

Media release for the Garden Centre Association

# Outdoor categories and Christmas performing well in October

CUSTOMERS at garden centres across the country were buying furniture and outdoor plants during October and early indications of Christmas sales are good according to the Garden Centre Association's Barometer of Trade (BoT) results.

There was a 26.82% rise in sales of furniture and barbecues compared to 2014 and outdoor plants were up 17.59%. Clothing was also a good seller at 9.20% up.

Iain Wylie, GCA Chief Executive, explained: "As the festive season approaches, the early indications show Christmas sales are looking positive and there is the potential for a good season ahead. While the headline 10% increase may not be as high as other categories such as furniture and barbecues, the average sales value for the Christmas category is seven times greater and the value of the increase is three times as great.

"It's interesting to see sales of furniture and barbecues up at this time of the year. Because of the season we expect people to be purchasing items such as fire pits, outdoor heating and lighting and cosier seating so they can still enjoy their gardens before the very bitter weather sets in.

"Strong outdoor plant figures show people have potentially been busy preparing their plots with plants ideal for colder weather and that produce some much needed winter colour such as shrubs and evergreens.

"Clothing has been one of the top selling categories for the past few months, which is proving how garden centres are becoming real destinations with an increasingly diverse product range."

For the month of October the overall garden centre performance was up by 11% with a Year to Date change of 7.5%.

Sales in catering were 14.48% up compared to the same month in 2014 while Food Hall and Farm Shop sales were 11.51% up. Sales in gifts were up 9.74%.

The BoT results are the only official GCA trading figures to be released.

The GCA BoT reports are compiled using actual sales figures and provide an up-to-date trading position statement. They are made available mid-month following the end of the prior month after all member garden centres have submitted their results.

The BoT reports allow members to compare their trading positions with other centres.

The GCA represents nearly 200 garden centres nationwide.

For further information, please call 0118 930 8918. Alternatively, please visit [www.gca.org.uk](http://www.gca.org.uk), log on to [www.facebook.com/pages/GardenCentreAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/pages/GardenCentreAssociation) or follow the organisation on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/GC\\_Association](https://www.twitter.com/GC_Association).

**ENDS**

**For further media details, please call Porcupine PR on 01278 446801 or email [Cherry@porcupinepr.co.uk](mailto:Cherry@porcupinepr.co.uk). Alternatively, please contact Iain Wylie, GCA Chief Executive on 07843 633408 or email [Iain@gca.org.uk](mailto:Iain@gca.org.uk).**

**Photograph caption one:** Sales in furniture and barbecues were on the up during October.

**Photograph caption two:** Early indications in Christmas sales show a positive season ahead.