



CLARA MOLDEN FOR THE TELEGRAPH; JAMES MANNING/PA



Horatio's Garden, left, designed by Charlotte Harris and Hugo Bugg, above, has won best in show at the Chelsea Flower Show. It was inspired by a charity named after Horatio Chapple, a hospital volunteer who died in a bear attack aged 17 in 2011, right



Wheelchair-friendly garden wins Chelsea

Best in show goes to spinal injuries charity supported by Telegraph readers after death of teenager in Arctic

By Emma Gatten
ENVIRONMENT EDITOR

THE best in show at this year's Chelsea Flower Show is a garden designed for a spinal injuries charity previously backed by *Telegraph* readers.

Horatio's Garden, a group which designs outdoor spaces for hospitals across the country, created the show's first wheelchair accessible garden.

The charity was set up by the family of Horatio Chapple, a volunteer at a spinal injury unit, who was killed by a polar bear in Svalbard north of mainland Norway at the age of 17.

Olivia Chapple, Horatio's mother, said yesterday's win at Chelsea was the realisation of a "pipe dream".

"We've always had a dream to be here," she said. "Because we try to create gardens that are mini Chelsea gardens in hospitals and we look after them really, really well. So that people always feel that they're being appreciated."

In 2015, Horatio's Garden was backed by the *Telegraph's* Christmas appeal, when the charity was still in its early years and had completed just one gar-

den. "Being the *Telegraph's* Christmas charity in 2015 had the most enormous impact for us," she said. "We've just been overwhelmed by readers' interest and support and understanding of our work."

Readers gave £250,000 to the Christmas appeal, which was used to help fund the charity's third garden at the National Spinal Injuries Centre at Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Buckinghamshire.

Mrs Chapple said the impact of the campaign had lived on, with many donors committing to the Salisbury-based charity long-term.

"If you're in hospital, even for a short time it is very hard to be in a formica

world," she said. "If you're in hospital for six months or a year it is incredibly difficult. These gardens are really vital for people finding a new way to live after spinal injury."

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The winning garden, designed by Charlotte Harris and Hugo Bugg, features several mature trees that provide visual interest for patients in bed, alongside evergreen shrubs and peren-

nials as well as planting at different eye levels.

A wide porous puddle-proof garden path designed for wheelchair and bed-users was made from cement-free concrete. The garden includes a wooden pod-like structure with a bed for patients to seek respite.

Marie-Louise Agius, the Royal Horticultural Society's chairman of show garden judging, said: "The garden is uplifting, beautiful, and considered and for someone who has had a life-altering spinal injury it will provide them with a wonderful sanctuary."

"The brief and the garden was delivered at an exceptional level."

Despite weeds dominating chatter

around this year's event, they were relatively absent from the top placed gardens.

A third of this year's entrants "went back to nature" and used weeds, but only one of them was a gold-medal winner - Cleve West's garden for Centrepoint, the homeless charity.

Allon Hoskin, RHS chairman of show garden assessors, said entries are marked without consideration for trends.

"There's no bias towards it because of anything that's going on in the outside world or any sort of zeitgeist or any sort of sustainability drives," he said. "As the gardens change, the criteria may need to be refined," he added.