



Business & Market Development Case Study: Using Recycled Ingredients in Topsoil Manufacture with Bettaland Products Ltd



Topsoil manufactured using recycled ingredients.

What sort of recycled ingredients can be used in topsoil manufacture?

Topsoil made from recycled ingredients provides a sustainable environment in which plants flourish. Typical ingredients include high quality recycled organic material, such as green, food and vegetative waste, as well as mineral-based materials, such as poor quality soil, construction and demolition waste or by-products of quarrying or soil washing.

Bettaland Products Ltd manufactures a unique compost-based topsoil. As well as regular components of compost, such as grass cuttings and leaves, it contains waste from a broader range of sources, including potatoes, fruit, vegetables and flowers, all of which introduce a significant amount of topsoil and mineral-based matter. The result is a high quality product that has the characteristics of a BS 3882:1994 premium grade topsoil.

The benefits of using recycled ingredients in manufactured topsoil

Topsoil made from recycled materials can be blended to provide a sustainable living environment for any given landscape, from chalky grasslands to verdant heath. It provides an enormous range of benefits, including:

- A fit for purpose growing media for any landscaping application
- Consistency of quality
- Reduced need for fertilisers
- Reduced watering costs
- Less money spent on plant replacement
- An excellent way of taking action to help achieve recycling targets and sustainable procurement objectives

The use of recycled ingredients in manufactured topsoil at Hampton Vale in Peterborough

Summary

Property development company Countryside Properties has long promoted high standards of sustainability in order to minimise the impact of its developments on the environment. For the site at Hampton Vale in Peterborough, a social housing development for Circle Anglia, topsoil manufactured from recycled content was used.

Bettaland Products Ltd supplied a high quality topsoil, manufactured from recycled ingredients collected from the local area. The topsoil provided an excellent planting medium for the landscaping contractor, Acer Landscapes Ltd of Essex, to plant trees, plants and turf in the gardens of the development.

Background

Bettaland Products is a large supplier of organic, recycled, peat-free composts, topsoil, topsoil/soil conditioner, bark and mulch products.



In 2005, Countryside Properties were approached about using topsoil conditioner at Hampton Vale and other developments. Keen to ensure good quality landscaping on the site and to promote sustainability, Countryside Properties agreed to use 1,000 tonnes of topsoil conditioner at Hampton Vale.

Implementation

Ensuring the product met the industry's robust specification criteria was essential. As Hampton Vale is a social housing development, the regulations and restrictions around the use of building materials are particularly strict.

Bettaland topsoil is produced in accordance with BSI PAS 100, the stringent specification for the production of compost. Due to the high mineral content of the product, it has the characteristics of BS3882:1994 premium grade topsoil. It is also registered as an Annex 2 product with the Soil Association, which means it can be used in organic systems.

In 2006 Remade East and Bettaland approached Countryside Properties and Groundwork Construction Ltd regarding the benefits of using topsoil blended using recycled ingredients.



Turf laid onto manufactured topsoil at Countryside Properties development, Hampton Vale, Peterborough.



Planting into manufactured topsoil at Countryside Properties development, Hampton Vale, Peterborough.

Analysis of a sample provided confirmed that the product met the projects requirements for topsoil on the Hampton Vale site. The first load of 300 tonnes was delivered in September 2006 for the landscaping contractor, Acer Landscapes, to use to landscape the public areas and gardens of the development.

"the quality is so much better than the soil we normally have delivered, which often looks little better than the poor soil we removed originally. This is totally different. It met the specification with no problems. We'd definitely use it again."

Mick O'Leary, site manager for GCL

"the soil is wonderful for trees and planting. It is easy to work, clean and free from debris, weed seed and stone. We look forward to seeing a superb display next spring."

Darren Pilbeam, operations manager at Acer Landscapes