

# The Health & Wellbeing of people working in horticulture

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Key Research Findings:

- **Health & Wellbeing Survey 2021**
- **Horticultural Labour Market Research 2021**
- **Wellbeing Kiosk Results 2019**





# BUILDING BETTER FUTURES FOR PEOPLE IN HORTICULTURE

Every day we speak to some of the 876,000\* people eligible for our support. Knowing that people working in horticulture need our support isn't enough. Through the inaugural Horticulture Health and Wellbeing Survey (2021), Labour Market Research (2021) and Wellbeing Kiosk results (2019) we are building a picture of the health and wellbeing of the industry.

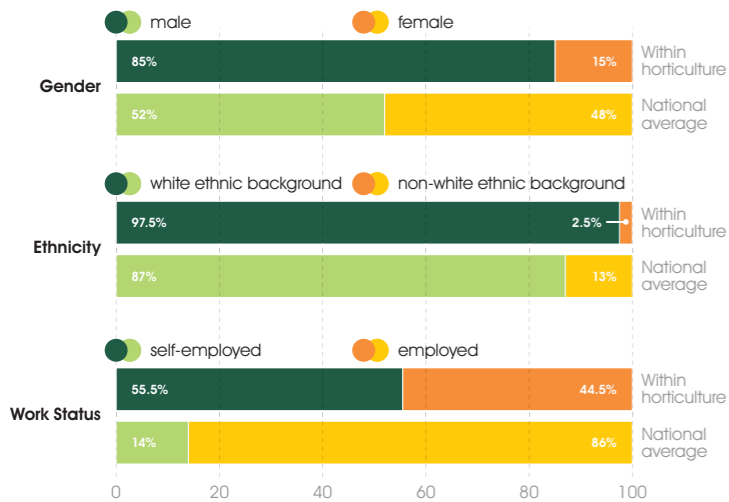
The research has identified that there is a significant gap between individuals' perceived and actual state of health and wellbeing with a pressing need to raise awareness of good health and wellbeing.

**Julia Hayne, Director of Services**

## KEY FINDINGS

### PEOPLE WORKING IN HORTICULTURE\*\*\*

Unlike the national average for other industries, the majority of those working in horticulture are male. There are more self-employed than the national average and the workforce is less diverse with **2%\*** from ethnic minorities.



### CRITICAL ISSUES

The biggest perceived challenges for people working in horticulture are:

- Mental wellbeing (**35%**)
- Back and joint pain (**20%**)
- Debt and financial pressures (**16%**)
- Lack of training and progression (**13%**)

## PHYSICAL & MENTAL WELLBEING

The results indicate that most people working in horticulture generally feel good about their health (**81%**). But in reality, a large proportion of participants have experienced or are experiencing mental or physical conditions that do not equate with good health, for example:

- The number of people in the industry with poor mental wellbeing is greater than the UK's national average, whilst over three quarters of people are experiencing aches and pains, with back and joint pain being prevalent.
- Blood pressure data taken from the Wellbeing Kiosks also highlights potential health problems for people in horticulture. The average blood pressure for those in the industry was consistently higher than the UK average, with **43%\*\*** of those tested showing cause for concern vs **32%\*\*** UK average.
- The proportion of people in the horticultural workforce identifying with a health condition (lasting or expecting to last more than a year) is higher than the national average according to data from the Labour Market report (**34%\*** of people employed in horticulture vs **28%\*** of people in employment in UK). An even larger proportion of those responding to the Health & Wellbeing survey identified as having a long-term health condition (**41%**).

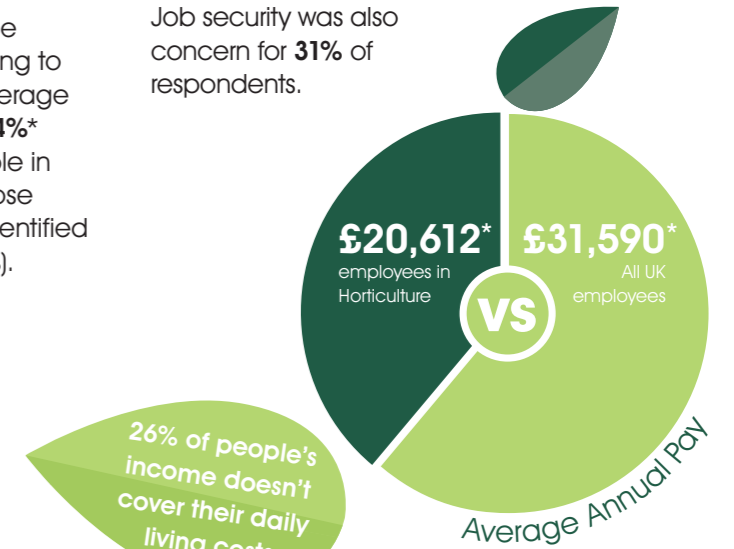
## FINANCES

There is a significant gap in estimated earnings between employees in horticultural occupations compared with all employees in the UK.

Many in horticulture are barely earning enough to reach a minimum socially acceptable living standard. The estimated average pay is **£20,612\*** while it's estimated that **£19,200\*** is needed for a single person to keep their head above water.

On average one in four people responding to the Health & Wellbeing survey said that their income didn't cover their daily living costs and the figure was even higher for females (**33%**).

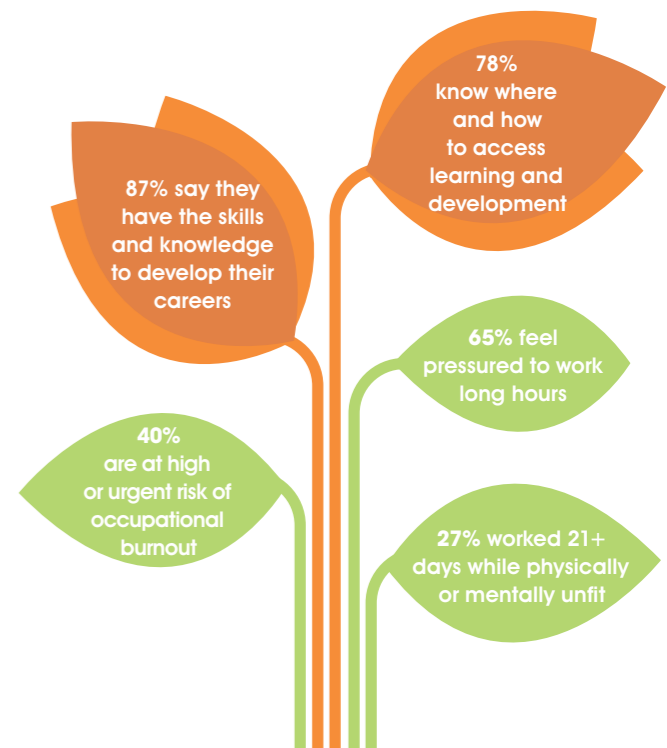
Job security was also concern for **31%** of respondents.



## CAREERS AND TRAINING

When asked about their career development, **87%** said they had the skills and knowledge to develop their careers; however **13%** of people perceived a lack of training and progression opportunities as a critical issue for the horticultural industry.

More than **50%** of people felt pressure to work long hours and of those three quarters said the pressure came from workload and the pressure they put on themselves.



\* indicates data taken from Horticultural Labour Market Research 2021

\*\* indicates data taken from Wellbeing Kiosk Results 2019

\*\*\* The scope of this report covers the vast majority of people in horticulture. However some occupations (such as academics, scientists and florists) are not represented because the ONS data includes them in multi-sector occupational groups which it is not possible to disaggregate. We estimate that these amount to no more than 12.5% of people working in horticulture.

## BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HELP

A delay in seeking care could lead to a delay in diagnosis and treatment, living in pain for longer and/or a deterioration in their condition.

**33%**

only seek help when they are really ill

**22%**

didn't want to take time off work

**12%**

didn't think their current health issue required medical attention

**18%**

not sure where to access the information from

**20%**

practical barriers

**22%**

not comfortable asking

BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HELP FOR CRITICAL ISSUES ...

REASONS WHY PEOPLE DON'T SEEK HELP FOR THEIR HEALTH ...

## WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH & WELLBEING OF OUR INDUSTRY

The Health and Wellbeing Survey 2021 has provided the industry with an insight into the causes and impact of poor wellbeing. It highlights how individuals across the sector feel about their health and the issues that are important to them.

To truly build better futures for the whole horticultural community, we all need a shared understanding of the real and perceived challenges people are facing and collaboration to develop solutions which support the key recommendations:

- Help the horticulture community to understand good health and wellbeing
- Encourage the horticulture community to build healthier lives and adopt positive routines
- Build a culture of wellbeing
- Develop our knowledge base

This report summarises the key findings from Perennial's Horticulture Industry Labour Market Research 2021, the Health and Wellbeing Survey 2021 carried out by International Wellbeing Insights, May to July 2021 and The Wellbeing Kiosk Results 2019. The full survey reports are available at [perennial.org.uk/survey](https://perennial.org.uk/survey)

Perennial is the safety net for people in the horticulture industry and is here to help individuals working in, or retired from, any job involving trees, plants, flowers or grass. Perennial's help and support is free and confidential. The helpline is available on 0800 093 8543 or visit [perennial.org.uk/help](https://perennial.org.uk/help) to find out more.