Heritage horticulturalists blossom and bloom at



Rhai o raddedigion y Cynllun Sgiliau Garddwriaeth Treftadaeth

A group of specialist heritage horticulturalists have now graduated at the RHS Flower Show in Cardiff, having gained a unique qualification partly funded by National Lottery players.

The gardeners are all successful graduates of The Heritage Horticulture Skills Scheme (HHSS), which provides trainees the opportunity to combine a real understanding of practical gardening with a thorough knowledge of horticulture history.

The HHSS scheme runs in seven key gardens across Wales, including Aberglasney Gardens, Belle Vue Park, Bodnant Garden, Bute Park, Dyffryn Gardens, Picton Castle and St Fagans - allowing students to experience tending some of the most prestigious heritage gardens in Wales.

Having been first introduced in 2010, the scheme has now trained more than 60 budding heritage gardeners, many of whom have gone on either to further study or to enjoy a career in private or heritage gardens.

Andrew Dixey, chair of HHSS, said: “This qualification is so important if we are to safeguard and enhance heritage horticulture with a new generation of highly trained gardeners who are experts in both the theory and practice of the craft.

“I would like to congratulate all those who graduated and wish them all the very best for the future.”

The successful HHSS scheme is now in its final year, and will see one more group of trainees graduate this summer. But mighty oaks from little acorns do grow – and the scheme's legacy will live on in the Lantra Level Three Heritage Horticulture Award, which is designed to recognise and reward the skills of heritage horticulturalists.