

BEN PIKE



Ben's love of gardening comes from very early childhood memories of walking past a garden laden with fruit trees and rows of vegetables on his way to school. By the age of 28, he was working as a landscape gardener, followed by spell as a jobbing gardener and it was during this period that his love affair with fruit trees began. Asked by his clients to prune their trees, he began to inquire into all aspects of growing fruit.

Ben taught himself how to prune fruit trees and his passionate interest started. During this time he met Tom Hoblyn and in 1995 they set up South Hams Orchard Services. This involved planting and pruning fruit trees as well as consultancy work. This business continued to grow and is now known as Devon Orchard Services.

For the past six years, Ben has been head gardener at Sharpham House, near Totnes. There he looks after a walled fruit and vegetable garden as well as two orchards containing 150 fruit trees. Ben also mentors volunteers who come to work in the gardens and he enjoys passing his knowledge and enthusiasm on to young people interested in horticulture.

Through Ben's work and interest in orchards, he has become very involved with Orchard Link and for many years has been their horticultural advisor and has run courses on orchard management.

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