

Royal Botanic Gardens
Kew

Inspiring futures

Alice Livingstone

Botanical Horticulturist



I am: 1. Persistent
2. Adaptable
3. Passionate

I work in the Millennium glasshouses. I propagate plants from seeds and make more plants by taking cuttings and growing them.

I enjoy the massive variety of plants from all over the world that I look after and the fact that the work changes daily and seasonally.

My average day varies with the seasons. Through the summer I am watering, potting on, controlling pests and doing glasshouse maintenance.

After a break for family and moving I had to start again and studied for the RHS 2 qualification in professional horticulture. It is persistence that got me my dream job at Kew!

When I left school, I went to Reading University to study for a BSc in Landscape and Management, and an MSc in Plant Diversity.

To quote Tim Minchin, 'Science is just a term which describes humankind's incremental acquisition of understanding through observation'.

We have a thousand years of observations to inform us and we learn more every day. So I am using science when I observe and adjust to the needs of my plants. I think we are now realising the full value of the empirical plant knowledge handed down from generation to generation.



If you are considering a career in horticulture, get the RHS 2. Only do it if you enjoy physical work with plants and in all weathers.

My job is good for me both mentally and physically. If you can't sit at a desk and you love plants then horticulture might be for you.

Want a career that grows?

Build your skills in science, technology, engineering, art and maths to give yourself a chance to blossom in a career like one of these varied and exciting jobs at Kew.

You could make a real difference to the world.

For further information: kew.org

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