

Looking After a London, City or Town Lawn



We often get asked why London, City or Town Lawn(s) fail so quickly...

The Scenario

Imagine this - you cope with a busy professional life and family life too, escaping to the Country when you have a chance at weekends....

You treasure your garden and most of your lawn. After-all the entire garden is small with only circa 100 square metres of lawn so it cannot be difficult to look after it!

In desperation, you rip up the old lawn and re turf it. For a few months it looks great and slowly it starts to thin and go bare and you raise your hands in despair asking why?.....

Image courtesy of The Daily Mail 2007

The identifying signs and problem

Any lawn areas surrounded by high garden walls and fences suffer poor airflow and inconsistent natural light. They remain partially in shade throughout the day especially in the winter and the frost may not clear from the surface every day in the winter months. The lawn areas are often over used by the dog and kids, with minimal maintenance including nutrition which leads to a high probability of Red Thread Disease and Fusarium Disease. The lawns are covered in dew most of the day in the autumn and early spring months with a high water table resulting in high worm cast activity and moss and weed grasses and thinning grasses. The prospect of ample water running off hard landscaped areas onto the lawn is likely, compounding the surface moisture problem.

All in all the ingredients why a London, City or Town Lawn fails so quickly unless they are a bit more open to the elements and have better a more ideal growing environment.

Do not think that you are alone - there are many Ground Managers at some of the Premiership Football Stadia who have one side or end of the pitch that suffers in the same way because of the stadium building surrounding the pitch.

They install huge fans and artificial lighting rigs in-between games in their endeavor to create improved and ideal growing conditions for the grasses, and they are constantly over seeding with new grass seed throughout the season.

Imagine placing a pot plant into a dark cupboard, will it flourish? A lawn is made up of many thousand living plants.

So what can you do to try to promote the ideal growing conditions?

Having a lawn with great healthy grasses is the key so if you have weeds and moss, kills these off first and after scarifying and aerating the surface over seed and top dress the lawn to restore the micro levels.

If you cannot lower the surrounding fences and walls, raise the canopy of any trees to allow more light and air flow, pick the lawn up and change the topography of it then try the tips below :-)

Ensure the lawn is aerated annually, and fertilized every three months with a good quality lawn fertilizer. Be prepared to over seed the lawn a couple of times a year, perhaps once every three months to maintain a dense sward as it will thin naturally under the not so ideal growing conditions inflicted upon it mostly by the environment that cannot be easily changed. Do not mow the hell out of it as keeping it a little longer like 2 to 3 cm in height. If the tips of the grass blades are ragged and torn after mowing, change the mower blade! Mow weekly without fail and do not immediately reach for the sprinkler when it is dry for just a week. Try and control any water running onto the lawn by installing catchment drains where the lawn meets the terrace for example.

Treat when you see the first signs of worm casts, lawn diseases such as Red Thread and Fusarium Disease and insect infestation like Leatherjacket and Chafer Beetle Larvae. If it becomes thin over seed it before the moss takes hold once again. Give the grass the best chance in life to develop and flourish. It may be that you need to strip off the old lawn and returf every five years.

To seek assistance - email technical@weedfree.co.uk

