

Media release for the Garden Centre Association

GCA centres report mixed results for end of May

THE GARDEN Centre Association's (GCA) members say May (2014) has ended with mixed results with weather affecting sales during the second Bank Holiday of the month.

The GCA asked members for feedback on the weekend's trading (May 24-26) to see how one of the industry's busiest weekends had gone.

Iain Wylie, Chief Executive of the GCA, explained: "The feedback we have had from members has been that it was very hit and miss due to the cooler, rainy weather that was experienced on one day or another across the country for much of weekend, especially in the North."

The garden centres that were contacted said generally Sunday and Monday were the better days despite the poor weather.

Managing Director for The Gardens Group in Dorset and Somerset, Michael Burks said: "The weather or more so the weather forecast had an impact over the weekend and including Friday, which was a shame because the Chelsea factor normally works very positively for us.

"Prior to that we had been very busy and this week has started well but the weather may reduce the positive effect of half-term for the rest of the week."

The rain affected sales in other parts of the country too.

Will Armitage, Managing Director of Armitage's Home and Garden in Huddersfield, said: "It seems to be monsoon season in this part of Yorkshire at the moment, so sales were 20% down during the Bank Holiday weekend.

"However, we are still 5% up on the month and 15% up for the year to date so it's not all bad. From what I understand, the centres that dodged the rain over the weekend did best."

Meanwhile, Monkton Elm Garden & Pet Centre in Somerset, reported steady sales.

Mike Lind, Managing Director at Monkton Elm Garden & Pet Centre, said: "It was a good, solid May Bank Holiday weekend for us but no records were broken.

"The wet weather on Saturday was welcomed by a large core of our customer base, who are our more serious gardeners, they love tending their gardens whatever the weather. As the weather improved over the weekend, we saw more of our fair weather

or weekend gardeners visit for instant colour, bedding and grow your own. Plant sales were also strong.

“Year to date has been an improvement on previous years. Customer spend has been steady over the warmer spring period compared to last year where the cold start to the year resulted in a compressed spring sale period. Overall our customer trend is positive, but cautious on larger priced items.”

For further information, please call 0118 930 8918. Alternatively, please visit www.gca.org.uk, log on to www.facebook.com/pages/GardenCentreAssociation or follow the organisation on Twitter at www.twitter.com/GC_Association.

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Photograph caption: A May garden centre scene.

