

LET'S HEAR
IT FROM

TOM WILLIAMS

MAYDENCROFT LTD

TOM WILLIAMS,
MANAGING DIRECTOR
OF **MAYDENCROFT LTD,**
TELLS US ABOUT HIS
GROWING PORTFOLIO
AND WHY THE IMPACT
OF COVID-19 WON'T BE
SLOWING THIS DOWN

During this pandemic, it was great to have some time to catch up with Tom Williams, owner and managing director of Maydencroft Ltd. The company is a specialist group of businesses offering many forms of land management, as well as environmental and landscaping services across southern England.

Maydencroft has traditional values at its core with a modern approach. By focusing on quality, performance and customer experience whilst always prioritising its people and the environment, Maydencroft is built to last, alongside the fabulous landscapes it creates, restores and maintains.

Tom's love of the outdoors came from growing up on the family farm and working outside during school holidays. He founded Maydencroft Ltd in 2007 after obtaining his BSc in Landscape Management from the University of Reading and a spell of working as an assistant to the park manager at Kensington Gardens for The Royal Parks.

"The ambition to run my own business was there from the start," says Tom. "With my £10k savings, newly opened bank account and a very small team of three, Maydencroft Ltd was launched."

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"Very soon after setting up the company, we had the opportunity to tender for a very large project for The Wildlife Trusts on a nature reserve, creating access around the site and managing the surrounding land. Fortunately, we were successful and won the tender, giving us six months of work. Whilst we were fulfilling

the contract, it allowed me time to source and secure additional work."

The company quickly established itself and now employs more than 100 staff across three different sites. From the start, all staff were employed full time with salaries, pensions and paid sick absence. Tom explained that the company has positioned itself into a niche segment and specialist part of the market. "We have taken opportunities along the way; we have bought related companies that can enhance and or improve an offering; we have focused on growing our core business, positioning ourselves as an integrated partner with clients; and, perhaps more importantly, we have delivered a consistently high level of quality service. Our team has always been high priority. I believe in having specialist staff for specialist roles, allowing them to do what they do best. ▶



“We have fantastic staff retention and pride ourselves on the training and development that we offer. I am hugely proud of our long-established apprenticeship programmes with Bedford College, the Berkshire College of Agriculture and Capel Manor College. We work closely with the colleges to create a tailored apprenticeship programme.

“We have provided many thousands of qualifications over the years through our bespoke CPD scheme. Employing the right team, helping them to develop, giving them ownership and retaining them is key to what we do. Communication is also very important, especially at the moment; I produce a weekly roundup message, each of the different strands of our business has a direct manager, and we also try to limit the number of reports each manager has.”

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Maydencroft operates from a centrally based head office and has two further fully equipped offices and yards. The team is all able to work remotely and is encouraged to be entrepreneurial, managing their own schedules within the company guidelines, which it seems are very few and far between. “We encourage our ecological and environmental consultants to follow their own passion and dreams and work towards their own projects, which I guess is why



we can offer such a wide variety of services,” explains Tom.

The grounds and estates team offers services such as maintaining high-end large landscapes, historic parkland management, maintenance of utility sites and large-scale country estates. The portfolio includes looking after Letchworth Garden City and Welwyn Garden City, numerous Woodland Trust grounds, Affinity Water’s central region and Panshanger Park on behalf of Tarmac.

“We also have a landscape design and construction team. Being a multi-disciplinary firm, we benefit from our involvement with a broad range of clients and organisations. Our experience of managing projects from inception to completion puts us in a very strong position. The ideal type of work is where we can use all our different resources on large scale projects, but again keeping the landscape and the environment at the heart.

“We are an ARB Approved Contractor which means that we have had to pass a rigorous series of tests to guarantee we provide a high standard of work, uncompromising approach to health, safety and customer care. The Arb Association helps make Maydencroft what it is, having to go through all its processes to become an approved contractor gave us a greater understanding of the structure we needed, and the depth of health and safety needed.”

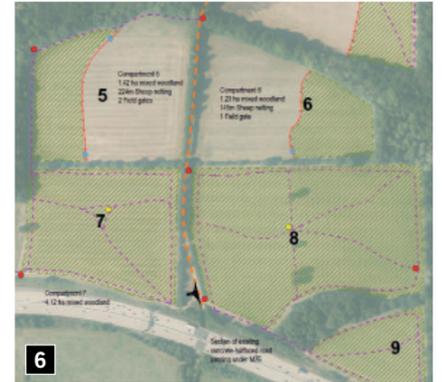
As well as the landscaping-related business, Tom has moved back to run the family farm, where they have a herd of 250 Longhorn cattle which has been established since 1982, when Longhorns were very much a rare breed. Tom

“AS A COMPANY I BELIEVE WE ARE WELL PLACED TO CONTINUE OUR GROWTH”

and his wife are passionate about the heritage native breed and have focused on sustainable, low input, high welfare traditional farming.

Other parts of the business include a growing forestry arm where it is managing in excess of 3,000ha of woodlands on behalf of clients in the South East. Tom is also managing director of Shanahan Contracting Ltd, a liquid waste and sewage business specialising in cesspool and septic tank emptying, drain cleaning and underground surveying – a business he bought in 2018.

“We are still ambitious for growth. In the future, there will no doubt be an opportunity to



extend our geographical reach and bolt on other companies that sit with our growth strategy. In the meantime, we’re about to launch a completely new business called REVIVE Recycled Plastics, producing recycled plastic outdoor landscaping products. We have vast experience and technical know-how in this area as we have been using recycled plastic products for years. Recycled plastic decking boards and posts work perfectly in the countryside environment and also across lots of commercial projects. The products will be available shortly and I’m really looking forward to starting to roll the product out, it’s a very exciting time for us.”

Speaking about the future, Tom says: “I’m sure over the next few years there will be sectors of the landscaping industry that will suffer a slowdown, but on the whole I’m very positive about the environmental sector which could really boom for the foreseeable future. We face a massive opportunity to drive home the value of managing green space, and the benefits it could have on the economy and the health and wellbeing of the population.

“As a company I believe we are well placed to continue our growth – we have the history, knowledge, track record, and the team to add real value.”

- 1 A landscape that Maydencroft created and maintain
- 2 Head Office, Maydencroft Manor
- 3 Hard landscaping, the Maydencroft way
- 4 Landscape construction in action
- 5 Essential arb work during the pandemic
- 6 Example of a woodland planting scheme, by the M25

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