



Plan for Jobs: Environment Minister visits Dobbies Garden Centre

- Environment Minister Rebecca Pow visits Dobbies Garden Centre in London to hear how they are creating jobs and planting for our planet

The Environment Minister Rebecca Pow has today (8 July) visited a branch of Dobbies Garden Centre in London to hear how they are creating new jobs and getting involved in the [Plant for our Planet campaign](#). This comes as the government's Plan for Jobs has been running for a year, helping protect livelihoods and support millions of people across the whole of the UK.

The garden retailer is opening two new 'Little Dobbies' in London which will create new, local jobs and help connect people from urban areas with nature. Nationally, the business is set to create around 1000 jobs over the next five years, including 150 apprenticeships to support young people enter horticulture, hospitality and retail industries.

To help the nation build back greener and step up our efforts to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss, we recently launched a campaign to inspire people, businesses and communities across the country to plant more trees and flowers: 'Plant for our Planet'. The campaign is backed by several green organisations, including Horticultural Trades Association, Royal Horticultural Society, The Wildlife Trusts, Woodland Trust and National Trust, and today Dobbies Garden Centres joined the campaign.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

"As we build back greener and implement our Plan for Jobs, it is encouraging to see new jobs being created which are helping protect and enhance our environment.

"I am grateful to Dobbies Garden Centre for the work they are doing to boost the local economy, increase access to nature and for their support for our Plant for our Planet campaign. By all working together to plant more flowers and trees we can all help tackle climate change and reverse biodiversity loss."

The Plan for Jobs is working and is protecting jobs across the whole country, including in London. In the region, 1,627,700 people have been supported by the furlough scheme and 308,187 loans have been offered to businesses, totalling more than £13.7 billion.

Graeme Jenkins, CEO at Dobbies, said:

"At Dobbies we recognise our responsibility in raising awareness and promoting more sustainable practices. Our 4000 team members are our most valuable asset in achieving this and we invest a significant amount each year in training and development.

"As we continue to grow, we expect to create around 1000 new jobs across the UK in the next five years. A number of these will be in little dobbies, our new smaller format stores which we have developed to meet the growing demand to shop local. At the same time, little dobbies supports our aim of attracting new gardeners and making gardening accessible for all."

James Barnes, Chairman of the Horticultural Trades Association, said:

“This jobs announcement by Dobbies shows how our sector is vibrant and committed to expansion. As an industry we will launch our ‘growth strategy’ in September. This will be an exemplar on how government and industry can come together to develop a ‘green economy’. Removing barriers to growth can unleash the full opportunity of the British horticulture and landscaping industry - creating jobs and investment in local communities, helping to tackle climate change and achieving net zero emissions.”

Notes to editors:

Dobbies Garden Centres have made a range of commitments to put sustainability at the heart of their business, including:

- Setting a target to become peat-free by the end of this year and launching new peat-free products
- Pot and tray return point in every store to ensure they do not end up in landfill
- Recently launching a compost recycling bag scheme which will initially run in ten stores, including the store at Woodcote Green
- Aiming to source 85% of plants from UK nurseries – promoting British plants and reducing plant miles
- Powering half of their estate by biomass and donating waste from food halls to ‘Too Good to Go’