

March 2017, Ed Bowring,

Having previously worked as an occupational therapist in mental and physical health environments I learnt what a wonderfully therapeutic medium horticulture and gardening can be. With a long term love of horticulture I decided to pursue this as a career 3 years ago and trained to become a horticultural therapist with Thrive, Coventry University and Pershore College and worked in a therapeutic garden in London helping veterans with mental and physical health issues.

Having recently relocated and now working as a self-employed horticultural therapist and gardener based in West Sussex I knew what a benefit having the PA1/6 spraying certification would be not only to my immediate work and services I could offer, but also to my career over the long term.

Two of my current clients have been asking if I am able to apply nematodes for slug control and pesticides for weed control to which I have up until now been unable to perform or provide as a service.

I applied to the PG Trust hoping they might be able to help fund the course and qualification as without any funding it would not have been possible. The PG Trust very kindly funded me £550 from the charity Perennial's Lironi training fund towards the £570 course and assessment fees for the PA1/6 with GrowTrain

The course was delivered by Growtrain in West Sussex and was outstanding and very well taught. The theory was intensive, but along with plenty of opportunity to practice the practical application was a good mix and well delivered. Thankfully I passed both the PA1 and PA6 so am now legally certified to spray for my clients, one of whom has been longing me to obtain this qualification for some time.

Having the PA1/PA6 qualification will make a world of difference to the services I am now able to offer to both the community gardens I work in and to my private clients. I am also keen to try and secure a regular part time employed role as a gardener at an estate locally which, having looked at many job vacancies recently, one of all of their pre requisites is this spraying certification qualification. Thus with the help of the PG Trust and Perennial's Lironi training fund I am now in a position to be able to apply and hopefully get through to the interview stage for some of these role, which without their generous funding I would not be able to do.

So a huge thank you to all at PG Trust and the Perennial's Lironi training fund for helping me achieve this.