

MAINTENANCE PLAN

All ground preparation and planting to be carried out to BS standards as stipulated in the John Heather Landscape Specification 2015.

GARDEN IRRIGATION

- A micro irrigation system with battery operated controller will be installed to ensure that all semi-mature tree stock, hedging and new planting will be irrigated regularly until properly established. For the semi-mature trees this will be a period of at least two years. After this time we would recommend that the client keeps the system in place though may use it on a much reduced basis. The controller would be disconnected in late autumn and brought inside to avoid frost damage.

GREEN WALL

- Hydroponic green wall system to be installed by TLA (www.thelandscapearchitect.net) Please see accompanying brochure also supplied.
- The booster pumpset, controller and dosing unit will be housed within a small plant enclosure, either in ground or disguised within the adjacent planting bed. The controller will be mains powered in order to avoid plant failure from battery failure. The dosing unit will dispense liquid fertiliser at a dosing rate of 0.2 – 0.5% to suit performance requirements.
- The green wall will be irrigated for the whole duration of its lifetime by a dedicated drip line irrigation system. This system may be zoned to ensure that different sections of the wall receive the correct amount of moisture. Factors which effect this would be height of wall and amount of direct sunlight received.
- A maintenance contract will be taken out with TLA. Maintenance visits to be scheduled at the very least on a quarterly basis. Typical tasks on these visits might include replacement of any plant failures, general tidying/clipping and topping up liquid fertiliser. The health of the green wall may also be monitored on these visits and irrigation requirements adjusted accordingly.

MULCHING

- All planting will be mulched after installation using MixOrMulch supplied by Thompsons of Crews Hill. This product not only helps to retain moisture within the soil but also to condition the soil as it contains fenland soil and manure as well as composted bark and leafmould. We recommend annual mulching either in Autumn or spring to promote the health of soil and maintain the health and appearance of all planting.

HEDGING

- Hedging at both the front and the back of the house will be clipped annually to retain the required height and neat appearance evidenced in the area generally.

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- All hedging will be formatively pruned on installation to achieve the finished height. *Taxus baccata* will then be clipped at least once a year in the summer so that more growth may be achieved prior to the plant slowing down in the Autumn. *Taxus* may then be clipped again in the Autumn if required. Deciduous hedging to the rear of the garden should also be clipped in the summer for the same reasons.

PLANTERS

- *Taxus baccata* will be planted in the three planters at the front of the house. These plants will be irrigated either by micro irrigation lines or by plantsava reservoirs supplied by Greentech. These reservoirs store water underneath the rootball of the plant so that the plant may take up water via capillary action as and when it needs it. This does mean that the tanks need to be filled every so often but is a viable and optional alternative to micro drip lines and also avoids excess water from leaking out of the bottom of the planter.
- In order to maintain the health of these plants a liquid fertiliser should be applied annually in spring.

TREES

- As mentioned above, all semi-mature stock should be irrigated on a regular basis until completely established. This will take a minimum of two years.
- We also recommend that all trees planted should be managed on a long term basis as so often we see damage caused to landscapes and even buildings by trees that have been allowed to grow without any management. We recommend that a tree surgeon should carry out formative pruning as well as pruning out of dead wood etc at least once every four to five years. This is not to formalise the trees but simply to maintain a balanced and healthy crown. As we are in a conservation area, each visit would be preceded by an application to Camden Council who would ultimately regulate the frequency of this maintenance.

MAINTENANCE OF HERBACEOUS PLANTS AND SHRUBS

The planting palettes for this garden have been designed to be relatively low maintenance featuring a backbone of trees and shrubs around which is woven a mixture of flowering perennials and ornamental grasses. Maintenance tasks are as follows:

- At the end of the season old flower stems are cut back down to the ground. This gives room for the new shoots to emerge. Some plants are left over winter because they offer some interesting winter structure. These must be cut back no later than the beginning of February as new shoots emerge the following spring.

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- Weeds can be a big problem amongst herbaceous plants as they will grow up through the clumps and are not easily removed without damaging the plant. Herbicides cannot be used as, unless the weeds are very carefully spot-treated, they will damage herbaceous growth. Hand weeding is done throughout the summer. If a weed problem becomes very bad the clumps are lifted out of the ground. The weeds can then be cleared from amongst the roots, and from the ground, before replanting.
- Herbaceous plants in the border need nutritious ground. The best source of this is composted waste or rotted manure. However, this sometimes introduces more weed seeds. Fertilizers applied in the spring will improve plant growth.
- Mulching herbaceous plants in the spring helps to conserve water and suppress weed growth. The best materials for mulching are composted garden waste, leaf mould or well rotted manure. These will also add nutrients to the ground. Bark or composted bark can also be used. Fresh manure should not be used as it will scorch young soft shoots of herbaceous plants.
- Removing the flower heads as they mature will encourage the plant to produce more flowers and extend the flowering period. In most cases this is done with secateurs to individual flower stems. Some plants can be cut back with shears after flowering to encourage more growth and a repeat flush of flowers. Crowded stems can be pinched right out before flowering to thin the number of flowers if necessary.
- In spring or autumn large clumps will need to be lifted out of the ground and divided into smaller plants which can then be replanted. The frequency with which this is done will depend on the vigour of the plant but is normally every 3 to 4 years. Fibrous rooted perennials are lifted and split apart with two forks back to back. Early flowering plants are divided in the autumn and late flowering plants are divided in the spring. Fleshy rooted plants, such as hostas, are lifted and split apart with a spade or a knife in the spring. The older part of the lifted plant in the middle is discarded and the younger plants from the outside are replanted.

LAWN MAINTENANCE

General tasks for maintaining a high quality lawn are as follows:

- Apply a top dressing in Spring and start mowing as warmer weather stimulates turf growth. Once over a year old, the lawn may be scarified at this time and any weeds removed either by hand or by spot treatment.
- The lawn should be mown regularly over the summer period.
- In the autumn the lawn may be scarified and aerated. It may also be fed with a fertiliser such as Rolawn GroRight Lawn fertiliser, weed and moss killer.

MAINTENANCE REGIME

- If the owners are not maintaining the garden themselves, we would recommend garden maintenance to be carried out by a team on at least a bi-monthly basis with extra visits scheduled during the summer for regular lawn mowing.