

Block Paving Care

All paved surfaces need care and attention, Since their development, block paving has been used as an economic, long life alternative to asphalt or monolithic concrete. Whether on drives, pavements or large open areas it presents benefits of drainage and appearance over its alternatives. The planned maintenance will dictate the ongoing drainage performance, the grip the surface provides, the cleanliness of the surface and the expected life span of the surface before renewal.



Sweeping – the regular regime

Above: The difference between well kept paving and some left to its own devices.

There are a number of issues that may be addressed by sweeping regularly.

1. With every day use general dirt and detritus can be transferred from peoples shoes and tyres or by other means onto the surface looking unsightly. This can be easily collected before it leads to further problems.
2. In shaded areas under trees and buildings, the conditions are ideal for moss and algae to grow if left unchecked.
3. The surface must drain freely to allow the surface to dry out rapidly after rainfall. Surfaces remaining damp for longer periods of time are more likely to become infected with moss and algae spores, unusable in freezing conditions, and expedite the decomposition process of any organic material lodged in the gaps between blocks. Compaction of the in-filling causes rapid deterioration of the surface by restricting free drainage.
4. Filling material can be displaced by moss and weeds over time especially in shady areas such as under hedges, edges, buildings and under trees leaving these locations prone to damage. If this situation is left unaddressed it may seriously damage the surface, affect performance and cause a hazard for people using the surface.

Sweeping – How Often do I need to sweep?

A typical carpark with little access by the public and few surrounding trees or buildings may require sweeping only a few times a year. Whereas a surface in a busy park or similar, with lots of traffic, many trees and potential for litter could benefit from sweeping every week. The site manager is the best person to gauge the required regularity after considering the 4 points above.

It is important the sweeper is supported (rather than just relying on gravity) enabling the height and pressure applied to the surface to be adjusted to effectively carry out the above operations and adapt to follow undulations. The brush must have the facility to be lifted and lowered to account for surfaces with different depths of filling. A gully brush is necessary to get into the edges where most moss and algae will build up. Without sweeping the debris and detritus can have serious effects.



The Kersten Sweeper, with collector box and gully brush fits the bill perfectly. It may be mounted on any of the Kersten K-Series Two Wheel Tractors From the 5.5hp K820 to the 9hp K2100 or, using the Kersten FKDR front linkage kit, it may be fitted to certain models of Ride-on Mower and tractor.

Debris collection – as required

Therefore it is essential to remove any organic debris before it contaminates the surface. At the same time remove any litter and potential injury causing debris on a regular basis.

Sources of debris that can contaminate the surface include;

1. Wind blown material such as leaves and litter,
2. animal excrement from birds and other animals gaining access to unsecured sites,
3. debris carried on to the surface by users of the facility.
4. Debris carried on to the surface on maintenance machinery used in other applications.
5. Debris that can wash on to the surface in heavy rain or flood conditions.

In a secure, controlled area, litter may be minimal but, in urban municipal environments, it is commonplace. Where paved areas are close to surrounding trees, falling or windblown leaves may be an issue at certain times of the year, albeit sometimes only in one small area.

Weed Brushing the Surface – important but less frequent

The gaps in paving are generally filled with sand, which can be compacted over time and reduce drainage properties. This can be compounded when organic matter contaminates the infill material. This not only restricts the drainage capacity but also retains moisture in the filling material. This prolonged moisture retention and organic material provides ideal conditions for moss and algae to flourish. This can result in dangerous slippery conditions and produce an unpleasant odour. In extreme cases the algae can cause puddles leaving a thick black sticky residue that can solidify when the surface does eventually dry out. Because the gap between the block allows for it, in many cases other weeds, may appear and cause further damage to the surface rendering it unusable and even dangerous.

Below: Another surface infested with Moss and weeds.



Using a Weedbrush

When these extreme circumstances occur, a sweeper is no longer effective, something else is needed to remove the moss and weeds from the surface to prevent further damage.

Below: Kersten UB 70 Tractor Mounted weedbrush cleaning block paving.

The weedbrush does just that, it is an aggressive brush which can be set up to get between the cracks in the block paving and wrench out the offending moss or weeds as well as the detritus it has grown in. Thus restoring the drainage properties of the surface. After a sweep, the surface will be presentable and usable again.



Frequency of use of the Weedbrush will obviously be variable, and perhaps seasonal. However, the speed at which moss appears in block paving means that on large sites it is almost inevitable that a surface will reach the condition where it needs a Weedbrush to rectify the situation, especially where trees and hedges are present. Our best advice however, is that prevention is better than cure.

Path Edging

Below: The Kersten UBS and Weedbrush bringing paths back to their full width.

Another use of the weedbrush is in path edging, where turf has encroached over the edge of the paving or path, the weedbrush can reclaim the original surface by removing the excess turf. This is done by ripping it away from the material that is intended to be there. A neat finish can be achieved with the weedbrush, allowing the surface to be restored to its original state..



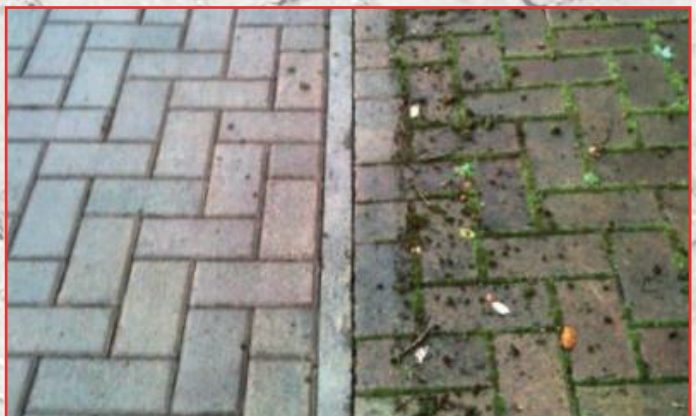
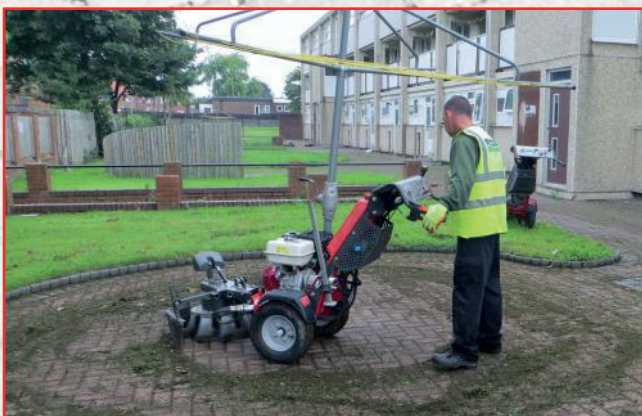
Other specific maintenance issues

Additional care should also be taken to keep access gates and pathways clean and free from mud and grit. Debris can easily be transported onto the surface on shoes and the tyres of maintenance equipment. Keeping surrounds free from weeds is also essential to stop encroachment into the sand infill within the surface. Spot treatment with a suitable weed killer may be required periodically.

Below: Using a Weedbrush to remove moss from block paving and a close up before and after.

Paved surfaces can also be disrupted by snow and ice, making them unsafe to walk or drive on. Snow and ice can be removed with a sweeper, a plough or a salt spreader. All these are available from Kersten, to fit all our two wheeled tractors and many Ride on Mowers and Compact Tractors.

For more information on Kersten Equipment please contact your local dealer.



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