

### **RECYCLED PRODUCT OF THE YEAR**

CARE Compost is produced by composting garden waste from parks and gardens throughout the West Midlands. CARE Compost is a 100% recycled, peat free soil improver and produced from renewable resources. It is free of weeds and disease and is therefore ideal as a top dressing, soil improver and tree and shrub planting compost. Composted under quality controlled conditions, CARE Compost is naturally rich in nutrients, which help to build up a natural fertility in the soil, increasing root structure and producing healthier plants.

In partnership with Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, servicing 4 Local Authorities in the West Midlands conurbation, Midlands Compost Recycling (a subsidiary of Jack Moody Landscapes Ltd) have established a green waste recycling scheme which to date is the largest in the country. The recycling site then composts the material under strict quality controlled conditions to ensure that consistent standards of the products are maintained.

It has enabled local authorities to develop kerb side collection schemes and provide a sustainable service to the local community. This not only meets government recycling targets by using a cost-effective alternative to landfill but also ensures a proactive approach to local environmental initiatives.

Midlands Compost and Recycling has produced several grades of compost/mulch for use in the trade and consumer markets. CARE Compost is currently being specified and used in planting schemes and urban regeneration projects throughout the country. CARE Compost is also used extensively by the horticulture, agriculture and landscaping industries.

Early this year saw the launch of CARE Compost to the consumer market. CARE Compost is sold in 40l bags and is a highly effective cost efficient alternative to traditional peat and compost. Sales outlets have included local garden centres, civic amenity sites and a local Zoo. Flyers publicising the initiative were delivered to all

households currently involved in the kerb-side collection schemes. Information sheets were produced for Dudley Zoo and used as part of their recycling educational programme for schools in the area.

The scheme has attracted widespread publicity and both partners have given considerable time and effort to share their experience via seminars and site visits, thus developing good practice across the country. Last month saw the formal endorsement of the product by the National Wildlife Trust and the Soil Association.

As well as the obvious benefits for those using the product, the introduction of the scheme has allow Walsall MBC to increase their recycling rate from 0.5% in 1993 to 11.8% in 1998, giving Walsall one of the highest recycling rates for a Metropolitan Borough.