

Media release for the Garden Centre Association

GCA garden centres report a good start to May

THE GARDEN Centre Association's (GCA) members say May (2014) has started well with 'no records being broken' during the first Bank Holiday of the month but business continuing at 'good levels'.

The GCA asked its members to give feedback from the weekend's trading to see how the industry was fairing in its generally busiest month of the year.

Iain Wylie, Chief Executive of the GCA, explained: "The members who contacted us said 'no records (were) broken but trade had continued at good levels'.

"For perfect shopping weather it could have been warmer, they said, but overall no rain, with sun for much of the weekend across the country, meant it was a relatively positive one, giving a solid Bank Holiday weekend performance."

The GCA garden centres that got in touch said generally Sunday and Monday were the better days and that sales were in line with Bank Holiday expectations.

David Little, Managing Director of Poplars Garden Centre in Bedfordshire, said: "The first May Bank Holiday in 2014 was a real gardeners' weekend. While not a record breaker, we are very satisfied with the sales we recorded. It was fantastic to see trolleys full of plants going through our tills. Just about everyone must be growing veg this year – judging by the number of tomato plants we sold!"

Plants were also selling well in other parts of the country too.

General Manger for the Trelawney@Wadebridge and Trelawney@Ashford garden centres, Peter Burks said: "Very few holidaymakers were around in either Devon or Cornwall as Easter and this Bank Holiday were so close together. The good weather Saturday and Sunday sent everyone off to other events, but on Monday all our regulars were out and in a gardening mood as the weather wasn't as nice. Plants and the restaurants did well."

Meanwhile, Haskins Garden Centres in Dorset, Southampton and West Sussex said gardeners were still holding back.

Julian Winfield, Chief Executive of Haskins, said: "Bedding plants sales were poor and furniture sales have also been poor during the last week, with availability hitting sales."

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.

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: Spring garden centre scene.

