



## HINTS & TIPS: The bit you can't see!

**Many of our clients and customers are often only interested in "how it's going to look" however more and more we are being asked about the "bit you cannot see" and frankly we would rather the latter as very often this is where the bulk of the cost lies with the majority of construction projects and it is important that you the customer are fully aware the extent that Landscape Design Contracts go to.**

LDC work to exacting standards and whenever possible use only the best materials available, as standard practice we utilise many products considered to be unique to large scale civil engineering projects. We strive to maintain high standards and longevity however in many cases the part of the project that requires the most amounts of time and money devoted to it is the part you cannot see when the project is completed, this is known as the sub-base.

The sub-base layer is often the main load-bearing layer of any driveway or pathway. It is designed specifically to evenly spread the load of the paving, and any traffic thereon, to the sub grade below. A well-constructed sub-base will prevent settlement and channelization - the phenomenon common on cheap installations of block paving, where two 'ruts' develop in the paving. These 'ruts' are caused when a car travels over the same line of paving to the garage, every morning and every night. The sub-base is intended to prevent channelization and settlement.

All too often, cut-price residential block-paving installations omit the sub-base

as a major cost-saver. Householders are unlikely to be aware of the need for such a layer, and, if out all day when the work is being done, may never notice its absence. A common tale we hear is, "we were told we didn't need any stone, because the dirt under the old flagstones will be firm enough!" Unfortunately we usually here this tale once the paving has sunk, and the original contractor is long gone!

When discussing the construction of driveways or paving with clients, we liken the sub-base to a carpet underlay..you can spend a fortune on the finest Axminster carpet, but if you don't use an underlay, it's never going to look or feel right. Once a good sub-base has been installed, it can be re-used with very little work should you decide to change the surfacing/paving of your driveway in the future.

A finished sub-base should not deviate from the correct level by more than 10mm, and should reflect the final profile of your paving. The bedding layer above the sub-base ought to be a constant thickness to avoid differential settlement.

If a contractor tells you that a sub-base isn't required beneath your new drive, then ask how the sub-grade (soil beneath drive) is going to spread the load of the paving and what guarantee is offered with regard to settlement.

**For a free no obligation consultation and quotation please call us on 01506 639950 or fill in the enquiry form. Your peace of mind guaranteed!**



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