

Solar panels supply all of the power for lighting the garden centre during the day. The globe light fittings are a feature through the building and visually lower the ceilings



Above: local artists can display and sell their creations in a New Zealand Designer Showcase section of the garden centre, with 100 percent of the profits being returned to the artist



## Kings open a new concept garden centre in Auckland

THE KINGS Plant Barn chain opened their new architect-designed garden centre in Stonefields, near Mt Wellington Auckland, in July.

The 2,800sq m site is certainly a garden centre with a difference. "Stonefields is the first major step in a project of continuous re-invention for Kings," says Nat Cheshire of its designers Cheshire Architects, "a project turning garden centres into urban epicentres supporting, and delighting in, the reconciliation of humanity and nature."

A high-ceiling building stretches along the front, carpark side of the site, and houses the indoor plant categories, accessories and gift lines, a childrens' play area and a large café.

The remainder of the site has a crop cover-type roof and houses a wide range of outdoor plants, plus there is a drive-thru area for garden mixes and landscape sup-

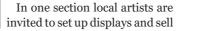
The garden centre is near the

older suburbs of Mt Wellington, St Johns and Glen Innes but also close to one of Auckland's biggest recent residential subdivisions, Stonefields, in the former Mt Wellington quarry.

Here there are hundreds of new apartments, stand-alone houses and terraced houses, none of which have much land for gardening and this is reflected in the ranges offered by the new garden

## **Endless ideas**

Its plant displays, with input from landscape designer Xanthe White, are exceptionally good, attractive and well thought out, and everywhere there are small displays of gift lines, knick-knacks and ideas for customers to take home.







Outdoor display area stretches the length of the building, completely under plastic cover



Multiple displays of large-leafed indoor plants give the garden centre something of a tropical feel



each month. The one pictured on ating terrariums.

their products, keeping the prof- | the page opposite was featuring its. They can be on hand to talk | kokedama. There is another secwith customers and are changed | tion devoted to materials for cre-



A variety of display benches and fittings are used through the outdoor area. These steel modular tiered displays were supplied by Primehort



Below: the unprepossessing entrance facade gives no hint of what lies within. Above: small constructions



