

WHO DO WE HELP AND HOW DO WE DO IT?

We're here to help anyone who makes or looks after gardens, parks, sports grounds, woodlands and other green spaces. If you work with plants, trees or grass, Perennial is your charity. Our friendly and experienced team can help you and your family through life-changing events with free and confidential personal support, for as long as you need it.

People tell us we're a 'lifeline' as we're here for you throughout your working life and into retirement. No problem or question is too big, or small, so don't let something that's worrying you become a crisis, call us to talk about how we can help.

We know how hard it can be to ask for help, but if you're struggling financially, physically or personally, please get in touch. People often tell us that making the decision to call Perennial was the hardest part about their experience but no one ever regrets it.

We believe everyone should know about Perennial and have the confidence to get in touch if they need help. As we mark our 180th anniversary in 2019, we want to reach more people in horticulture than ever before.

If you or someone you know needs Perennial's help, please get in touch.

All advice is completely free and confidential.

Helpline: 0800 093 8543 | Debt advice: 0800 093 8546 | General: 0800 093 8510

Email: services@perennial.org.uk | Visit: www.perennial.org.uk/help

Health

We understand the importance of your physical and mental health and we know what a devastating effect poor health can have on your life. When things take a turn for the worse you can find yourself in a downwards spiral and it can be difficult to pull yourself out. We're here for you and your family, so please don't wait until things are becoming too much before you get in touch. If your health is affecting your ability to work, or find work, we can do something about it.

"We were visited by a caseworker within days. She seemed to know exactly what we needed and her advice was perfectly pitched. We didn't feel patronised and felt positive that our situation was being taken seriously. Looking back we simply couldn't have coped without Perennial."

Kate – nursery worker with long-term health condition

Accident and Injury

Many people working in horticulture, especially those who are self-employed, simply can't afford to insure themselves against personal injury. So when the unthinkable happens, and an accident or injury stops you from working, things can quickly get out of control. Our team can speak to creditors on your behalf and help your family as you recover.

"My physical state affected me mentally and I became depressed – I was used to having a physically demanding job that kept me outside for most of the day. Being cooped up inside recovering, unable to support my family, was almost too much to bear. It was during one of my really low points that I was reminded about Perennial."

For all media enquiries, contact Bloom PR & Communications

clare@bloom-pr.co.uk | 07815 041635 OR jennie@bloom-pr.co.uk | 07944 552634

Peter – self-employed gardener who suffered a spiral fracture to his leg while at work.

Personal support

We are a great sounding board for self-employed people who do not have the support of an employer. Our experienced team can help you find trusted business advice from local agencies and banks. We can talk through the pressures of running your own business and looking after a family and put you in touch with other people in your area who might be able to help grow your business. Whatever you're up against, we can be the listening ear you need and will always offer unbiased, independent advice, helping you move forward in your horticulture career.

"If it wasn't for Perennial our relationship would have broken down and we wouldn't be where we are today. It's really reassuring to know that Perennial will always be there; that's a great help for me, both physically and mentally."

Stephen – self-employed landscape gardener with long-term health condition

Money matters

Almost everyone who comes to Perennial needs some extra financial help and we support a third of the people who contact us to get statutory benefits they didn't know about. Some people simply can't afford to live on their wage and need help to find other forms of income. Many people have done all they can to reduce their costs and as a result have become isolated and excluded from their family, friends and community networks. We can help with debt clearance (and will represent you in court if you'd like us to), crisis housing and food and clothing for you and your family, but for most people we can help before a problem becomes a crisis. Please don't be afraid to ask for help – it's why we're here.

"The bills didn't stop, so I didn't. My condition made me mentally depressed and so when Perennial stepped in they definitely helped me get better. They're patient, they don't judge. You just feel like you're being looked after, when you can't look after yourself."

Leigh – self-employed landscaper and single parent with a stress-induced skin condition

Children's support

Every child has the right to a healthy childhood and over the last 12 months we've supported more children of horticulturists than ever before. The cost of raising a child increases each year but most wages in the sector are static or in decline. Food poverty affects around 44% of the families we support. We can make sure eligible children get free school meals and can help with food vouchers for school holiday periods when free school meals stop.

For families unable to afford the basic costs of food, warmth and shelter, additional costs associated with a child's education can be very difficult to cover. We can help with essential school equipment, school trips, uniform, additional lessons and for older children, educational training. Talk to us about how we can help you give your children the best possible start in life.

"Perennial helped us during a particularly cold winter when our heating bill was higher than usual and we were struggling to pay other bills. They helped with school lunches and paid for a school trip for our older child. Without their help, we just wouldn't have been able to cover the cost."

Alison and Stuart – self-employed gardener and garden centre worker