



**Appointment of
Managing Director**

October 2024
Reference: HBQUA

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Foreword from the Chair, Sarah Squire

We are passionate about our family horticultural business and a truly exciting opportunity has arisen as a result of the forthcoming retirement of our Managing Director.

The role of Managing Director at Squire's offers the opportunity to play a key role in formulating and delivering the strategy and vision for our business going forward.

The role offers an interesting, challenging and very varied work life as we strive to provide the best in horticultural retailing service and standards alongside our catering offer and nursery operations. It involves growing the business while looking for new opportunities, developing our people and playing a positive role in our local communities and the wider UK horticultural industry.

We are seeking a person of integrity, enthusiasm, energy and ability to work with us and lead our business confidently through the opportunities and challenges of the future.

Sarah Squire

October 2024



Our History



Our business began in the mid-1930s and our company was incorporated in 1936. In 2026, we will be celebrating 90 years of Squire's.

Squire's was founded by D.J. Squire, who had been head gardener at the Police orphanage in Twickenham. When the orphanage closed, he was made redundant. He had a young family to support and began a small business constructing gardens in the locality and developing a thriving nursery and landscape business.

on the site it still occupies in Twickenham today. It was one of the very first garden centres in the UK.

Colin opened further centres and this steady growth has continued under his leadership and that of his daughter Sarah, the current Chairman, and our Managing Director, Martin Breddy.

Read more about our history [here](#).

Squire's is proud to be a family business. Squire's centres are local; they reflect and are designed to serve the local communities in which they operate.

During the war the nurseries were turned over to food production with the help of land girls and, later, Italian and German prisoners of war from the huge camp at Kempton Park. The company also built a number of air raid shelters in the Twickenham area.

In 1964 Colin Squire (D.J.'s son) opened our first garden centre



Welcome



Royal Gardening Experience
at Hampton Court Palace

Enjoy a special day, exclusive to Squire's customers, including a guided tour, gardening and access to the palace at your leisure.

Thu 19 & Fri 20 Sept
10am - 5pm

Tickets £15 per day
Book online or in-store



Autumn
Nature's time to plant



CALOR
Sold Here

About Us

We currently operate 16 garden centres, located to the west of London in Middlesex, Surrey, West Sussex and Berkshire. It is important to us that we can visit all of our centres regularly and easily, and that our teams have a strong common bond across our sites. Our centres vary greatly in size and, while they share common values and a family resemblance, each has its own character and serves a diverse customer base.

We remain committed to our core business of plants and gardening although, these days, our product range is very diverse. All of our centres have café bars and catering has become an important part of our business and the customer experience. We also operate bedding plant nurseries through our wholly owned subsidiary Barnsfold Nurseries. Barnsfold supplies approximately 40% of the bedding plants we sell and serves other respected garden centres.

We employ around 900 people in a variety of full and part time roles. Sarah Squire is our Chairman and her father, Colin Squire, still sits on the Board as Chairman Emeritus and retains a keen interest in the Company and all it does.

Our registered office remains in Twickenham but our group office, where the MD and key senior team are based and the administrative functions are carried out, is located at our Badshot Lea garden centre near Farnham.

We are members of the Tillington Group, a collection of 11 like-minded family-owned Garden Retail businesses, with whom we collaborate in buying and marketing.



Our Values

We strive to be the Best Local Garden Centre and to be fair to our customers, our people and our suppliers.

- **For our customers:** Across the business our customers should expect excellent service and advice. Our plants and other products should be of the best quality at a fair price and our range must reflect our commitment to gardening and to our local customer base. We are committed to treating our customers with integrity and honesty. We want to go the extra mile, connect with them and offer sound horticultural advice.
- **For our people:** We are team players, fostering a collaborative and supportive culture throughout our business. We are dedicated to providing our team with good terms and conditions, to developing them and to treating them with respect, honesty and integrity at all times. We want our people to love our customers, know our products and share our enthusiasm. We want them to be proud of working with us.
- **For our community:** Being a responsible local business is at the heart of what we do. We have longstanding relationships with the local communities we serve and close ties with many local organisations through our charity of the year programme and our 'Love Where you Live' programme, and we support many 'In Bloom' initiatives. We depend deeply on the support of our local communities and are committed to actively engaging with them.
- **For our world:** We have sustainability champions at each centre and are members of Planet Mark, which audits our carbon emissions. We are investing in solar panels, electric car charging points, electric delivery vans and a host of other initiatives. We ceased to sell any bagged compost containing peat well before the proposed ban, and Barnsfold nurseries are also almost entirely peat free. We are committed to our anti modern slavery policy.
- **For our industry:** We are proud to be a part of the UK horticultural industry. We pride ourselves on the fact that over 85% of our plants come from UK nurseries, and some from very local nurseries. We are active members of the Horticultural Trades Association (HTA) and Garden Centre Association (GCA). Our Hersham centre was awarded plant area of the year in 2024 in the garden centre category following its annual inspections by the GCA. Colin Squire is president of the Rose Society UK.



Our Ambition

It is our ambition to grow our business, to add to our number of garden centres and to continue to invest in those we have.

Our aim is to achieve turnover growth ahead of our sector average and profit in the upper quartile of the sector.

- We have the ambition and capacity to add more centres to our estate and are considering the expansion of our own nursery production.
- We are constantly re-investing in our sites to keep the standards of our garden centres at the forefront of garden centre retailing. We actively seek planning approvals to improve our existing portfolio.
- We are committed to maintaining and strengthening our core business of plants and gardening, but we are also aware of the need to develop our non-gardening proposition.
- We consider that we need to become more data driven as a business, without losing the human touch and the acquired wisdom that comes from a multi-generational family business. This experience should allow us to interpret data to give our people the tools to make informed and good decisions.
- We are about to implement a customer reward programme, called 'Friends of Squire's' to get closer to our customers, aiming to make the customer experience even more relevant and engaging. We are fortunate to have an established and intelligent customer base, (with a healthy 140,000 newsletter subscribers) which we must never take for granted.

“In an ever more frantic world, we’re here to help people relax and live happier lives.”

The Role

As the Managing Director, you will lead the overall strategic direction and operational performance of Squires Garden Centres. This role involves driving growth, ensuring operational excellence, and fostering a culture that prioritises customer satisfaction and employee engagement. You will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of the business, including retail operations, marketing, product development, and financial performance, ensuring alignment with the company's values and long-term vision.

Our priorities for success in the role are as follows:

- Sales growth consistently ahead of the sector.
- Profitability consistently in the upper quartile of the peer group.
- Smart adoption and harnessing of technology and data to drive growth and efficiency.
- Nurturing of a relevant, distinctive Squire's proposition, with plants at its heart.
- Development of distinctive, profitable, non-garden offering, including gifts and restaurants.
- Expand and enhance the hospitality services offered at our sites.
- Developing the next generation of leaders and ensuring smooth succession as required.
- Ensuring Squires leads the industry in Environment, Social and Governance matters.



Main Activities & Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Develop and execute a clear strategic plan to drive growth and profitability.
- Lead and inspire the senior leadership team, setting a vision that aligns with the company's core values.
- Identify and capitalise on new market opportunities and trends in the garden and retail sectors.

Financial Management

- Oversee the financial performance of the business, including budgeting, forecasting, and achieving financial targets.
- Ensure effective cost control, cash flow management, and profitability across all centres.
- Provide regular reports and updates on business performance and strategic initiatives.

Operational Excellence

- Ensure high standards of operational efficiency and excellence in all garden centres.
- Oversee the development and implementation of policies, procedures, and best practices.
- Drive continuous improvement initiatives to enhance the customer experience, streamline operations, and optimise product offerings.
- Drive use and implementation of technology and data to drive growth and efficiency.

Team Leadership and Development

- Foster a positive and collaborative work environment that encourages employee engagement and development.
- Mentor and guide team and centre leaders, supporting their professional growth and fostering a high-performance culture.
- Promote a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the organisation.

Customer Experience & Brand Development

- Ensure that Squires Garden Centres remain a top choice for garden enthusiasts by delivering an exceptional customer experience.
- Oversee the marketing strategy, brand positioning, and communication efforts to strengthen brand identity.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with customers, suppliers, and community partners.

Sustainability and Community Engagement

- Champion sustainable business practices and drive initiatives that align with the company's commitment to the environment.
- Engage with local communities and support initiatives that build brand loyalty and enhance Squires' reputation as a responsible, community-oriented business.



Person Specification

Empathy with Squires values

- Squires is a local, community business with a strong sense of identity. This starts with the family, whose values are keenly felt though every part of the business and which have endured over many years. These core values help the business 'do the right thing' – morally, ethically, legally, commercially - which in turn will create long term success. The successful candidate will demonstrate a quick understanding and appreciation of these innate values of Squires. These values have been cultivated in the local communities in which Squires operates for many years; some knowledge of these communities would also be an advantage.

Personable, 'down-to-earth' nature

- The successful candidate must demonstrate an ability to engage with employees at all levels in the business through clear, supportive verbal communication. This also applies to important relationships outside the business, for example with service providers, product suppliers, and the many contractors employed to maintain and develop the estate, as well as industry peers in the Garden Centre world.

Collaborative

- A team player who gathers opinions, views, and inputs from the rest of the team and other quarters in the business, before efficiently and promptly deciding on a course of action. Someone who will work closely and collaboratively with the Chairman to deliver the goals of the Company.

Operational Bias

- Practical approach. Strategic clarity and rigour is essential, but a bias for action, allied with preparedness to change tactics at short notice, is equally important given the highly competitive, fast moving, seasonal nature of the Garden Centre sector.

Sector Knowledge

- Whilst experience of the garden industry is not essential to our business, an appreciation and understanding of a multi category retail environment with seasonality, ranging and category management, supplier management and the competitive context, will be important. The skill to understand our consumers in developing a compelling customer proposition across our horticultural and hospitality services, is especially sought. Experience of deriving relevant insights from increasingly rich digital sources (alongside more traditional information sources) will also be valuable.

Person Specification ctd.

Analytical Rigour; Data Driven, with high attention to detail

- Financially literate; clear understanding of P&L; cost focussed. Track record of delivering strong financial results. Specifically, an appreciation of how digital technology and data across all functions can be harnessed and applied cost-effectively, to provide relevant insights and greater efficiency.

Broad Category/Consumer Insight and Understanding

- Demonstrable experience of juggling a wide range of categories to identify and prioritise growth opportunities and help drive footfall and demand. A knowledge of communication channels, specifically balancing old media with new media, would be an advantage.

Project Management Skill

- Squires typically invests between £3M and £5M pa in capital improvements. Experience of handling major investments, from the start through the planning application process and ensuring timely and cost-effective delivery, is advantageous. Practical experience of M&A will be valuable given the ambition to acquire additional centres.

Team Leadership and Management Skills

- We seek a candidate with strong and proven coaching and mentoring skills. First, to ensure great performance amongst the immediate senior team of direct reports, (both those with many decades of senior level experience, and others newly promoted to their roles). Second to develop the group of more junior, high potential employees, (amongst whom may sit the next generation of Squire family leaders!)

Strategic Direction Setting

- Whilst the business rightly prides itself on being operationally responsive and agile, our new MD will be responsible for setting a coherent strategy for the long term. In a volatile, post-Covid world, with continued economic uncertainty and seemingly more volatile weather patterns, charting a clear, value-creating strategy for the next 5-10 year period is paramount, as is the ability to capture and convey that strategy to the whole team.

Terms of Appointment

Salary

A competitive salary will be agreed with the preferred candidate.

Benefits

Benefits package and non-contractual bonus aligned to business performance.

Pension

The successful candidate will be enrolled in the Squire's pension scheme, or other arrangements may be discussed.

Annual leave

30 days holiday, plus UK public holidays.

Location:

Our main offices are at Badshot Lea in Farnham where all the senior team

and group office functions are based. Our registered office remains in Twickenham, but it is expected that the MD will regularly attend all our sites.

We operate standard working hours, but the MD will be asked to occasionally work ad hoc hours, including some weekends.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.



How to Apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Squire's Garden Centres on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **HBQUA**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 22 November.

* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

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