



Melcourt Mail

April 2026 Issue 1

Rooted in what matters

Peat-Free Since 1983: The Melcourt Story



Founded in 1983 and based in Tetbury, Gloucestershire, Melcourt began by supplying high-quality bark mulches and wood-based landscaping materials to local authorities, landscapers and professional users. Working with responsibly sourced bark and wood materials, the company developed expertise in processing natural, sustainable products.

Over time, this knowledge led Melcourt to explore the use of bark and wood fibres in horticultural growing media. Long before the environmental impacts of peat extraction became widely recognised, the company was already developing **peat-free alternatives** using renewable materials.

This work led to the creation of **Sylvamix**, a range of peat-free growing media designed for professional growers. Building on that expertise, Melcourt later introduced **SylvaGrow**, a peat-

free compost range for home gardeners seeking sustainable products without compromising performance.

Today, Melcourt is recognised as one of the UK's leading producers of peat-free growing media, bark mulches and soil improvers. With more than four decades of experience, the company continues to support growers, landscapers and gardeners in the transition to more sustainable horticulture.



Which? Says Best Buy – Four Times Over



We're delighted to announce that Melcourt has achieved four Which?

Best Buy endorsements for 2026, recognising the outstanding performance of our peat-free SylvaGrow® compost range.

Independent testing by Which? Gardening continues to demonstrate that peat-free composts can deliver exceptional results for gardeners. This year, three SylvaGrow® products have been recognised as Best Buys, highlighting their reliability, quality and plant performance.

Recognised as Which? Best Buys in 2026:

- SylvaGrow® Multi-Purpose for Patio Pots
- SylvaGrow® Multi-Purpose for Young Plants
- SylvaGrow® Tub & Basket for Patio Plants
- SylvaGrow® Seed Compost for Young Plants



In their assessment of our Seed Compost for Young Plants, the Which? team commented:

"This new seed compost uses the same basic ingredients as its wood fibre, bark and coir composts, but has a finer texture. Our tests show it's a great choice for both seeds and young plants. Young plants were better than those grown in a professional peat-based compost, with larger tomato plants and better-flowering snapdragons."

This latest success continues Melcourt's strong track record, bringing the total to 27 Which? Best Buy endorsements since 2015. It's further proof that peat-free composts can deliver outstanding growing results, helping gardeners make the sustainable choice without compromise.

What's New?

Our new SylvaGrow® Indoor Range brings specialist peat-free composts to houseplant care. Developed to support healthy growth indoors, the range includes blends tailored for a variety of plants – from leafy houseplants to orchids, cacti and succulents.

At the heart of the range is SylvaGrow® Houseplant Compost, an RHS-endorsed mix designed to provide balanced nutrition for the first 4-6 weeks of growth. Alongside it, Desert Plant Compost offers excellent drainage for cacti and succulents, while Orchid Compost delivers the aeration and structure orchids need to thrive.

The range is completed with our RHS-endorsed Horticultural Pot Dressings, helping improve drainage, moisture control and presentation for indoor plants.



For a quarter of a century, **Sylvamix**® has supported professional growers across the UK with consistent, high-performance peat-free growing media.

Since its launch in **2001**, the range has helped nurseries produce top-quality crops while leading the transition away from peat-based media. Built on responsibly sourced ingredients and backed by Melcourt's technical expertise, Sylvamix continues to be trusted by growers nationwide.

Turn the page to read how Sylvamix has shaped peat-free professional growing for the past 25 years.



An Inspired Partnership

Melcourt is proud to be the official supplier of growing media to **Gardening with Alan Titchmarsh**, the popular YouTube channel filmed in Alan's own garden.

Our award-winning SylvaGrow® growing media are used throughout the series, helping demonstrate how gardeners can achieve excellent results with high-performance peat-free composts.

With Alan sharing tips, projects and inspiration, the partnership is helping bring great gardening to an even wider audience.

Follow on social media for tips and advice.

<https://www.youtube.com/@GardeningWithAlanTitchmarsh>



Grower Focus

Celebrating 25 years of Sylvamix®



The move towards peat-free remains one of the most significant shifts facing growers today. While the direction of travel is clear, the pace and practical implications continue to create understandable challenges across the sector.

For 25 years, Sylvamix® has supported professional growers in navigating that transition - delivering consistent, high-performance growing media that enables nurseries to maintain crop quality, yield and reliability.

Combining robust science with real-world nursery experience, the Sylvamix® range was designed specifically for the demands of professional horticulture, and has helped produce millions of

high-quality crops across the UK. Using responsibly sourced materials and refined through continuous innovation, it's recognised for excellent structure, reliable water management and consistent performance in commercial nursery production.

The range includes specialist formulations for propagation, potting, nursery stock and hanging baskets, alongside Sylvamix® Special – a bespoke prescription service that allows growers to tailor mixes to the specific needs of their crops, irrigation systems and production programmes.

Backed by our team of experienced technical specialists, we continue to provide practical advice on growing media selection, nutrition, irrigation and crop performance – helping growers plan with confidence and achieve consistent results.

As we mark this 25th anniversary, our focus remains the same – to support the UK horticulture industry with reliable, high-performing peat-free growing media for many years to come.



Here's a link to our ProGrowers brochure: <https://bit.ly/3OMMRNc>



Henry Street Rose Nursery

Location: Arborfield, Reading

Type of nursery:

Rose Nursery

How long have you been using Sylvamix®?

Over 15 years

Which Sylvamix® products do you use most?

Nursery mix with bespoke mix

What crops do you grow using Sylvamix®?

Roses

What do you value most about Sylvamix® in your production?

Great consistent quality, plants love it and thrive on the mix, back up support from Melcourt is always good quality

Additional comments:

Having relied on Melcourt Nursery Stock compost for over 15 years, the exceptional quality and dedicated service from their team have been vital to our nursery's success. It provides the perfect foundation, allowing us to consistently produce and deliver an outstanding plant for our customers.



*Mark & Oliver Goad
of Henry Street*



Martin Einchcomb, Plant Specialist & Growing Team Leader

Historic Royal Palaces

Location: Hampton Court Palace

Type of Nursery:

Being a historic nursery producing for the Hampton Court palace the range of plants range from Bedding Plant, Perennials and ornamental specimens

How Long have you been using Sylvamix®?

Since 2023

Which Sylvamix® Product do you use?

Sylvamix® special based upon the Sylvamix® Nursery stock with the inclusion of Osmocote® and sterilised Loam

What crops do you grow using Sylvamix®?

Bedding Plants for planting out in the palace gardens

Perennials

Vegetable seedlings for the Kitchen garden

Large specimen plants for displays including Citrus, Agave, Ilex/other Shrubs and Exotic plants

What do you value most about Sylvamix® In your Production?

The key points are consistency of every batch being uniform and reliable from one season to the next and can be used on a wide range of crops that we are growing

Additional comments:

Sylvamix® has been developed over many years with a proven track record enabling me to produce high quality plants that are planted out into the Historic palace gardens for the visitors from around the world to see. We have developed a partnership with Melcourt as part of our sustainability commitment and in this we are educating our apprentices in using the Melcourt Sylvamix Growing media.



Becky Coombs, Customer Service

Retail insights

Going into the new season, retail faces a familiar balancing act: delivering availability, quality and value, while continuing to meet sustainability commitments that are increasingly central to customer expectations.

Garden centres can count on Melcourt's growing media for exceptional freshness and quality, backed by robust scientific research and deep-rooted industry expertise.

What You Can Expect This Season

- Consistent supply and quality you can rely on
- Clear, well-structured product ranges from day one
- Expert support for product development and transition
- Transparent communication that builds consumer trust



Gavin Clifton - Gavin is our Transport Planner, the voice at the end of the phone booking your deliveries in!

Melcourt works closely with retail teams to support responsibly sourced ranges while maintaining a clear understanding of production realities. By aligning expectations early and keeping communication open, we help reduce risk and support confident decision-making throughout the season.

Retail & Merchant Lead time: 7-10 days

Dr Victoria Wright becomes Vice President for the Highgrove RWHA



We are incredibly proud to share that Dr Victoria Wright has been appointed Vice President of the Highgrove Royal Warrant Holders Association.

The Royal Warrant Holders Association represents companies and individuals who supply goods and services to the Royal Household, a mark of excellence, quality and trust that is recognised around the world. Through its local associations, including Highgrove, it brings together warrant holders to collaborate, share knowledge and uphold the highest standards.

Victoria Wright's appointment to this position is a fantastic achievement and a reflection of her expertise, dedication and the contribution she continues to make both within Melcourt and across the wider Royal Warrant community.

Congratulations, Victoria, a truly well-deserved recognition 🏆



Why Melcourt Dates its Compost Bags

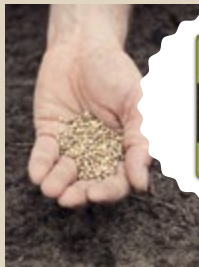
Every bag of Melcourt compost carries a clear manufacture date. This isn't a "use by" date – it helps gardeners and retailers understand the age of the compost and manage stock effectively.

Because Melcourt composts are **100% peat-free**, made from natural materials such as bark, woodfibre and coir, they are biologically active. Over time, natural microbial activity can gradually influence how nutrients are released. This is normal for peat-free compost and not a quality issue.

For the most consistent results, compost is best used **within the season of manufacture**, particularly for seeds and young plants. Older compost remains perfectly suitable for jobs such as mulching, topping up beds or filling borders.

Did you know?

Melcourt is believed to be the **only UK compost manufacturer to clearly print the manufacture date on every bag**, helping gardeners and retailers manage compost freshness.



Seed success

Seed compost sales triple in year one! Our outstanding SylvaGrow seed compost, launched in January 2025, a fine, friable blend based on expertise gained after more than two decades of serving the professional grower market.

Year one of product launch gains a Which? Best-buy too!

Here's a link to our retail brochure: <http://bit.ly/4e65Ex5>

Melcourt show dates and where to find us!

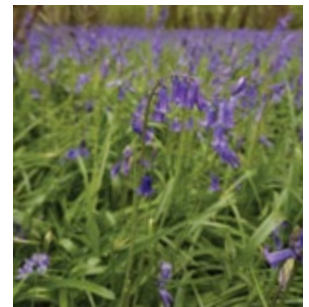
Event Name	Date	Location
National Plant Show	17-18 June	Stoneleigh, Coventry CV8 2LH
Four Oaks Trade Show	2-3 September	Lower Withington, Cheshire SK11 9DU
GLEE	8-10 September	Birmingham NEC
Groundsfest	16-17 September	Stoneleigh, Coventry CV8 2LH
Southwest Growers Show	7 October	Matford Centre, Exeter

Spring has arrived at Melcourt HQ

Our bluebell woods are now in full bloom, transforming the landscape into a calm and beautiful space for both our team and visitors to enjoy.

It's moments like these that make our surroundings truly special – and a reminder of the natural environment at the heart of everything we do.

We're always pleased to welcome visitors for tours of our facility, where you can see our processes first-hand, learn more about our products, and discover our commitment to peat-free growing.



BASIS Points

You can claim BASIS points for reading **Melcourt Mail**.

Use the reference **248152077533**.

THE MERCHANT PERSPECTIVE

Melcourt works closely with merchants to ensure a reliable supply of high-volume products, including topsoil, bark and compost, where consistency and availability are essential. We focus on understanding demand patterns, planning ahead for peak periods, and supporting merchants with products they know their customers will buy



INDEPENDENT BUILDERS
MERCHANT GROUP



Blended Loam Topsoil

All year-round availability with guaranteed consistency. Our blended loam topsoil is produced to deliver a consistent, workable structure for planting and landscaping. By combining screened soil with organic matter, it supports healthy root development and good moisture retention.

Why We Stick With 600L Bulk Bags

Quality and consistency are key. Our 600L bulk bags help maintain the structure and integrity of the material from production to site, ensuring reliable performance.

Consistency You Can Count On

Produced to a controlled specification, our blended loam topsoil is uniform, dependable and easy to work with across a range of landscaping applications.

Built for Value

600L bags provide more usable material per load, reducing handling, transport and overall costs for merchants and contractors.

Designed for Safety

Integrated lifting tunnels allow for safer, simpler handling, helping reduce on site risk during loading and unloading.

Our Commitment

We remain focused on delivering consistent, high quality blended loam topsoil that customers can rely on, backed by careful production and a format designed to maintain that quality from dispatch through to use on site.



Looking to stock landscape products? Our core range is the ideal place to start

600L Topsoil Blended Loam

(As seen above)



600L All Purpose Compost

A consistent, easy to use compost supporting reliable establishment and healthy growth for general planting.



600L Spruce Ornamental

A high performance mulch suitable for a wide range of garden and landscape applications, from public spaces to private gardens.



600L Farmyard

A nutrient-rich soil improver for improved fertility, structure and moisture retention



Why stock our core range:

- Consistent, high-quality materials
- Trusted by landscapers and contractors
- Efficient 600L bulk bag format
- Reliable supply during peak periods

Now Available: Rose, Tree & Shrub in 600L Bulk Bags



For this season, our Rose, Tree & Shrub compost is now available in a 600L bulk bag – ideal for landscapers and contractors working on larger planting schemes.

Perfect for projects involving multiple shrubs, trees, and garden builds, this format helps customers work more efficiently by reducing the need for multiple smaller bags, saving both time and handling on-site.

For merchants, it offers the opportunity to stock a specialist, high-value product in a format suited to trade demand-supporting larger orders and increasing basket spend.

Our Builders Merchants' brochure:
<https://bit.ly/4bZxD0h>

Expert support for biofiltration systems

Melcourt has over 40 years' experience in developing sustainable, high-performance biofiltration media, supporting businesses in meeting increasingly stringent air quality and odour control regulations.



Our range of responsibly sourced bark and wood-based media is designed to deliver reliable, long-term performance, backed by rigorous testing and real-world application. From understanding the science behind the process to best practices for installation and ongoing maintenance, we can provide expert technical support, helping to ensure your biofiltration system performs efficiently, compliantly and cost-effectively.