



Wykeham Mature Plants

Second Edition – Autumn 2007
www.wykehammatureplants.co.uk

No Place Like Home

A year has passed since Wykeham Mature Plants moved into a new home in the converted Bothy within the walled garden.

It has been an eventful year. The move into the Bothy has given the business a permanent on site sales presence, allowing longer opening hours of 9.30 am to 4.30 pm six days per week, and leading to a noticeable increase in 'walk-in' customers.

In addition to being used simply as a base for the office and sales staff, the Bothy has hosted a couple of events this year. In May, an invitational event was held to celebrate the official opening of the Bothy and, in early



Wykeham Mature Plants staff gathered in the Vinehouse of the Bothy



Charity dinner in the Victorian vinehouse, Nov. 2007

November, the Victorian vinehouse (which is attached to the rear of the Bothy) hosted a charity dinner to raise funds towards Wykeham Village Hall. Also, in recognition of the beautiful restoration and conversion of this character building, the Bothy was shortlisted as a regional finalist for the CLA (Country Land and Business Association) Rural Buildings Award (sponsored by Knight Frank).

Contemporary Style

In May, Mr and Mrs Whitely contacted Martin Howe at Wykeham Mature Plants having seen an advertisement in the local press and looking at the website. Mr Whitely is a graphic designer and had grand plans for the garden of their riverside family home in East Yorkshire.

The original idea had been formal planting using pleached or box-headed trees. However, a visit to the nursery at Wykeham soon saw the plans change as, with a keen artistic eye, the Whitelys immediately saw the potential of the plants that were pointed out and discussed with them. It was decided that the bulk of the tree planting was to be dominated by rich burgundy colours, as achieved by the stem colour of *Prunus serrula* and the spectacular foliage of *Acer platanoides* 'Royal Red', in stark contrast to the brightness of the



whitewashed walls. The strong geometric shapes of the walls of the garden structure were beautifully complemented by the regimented structure of the planting, yet softened by the texture of foliage.

To achieve the desired effect, the planting had to be inch-perfect, but in just a few days, the Boys in Blue from Wykeham Mature Plants have helped to create a stunning setting.

"Working with Martin and the team at Wykeham has been absolutely fantastic. Right from advice on trees through to the aftercare the service has been second to none. We would also like to thank the planting team who after days of hard digging continued to move trees even as a lightning storm loomed, ensuring it looks absolutely perfect. We are chuffed with the lovely garden you have helped create for us."



Plant Focus

There is a reason why so many garden writers sing the praises of Mahonia at this time of year, and that is simply because it is a fantastic plant! Its strong, architectural evergreen foliage, an ability to grow in sun or shade, tolerance of competition from large over-hanging trees, the ability to withstand summer drought surprisingly well once established, tough prickly leaves to see off even the most persistent of intruder when planted on boundaries for security, and magnificent (often strongly scented) flowers in the depths of winter. What is there not to like about this group of plants?

Mahonia japonica 'Bealei' is relatively compact, growing to a maximum of about 6ft tall, with dark blue-green foliage and 4 inch long racemes of very fragrant pale yellow flowers. However, my favourite is Mahonia x media 'Charity'. Although not as fragrant, it has upright racemes, often a foot long, of bright golden yellow flowers between late autumn and late winter. It is vigorous, even in quite difficult positions, but if it gets too big it can simply be cut back hard with a pair of loppers. Although not native, Mahonia 'Charity' is as equally at home in a woodland planting scheme as it is, due to its long pinnate leaves, in a planting plan designed for tropical effect. If planted with other attractive spiny plants such as Berberis, Holly and Pyracantha it creates a secure boundary hedge – let potential intruders beware!



Plant Hire

No, we're not branching out into rental of heavy machinery! For weddings and other special events, Wykeham Mature Plants now offer a hire service of plants, including topiary, arches, seasonal



flowering shrubs, and basically anything from our stock range that can realistically be 'set up' at the site of your venue and then returned to the nursery afterwards in the same state in which it left. When we deliver and set up the plants, we can display them in attractive pots and even dress them with lights (practicalities allowing) if you wish.

As a further service for those planning a wedding, we are also happy to hold/produce a wedding list with the Bride and Groom. As part of this service, we would produce cards which can be sent out with the wedding invitations to notify guests of the arrangements regarding this plant list

(which may also include contributions towards planting costs if our planting service is requested). An ultimate green way to start married life!

For further details, please contact Martin Howe at Wykeham Mature Plants.

Contact Details:

Wykeham Mature Plants is open to the public Monday to Saturday 9.30am to 4.30pm

Christmas Opening:

Saturday 22 December **Open** as usual 9.30am -4.30pm

Sunday 23 December - Tuesday 1 January **Closed**

Wednesday 2 January **Open** as usual 9.30am - 4.30pm

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Tips for Winter

Late autumn is often a time of gales, leading to many people seeking to replace damaged fence panels during the winter, but is this really the best option?

One answer to the problem of fences being blown down by strong winds is not to have a fence at all. If you look around the British countryside, solid screening has always traditionally been provided by hedgerows. Many are hundreds of years old and, although they provide shelter, they also allow air to pass through and around them, making them remarkably tolerant of winds. In addition to this, screening using plants, with its sound absorbing characteristic, can be better at cutting down noise than a solid screen such as a fence or wall. Also, as far as security is concerned, a fence is relatively easy to climb over – not so a dense (or prickly) hedge. So, from a practical stand-point, there are a number of situations where hedging makes sense.

There is of course the small matter of the 'green credentials' of planting a hedge in preference to other options in that it will provide a haven for wildlife. Also, don't forget that a hedge will absorb CO from the air, helping to combat climate change.

If varieties are carefully chosen, maintaining a hedge does not need to be hard work or require as frequent pruning as some may think. You can choose plants that will make your hedge a real feature of your garden, and rather than having to be replaced at great expense and hassle every few years, (such as is invariably the case with fencing), a hedge can outlive its owner.

