

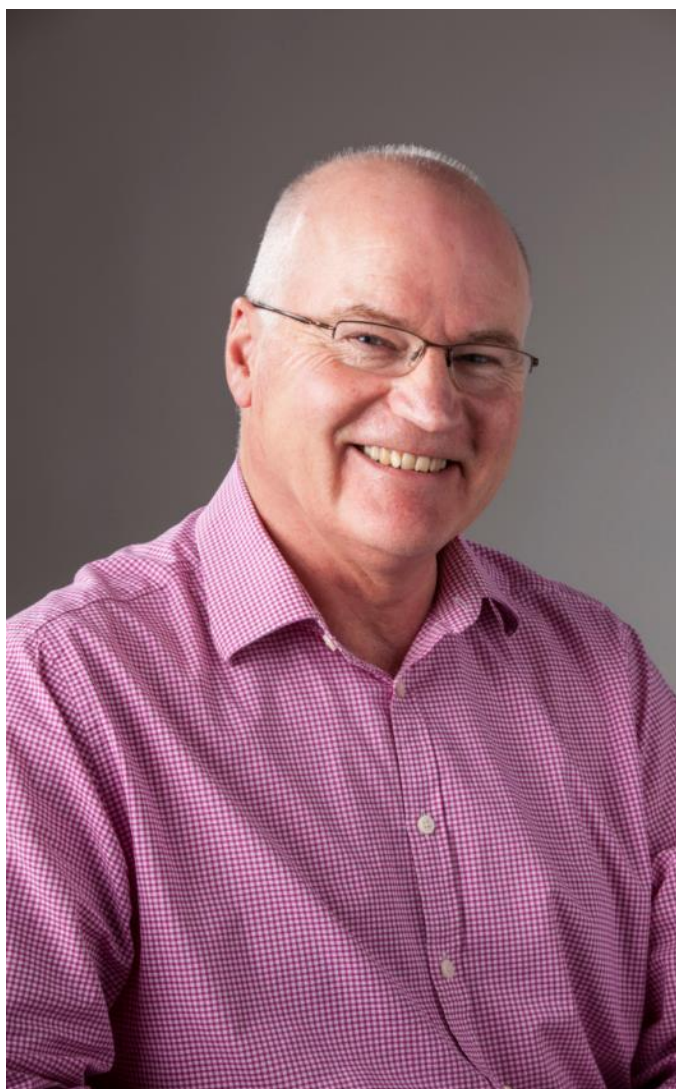
**Palmstead Nurseries Soft Landscape Workshop – Strictly Sustainable**  
**Wednesday 16th September 2015 - Ashford International Hotel**  
**Delegate registration via [www.palmstead.co.uk](http://www.palmstead.co.uk) click on events**

## **Strictly Sustainable: The Client's Perspective**



A stellar line-up of speakers have been booked to debate the topic of 'sustainability' at this year's Palmstead Soft Landscape Workshop.

In this newsletter we feature an interview with Ken Trew a landscape architect who works with Argents a major developer currently engaged on the substantial Kings Cross site. Ken will be speaking at the Workshop this year about Argents views on the landscape it provides (including much publicly accessible space at Kings Cross) and how this has led to a change in procurement methods and views on long term estate maintenance.



**What did you think of Palmstead Nurseries recent survey which suggested that less than a fifth of clients (19%) are asking for 'sustainability' to be part of the brief?**

Given the responsibility of the professions within the development and delivery process it is interesting (and surprising) to see that Palmstead's survey results suggest that it is the employers who are failing to take action.

**What can we do to improve the situation?**

Designers need to be more persuasive about what their clients can achieve - the ball is in their court. Landscape Architects need to provide excellent case studies, put themselves in the developers shoes and ask 'what are you suggesting I invest in' and 'what is it going to cost me', be specific about the benefits - that message is sometimes lost.

The client is waiting to be impressed and designers have potentially more influence than they think they have - they need to tailor presentations to clients and find ways of encouraging them to do things more sustainably and not give up.

### **Do you think we are failing as an industry to tackle the topic of sustainability?**

If we look at this from a developer's perspective, then developers are well versed in dealing with sustainability. Development proposals include sustainability measures in order to meet planning policy requirements and those of the developer. Planning consents include conditions to control the delivery of these measures and there are usually further commitments in s106 agreements.

These will include codes of conduct for the construction process, environmental management processes and a sustainable supply chain.

The design stage includes sustainability objectives for planting to meet biodiversity requirements and the wider needs of multi-functional green infrastructure i.e. balancing biodiversity issues with human well-being, aesthetics and long term maintenance and management. We rely on the specialist design and procurement team to advise us on best practice. The designers will write the specification and Employers Requirements for the Design and Build Contractor. These ERs will include details of the sustainable performance of the contractor, sub-contractors and their suppliers.

### **The Kings Cross Project that Argent are engaged in is a successful model of sustainability. What was the recipe for this success?**

The planning submission included a Sustainability Strategy and this was embodied in the consent through a range of planning conditions and s106 requirements setting targets for performance. Argent employs a Sustainability manager to measure and report on progress. In terms of the landscape work Argent prefer to partner selected contractors, suppliers and designers to achieve the quality that we, and our tenants, require. This ensures good practice and continuity over the longer term with the landscape contractor and designers retained through the maintenance period. At Kings Cross we are also working with ecologists at the London Wildlife Trust (based at Camley Street Natural Park) to set strategies for biodiversity and advise on habitat creation for roof gardens. The water features all employ recirculation and recycling of water to reduce water usage. Argent are particularly interested in the sustainability benefits of improving life in cities through the provision of a variety of inclusive 'green' and 'blue' outdoor spaces catering for all age groups.