



NEWS RELEASE

23 May 2016

SILVER LINE LAVENDER DEBUTS AT RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW

- **Stunning new variety called Lavandula ‘Silver Line’ being unveiled**
- **Dame Esther Rantzen launching new plant on Hillier Nurseries stand at RHS show**
- **Sales will raise money for charity helpline for lonely and isolated older people**

The Silver Line helpline for lonely and isolated older people will be getting a big boost thanks to a new variety of lavender being launched at the RHS Chelsea Flower show 2016.

Lavandula ‘Silver Line’ has been specially grown by Hillier Nurseries to help raise funds for the Silver Line, which runs the UK’s only national, free, confidential helpline to provide information and support for lonely and isolated older people.

After its Chelsea debut, Lavandula ‘Silver Line’, will be going on sale at garden centres across the country (including Hillier Garden Centres and Dobbies Garden Centres) with £1 from each pot sold going to The Silver Line.

Dame Esther Rantzen, founder of the Silver Line, who will be launching the new variety at the RHS Chelsea Flower show, said:

“I’m a great fan of lavender. I love its look, its fragrance – and that it puts up with the way I treat it and just keeps coming back. That’s why I’m delighted that we are launching The Silver Line Lavender with Hillier, it’s such a lovely-looking plant.

“Lavender suits so many people. It looks great in a garden, or you can grow it in a window box or in a pot on a balcony, and it really attracts the birds and butterflies. I’m already planning a place in my garden for Lavandula ‘Silver Line’.”

The Silver Line currently receives around 10,000 calls a year, it offers friendship and advice, and signposts callers to other resources in their community. It has trained around 3,000 volunteers to be Silver Line telephone or letter friends.

This variety of English lavender was specifically selected and named by Hillier for The Silver Line following a conversation with Dame Esther Rantzen at Chelsea in May 2015.

Robert Hillier OBE VMH, Chairman of Hillier Nurseries & Garden Centres, said:

“We are extremely proud to be supporting the work of The Silver Line as the exclusive grower of Lavandula ‘Silver Line’.

“It is a superb plant for a wonderful cause, and it is appropriate that we should launch the lavender on our Chelsea exhibit, where our association with The Silver Line charity began just one year ago.”

Further information

For more information about The Silver Line or to arrange interviews with Dame Esther Rantzen, contact:

- Kevin Mochrie, Head of communications, The Silver Line
Tel: 0748 301 5955 Email: kevin.mochrie@TheSilverLine.org.uk

For more information about Hillier Nurseries & Garden Centres, and interviews, contact:

- Liz Anderson, Hillier Chelsea Publicity
Tel: 01952 501594 Mobile: 07976 061092 Email: liz@lizanderson.co.uk

About The Silver Line (www.thesilverline.org.uk)

- The Silver Line (0800 4 70 80 90) is the UK's only national, free, confidential, 24-hour seven-days-a-week, helpline for lonely and isolated older people:
- Since its national launch in 2013, the helpline has received over 870,000 calls
- 68% of calls are after 6pm or at weekends; while 67% of callers contact the helpline because they are lonely or isolated, 88% live alone, and 54% say they have no one else to speak to.
- The Silver Line has recruited and trained more than 3,000 volunteers.

About Hillier Nurseries (www.hillier.co.uk)

- Hillier was founded in 1864 by Edwin Hillier and remains a family-run nursery with the fifth generation now actively involved in the business. Hillier employs 500 people across its wholesale nursery, trees and garden centre divisions and is based at Ampfield in Hampshire.
- Hillier has been involved in the RHS Chelsea Flower Show from the early days and is the most successful exhibitor in the show's history with a record 70 consecutive RHS Chelsea Gold medals. Chelsea is a large part of the story of Hillier, the family and the nursery. Tales of children's birthday

teas, dressing up as gnomes and hanging out the teabags are much a part of the Hillier history as the Gold medal wins and Press Day glamour.