

Garden centre and gift buyers flood to Harrogate

The 66th Harrogate Christmas & Gift closed its doors on one of its most successful shows ever in January with the majority of exhibitors reporting a first class event.

This year, more than 30 new companies exhibited, bringing a wider and more diverse range of products than ever before. As well as the usual array of Christmas trees, lights and decorations, there was a notable increase in gift ranges and products for the home and garden. This is no doubt a reflection of the increasing number of garden centre and visitor attraction buyers attending in recent years and looks to set the precedence for Harrogate Christmas & Gift in the future.

Simon Anslow, show organiser, comments: "The show has seen a steady increase in visitor numbers over the last four years and we are delighted that once again attendance was up by three percent on last year.

"It is pleasing to hear from many of our visitors, particularly those in the garden centre sector, that Christmas & Gift is their most important show of the year now. With the diversity of products sold by these retailers, we can only speculate the continuing growth of the event and product ranges on offer."

Retailers and buyers appeared to spend more time at the show this year – many staying for the entire four day duration. Mandy Bromwich from the The Watermill Experience, Barton le Clay attended three days commenting: "I go to Harrogate Christmas & Gift every year and found some really nice new ranges again. I'm particularly interested in new colour ways and love the new copper themes as well as the welcome return of black and white product ranges. Among my favourite items at the show were the new lit canvasses – these always sell really well."

Gisela Graham Ltd has been a regular exhibitor at Christmas & Gift for many years and reports that once again the company had a great show and experienced good footfall. Piers Croke said: "The hundreds of new, original designs we presented for both Christmas and everyday were extremely well received and we took a couple of respectable export orders. One Canadian customer, new to us last year, made the journey to Harrogate specifically to see us. With the usual crossing of fingers, our Harrogate result gives us quite a lot of confidence for the year ahead."

SIL Sifcon International returned to Harrogate Christmas & Gift after many years absence to introduce its new Christmas range for 2015. Alan Pimm, managing director, said: "It was a very successful launch with good orders from both existing and new customers. We will definitely be looking to return next year."

Harrogate Christmas & Gift 2016 takes place from 10th to 13th January. Exhibitor bookings for the show will open on 2nd March 2015. Please visit the website at www.harrogatefair.com for more information.