

## **CASE STUDY AUGUST 2017**

### **DeepStore Sees its Partnership Blossom with the Royal Horticultural Society**

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*Sarah McDonald, RHS Heritage Collections Manager*

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) is perhaps best known for its spectacular gardens and shows, but since its foundation in 1804 the organisation has embraced a far wider brief.

The RHS sees its role as inspiring passion and excellence in the science, art and practice of horticulture, and enabling every UK citizen to help build healthier and happier environments and communities.

This strongly educational remit has meant that the RHS has, over the years, collected a vast number of books, art, artefacts and archives. These include RHS Heritage Collections, RHS Archive and other private collected archives and pre-19<sup>th</sup> century Heritage books on garden history and science. It also includes photographs in all formats, botanical art, framed oil portraits and marble sculpture.

With limited on-site storage, the RHS need an external home for over 500 items and the size, value and vulnerability of this collection made it difficult to store. In 2012 the RHS turned to DeepStore, the UK's largest underground storage company.

Sarah McDonald, RHS heritage collections manager, says: “DeepStore is a unique facility that suits all our needs. The option to store items of various sizes, sensitivity and weights on one site is invaluable since our collections include everything from standard bankers' boxes to custom-made crates and even a very heavy marble bust. The RHS continues to add material to DeepStore on a regular basis.”

The RHS wanted to keep the items together on one site for easier control and access, but few storage facilities could offer the conditions or flexibility to handle the range of items involved. PAS 198 and PD 5454:2012 (accreditations relating to the storage of archival materials and cultural collections) were also essential, as was tight security and a good reputation in the museum sector.