

## Where land and learning meet

6 months ago



With over 20 years in the industry, Andrew Fletcher knows the value of hard work and second chances. Through GVA Training, he's helping others build both.

In the rolling countryside near Halifax, Green Valley Arborists Ltd (GVA) has built a reputation for arboriculture, forestry, and land management. From its base at Far Turbury Farm, the company operates nationwide, combining expertise with environmental responsibility. Alongside this commercial work sits a mission with wider impact: GVA Training, recently recognized as a Lantra Awards approved provider.

Lantra is one of the UK and Ireland's leading awarding bodies for the land-based industries, setting national standards and accrediting courses across forestry, agriculture, horticulture and landscaping. As an approved provider, GVA Training can now deliver these nationally recognised qualifications – giving learners portable skills respected by employers across the sector.

At the heart of this training effort is Andrew Fletcher, Corporate Training Instructor and Co-ordinator. With a career spanning more than two decades, his passion lies in giving people the tools – and confidence – to build brighter futures.



## A twist of fate

Andrew didn't set out to work in land-based industries. A keen sportsman, he studied coaching in basketball, football and sailing, qualified as a ski instructor, and travelled extensively in South America and Canada.

On his return, he applied for a sports science degree - only to learn the course had been cancelled.

"While I was on the phone to the college, a prospectus rolled down the stairs and opened on the horticulture and arboriculture page," he laughs. "It felt like a sign. I applied, got in, and never looked back."

That chance moment became the start of a 20-year journey. He has since worked as a climber, project manager, consultant, and now trainer. "Every day is different," he reflects. "You're outdoors, problem-solving, and watching people grow. That's what makes it rewarding."

## Training with purpose

Andrew could have taken a classroom teaching role, but chose GVA because it allowed him to remain active in the industry he loves. "I need to be out there, alongside people, showing them the ropes in real environments," he says. "This way I can do what I love and help others at the same time."

Through its partnership with Lantra, GVA now delivers nationally accredited qualifications to apprentices, veterans, career changers, and ex-offenders to aid meaningful employment in land-based sectors. The courses are open to all - whether someone is taking their first step into arboriculture or building on existing skills, there is a pathway for them.

## Giving back to communities

GVA's reach extends well beyond technical training. The team works with schools, veterans' groups, and social impact organisations to make a difference where it's needed most — from restoring storm-damaged woodland to improving community green spaces. A recent pilot with Hindley Prison and National Highways enabled inmates to earn qualifications and Lifetime Skills Cards - industry ID cards that prove a person's training and competencies to employers, helping them secure work on release. "It's about second chances," Andrew says. "Everybody deserves the opportunity to build a future."

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