# Chelsea Flower Show 2025 blends innovation and tradition with eco-friendly gardens and dog-friendly designs



In its 112th year, the Chelsea Flower Show continues to challenge traditional gardening norms by blending practicality with aesthetics, as exemplified by an array of groundbreaking designs. Central to this year's event is the Garden of the Future, conceived by designers Matthew Butler and Josh Parker. This innovative garden showcases a unique toilet that converts human waste into biochar compost—a sustainable approach enhancing soil health for vegetable gardening. "It converts the solids into a biochar and then the liquids into a water that is safe to use on the ornamental planting," Butler explained, highlighting the eco-friendly utilities of such installations during a period of increasing drought.

The ongoing climate crisis demands new approaches to horticulture, particularly in the UK, where hot conditions have put extraordinary strain on water resources. Butler's installation is equipped with a solar panel that powers an irrigation system, demonstrating a commitment to resilience in gardening. "Our chickpeas have been growing well," he noted, while also referencing the rising popularity of crops like sweet potatoes, traditionally uncommon in British agriculture. Lucy Hutchings of She Grows Veg echoed this sentiment, sharing her experiments with drought-resistant varieties of leafy greens that are faring better under current conditions. Despite the dry weather, she optimistically remarked that the season would be "fantastic for tomatoes," as the concentrated sunlight promises to enhance their flavour.

Amid the innovation, the event has embraced a light-hearted celebration of the UK's affection for dogs. Monty Don, beloved presenter of BBC Gardeners’ World, introduced a dog-friendly garden that reflects this unusual but delightful fusion. The RHS and BBC Radio 2 Dog Garden features a robust lawn, non-toxic flora, and a pond designed for canine enjoyment. Don's golden retriever, Ned, contributed indirectly to the garden’s design, creating pathways through the flower borders. The playful atmosphere of the garden ensures that it remains practical for pets while enchanting for humans.

Prince Charles and Queen Camilla were notably in attendance, lending royal support to the show. The couple has a long-standing association with the Royal Horticultural Society, with Charles serving as its patron. Their visit underscores the enduring cultural significance of the Chelsea Flower Show, which balances celebrity appeal with charitable initiatives. This year, gardens created through the Project Giving Back initiative showcase community-focused designs that not only inspire but also have lasting impacts, as many gardens will be relocated post-event to serve hospitals and community spaces.

While the event's dog-centric features highlight a joyous trend, not all animals are welcomed. The SongBird Survival Garden, sponsored by the eponymous charity, takes a different stance by employing thorny trees to deter cats and protect dwindling songbird populations. This garden is designed to offer a refuge for birds, featuring an array of berry-producing plants and dense hedges ideal for nesting. As Susan Morgan, chief executive of the charity, pointed out, attracting avian visitors is crucial, particularly as their numbers continue to decline across the UK.

The 2025 Chelsea Flower Show represents a microcosm of contemporary horticulture, intertwining innovation with conservation, and leisure with responsibility. Amidst rising costs and changing trends in the industry, such as the reduced presence of traditional exhibitors, the event has expanded to welcome newcomers, including 16 fresh exhibitors this year, emphasising diversity in garden design. The show not only sets the stage for botanical beauty but also, increasingly, for meaningful social engagement through its sustainable and philanthropic dimensions.

The Chelsea Flower Show reaffirms gardening’s role as both an art and an environmental statement, where beauty intersects with necessity, making it a focal point for horticultural enthusiasts and casual visitors alike.

### Reference Map

* Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs), [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/379192ed5e3339f7a9453afd7127f5d4)
* Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs), [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/5f1bb385-f9a5-4d46-aad5-8be3426a533f)
* Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs), [[6]](https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/gardens/2025/rhs-radio-2-dog-garden), [[7]](https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/news/2025/rhs-radio-2-dog-garden)
* Paragraph 4: [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/379192ed5e3339f7a9453afd7127f5d4), [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/a34cf9fb-d961-41e9-871a-8dba16a30a03), [[5]](https://www.ft.com/content/5f1bb385-f9a5-4d46-aad5-8be3426a533f)
* Paragraph 5: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs), [[4]](https://www.ft.com/content/a34cf9fb-d961-41e9-871a-8dba16a30a03), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs)
* Paragraph 6: [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/379192ed5e3339f7a9453afd7127f5d4), [[6]](https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/gardens/2025/rhs-radio-2-dog-garden), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2025/may/20/chelsea-flower-show-practical-gardens-dogs> - The 2025 Chelsea Flower Show highlights innovative garden designs emphasizing practicality alongside beauty. Notably, the Garden of the Future by Matthew Butler and Josh Parker features a toilet that converts waste into biochar compost, enhancing vegetable growth. The garden also includes a solar panel-powered irrigation system, addressing drought conditions exacerbated by climate change. Additionally, Monty Don's dog-friendly garden showcases a robust lawn, non-toxic plants, and a pond, reflecting the UK's love for dogs and gardens. The SongBird Survival Garden, sponsored by the charity, uses thorny trees to deter cats and supports declining songbird populations.
3. <https://apnews.com/article/379192ed5e3339f7a9453afd7127f5d4> - The 2025 Chelsea Flower Show in London showcased innovative garden designs with a focus on resilient landscapes and natural plantings. King Charles III and Queen Camilla attended the event ahead of its public opening, highlighting their ongoing support, with Charles serving as a patron of the Royal Horticultural Society. This year's exhibits emphasized eco-friendly design elements such as moss paving and seamless gravel paths intertwined with greenery. Notably, one garden replicated the Atlantic temperate rainforest, a rare habitat once common along Britain’s western coasts. The royal couple also visited a garden designed for dogs and admired the 'King's Rose,' a newly introduced rose variety featuring fuchsia-and-white stripes, named in honor of King Charles and benefitting the King’s Foundation. The event blends horticultural innovation with royal and celebrity appeal and is captured in a photo gallery curated by AP editors.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/a34cf9fb-d961-41e9-871a-8dba16a30a03> - The Chelsea Flower Show 2025, hosted by the RHS, opens with a gala evening for press and guests, followed by exclusive days for members before opening to the public. A veteran attendee with over 54 visits reflects on the show's evolution since 1963, lamenting the absence of traditional exhibitors like Hillier, Notcutts, and McBeans Orchids due to rising costs and Brexit. Despite these losses, the show introduces 16 new exhibitors, including the Bahrain Garden Club and Newby Hall, highlighting fresh contributions like historic irises and ornamental malus trees. Returning favorites such as David Austin Roses, Kevock, and Pheasant Acre Plants continue to maintain high standards. Outside the main pavilion, small, innovative gardens for modern living spaces and ambitious large-scale garden designs enrich the event. Highlighted themes include regional British landscapes and Japanese-inspired gardens. One notable new feature is the RHS and BBC Radio 2 Dog Garden by Monty Don. The author emphasizes personal enjoyment over consumerism, bringing his own lunch and relishing the show as an extraordinary, if fleeting, escape from typical gardening.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/5f1bb385-f9a5-4d46-aad5-8be3426a533f> - This year's Chelsea Flower Show, scheduled for May 20-24, showcases a transformative pivot in design and sponsorship, emphasizing sustainability, innovation, and charitable causes. Ten gardens, including Joe Perkins' volcanic seedscape, Tom Hoblyn’s Mallorcan-inspired rocky terrain, and Nigel Dunnett’s drought-resistant sand garden, are sponsored by Project Giving Back (PGB), a philanthropic initiative launched in 2021. PGB partners designers with charities and emphasizes sustainable, impactful storytelling through garden design. This shift from corporate to charitable sponsorship has encouraged experimental, eco-conscious landscaping. Designers such as Allon Hoskin have embraced sustainable materials like mycelium and recycling to minimize environmental impact. These gardens are also relocated post-show to continue their charitable missions, like hospitals and community centers. The initiative inspired significant public engagement and funding for charities such as the RNLI and Centrepoint. The Royal Horticultural Society has supported these changes with a green audit that reduced carbon emissions by 28%. Overall, the Chelsea Flower Show, powered by PGB’s 'creative philanthropy,' emerges as a model for integrating environmental responsibility with social good, reshaping both garden design and community support.
6. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/gardens/2025/rhs-radio-2-dog-garden> - The RHS and BBC Radio 2 Dog Garden, designed by Monty Don, features a central lawn suitable for canine activities, shaded by a large tree and surrounded by alliums and topiary. The garden includes brick paths leading to a summerhouse and a sectioned area for humans to enjoy a tapestry of plants. The paths are inscribed with the names of dogs belonging to Radio 2 presenters, RHS ambassadors, and Monty Don's dog, Ned. The garden will be relocated to Battersea Dogs & Cats Home after the show.
7. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/news/2025/rhs-radio-2-dog-garden> - Monty Don's first RHS Chelsea garden, the RHS and BBC Radio 2 Dog Garden, celebrates the UK's love for dogs and gardens. The garden features a central lawn, shaded by a large tree, surrounded by alliums and topiary. Brick paths lead to a summerhouse, and the paths are inscribed with the names of dogs belonging to Radio 2 presenters, RHS ambassadors, and Monty Don's dog, Ned. The garden will be relocated to Battersea Dogs & Cats Home after the show.