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## LCGS Fencing – Gates Lawn Care – Pruning

*Tony Turnbull  
(City & Guilds and LCA in Horticulture, LANTRA)*

### Autumn Newsletter 2016.

Welcome to the autumn newsletter. This is a picture of the beautiful and bountiful wheat fields behind our housing estate on an August evening as I walked through Burradon Farm looking towards the coast. A fabulous and uplifting sight! I feel like we've had a good summer this year although it's been changeable and there doesn't seem to have been any prolonged long hot spells, I've enjoyed it and it has been very good growing weather with plenty of moisture and warmth, good for farmers and good for our gardens too!



It's a blessing to have been kept busy this season as it's been a difficult and sad year since last December with the loss of Les my father-in-law and then my Mother in April. On July 14<sup>th</sup> 1956 my parents were married at St Hilda's Church in Jesmond. My father had the foresight, courage and strength to invite my brother, sisters and their families to his home this July 14<sup>th</sup> for a lovely buffet and a very special family evening together to recognise that day 60 years later.

#### Autumn lawn care.



September through October is a good time to undertake lawn care. This may involve **scarifying** the lawn to remove unwanted thatch and open up the lawn to allow light and water in. Sometimes **aeration** is helpful where a lawn has become compacted. An **autumn lawn feed** helps to strengthen the lawn, maintaining health and vitality. September is also a good month, while the soil is warm and moist, for **re-seeding** bare patches. On the subject of grass seed, after the making of Grand Hotel in 1932, Greta Garbo was asked "why do you go to bed with grass seed and a hair net on your head?" to which Greta replied "I want to be alawn".

#### Christmas wreaths.

Due to popular demand, I am delighted to say that having checked with Robert at the nursery near Wooler, they will be making the Christmas wreaths with local Northumbrian foliage again this year. I will drive north in early December to collect them and return to Newcastle to promptly deliver the wreaths. I need to place the order by the **end of October**. Please can you let me know before then if you would like one or more wreaths at £12 per wreath (free delivery).



#### Fences.

Storm Desmond in December 2015 caused fence damage last winter followed by several more storms. Fencing services were in high and, in some cases urgent, demand where fencing came down onto public paths etc. It can be prudent to check fence boundaries are secure before the winter sets in. If you require advice or help checking fencing / gates and would like me to take a look please let me know.

#### Hedges.

A final trim of the hedge in September or October will keep it looking tidy throughout the winter and into the spring when the birds are nesting and hedge cutting is best avoided.

Antony Turnbull (City & Guilds Horticulture, LANTRA) Trading as Lawn Care and Garden Services.

Est. 2009.

◆ Fencing ◆ Garden gates

◆ Hedge Trimming ◆ Pruning ◆ Tree work – chainsaw work and small tree (up to 5 metres) felling  
◆ Lawns • aeration • mowing • mulch mowing • scarifying • over-seeding and top dressing



## Staff Changes.

Neil Alderson has been working with me since March 2015 and it is with sadness and pride that we see Neil leave at the end of August for pastures new. Neil has been studying horticulture for the past 2 years at Askham Bryan College and working with me on a part time basis. It's been a pleasure to work with Neil and he has been really popular with our Clients. Neil has attained a position in Oxford working full-time at the Oxford University botanical gardens. It should be a fabulous new role and we wish Neil every happiness and success in his new role and give our thanks for the great work he did here in the north-east.



This is a recent picture of Neil fencing, complete with concrete breaker as in this instance a concrete path had to be broken through to install each and every post .... hard work indeed! Unlike the saying, 'when you're in a hole stop digging' well we **do keep digging!**



## Card payments.

Moving with the times we can now accept card payments using '**chip and pin**' or **contactless** payments. We now offer payment by a variety of methods:- **cash, card, direct bank payment** (e.g. internet banking) or **Paym®** (for anyone who uses a mobile phone banking application).



We will **no longer be accepting cheque payments**. Although banks have been trying to discourage the use of cheques for some time by increasing the charges to bank a cheque, the final push for me to change is after an experience in April when I was paid by cheque for removing an old fence and supplying and installing a beautiful new fence for a one-off client. The Client said they were delighted and that we had 'restored their faith in tradesmen'. Surprisingly, a week later their cheque payment was returned to me from my bank uncashed as it had bounced. Despite every effort the payment remains outstanding. *Please note, existing regular clients who currently pay by cheque are welcome to continue to pay by cheque or to change to another method if they prefer.*

## Himalayan balsam.

Although Himalayan balsam is classified as an invasive species, I had not seen any until a recent visit to see our daughter in Glasgow. We went to see the amazing Burrell Collection in Pollock Park and on the walk through the park I took these pictures of the Himalayan balsam. As you may notice the roots are shallow but dense. Unlike the Japanese knotweed where the roots go very deep and can undermine buildings. The botanical name is



*Impatiens glandulifera* and it's native to, guess where? That's right the Himalayas in Asia. It has other common names such as 'Policeman's helmet' due to the helmet shape of the flowers. Himalayan balsam is an annual which means that the seeds germinate, the plant grows, flowers, re-seeds and dies all within the same year. Each plant can produce up to 800 viable seeds which can germinate in soil or underwater. As a result the plant can be prolific in and around rivers and the seed can spread downstream.



**Berlin Marathon.** Finally, we wish our son James all the very best as he is running the Berlin marathon in September, which has involved a lot of discipline and hard training this year. James is raising donations for Prostate Cancer in memory of his grandfather Les. Anyone wishing to make a donation is welcome to do so using the [JustGiving.co.uk](http://JustGiving.co.uk) website and searching on 'James Turnbull Berlin 2016'.

.... Auf Wiedersehen, Good luck Neil, Good Luck James and Happy gardening! *Tony*