G club

The G Club magazine from greenwood

JANUARY 2024

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Enhancing new build homes in a competitive market

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G club 2024 is better than ever

We're pleased to announce that in 2024, we're making G Club better than ever, with enhanced benefits, and greater rewards. Additions include Luxury event hospitality, charity of choice donation, case study collaboration, and more. To qualify for G Club benefits, all you need to do is remain within your payment terms each month of the quarter, and the level of benefits you will receive will increase in line with the value of your quarterly spend.

	G club GOLD TIER	G club SILVER TIER	G club BRONZE TIER
Credit bonus based on quarterly spend	3% Credit bonus	2% Credit bonus	1% Credit bonus
Complimentary delivery	all orders over £500	all orders over £750	all orders over £1000
Charity donation of your choice	£500 towards nominated charity	£250 towards nominated charity	£100 towards nominated charity
Fresh Acres HQ Tour	●	●	●
Greenwood Community Project Nomination	●	●	●
Case Study Collaboration	●	●	●
Complimentary copies of Greenwood Specifaster	●	●	●
Seasonal Hamper	●	●	●
Trip to Greenwood Holland (once a year)	●	×	×
Luxury Event Hospitality	●	×	×

Business Update

Greenwood Plants win HTA 'Peat Free Grower of the Year' award, Shortlisted for AIPH International Grower of the Year

We were thrilled to be named 'Peat free Grower of the Year' at the 2023 HTA Awards. The HTA's Grower of the Year Awards demonstrate the high calibre of UK nurseries who lead the way in quality, levels of service and innovation. Winning in the peat-free category is a credit to the hard work of the G Team over the last two years in transitioning to growing fully peat-free.

Following the award, Greenwood were entered into the AIPH's 'International Grower of the Year' award, where we're pleased to share that we have been shortlisted as a finalist, ahead of the announcement in January 2024. The nomination is a testament to the hard work and commitment of the G Team, and their living of the company's values.

The Greenwood Specification is here!

Our definitive plant specifying guide for commercial landscapers has finally arrived. After lots of conversations with clients over the years regarding the optimal growing conditions of various plants, the Greenwood Specification has been carefully curated by our experienced horticulturists to present key information on our most popular plant varieties. It's a distillation of over 30 years of experience in commercial landscape supply, offering variety selection, plant heights, pot sizes, and more, that moves beyond theory into the everyday practicalities of the landscaping market.

As a member of G Club, you should have already received a copy of the book. We hope you find it to be a useful reference tool, with information on a wide range of topics related to responsible growing.

Greenwood Plants is now growing 100% peat-free

We are delighted to announce that we are now growing 100% peat-free on all six of our UK nursery sites, ahead of our target of the end of 2023, in advance of anticipated industry regulation to prohibit the use of peat for commercial growers.

Greenwood has been running extensive trials of peat-free growing media since early 2022, exploring different types of growing media to use in our annual production of more than six million plants.

"We are delighted to have met this demanding target which is testament to the hard work and dedication of the G Team. " says Managing Director, Melanie Asker.

"Our focus is now on working with our supply chain to ensure that any purchased stock is peat-free. We have several European and UK suppliers now growing plants for the new season in peat-free compost," Melanie added.

Greenwood Plants welcomes Defra Minister Trudy Harrison MP

Trudy Harrison MP, Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Defra and Minister for natural environment and land use, visited our Fresh Acres nursery site on 11th October 2023 to discuss our transition to peat-free growing.

Mrs Harrison said, "It was a pleasure to visit Greenwood for a tour of its Fresh Acres site and see how it has embraced the challenge of transitioning to peat-free horticulture.

"Peatlands provide important habitats for our plants and wildlife and are large natural carbon stores, which is why we are phasing out the use of peat in the professional horticultural sector by 2030."

Planting Inspiration: Playground friendly gardens

When designing a playground, safety and aesthetics are paramount considerations. An often overlooked aspect is the choice of plants surrounding the play area. Playground-friendly plants not only enhance the overall ambiance but also contribute to a safer and more stimulating environment for children.

First and foremost, consider plants that are non-toxic and hypoallergenic. Many common garden plants can be harmful if eaten, so opt for non-poisonous species. Plants that are hazardous if ingested, or can cause irritation if touched, include *Euphorbia*, *Digitalis*, *Taxus*, *Polygonatum* and *Lupinus*.

Low-maintenance plants are a great choice to reduce the upkeep of communal areas. Playgrounds can be high-traffic zones, so robust plants like ornamental grasses and herbs require minimal care and can withstand the occasional trampling.

Furthermore, it's crucial to avoid plants with thorns or spines like *Berberis* and *Pyracantha*. Smooth-leaved or hairy plants, such as *Stachys*, *Hosta*, *Bergenia*, ferns and *Helleborus*, are soft to touch, providing a sensory experience, and are safe for children to be around.

Choosing colourful plants not only brightens up the outdoor space but also introduce children to the world of gardening. If the area allows, it is beneficial to include a planting bed for children to grow varieties like marigolds, sunflowers, and nasturtiums.

Hedging species can create a natural boundary or be used to soften the look of fences and railings. They also provide visual screening, some acoustic absorption and create a windbreak. *Fagus sylvatica*, *Prunus lusitanica* and *Photinia* x *fraseri* 'Red Robin' are all appropriate.

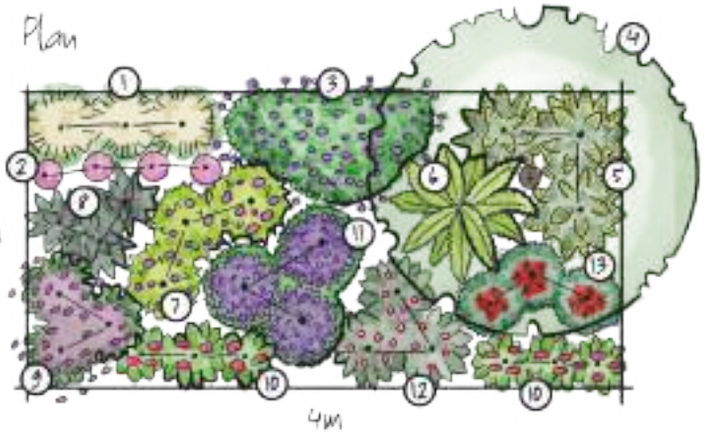
Lastly, don't forget to include plants that provide shade. Trees like *Betula*, *Acer* and *Prunus* can create naturally cooler zones for children to play under on hot summer days.

Ceanothus thyrsiflorus var. repens

Astilbe* 'Fanal' *(× arendsii)

Incorporating playground-friendly plants not only adds beauty but also fosters a safe and inviting environment for children to explore and play. These plant choices promote growth, learning, and a connection with nature while ensuring their safety in the great outdoors.

With that in mind, here is our design for a planting scheme that's playground friendly:



At the rear left of the garden, adding some height to the plan, we have *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Kleine Fontäne' (1), which is a flowering ornamental grass with slender leaves and white midribs. Providing some colour in front, *Verbena bonariensis* (2) stands tall with flattened heads of lilac-purple, whilst *Ceanothus thyrsiflorus var. repens* (3) provides volume alongside, with its fluffy, light blue flowers. Providing shade in the plan is *Viburnum opulus* (4), which is a vigorous shrub that can grow up to 4 meters tall, with snowball-like flowers in late spring. *Hosta fortunei* var. *aureomarginata* (5) and *Polystichum setiferum* (6) are providing ground cover, whilst *Spiraea japonica* 'Golden Princess' (7) sits in the middle of the plan with its pink flowers in late summer. *Stachys byzantina* (8) stands out with its silver-green foliage, behind *Geranium sanguineum* (9), which is a low, spreading perennial with pink flowers, making it ideal for the front of the plan. Also marking the front of our plan, is *Bergenia cordifolia* (10), which is an evergreen perennial with erect red stems, and spikes of pink flowers in spring. Taking centre stage in the middle of the plan is the aromatic *Lavandula* x *intermedia* 'Grosso' (11), with its robust, violet flower heads. Lastly, to complete the plan, we have *Persicaria bistorta* 'Superba' (12), providing colourful interest in summer with its dense spikes of soft pink flowers, and *Astilbe* 'Fanal' (× *arendsii*) (13), providing interest via its fluffy dark crimson flowers, planted under the shade of the *Viburnum opulus*.

With some careful planning and researching of safe, non-toxic plants, you too can use this design as an inspiration for your own green spaces, that can interest curious children, whilst at the same time keeping them safe.

Planting inspiration

Scan this QR code to view more planting inspirations on our website.

Oenosan®: A sustainable, lime-based fertiliser

Oenosan is a sustainable, lime-based fertiliser, which can be used for a number of applications, including horticulture, forestry, soft landscaping and more.

Our environment is experiencing climatic changes which are which can impact the quality, productivity, and performance of plants. Increasing temperatures, longer periods of drought and wetter winters can lead to increased plant hydric stress, and a decrease in natural resilience to factors such as soil degradation, invasive weeds, disease infection, and calcium imbalance. Therefore, it is important to ensure that a plant is well protected against changing and challenging environmental conditions. Oenosan alleviates these challenges and reduces the need for traditional fertilisers, herbicides and pesticides.

Oenosan has been proven to increase the performance of plants, requiring up to 70% less water than normal in order to thrive. Due to its small particle size, Oenosan is able to very quickly penetrate leaf stomata, resulting in a fast response from initial application. It has a high chlorophyll content, which, when applied, can help a plant with photosynthesis, resulting in a greater volume and strength of canopy. Its high calcium content, an essential nutrient for plants, helps to restore calcium balance, restoring cell walls.

As well as providing a great benefit to the growth and health of plants, Oenosan also helps to improve the condition of the soil beneath. It's proven to reduce the presence of a well known pest, nematodes, in the growing medium by up to 75%. Not only this, but consistent usage can lead to an increase in the pH balance of the soil, reducing its acidity. Oenosan inhibits the growth of weeds, such as nettles and horsetail, and provides a balance in nutrients, to support optimal plant growth.

One benefit beyond the increase in growth rate that is prevalent when using Oenosan, is the increased resilience it provides plants. It aids the regeneration of the capillary root system, leading to an increase in survival rates. Using Oenosan leads to a reduction in pesticide use, allowing your plants to thrive without the need for harmful chemicals which can affect growth and yield. On top of this, it increases the plants tolerance to diseases, and extreme weather, such as droughts. It's even been proven to reduce the required water consumption of the plant by up to 70%.

In order to get the best out of Oenosan, it is recommended that is applied either monthly, for winter hardy vegetation/plants, or twice monthly for plants with a short vegetative cycle. Applying five times per year will produce noticeable results. It is not recommended for use alongside other pesticides or herbicides. In terms of application, there are two methods: base dressing, and leaf application. For base dressing, simply mix 200g of Oenosan into every cubic metre of soil. In order to apply to leaves, mix 1.5g into each litre of water, no more than 24 hours before application to avoid sedimentation, and spray onto the foliage of each plant, preferably in the morning, for maximum sunlight. No licenses or protective clothing is required to use Oenosan, and can be used with standard spray equipment.

If you have any questions about Oenosan, or would like to place an order, speak to our sales team today: sales@greenwoodplants.co.uk

- Chris Williams
Interim Marketing Manager

Plant Focus: Miscanthus sinensis

***Miscanthus sinesis* 'Morning Light'**

Miscanthus sinensis, often known as Chinese silver grass or eulalia grass, is native to Japan, Korea, and China and flourishes in lowlands and lower alpine regions. It is commonly used as an ornamental grass in landscaping due to its striking appearance and low maintenance. The grass adds height and movement to mixed borders and is complimented by colourful perennials in a prairie-style planting scheme.

Notably, the seed heads of *Miscanthus* provide visual interest while serving as a food source for birds. This supports local biodiversity by attracting a varied range of bird species, which helps to maintain a healthy ecosystem. Not only is it enjoyable to see birds in our gardens and green spaces, as a way of feeling closer to nature, but we also benefit from their role of biological pest control, as they feed on invertebrates, like caterpillars, aphids and snails, that damage our plants.

Miscanthus produces the best results when planted in a well-drained area during spring or autumn. *Miscanthus* flower from late summer through to autumn, adding an extra touch of elegance to the landscape during this transitional season.
The graceful, feathery seed heads usually form in late summer to early autumn and can last well into the winter months, Looking beautiful with a dusting of frost. These seed heads naturally release their seeds as they mature, and seed distribution is often aided by the wind.

In order to successfully grow *Miscanthus sinensis*, choose a sunny area with well-drained soil for optimal growth, although this species has the ability to thrive in a variety of soil types. While its planting season is all year, the best time to plant is in spring or autumn. These seasons bring moist soils, and a long period of time for the root structure to establish itself, laying the groundwork for a flourishing *Miscanthus* display.

Miscanthus sinensis requires minimal pruning and care. It is drought-tolerant, eliminating the need for watering once established. Trimming dead leaves when winter gives way to spring encourages fresh growth at the base of the plant. When the clumps get overcrowded, separate them in early spring to reinvigorate their growth. Use a spade to lift each grass then divide the clumps by inserting two garden forks back-to-back into the plant's crown and gently pull the handles down. A mattock or knife might be needed to split tough root balls. These newly created clumps can then be replanted in new beds.

***Miscanthus sinensis* 'Zebrinus'**

Miscanthus flower best during a hot, sunny period, therefore poor flowers could be the result of a cool summer. A wet winter might cause plants to rot, if you are working with heavy clay soil, you can try to mitigate this by putting some horticultural grit into the planting hole before planting. Very intense, hot sun can produce brown areas on variegated *Miscanthus* varieties. If there is browning around the edges of variegated leaves, this could be a form of rust, and you should remove the affected leaves as soon as possible to ensure the plant stays in prime condition.

Miscanthus are generally trouble free but are susceptible to a variety of leaf spotting fungi. *Miscanthus* Blight is a more common disease for these plants caused by the Stagonospora fungus. This can cause purplish or rust-coloured dots and streaks on the leaves, which are quite obvious to the naked eye, especially on the white areas of variegated leaves. To treat this disease, trim out the damaged foliage and safely dispose of the cuttings to avoid the disease spreading.

- Lara Wickland
Marketing Assistant

***Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus'**

***Miscanthus sinensis* 'Kleine Silberspinne'**

greenwood Community

Chichester College SEND Foundation

Supporting local students in developing a garden of their own.

In June, as part of our Greenwood Community scheme, we made a donation to the Chichester College SEND Foundation. The SEND Foundation teaches its students valuable skills and offers them support in a number of ways, to help them gain employment and live independently. Here at Greenwood, the college is particularly special to us, as one of our employees, Anna Tatarczak, has a daughter who attends the school.

The garden and workshop have both been designed, created and built by the students themselves, encouraging team building and a sense of ownership, teaching the students responsibility. They've created their own plant beds, including several raised beds, installed their own wheelchair accessible paths, as well as the on-site workshop. Not only this, but constant improvements are made to the area, and the students maintain it themselves, ensuring it is an enjoyable space to work and rest.

Before the donation, there were only a few established trees in the area. The plants Greenwood donated have now been used to create much greater interest in the garden, resulting in a significant transformation of the green space. The plants donated were a mix of shrubs including Hebe, Hydrangea, Osmanthus and Cistus as well as mixed herbaceous perennials including Bergenia and Sedum. These plants all have low maintenance requirements and are able to thrive in various garden conditions. They feature attractive foliage and flowers, and in addition to their aesthetic appeal, they attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Encouraging wildlife into the garden at the Chichester College adds to its value and interest, also helping to encourage biodiversity in the local area. We attempt to vary the plants we donate, based on their intended planting location.

Roger Curwen manages the garden alongside the students.

> *"They all love the garden they have created, it is very therapeutic, and is teaching them a wide range of useful skills. It is a very exciting prospect that our Foundation Programmes' garden will be transformed into a beautiful, varied and vibrant area by Greenwood's generosity, kindness and expertise."*

Kevin Merritt, our Greenwood Choice Manager, went to visit the Chichester College on 16th October to see how the plants had been used.

> *"Seeing the garden, meeting the enthusiastic students and learning of their roles in the garden, really confirmed the value of our plant donation."*

Kevin said of his visit.

The donation was further boosted recently with the delivery of some more plants, to help continue the garden's development. Included in this were a few varieties of Hebe to place into the raised bed, as well as a number of Carex grasses to be planted along the border of the garden.

The students have worked extremely hard, and produced a wonderful outdoor space for themselves and future students to enjoy. Despite this, there is still potential for improvement in certain areas, and so Greenwood have committed to making an additional plant donation in the future, to support the students in further enhancing the development of their garden.

Helping our local communities is a priority to us, and we are proud of the many projects we've helped so far. Visit our Greenwood Community page for more information on our community initiatives: https://greenwoodplants.co.uk/greenwood-community/. If you have a project you would like to nominate for Greenwood Community support please email hello@greenwoodplants.co.uk

- Lara Wickland
Marketing Assistant

Planting to Attract Birds

How to encourage bird populations into your green spaces.

Birds are some of our most beloved wildlife. Not only do we enjoy them for their beautiful appearance, and their aerial displays, but also for their mellifluous birdsong, that can bring peace and joy to all.

Aside from this, they're one of nature's most useful assets for a variety of different jobs, all which help our green spaces, and other wildlife, to thrive.

Firstly, birds are great as a natural pest control against all sorts of insects, which feed on plants and crops. For example, starlings love to feed on larvae that are buried in lawns. They swoop down and collect invertebrates on the wing, allowing them to feed their chicks an average of 10,000 caterpillars before they leave the nest, according to the RSPB.

Not only that, but birds are some of our best seed dispersers, ingesting the seeds from a wide range of different plant life, before flying off and later depositing the seeds elsewhere via their droppings.

Whilst normally thought to be a job left to bees and butterflies, birds can also be useful as pollinators for various types of plants. In the UK, throughout May and June, you might catch a glimpse of the rare golden oriole that normally collects nectar in Africa.

It's essential that new development becomes more sensitive to the needs of natural habitats and encourages the cultivation of new environments where birds can thrive. There's many species of birds in the UK that are under threat of extinction due to the disruption of their natural habitats, and this needs to be addressed at the design stage.

Growing trees that offer shelter, and branches for nesting, as well as providing seeds as a food source and material for nest building, is a very effective way of attracting birds to your green space and encouraging populations to flourish. Hedges also help to provide shelter for birds. Also, flowering plants and trees can provide a wide variety of fruits, berries, nectar, and pollen, which are a valuable food source for birds.

Developers, architects and landscape contractors can add a variety of different plants to their projects to encourage biodiversity. Planting a mixture of suitable perennials, shrubs, hedges and trees can provide projects with plenty of different areas of shelter, nesting sites, and food, for a more diverse bird population. Planting native species also helps, as these plants have co-evolved with native wildlife and are adapted to our regional climate and soil variations.

It is also a good idea to choose combinations of plants that either flower, or bear fruit and berries at different times of year. Covering as many months and seasons as possible, will ensure there's food to eat throughout the entire calendar year.

For trees, *Malus sylvestris* (Crab apple) is always popular among birds. In spring, the crab apple tree attracts various insects, providing a food source for birds. Around October, the tree produces small apples about the size of golf balls. Whilst these apples are too sour for most people's palate, they are a favourite amongst creatures like mice, voles, foxes, badgers, song thrushes, and blackbirds. Even fieldfares and redwings are drawn to the fallen fruits, particularly during harsh winters.

Prunus avium

For hedging, *Prunus spinosa* (Blackthorn) blooms earlier in the year, providing essential nectar and pollen during spring. For birds, blackthorn is a valuable asset. Its dense, thorny thickets offer a safe nesting environment, shielding them from predators. Birds also find sustenance in the form of caterpillars and other insects found on its leaves. The addition of juicy black sloes in autumn and winter further aids their survival.

Alternatively, *Achillea* 'Coronation Gold' boasts elevated growth and abundant golden yellow flowerheads which persist through summer. This particular variety of *Achillea* is famed for its ability to allure bees, beneficial insects, birds, and diverse pollinators. Its flowers offer a plentiful supply of nectar and pollen, whilst its seeds serve as a source of sustenance for birds.

Birds play a vital part in protecting our ecosystems, encouraging biodiversity, and helping to disperse seeds throughout our green landscapes all over the country. Above anything, they're just nice to have around, whether it's in your garden, or in a public communal space.

- Chris Williams
Interim Marketing Manager

Echinacea purpurea

Enhancing new build homes in a competitive market

Investing in front gardens and communal areas to attract potential buyers.

In a turbulent housing market, where homeowner's ability to borrow money is affected by interest rates, the state of the economy, and real income level, it can be important to make your new build development stand out.

According to HomeOwners Alliance, more than two thirds (68%) of homeowners say 'kerb appeal' was important in choosing their home and a well-kept front garden was one of the most important factors when they first view a house from the outside. By investing in high quality soft landscaping, with a carefully considered variety of trees, shrubs and perennials, you can enhance the front gardens and communal spaces of your development, giving a sense of distinction that will add value to the new homes.

Plant selection and garden design are imperative to achieving strong kerb appeal. It is important to select plants that are suitable for the local climate, aspect, soil type, and ensure they have enough space to grow. You want to make sure your plants have the opportunity to thrive, and offer appeal in the subsequent months that follow.

To add depth and interest, make sure to use a variety of plants with different heights, forms, textures, and colours. You can ensure that your green space is colourful in all seasons by including varieties that provide interest through their flowers, fruit, stems and foliage at different times of the year. Choose low-maintenance plants that will provide structure and interest year-round and that will be easy for residents to look after in the future.

Planting trees and hedges not only adds aesthetic value but will also define boundaries, establish entry points and increase privacy, as well as diffuse wind and provide shade. Planting hedges along boundaries softens the appearance of the buildings and hard landscaping, complementing the different construction materials and ensuring the house sits comfortably in its surroundings

Evergreen plants provide architectural structure in borders and give instant impact, especially in show home gardens, from conifer spirals or columns to cloud trees to clipped balls and cones, across a variety of species.

Flowering shrubs have aesthetic value, provide fragrance and also support pollinating insects. One of our favourites is *Hebe franciscana* 'Blue Gem' which has racemes of purple-blue flowers from June to July. These shrubs are all popular and reliable choices for new developments as they are low maintenance, evergreen, provide a variety of shape, colour and texture, and are available in larger sizes.

Smaller, perennial plants can be positioned close together to create the illusion of a more established garden. For example *Heuchera* 'Plum Pudding', which has plum-purple, lobed foliage with a dusting of silver-grey.

It's beneficial to include native plants in your green spaces for a number of reasons – they often require less maintenance, are adapted to the local environmental conditions and best support the local wildlife. In the UK, this could include *Betula pendula*, a birch with silver-white bark.

Plants in pots and containers can help to soften down paved areas and highlight entrances, creating a greener appeal. Suitable plants for containers include *Skimmia japonica* 'Fragrans' which flowers in April and May. Bulbs in containers, like tulips and daffodils, are an effective way to add seasonal splashes of colour to any garden.

Other items to consider are lighting and furniture which will make it easier for residents to enjoy the open spaces you have provided.

Planning a development with water neutrality and minimal impact on wildlife, is becoming increasingly important to local planning authorities and residents. Sustainable landscaping practices like using native plants, peat-free compost, rainwater harvesting, and greywater recycling systems encourages environmentally conscious buyers, demonstrating environmental responsibility as a landscape architect or developer.

Lastly, make sure to mow the lawns, remove debris, trim hedges and overgrown plants, and keep communal spaces tidy so that the whole road looks well-kept, and appealing to potential buyers.

Enhancing the front gardens and communal areas of new houses not only increases their kerb appeal but also fosters a sense of community among residents. These improvements not only make the properties more attractive but also enhance their overall value and distinguish them from other housing developments.

- Lara Wickland
Marketing Assistant

Betula pendula

Nursery Focus: Greenwood Holland

Since its establishment in September 2021, Greenwood Holland has played a key role in our mission to deliver top-quality plants and trees from Europe to our clients. Located strategically in the heart of Tree Centre Opheusden, in the Netherlands, Greenwood Holland has become a crucial hub for the whole importation and exportation of trees and plants between the United Kingdom and Europe.

Opheusden, as a municipality, is situated on centuries-old alluvial soils renowned for their exceptional fertility, making them perfect for arboriculture. The river soil, in particular, is able to retain essential water and nutrients, ensuring optimal conditions for the trees we cultivate.

Within the municipality of Opheusden, you'll find nurseries covering approximately 1800 hectares, offering a diverse range of avenue trees in various forms, from root ball to bare root and container-grown specimens. Tree Centre Opheusden (TCO) serves as the hub, connecting over one hundred and fifty tree growers from the riverside area in the Netherlands.

Over recent years, the nursery sector in Opheusden and its surroundings has seen significant growth and prosperity. Local farmers have come together to form a robust and efficient organisation. Many processes have evolved with the introduction of innovative systems, and growers have embraced the concept of "climate trees" to adapt to changing weather patterns, including warmer temperatures, heavier rainfall, and urban areas becoming hotter.

Our Holland-based nursery has quickly become a focal point of our operations. Since Brexit came into effect, exporting plants and trees from Europe to the United Kingdom has faced new challenges due to increased stringent plant health controls taking effects since January 2021. These controls encompass a series of critical procedures, including the issuance of phytosanitary certificates, mandatory pre-notification, document checks, identity checks, and physical inspections, all aimed at ensuring the biosecurity of imported plants and plant products.

Greenwood Holland, at Opheusden, serves as a proof of our commitment to providing our clients with top-quality plants and trees while navigating the complexities of post-Brexit regulations. We handle all the necessary paperwork and logistics, so our clients can rest easy knowing that your orders will arrive hassle-free. Our commitment to providing top-quality plants and trees is matched by our dedication to ensuring a smooth and worry-free buying experience for our clients.

Every day, before our plants and trees embark on their journey to the United Kingdom, they undergo a thorough inspection conducted by a dedicated plant health officer. This inspection verifies the health of the plants, the integrity of the delivery's packaging, means of transport, and accurate labelling. The plants are allowed to begin their journey to the United Kingdom only after receiving approval from a Dutch officer.

The relocation of Greenwood Holland to Opheusden in October 2022, however, has brought a significant improvement to the efficiency of these inspections as they're all under one roof – our own quality control checkpoint.

At Greenwood, we ensure biosecurity, with multiple UK sites for control and quarantine, quality control checkpoints in the Netherlands, and our "Every Plant Matters" approach to plant hygiene and housekeeping.

At Greenwood Holland, we take pride in our commitment to ensuring an efficient and reliable plant delivery process. Our facility features a dedicated loading bay within the warehouse, where our experienced team loads the trucks. Each tree takes just about 45 seconds to load, allowing us to prepare our cargo quickly.

We've made enhancements to our operations by implementing a system where each of our trusted suppliers has their own designated batch in the yard for tree and shrub deliveries. This approach allows us to have better control over plant quality and logistics. It also leads to more economical deliveries, as we can efficiently load larger quantities of plants each time.

Once loaded, our trucks depart from the Netherlands and can reach the UK as early as the following day. Our focus on meticulous planning and logistics minimises transit stress on our plants and ensures they arrive in excellent condition, ready to thrive in their new environment.

At Greenwood Plants, we are passionate about plants, committed to biosecurity, and dedicated to excellence. From early November, we have rootball shrubs, for immediate impact and screening, as well as cost-effective bare rood hedging plants available for delivery. If you have questions, need more information, or wish to place an order for our top-quality European plants and trees, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the G Team.

- Giulia Dattis
Creative Director

Sustainability: Our beekeeping journey so far

Bees are crucial for our environment, playing a vital role in pollinating around 30% of our crops and nurturing green landscapes. In the UK alone, about 70 bee species carry out this essential work. They also support the growth of various trees and plants, creating habitats for wildlife. Sadly, bees are in danger, with approximately 35 domestic species at risk of extinction due to factors like pesticides, habitat loss, and climate change.

As part of Greenwood's commitment to sustainability, we've started our own beekeeping initiative. In March 2023, we introduced two hives at our Fresh Acres nursery site, and a few months later, we celebrated our first honey harvest. Greenwood's beekeeping effort is thriving, contributing to the protection and encouragement of local bee populations in our green spaces.

The idea to keep bees at our nursery came from our CEO, Glenn Devenish, whose family has a history with bees. Recognising their environmental benefits and role in pollination, Glenn invited the G Team to join in when the opportunity arose to have our own hives on site.

We were lucky enough to have three volunteers from our G Team: Kevin Merritt, Jacob Grace, and Wesley Elkins. The trio completed eight weeks of training with the Worthing Beekeeping Association, including evening sessions and practical workshops at their apiary.

Initially, two hives were set up on our Fresh Acres nursery site, acquired from a retiring beekeeper, along with colonies and beekeeping equipment. The bees were moved in the late evening to ensure they were all in the hive, and the new location allowed them to gradually explore their surroundings. Bees are amazing navigators, using orientation flights and even a 'waggle dance' to share information about locations and food sources.

In winter, our beekeepers focus on ensuring the bees have enough food like sugar syrup or fondant and that their hives are weatherproof. It's a quieter time, allowing for equipment cleaning and repairing, ensuring the bees are safe and well-fed. Good bee husbandry is vital for their health, much like farmers care for other livestock.

Spring sees increased hive activity as the queen lays eggs, and the colony population grows. Beekeepers sterilise hive floors and provide additional feeding if needed. May and June bring even more population growth, and with bees finding their own food and producing honey, more space is added to the hives. Care is taken to prevent swarming as hive populations can soar from a few thousand in winter to over 50,000 in summer!

Summer is honey-harvesting time, done responsibly to leave enough for winter. The warmer weather poses risks from pests like Varroa destructor, combated with varroacide treatment after honey harvesting.

As summer turns to autumn, preparations begin for winter. Mouse guards are fitted to prevent mice invasion, and the hives are checked for weatherproofing. October to December includes topping up food supplies with sugar syrup and fondant, completing the cycle for the winter ahead.

Recently, our bees had their first summer harvest, and each member of the G Team received a jar of their own. Honey production varies based on conditions, location, and food sources. A standard hive can yield 20 lbs (10 kg) to 60 lbs (25 kg) of honey. In their first harvest, our new beekeepers learned valuable lessons,

planning to harvest in one day next time to reduce waste and cleanup. Despite this, they achieved an impressive 70 lbs (32 kg) of honey from two hives in their first harvest!

While our beekeepers are pleased with their inaugural season, being first-year beekeepers came with challenges and stings. Losses, like swarms and timing issues, were part of the learning process. The beekeeping association mentors helped guide them, recognising that bees, like plants, have variable factors affecting success. Regular hive inspections addressed diseases, bugs, and bee size. Preparing bees for winter included fitting mouse guards and checking hives for weatherproofing and food supplies from October to December.

Future plans involve expanding to more hives on additional nurseries. Moving to a new permanent location in winter, the goal is to increase hives to four in spring. Navigating the first winter is a big challenge, but success opens opportunities for expansion.

Despite occasional stings and challenges, our beekeepers enjoy their role, finding it satisfying to witness bees' intricate operations and produce delicious honey.

- Chris Williams
Interim Marketing Manager

Optimising Soil Health and Site Preparation

The foundation of successful planting schemes

A thriving landscape starts with healthy soil. As an award-winning supplier of plants to the commercial landscaping industry, we understand that the key to a flourishing garden, or outdoor space, lies beneath the surface. Soil health and site preparation should not be considered as optional extras; they are the foundation of a resilient and long-lasting landscape.

Soil is a complex ecosystem, teeming with life. Healthy soil has a balanced composition of organic matter, minerals, water, air, and living organisms that work together to support plant growth. Ideally soil for planting is usually comprised of 50% organic or inorganic substrate, 25% air space, and 25% water space. When soil health is compromised, plants struggle to access essential nutrients, water retention becomes an issue, and susceptibility to disease increases.

Healthy soil offers numerous benefits for plants. Firstly, it provides essential nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium crucial for their optimal growth. Microbial activity in fertile soil releases these nutrients, making them readily available to plants. The structure of healthy soil also facilitates easy root penetration, allowing plants to establish a robust foundation and access nutrients deep within the soil.

Fun fact: In total, the UK's soils store around 130 trillion litres of water – more than all UK lakes and rivers combined!

On large construction sites, it is worth planning how to protect and store soil on site whilst ground works and building works are taking place. Whenever possible, soil removal and stockpiling are recommended during dry conditions, and the use of machinery with tracks is advised to minimize compaction. If the ground has been compacted by building works and heavy machinery, it will not allow water, air, nutrients and plant roots to penetrate and

it impedes detritivores, like earth worms, from breaking down organic matter.

The first thing to do when planning an area for planting is a comprehensive soil test. This analysis will indicate the soil's pH level, nutrient and mineral content as well as presence of contaminants, guiding you on which soil additives may be needed and which kind of plants will thrive.

If the soil is poor quality, it can be improved by adding organic matter such as peat-free compost, well-rotted manure, or soil conditioner. Organic matter enhances the soil's structure, nutrient content, water retention capabilities and ability to bind to pollutants. Gently tilling the soil ensures thorough mixing of organic matter.

When importing clean topsoil, it is advisable to choose a reputable supplier operating from a sustainable source. Cultivating the soil is important to eliminate large lumps and create a fine tilth suitable for planting, ideally with clusters less than 50mm or less than 10mm when laying turf or seeding.

When preparing for planting, it is crucial to ensure there is ample space for the plants to mature, both above and below ground. Container-grown plants can be planted at any time of the year, but it's best to avoid planting

Step 1: Dig a hole

Step 2: Water the plant

Step 3: Remove the plant from its pot

Step 4: Position the plant in the hole

Step 5: Backfill with soil

Step 6: Firm the soil

Step 7: Water

during frozen or waterlogged soil conditions or droughts. For bare root and root ball plants, the recommended planting period is during the dormant season, which spans from November to March.

When planting a tree, it's common practice to dig a hole that corresponds to the depth of the root ball but is twice as wide. To determine the suitable soil level, a cane can be laid across the hole, ensuring alignment with the stem or trunk where the roots naturally spread out. Breaking up the soil around the hole is often done to facilitate root penetration and establish a strong foundation for the tree.

Before planting, it's a common practice to thoroughly water the plants. Gently removing the plant from its pot and loosening the roots allows them to grow freely into the surrounding soil. Positioning the plant and backfilling with soil is the next step. Firmly pressing the soil and ensuring thorough watering around the root

ball help eliminate air pockets in the planting area.

Trees that are being established within hard landscaped surroundings will require a structural soil cell system to prevent soil compaction. The trees will also benefit from tree staking kits, or anchoring systems, to secure them until they are established and can stand unsupported.

Regularly monitoring soil moisture levels is advisable, and adjusting watering practices accordingly is a good practice. Adding an annual top dressing of general-purpose fertilizer to beds before reapplying mulch in subsequent years is a recommended maintenance step.

Investing time and effort into soil health and planting preparation is an investment in the long-term success of the landscaped area. Focusing on these foundational aspects will result in a sustainable garden that requires less intervention, is more resilient to environmental challenges and has longevity. The success of a planting scheme comes from understanding and respecting the soil beneath it. By considering soil health we can transform ordinary areas into flourishing green spaces that have a positive effect on peoples' lives and how they connect with nature.

- Ellie Coutts
Marketing Manager

Trees for Winter Interest

Enhancing your landscapes with trees that offer year-round appeal.

Understanding the characteristics of plants is essential in designing a garden that evolves with the changing seasons. Evergreen plants provide consistency, and year–round colour. Carefully selected deciduous shrubs can bring a garden to life in winter with new colour and structure. Building on this foundation, smaller plants can be chosen to complement and enrich the overall visual appeal.

Tree species can be divided into two broad categories based on their ability to adapt to the changing seasons. Evergreen varieties, such *Pinus sylvestris*, *Taxus baccata*, or *Prunus lusitanica* continually renew their leaves throughout the year. These evergreens thrive in coastal or low-altitude environments, where even winter temperatures remain relatively mild. Whereas deciduous trees, like *Cornus* or *Acer*, typically shed their leaves in autumn, baring their branches during the harsh winter months. This helps the trees survive in higher altitudes or regions with more challenging winter conditions.

Winter can be an uninteresting time in gardens, without the colours of blooming flowers, or the dense green foliage that is present throughout the rest of the year. A garden's core structure and design is important in any season, but it becomes more apparent in winter. It's a season where the landscape presents a challenge to the designer.

As winter arrives and the temperature drops, the green foliage of spring and summer falls away to expose bare branches and this can leave many gardens looking uninspiring. However, key plants can provide visual interest during this colder season, through their evergreen foliage, winter flowers, fruit, and berries.

Thoughtful plant selection can provide appeal to the garden throughout the seasons, transforming it into a changing canvas as the colder months arrive.

Taxus baccata

Contrary to common belief, evergreen plants do shed their leaves, they just don't shed them all at once like their deciduous counterparts. Evergreens keep their leaves year-round, even in the colder seasons of our climates, or the dry periods of exceptionally hot climates. Typically, they shed their oldest leaves gradually, often alongside the development of new buds. In some instances, a single leaf can live for several years, showcasing the longevity of their foliage. This trait is particularly prevalent in environments with extreme temperatures, compensating for lower soil nutrient levels by allowing continuous photosynthesis and the accumulation of reserve substances. Notable examples of this include *Ilex aquifolium*, widely known as 'common holly', and particularly synonymous with the festive period. Its green, prickly foliage and bright red winter berries ensure the plant provides plenty of interest in the garden year round. *Picea pungens* 'Blue Diamond' is another example of a winter tree that provides year-round colour to gardens, with its unique blue and silver colouring, and a pyramid shape reaching up to 10 meters.

Deciduous trees, instead, shed all their leaves simultaneously, usually in autumn as the cold season approaches. However, in tropical, sub-tropical, and arid regions, leaf drop aligns with the onset of the dry season and reduced rainfall. The deciduous cycle, influenced by the changing environmental conditions, demonstrates the adaptability of these trees on a global scale.

There are deciduous plants that reveal their most intriguing characteristics when they lose their leaves in winter. Among these, the *Salix viminalis* is prominent, with its slender orange/red twigs, bringing a warm and vibrant tone. Similarly, *Cornus sanguinea* 'Winter Flame', alongside the *Cornus alba*, are intriguing beneath their season foliage. *Acer palmatum* 'Corallinum' features striking pink branches.

***Picea pungens* 'Blue Diamond'**

Notable deciduous tree varieties that provide interest in winter include *Prunus* × subhirtella 'Autumnalis Rosea', which produces pale pink clusters of flowers in November-December, that can last until April. It's perfect for milder climates such as the UK, as it tends to prefer cooler summers. Additionally, *Sorbus aucuparia* is popular in winter, due to its winter berries that appear, despite losing all of its leaves during this time, and conversely, *Fagus sylvatica* is a deciduous tree, the leaves of which have a tendency to remain on the branches until the end of winter, even after they've turned colour and dried up. This gives the tree a golden brown 'autumnal' look throughout winter.

Providing interest to your landscapes in the winter months can be a challenge, in a period where most plants are dormant, and green spaces lacking in visual interest. It is possible to include trees that will provide colour and foliage year round however, not only with evergreen trees such as *Pinus sylvestris,* but also with deciduous varieties such as *Cornus Alba,* bearing unique branch structure underneath their leaves, that reveals itself in the winter months, providing a unique visual opportunity in the season where such interest is at a premium.

If you would like to discuss more about trees that will provide year-round interest to your projects, get in touch with the G Team today.

- Giulia Dattis
Creative Director

Fagus sylvatica

The science behind bare root hedging

The bare root and root ball season is by far the busiest time of the year for everyone involved in commercial planting, whether you're a landscaper, a contractor, a purchaser, or even a grower and supplier like Greenwood. The winter months are, and have always been a hive of activity in the soft landscaping world.

But why is that? Why do we specifically pull bare root whips and root ball trees from the ground in the winter months, rather than year round, and why is it so important to plant them in the colder weather?

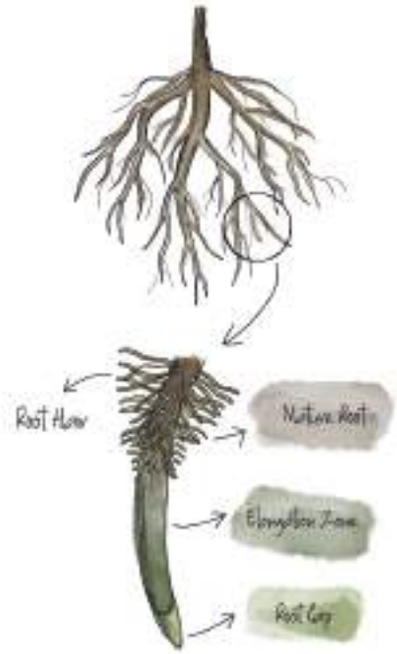
One of the key factors behind the timing of the bare root season is the way in which plants behave through the winter months. As we know, plants use roots in order to absorb nutrients and water from the soil, as well as leaves to absorb energy from the sun via photosynthesis. In the warmer months, where the days are longer, and the climate is more temperate, the plant in this season will actively be trying to maximise its absorption of the energy, the water, and the nutrients it needs to grow and to flower, for the purpose of reproduction. On a day to day basis, we notice this through the growth of the plants in this season, as well as the development of foliage in deciduous varieties, or flowering for pollination and reproduction.

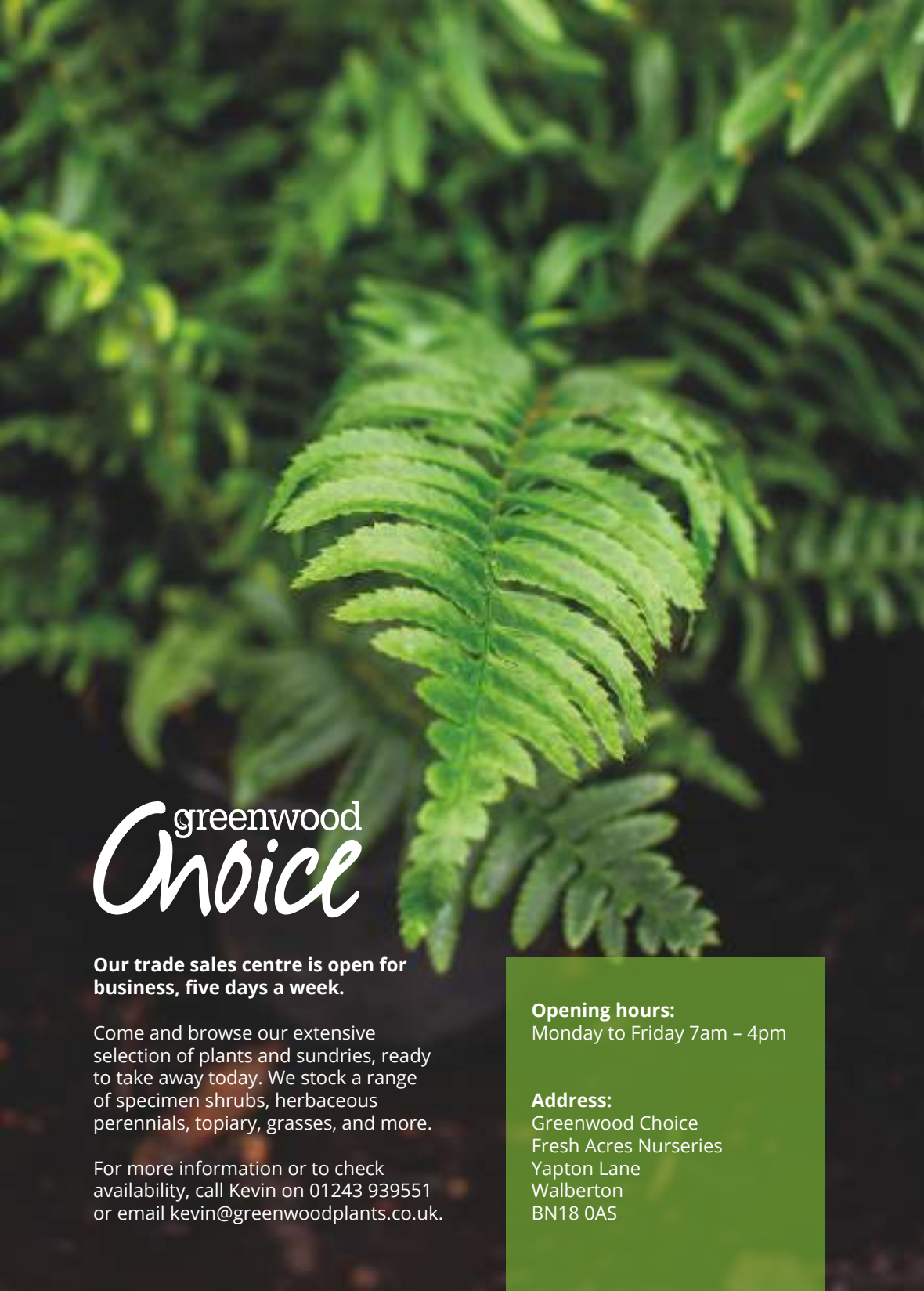
What you cannot see from the surface level however, is the activity of the roots, which underneath the soil are expanding, and maximising their ability to absorb moisture and nutrients from the soil. To do this, the roots grow softer, more delicate root hairs, which are much more efficient at absorbing nutrients from the soil, and produce a higher yield for the plant.

These root hairs are far more delicate than the hardy exterior of the roots, making them vulnerable and easily damaged. Leaving these hairs open to sunlight for even a minute can already begin to affect the roots. Causing stress to these root hairs during absorption can have an adverse effect to the overall health of the plant, limiting its ability to soak up nutrients from the soil.

This is why it's better to lift and move plants outside of its growing season. In colder, winter weather, when the conditions for the plant are more challenging, the roots stop producing these hairs, and the existing ones eventually die out and break off naturally. At this time of year, the plants go into a sort of hibernation, with top growth reduced, and less nutrients/light being absorbed. It is at this time of year that the plants are best placed to with stand unsettlement and movement, which includes replanting. This is why, particularly here in Britain, the winter months are especially important in the landscaping world, as the installation of hedging, trees, and other plants.

- Chris Williams
Interim Marketing Manager





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