

Pippa Greenwood

I was lucky with regards to gardens when I was a child. Very lucky indeed...

Although I was brought up in London, we had a good sized garden and, just as importantly, my mother loved that garden and everything that grew and lived in it. Gardening is infectious and when your mother is as lovely as mine was, the appeal of the plot behind the house doubles.

As soon as I was able to stumble, I was out there: subconsciously absorbing and learning at every opportunity. We made bonfires (which I love to this day!), weeded, planted, transplanted, sowed, dug, forked... and talked and talked. I was also kept well supplied with cocoa from a battered metal Thermos flask. It was idyllic.

By the tender age of four I had my own plot, edged with large stones, which was my pride and joy. If I have one complaint, it was that it was in pretty well the shadiest spot in the garden and that, combined with heavy London clay, didn't make it easy! Packets of hardy annuals such as candytuft, Virginia stock and stardust were what I hankered after.



ABOVE As a child, Pippa hankered after beautiful hardy annuals such as candytuft

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I'll never forget (and perhaps never quite forgive) the bright green looper caterpillars which ravaged the strip of marigolds that I had bought with my pocket money. They ate them up before they were even given a chance to grow... but on the positive side, perhaps they were my first introduction to pests and so maybe responsible for the direction my career has taken!

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It is great to know that gardening has also helped to transform the lives of so many others. Over the years that I have met and worked with people from Thrive, I have been both heartened and humbled by the skills of these passionate gardeners – both those with much experience and those who have just grabbed the trowel much more recently.

Keep up the good work! ■■



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