



Grace NEWS

Winter/Spring 2017



www.gracelandscapes.com

Head Office Region

To Hull and Back (Several times!)



Soft landscaping installation in Hull

Unlike the 1985 Only Fools and Horses Christmas Special where Del and Rodney only went 'To Hull and Back' once, some of our staff from Mirfield have been doing it every day for the last few months!

In preparation for Hull's year as UK City of Culture for 2017, Grace Landscapes have been appointed to undertake over half a million pounds worth of soft landscaping installation as part of the city centre public realm works being delivered by main contractor, Eurovia.



As with a lot of public realm works, this job hasn't been without its challenges. Distances of up to half a mile from the storage compound to the working area, coupled with one way streets, bus lanes and members of the public trying to go about their day to day business, has meant that moving the trees around site requires the use of 6 banksmen to escort the telehandler on the slowest of slow journeys, sometimes taking up to 45 minutes to travel half a mile.

The picture to the left shows some of the trees for Hull being held at the nursery in Holland awaiting dispatch to Hull (October 2016) and below – one of the trees on its long slow journey around the streets of Hull on its way to be planted (December 2016).





New Year Update from the MD

By Neil Pix



As we approach the end of another financial year, 2016/17 looks like being another strong year for the company.

Our maintenance contract portfolio continues to grow and with the construction industry remaining buoyant, along with a long list of happy clients and further industry awards, the signs for the coming year are very promising.

That said, the industry is not without its' challenges. The fact that there is plenty of work out there, means there's a lot of competition to recruit and retain good quality staff. The introduction and subsequent

increase in the National Living Wage also continues to put pressure on payroll costs, and the Brexit decision which resulted in a weakening of the pound has added to the cost of imported goods and materials. Despite these pressures however, I am confident that Grace Landscapes will continue to grow and with over 43% of our workforce having worked for the company for 10 years or more, its testament to the fact we offer a good place to work and have a very committed and loyal workforce. On behalf of the entire management team I would like to thank all staff for their hard work over the last year as well as our clients for allowing us to make it happen.

Long Service Award



In December 2016, we celebrated the 30 year work anniversary of our Training Coordinator, Ian Fearnley.

Whilst Ian has actually been with the company for a little over 30 years, we nevertheless couldn't let the occasion pass by.

A celebratory lunch buffet was held at Mirfield for Ian, at which he was presented with a gift and hamper to recognise his long service to the company. Asked about the biggest changes he had seen at the company over the years, Ian responded;

"Compared with 20 years ago, the sheer volume of training that we have to deliver nowadays in order to remain compliant and meet client's quality expectations is phenomenal, however with the infrastructure we have in place, it's a challenge that we can always rise to".

Congratulations and well done Ian!



Meet Scott Standish – North West Regional Manager

With a background in landscape construction spanning over 20 years, Scott joined Grace Landscapes back in October 2016 as our new Regional Contracts Manager for the North West. Having previously worked for a number of large landscaping

companies in the North West, Scott's experience includes management of commercial, education, leisure and retail landscape projects as well as high end residential projects. Other bespoke projects that Scott has managed include the

construction of a 2 acre lake in North Wales and involvement in the construction of a new section of the Jaguar Land Rover track-day experience in Solihull. Outside of work, Scott is married with 2 children and a parrot called Millie and is an avid fan of Manchester United.



Soft landscaping at the new Olympic Legacy Park

Midlands Region

Keeping the Legacy

Following closure of the former Don Valley Stadium in Sheffield in late 2013, works are now underway as part of a £50m transformation to create an Olympic Legacy Park.

In addition to the existing adjoining English Institute of Sport, Ice Sheffield and Don Valley Bowl, the latest phase of this 35 acre redevelopment will see further world-class sports, education, leisure and health facilities added, including a new 3,000 seat arena for the Sheffield Sharks Basketball team.

Grace Landscapes are proud to announce that we have been appointed to carry out installation of the soft landscaping, and are set to commence in early 2017. As well as the planting of over 100 trees, the landscaping scheme also includes a variety of species set to create the appearance of fire around the cauldron which was used to host the flame at the World Student Games on the same site some 25 years ago. More to follow in the next addition of Grace News.

North East Region

Across the Border!



Not for the first time, some of our Grace colleagues from the North East depot have found themselves working across the border in Scotland. Following the success of previous works on the same site a couple of years ago, our latest visit to Glasgow Fort saw the installation

of over £300,000 worth of play features and soft landscaping including a green roof using wildflower turf.

With over 100 shops, a cinema, a fitness centre and now another quality landscaping scheme delivered by Grace, Glasgow Fort is leading the way as one of Scotland's top shopping destinations.

North West Region

Adding a splash of colour



It's always refreshing when a client or landlord takes pride in their property, and at Broughton Shopping Park near Chester, it's no different.

Owned by British Land and supported by Landscape Architects, Macgregor Smith, the shopping park has seen some big improvements over the last 12 months.

Towards the end of 2015 (under some very testing weather conditions), Grace Landscapes delivered over £200,000 worth of soft landscaping improvements to the site infrastructure. A year later in readiness for Christmas 2016, we were instructed to supply and install over 50 large planters designed to add another dimension and a splash of colour to the walkways around site.

Royal Horticultural Society - Green Plan It Challenge

Back in June, Grace Landscapes was one of the companies approached by the Royal Horticultural Society to become involved with their 'Green Plan It Challenge' scheme for the Yorkshire area.

The RHS asked prominent landscaping companies to become involved and provide a mentor to support a local school to engage in a ten-week project where students were asked to re-think the role of green space for community benefit.

Ian Fearnley, Training Coordinator rose to the challenge, completed the application form and was accepted onto the scheme. Starting in September, Ian, alongside Adam Ralph of Grit It worked with the students of Dixons Allerton Academy B team in Bradford, to support them in achieving their project objectives.

After much debate, the students decided on a Shakespeare theme, aiming to create a circular, outdoor

classroom along the lines of the famous Globe Theatre in London.

On December 7th all participating students attended a celebration event at the RHS Garden, Harlow Carr in Harrogate to present their designs for assessment, receive

feedback on their work and celebrate their achievements with their industry mentors.

Following the adjudication process, Dixons Allerton Academy B mentored by Ian, scooped the prize for most innovative garden in Yorkshire.



Pest and Disease News

As reported in the last edition, Grace Landscapes are registered with the Defra Plant Passport scheme, which is designed to prevent the importation and spread of pests and diseases. One such disease which has been in the news of late is **Xylella Fastidiosa**.

Xylella Fastidiosa is a bacterium that affects its host plants by invading their water-conducting systems. In so doing, it restricts or blocks the movement of water and nutrients through the plant, with serious consequences, including death, for some host plants. Prior to 2013 it was only known to be present in the Americas and Taiwan, however in more recent years the disease has become prevalent in Europe, leading to the devastation of certain species of trees and shrubs. To date, over 200 species have been identified as being at risk from this disease including oak, elm and plane trees.

Symptoms range from leaf scorch (browning) to dieback and death. Symptoms vary depending on the host plant species and its degree of susceptibility, but



include marginal leaf scorch, wilting of foliage and withering of branches.

Whilst the bacterium can be transmitted through insects moving between plant species, it is widely acknowledged that the export / import of plant material between countries is also a known cause for the disease spreading, hence the importance of Plant Passport scheme to prevent the spread of pests and diseases to our native stock.



The BIG Question! COMPETITION TIME



Name the horticultural attraction where you would find this impressive building?

For your chance to win a £25.00 B&Q voucher, send your name, company and address to:

Neil Pix
Grace Landscapes Ltd
Nunbrook Farm
7 Leeds Road
Mirfield
WF14 0BY

Congratulations!
Andy Williams - Senior
Contracts Manager at
Mirfield, winner of the
Summer Word Search.

or email to:

neil.pix@gracelandscapes.com by 31st May 2017.

The winner will be drawn at random from all the correct entries received.

Answer

Name

Company & Address



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