

Masterlay Groundworks has been established for 6 years and began its introduction to the Industry as a domestic patio and driveway installation company. Rob Nash the Director has been in the Industry for nearly 10 years and had vast experience in laying driveways so decided to branch out on his own. As he recalls he started with a wheelbarrow strapped to his white van and a young enthusiastic Labourer who now is as skilled as him with his own family – thank goodness the company has evolved also since then!

The company's reputation from the workmanship rapidly gained momentum and the business brand took shape, new vans, tools and some specialist projects all helped in the development. The first commercial project was a local high street in Hampshire called Fareham; this was where Rob knew he had found his forte. As although he loved what he did looking back at the transformation of the driveway, garden etc he didn't find it challenging but commercial sites were where he found this thrived upon it.

Then in October 2007 he was asked to look at a project which turned into the company's biggest achievement, Slough High Street. This was far more intricate than he could have dreamt of and the different use of stone and artwork would be his and the teams biggest challenge yet. Also as a stroke of luck for the company as the world wide recession was hitting and what we wouldn't know then was that if this project hadn't have happened the company would have folded as domestic work came to a halt as many thousands lost jobs the last thing on their mind was renewing a driveway.

The Rejuvenation of Slough High Street began in late 2007 and didn't finish until July 2009. This is the project for which the company has received such a great acknowledgement an award from the Hard Landscaping and World of Paving, 1st place for the best Paving Project. Once you know more about the materials, size of project and the daily challenges I think you will all agree it's extremely well deserved.

The project was 15-16,000m² of black, white, green granite and Lake District green slate in 80mm and 150mm thick. The 80mm paving came in five different size modules in a set black and white pattern. The roads consisted of 150mm black and white set pattern. Another module and trims were in green granite. Green slate was used in the artwork pieces and stitches.

Also installed were monuments, which involved large blocks of polished black granite weighing up to 3000kg. These were often in stacks of two so packs of ice were used to lower the block on block, melt and form a seamless join between the two. High specification granite benches and steps were also constructed.

This was a very technical and very unique project. Cambers on the high street and roads were achieved with in some cases what seemed near impossible given the size of some of the paving. The main problems were working in a busy high street and maintain a safe place, access to the shops and bringing the materials onto the site. All weathers were dealt with given the length of the job and in total 14,000 cuts were made all wet cuts and contained, using either disc cutters or bench saws.

We could go further into this project as the company is extremely proud of the workmanship achieved; it has also lead to us installing the entrance to the world famous Savoy Hotel in London. A truly prestigious project that required a great deal of knowledge in Natural Stone and an extremely low tolerance enforced by architects involved!

Rob has always said the challenges of commercial projects are so rewarding and unlike driveways and patios that may change in his lifetime, projects like Slough and the Savoy will outlive him and leaves a piece of him behind for people to walk on for years to come-smile!