorpe, Lincolnshire, in 1990, British Garden Centres' phenomenal growth has continued with the announcement of major acquisitions this year, making them the largest family-run garden centre group by stores in the country.

2025 marks a special milestone for the company as it celebrates its 35th anniversary on the **25th August**. From opening that first site in Woodthorpe back in 1990 to becoming a nationally recognised brand while keeping its headquarters firmly in Lincolnshire, the anniversary is a moment of reflection and pride for the Stubbs family and the thousands of colleagues who have contributed to its journey.

Securing the former Dobbies sites at Shinfield, Gloucester, Gosforth, Heighley Gate, Rugby, Havant, and Northampton, then Hayes Garden World in the Lakes marks the latest expansion for the now UK-wide business, and this Lincolnshire-grown success story shows no sign of slowing down. These additions brought the company's portfolio to an impressive 73 garden retail sites across the UK, a testament to its incredible journey from its Lincolnshire roots, 35 years ago.

A family legacy

The phenomenal growth of British Garden Centres since its humble beginnings in 1990 is a testament to the power of family, a hard-working team, and a deep-rooted passion for gardening

Charles Stubbs and his brother displayed an entrepreneurial spirit as teenagers by selling plant cuttings outside Woodthorpe Hall. Over the years, the brothers' reputation grew far and wide. They were featured on the local news program Calendar for their entrepreneurial skills.

This early venture laid the foundation for what would become a thriving national business that has now become the UK's largest garden centre group by number of stores. Charles, together with Robert and Phillippa, developed a business that expanded from a single garden centre near their home to the flagship Brigg Garden Centre. This growth transformed their venture into Britain's largest garden centre group, which increased from 10 locations in 2018 to 73 in 2025, with five of those being in Lincolnshire (Woodthorpe, Brigg, Louth, Chapel, Horncastle).

As Woodthorpe Garden Centre turns 35 and Brigg Garden Centre reaches its 25th birthday this year, celebrations honour their place at the heart of the local community and their role as one of Lincolnshire's most visited and best-



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loved destinations. Long-time customers, dedicated staff, and local organisations will come together to mark the occasion.

The next chapter

As the number of centres has grown, so too has our team. One of the things we're most proud of is that we remain an independent, family-run business. It's been incredibly rewarding to see the next generation of the Stubbs step up to roles within the business and bring fresh and engaging ideas to grow the group further.

The family is proud to see the next generation stepping into key roles at British Garden Centres. This summer, at just 26 years old, Amy Stubbs proudly stepped into the role of Managing Director, becoming the youngest leader in British Garden Centres' 35 year legacy. With extensive hands-on experience across the business, Amy brings a fresh, modern vision deeply rooted in Lincolnshire's family values. Her dynamic leadership is set to drive growth, enhance the customer experience, and further strengthen the company's strong family community ethos as the next generation takes the helm and continues to grow the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group.

The team continues to grow from strength to strength, now employing over 3000 people, a far cry from the handful that started in Woodthorpe in Lincolnshire. All of our staff, whether they be at the head office in Brigg or on the shop floor, are passionate and knowledgeable about the plants and gardenware that we sell.

British Garden Centres is growing more of its own plants than ever before across its nursery sites. This focus on homegrown means the group can offer customers the very best in UK-grown quality, alongside our wide choice of gardening and home essentials.

The 73 centre strong group continues to invest in its sites and continues improvement in customer experience, recognising the importance of staying ahead of the curve in a competitive retail market, and differentiating itself from the high street offering.

Looking to the future, British Garden Centres remains committed to its core values of quality, family, and embedding itself in the community it serves. The centres actively engage with residents, supporting local charities and schools and becoming hubs for those around them.

As the business continues to evolve and adapt to the changing retail landscape, the Stubbs family and British Garden Centres team remain dedicated to providing a unique and enjoyable experience for every customer, ensuring that the passion for gardening and the family ethos remain at the heart of the business for generations to come.



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Charles Stubbs commented: "From a small seed starting in our home in Lincolnshire, we've watched British Garden Centres blossom into something truly special and become the largest garden centre operator in the UK. Our family values drive us to deliver exceptional gardening shopping stores in all of our centres. Seeing the next generation take the reins fills me with immense pride, and I'm excited to see what the future holds as we continue to nurture and grow the passion for one of the country's favourite hobbies."

Amy Stubbs, Managing Director at British Garden Centres, added: "I am proud to step up as Managing Director at British Garden Centres and honoured to continue our family's legacy. It's a privilege to lead our fantastic team as we build on 35 years of success, rooted deeply in Lincolnshire values. I look forward to driving growth, enhancing the customer experience, and strengthening the family commitment that has made us the UK's largest garden centre group."

As British Garden Centres continues to grow and evolve, Lincolnshire remains at the very heart of the business. It's where the Stubbs' journey began and where the business' deepest roots hold firm as it looks to the future.

ENDS:

WORD COUNT: 986

Notes to Editors:

About the business:

British Garden Centres (BGC) is the UK's largest family-owned garden centre group with 73 centres around the country. The group is owned and led by the Stubbs family, who also own and operate Woodthorpe Leisure Park in Lincolnshire.

BGC was launched in 1990 with the opening of Woodthorpe Garden Centre, funded by brothers Charles and Robert Stubbs. Since 2018, it has expanded rapidly with the acquisition of 50 garden centres, allowing it to grow from its heartland to the business it is now, with 73 garden centres spread from Carmarthen to Ramsgate, Wimborne to East Durham.

The group has a team of 3500 colleagues working across the garden centres, restaurants, 2 growing nurseries, 4 distribution centres and Woodthorpe Leisure Park and Woody's Restaurant & Bar.

Social Media

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