



Garden centre sales slow during Jubilee weekend

THE Garden Centre Association (GCA) has reported that its member garden centres didn't see the additional footfall they had hoped for during the Jubilee weekend (June 2 – 5, 2012).

Many members anticipated they would see an increase in sales during the festivities, but this didn't transpire.

Peter Burks, Chairman of the GCA, said: "It is disappointing that the industry didn't see the increase in footfall during the festivities that we were very much hoping for. I think the weather put a dampener on the weekend.

"However, the recent good weather has already helped to boost overall sales for May and members are reporting increased sales in most areas of their businesses.

"April was a difficult month for the industry, with the heavy rain causing sales to drop, but many garden centres have seen a big turnaround in plant sales since the sun has reappeared."

The cool, damp conditions in April and early May pushed the season back a few weeks so people have still been able to buy and plant shrubs.

Peter added: "Bedding plant sales in particular were high for a lot of our members at the end of May.

"This will have gone a long way to help garden centres recoup any losses they made in April and means that the lack of footfall during the Jubilee weekend wasn't so damaging to businesses."

The GCA represents nearly 200 garden centres nationwide. Through sharing information and its inspection programme, the GCA helps members to achieve high standards in customer service, plant quality and reliability.

Tammy Woodhouse, Managing Director of The Millbrook Garden Company Limited, which is a member of the GCA, said: "Unfortunately we didn't have as successful a weekend as we had hoped for, although we did see a good start to it.

"On Saturday (June 2) we had a good day with furniture and red, white and blue plants selling well, but the sales dropped off during the rest of the weekend."

For further details about the GCA, please call 01993 871456, visit www.gca.org.uk, log on to www.facebook.com/pages/Garden-Centre-Association or follow the organisation on Twitter at www.twitter.com/GC_Association.