

HORTICULTURE WO

April sales up in garden centres, says Garden Centre Association

21 May 2015, by Matthew Appleby, [Be the first to comment](#)

The Garden Centre Association's Barometer of Trade (BoT) results for April show outdoor living sales up for the month.



Sales of furniture and barbecues were up 26.73 per cent compared to the same time last year (2014). During the month sales of outdoor plants were up 12.09 per cent. Sales in pet and aquatics departments rose by 7.31 per cent and catering sales increased by 10.22 per cent

Sales in houseplants increased by 9.17 per cent compared to 2014. Clothing sales remained up for a second consecutive month at 17.95 per cent.

Year to date [figures](#) are about eight per cent up, with April itself 10 per cent up. YTD [figures](#) by the end of March were flat.

GCA chief executive Iain Wylie said: "The Easter holidays at the beginning of the month had the potential to boost sales as families had the time and opportunity to spend their time browsing at garden centres.

"The weather was not as kind as we would have wished on the first two days of the Easter weekend and of course centres were closed on Easter Sunday but the fantastic weather on the Monday seemed to make up for any shortfall in earlier footfall and spending."

Lucy Nixon, director at Thetford Garden Centre in Norfolk, said: "April saw a large increase in our coffee shop sales, predominantly due to a higher average spend achieved through additions of tempting lunchtime specials."

Mark Winchester, managing director of Blackbrooks Garden Centre in East Sussex, said: "I am happy to report that my April sales were positive and our footfall was up 5%. Most categories reported positive sales growth.

"The biggest category increase by far was garden furniture which was up by 56 per cent. Landscaping, garden sundries and giftware all reported more than 20 per cent increases. Clothing and catering were up 17 per cent.

"Plant sales were looking strong for most of the month but fell sharply towards the end due to cold weather finishing at five per cent up. Overall we fished the month a healthy 18 per cent up on last year. Let's keep our fingers crossed for May."

Christine Pimm, deputy shop manager at Monkton Elm Garden & Pet Centre in Somerset, said: "We have seen good sales in our clothing department during April. The improved weather at the beginning of the month saw our customers stocking up on summer clothing and shoes a little earlier than usual.

"We have also recently streamlined our clothing stock and been more selective with the brands we sell. We have kept to a core range, which has proved to be a hit with the customers."