



CROCUS

Making beautiful possible

Sustainability Report

— 2026 —

Edition 5

www.crocus.co.uk

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Introduction to Crocus

At Crocus, we believe gardening sustains us, and that we have a responsibility to give back to the earth we love. Guided by this belief, we are pleased to present our fifth Sustainability Report. Each year, writing this report gives us the chance to reflect on our progress, recognise what we've achieved, and identify where there is still more work to do. In this edition, we share the progress made during 2025*, alongside our goals for 2026. We hope this report offers insight into life at the Crocus nursery and the steps we are taking to reduce our impact while growing responsibly.

The CROCUS Team

*dates are reflective of Financial Year 2024-2025

Our nursery's impact

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Our nursery's impact

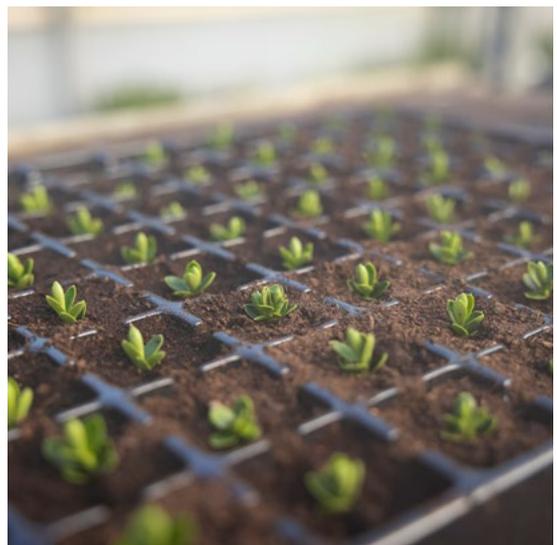


Last year our nursery team grew **1.45M** plants from plugs and cuttings.

Our goal for 2026 is to increase that to a whopping **1.65 million**

We grow **100%** peat free.

For all plants we grow ourselves we only pot into a peat free mix that we have **developed specially** in-house.



We started our own **bare root tree nursery.**

Less plastic, more **UK grown, peat free trees** for our customers.



Growing an outstanding 1.45 million peat free plants

At Crocus we are committed to growing sustainably and where our nursery is concerned that means more UK grown and peat free plants. We are able to do both through our on site propagation unit, where all of our plants are potted from plugs or cuttings into a peat free soil mix. Growing more plants ourselves also means that we are reducing the carbon footprint of every plant by reducing how far each plant travels and cutting down plastic use by reducing how many times each plant needs to be potted on.

In 2025 our team grew a whopping 1.45 million peat free plants. Much of this growth came from improving our cutting techniques. Taking cuttings, rather than using plugs from suppliers, means we are reducing the distance each plant has travelled. In 2025, we were able to grow 78% more cuttings than the



year before, increasing output from 191,000 to 340,000.

Since starting our propagation unit we have grown a total of 4 million peat free plants

Aside from taking cuttings we also grow plants from plugs. Whilst some plugs which are bought in from our suppliers

do contain a very small amount of peat, we are committed to finding ways to removing peat completely. Our goal is to be 100% peat free across our entire supply chain, and we are continuing to work towards achieving this. To make this change, we are continuing to work closely with suppliers, inviting industry leaders to the nursery to share knowledge and find ways to tackle this remaining small amount of peat.

Launching our own peat free tree nursery

One of the major changes we achieved in 2025 was the development of our new tree nursery grown in peat free soil.

These trees arrive to the nursery as bare roots, meaning they have been grown in open ground rather than in pots, and are lifted while dormant. When they arrive at our nursery they are placed into heeling-in beds before being potted into their 9L pot in autumn. Where they remain and are cared for until they are big enough to be sent out to customers.

In 2025 we grew over 3,000 peat free trees

This method reduces the amount of plastic pots needed, as there is no potting on. It has also helped us cut the carbon footprint of our transportation as each tree arrives to the nursery as a bare root, so fewer transport vehicles are required.



Trialling new methods with our 2 litre range

Every year we try to do something different and in 2026 our goal is to expand our 2 litre plants, where both the plugs and potting mix are peat free.

Our 2 litre plants typically begin as plugs, which are first potted into 9cm containers and grown on for several months before being transferred into their final 2 litre pots.

From 2026, we will be changing this process by planting plugs directly into 2 litre pots, removing the 9cm stage altogether. By bringing the potting schedule forward, plants will have additional time to establish strong root systems in their final containers. This change will significantly reduce the amount of growing medium used and eliminate a substantial volume of plastic by cutting the 9cm pots out of the production process entirely.

Promoting plant health & biodiversity



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Promoting plant health & biodiversity



Crocus is the **first** and **only** online gardening brand to achieve  **Plant Healthy**

meaning your plants are cared for to the **highest standards**.

82%
of **our plants**
come from **the UK**

An increase of 7% from the year before, our goal for next year is to reach 85%.



We are **free** of broad spectrum pesticides.

Instead **biological solutions** are always our first approach.



Plant Healthy accredited 3 years in a row

Our commitment to producing excellent plants for our customers means we take great care over the way we grow. For the last three years we have been awarded the Plant Healthy accreditation. The only online gardening brand to be so. This prestigious, DEFRA-supported accreditation is not easily earned; it is awarded only to growers who undergo extensive scrutiny over many months

by an independent assessment team and can demonstrate exceptional standards of plant health and biosecurity.

We remain the only online gardening brand to be awarded Plant Healthy

Holding Plant Healthy status gives our customers confidence that every possible step has been taken to supply plants that are free from pests and diseases. Central to this

is our commitment to daily plant inspections carried out by our team, alongside an approach known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM). In a nutshell, this means that when faced with a potential pest or disease, our first course of action will be to look for a cultural or biological solution. This practice has allowed us to massively reduce the use of traditional synthetic pesticides, while completely putting a stop to the use of broad spectrum pesticides such as neonicotinoids that

can be harmful to non-target species.

As a result of these practices, we have eliminated the use of broad spectrum pesticides, including neonicotinoids. Our Plant Healthy certification is reviewed annually through an audit conducted each early autumn, and we are fully dedicated to maintaining and strengthening these standards next year and into the future.

Increasing our UK plant supply

Our ambition is to offer our customers the widest possible range of UK grown plants. Where we are unable to propagate plants ourselves within our propagation unit, we work closely with a trusted network of UK nurseries who begin the growing process before plants are finished on at our own nursery.

We've increased our UK plant supply by 7%

This approach not only

strengthens relationships with local growers but also brings clear environmental and biosecurity benefits. Growing more plants in the UK helps reduce transport distances and associated carbon emissions, while also supporting higher

standards of plant health and traceability.

In 2025, we increased our supply of UK grown plants by 7%, representing an important step towards this goal. Looking ahead, we hope that more than 85% of our plants will be grown in the UK next year.



Reducing waste & water

Reducing waste & water

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Reducing waste & water impact



We are
100%
self sufficient for our
water needs.

We only use rainwater from
our **reservoir** to water our
plants on the nursery.

We recycled
80 tonnes
of green waste.

We collect nursery cuttings and
use this to **create compost** that
is used to pot up plants.



We **reuse** all of
our **WOOD** and
cardboard waste.

Any waste **wood** and **cardboard**
on the nursery is used for
heating or **packaging** of plants.

We are 100% self sufficient for our water needs.

With so many plants to water, we are unsurprisingly very water conscious. Our nursery is supported by an on-site reservoir we built which can hold up to 7 million litres, rainwater runoff from nursery buildings is channelled through a pipe network into our reservoir. As a result, all plants grown outdoors are irrigated using collected rainwater rather than mains supply.



All of our plants on the nursery are watered with recycled rainwater

But we don't just collect rainwater; excess water from irrigation is captured and returned to the system, enabling us to reuse a significant proportion of what we apply. Roughly 80% of the water used in a 24-hour period is collected and recycled again!

Recycling and reusing waste

Day-to-day work on the nursery, from cutting back plants to potting them on, naturally produces a steady stream of green waste. In 2021, we built three industrial-scale composting bays to process this material on site. Over time, the green waste is turned, rotated and sieved as it breaks down, gradually becoming usable compost.

The finished compost is then returned to the nursery, where it is used in landscaping projects and to top up plants before they leave

for delivery. This cycle allows organic material to be reused within the business, reducing waste and supporting a more circular way of working.

Materials that would otherwise leave the nursery as waste are put to practical use wherever possible. All waste wood and cardboard generated on site is collected. The wood is used to fuel our biomass boilers, providing heat for our warehouses during the winter months. Whilst the cardboard is used for the protection of plants.

We've recycled and reused 80 tonnes of green waste to make our own compost

Where waste cannot be reduced or reused on site, we work closely with specialist recycling partners to ensure it is handled responsibly. In 2025, 90% of the recyclable waste produced at the nursery was successfully recycled,

including plastic pots, trays, crates, cardboard and plastic packaging. We continue to build on this performance each year through improved recycling systems and ongoing training for both staff and managers.





Improving the way we package & deliver

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Improving the way we package & deliver



We're on the way to be
plastic free
in our
Crocus Collection
range.

Instead we use **brown paper**
and **paper tape** to protect
your items.

We've reduced
our **plastic pot**
use by **half** for
our bigger plants.

By switching to a
lighter pot which uses
50% less plastic.



For local
deliveries we use
no packaging
at all.

Helping us save **128 tonnes**
of paper packaging
every year.



Removing plastic from our packaging

Beyond changing the process of how we grow our plants we have also been looking at the way we package them. Every plant we send out is carefully selected by hand, thoroughly watered, and checked twice before dispatch. For larger orders, or deliveries close to our

nursery, our own team handles delivery directly, transporting plants in our Crocus vans without any packaging. In 2025 18% of orders were delivered with no packaging at all, saving 128 tonnes of cardboard.

In 2020 we made the switch from recyclable plastic packaging to brown paper and paper tape. Every year this helps

reduce our plastic use by 3.77 tonnes. Plastic is now used only where it is essential to protect plants. Whenever plastic packaging is required, it is always made from recycled materials and is fully recyclable.

The only remaining plastic packaging on our plants, aside from the pots themselves, is the blister packaging used to protect

smaller plants. Although these packs are made from recycled plastic and can be recycled again, we trialling a cardboard alternative and are hopeful that this will be rolled out in 2026. We continue to explore new solutions with the aim of removing blister packs entirely and hope to introduce an alternative in the near future.



Reducing our use of plastic pots

When it comes to the nursery, we only pot into plastic pots which are made from recycled materials and can be recycled by our customers at home. In 2025 we introduced a new type of plastic pot which is lighter and therefore uses 25% less plastic. So far we have used these pots in our 2 and 3 litre range and it is our hope to expand into 9cm in 2026.



and we're pleased to be seeing real progress across the industry.

80% of our pots can be recycled at home

As a result, we estimate that in 2025 around 80% of our plants were

supplied in recyclable pots made from recycled plastic. The remaining plants come from our European suppliers and are still grown in black plastic pots. While these pots are made from recyclable materials, they cannot currently be recycled through household collections.

Packing from suppliers

We have been actively encouraging our suppliers to move away from black plastic pots that cannot be recycled at home,

However, the Government has confirmed that from 2026, kerbside recycling in England will begin accepting black plastic pots.

In the meantime, we're helping customers dispose of these pots responsibly through our Crocus Pot Back scheme at our Dorney Court café and garden. Here, you can return any black plastic pots from our suppliers and we'll ensure they are recycled correctly. Find out more and plan your visit at www.crocus.co.uk/dorney-court.

How we're reducing our product packaging

In 2025, we successfully rolled out our improved product packaging across the Crocus Collection range, marking a significant step forward in our efforts to reduce plastic. For this range, we have moved almost entirely to brown paper packaging, replacing plastic with a more sustainable, recyclable alternative wherever possible.

This change represents an important milestone in our packaging journey and reflects our commitment to designing products with environmental impact in mind. Only a small number of items that include glass and wire items currently sit outside this approach, and for these we are actively working with our factory partners to develop a suitable, sustainable solution. For these items when we do use plastic, it is always made from

recycled materials which can be recycled.

Alongside the changes to our own Crocus Collection lines, we have continued to make strong progress in reducing plastic packaging across our wider supplier base. We are encouraged by the growing momentum across the industry, as more suppliers adopt sustainable packaging options and move away from plastic in favour of responsible alternatives.



A young man with glasses and a high-visibility orange vest is working in a nursery. He is focused on planting small plants into a black tray. In the background, there are stacks of brown pots and lush green trees. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

Championing employees

CROCUS

Championing employees



We've raised
£20,168.79
for charity since 2021.

Supporting both local and national charities.

We run our own
Apprenticeship Scheme.

This year Grace completed a marketing apprenticeship.



We're from
around the world.

We have many different nationalities working at Crocus, from Poland to India to Australia.

We are proud to be a diverse, international team, with colleagues representing no fewer than 18 countries from around the world. Our people strategy is built around open, fair, and inclusive practices that welcome individuals from all backgrounds.

Every year we raise money for charity through our staff plant sales, where excess stock or plants not quite up to our desired standards can be bought by our team for charity. In 2025 we were able to raise £1,793.80 which was donated to The Brain Tumour Charity,

an amazing cause close to the hearts of many of us at Crocus.

In the past we have taken apprentices on the nursery, last year Grace Meredew-Lynch completed an apprenticeship in the marketing team.

“Balancing learning alongside a full-time role has been incredibly fulfilling, allowing me to develop my skills, apply new knowledge and continuously grow both personally and professionally.

I feel incredibly lucky to have been given this opportunity, as it has strengthened my confidence, broadened my understanding of marketing across different channels, and reinforced my passion for developing within this field.

Grace said of the scheme.



Our promise

We started Crocus because we wanted to make access to the largest and most interesting selection of plants as easy as possible for people. We know that our sustainability goals will only help us to deliver this ambition, at a higher quality and lower cost to the planet.

We promise to push ourselves every year to continue to do better and do more. We will continue to keep our customers up to date on our progress, as well as releasing a report to the wider community every year.

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read our report, if you have any further questions we're always happy to hear from you.

Please contact us via our website at [crocus.co.uk/contact/](https://www.crocus.co.uk/contact/) and our team will be in touch.

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