

VALE OF GLAMORGAN. CASE STUDY.

How Foamstream can be used to reduce herbicide use in management of Green Flag Award parks and open spaces and notably enhance the quality of outdoor spaces across your municipality.

Client name: Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Sector: Councils and Municipalities.

Background: Municipality in South West Wales. Home to 130,000 residents and holder of 10 Green Flag Awards for its parks and gardens.

No. of Machines: 1 – M1200

Areas treated: Green Flag sites, country parks, open spaces, pre-treatment wildflower areas, children's play areas, hard, soft and artificial surfaces.

Previous methods used: Glyphosate based herbicides, pre-emergent herbicides (on suitable surfaces) and mechanical methods (hoeing, hand pulling weeds, strimming).



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Foamstream was far and away the best herbicide-free solution we tried. It's very safe to use in public areas. There's no need to barrier off treated areas, and we don't have to worry about working close to water courses, or about using the system in public areas - even around curious children or dogs. There is no need for protective equipment or specialist training, it's very easy to use, and it works in just about all weathers - you simply turn up and treat. It's a new way of looking at weed control in our parks and has been very well received by our park users and has become our go-to system.”

Jon Greatrex, Vale's Parks and Open Spaces Officer



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We've had fun with this system, it's clean, green, super safe and easy to use - just get your managers and staff on board with the concept that it's not going to replace glyphosate. But, look at things a bit differently and it may be all you need for herbicide-free weed control. In a parks and gardens environment it's become our go-to system.”

Jon Greatrex, Vale of Glamorgan

Benefits of Foamstream

- ✓ Safe for use around people, animals and waterways
- ✓ Lowest number of treatment cycles compared with alternatives
- ✓ All surface, all weather, year-round use
- ✓ No additional costs attributed to operator certification or protective clothing
- ✓ Easy to use - simple to set up and start using
- ✓ 100% natural herbicide-free solution
- ✓ Additional revenue stream for our business
- ✓ Chance to increase customer base with new product offering
- ✓ Positive public engagement tool
- ✓ A team of highly qualified, helpful and efficient Weedingtech technicians

Background

The Vale of Glamorgan is a beautiful county nestled in Wales' most southernly point. It has a rich mix of coastline, heritage sites and green countryside. It's parks and gardens where Foamstream is used are comprised of play parks, skate parks, playing fields, nature reserves, country parks and heritage sites.

PROBLEM

The Vale wanted to look at alternative ways to control weeds and unwanted growth without the use of herbicides which were previously used to manage their green spaces and parks. Being a holder of multiple Green Flag Awards for their green space sites in the Vale, one of the key criteria for the award specifically looks at the environmental management of the parks and states that policies should look to eliminate the use of chemicals. As such, looking at ways to reduce or remove herbicides for these sites and feature parks was a priority for the council.

ACTION

In the Winter of 2017/18, the Vale of Glamorgan Parks Department carried out tests of alternative herbicide-free methods alongside Foamstream including burning, weed ripping, brushing and hot-water.

After the trial, Foamstream was chosen as the herbicide-free solution of choice due to being far more effective, easier to use, and suitable for use on a much wider range of surfaces. Another winning factor for Foamstream was its absolute safety when applying in public areas, which is where the majority of its use takes place, and also the fact it can be used right up to the edge of waterways.



RESULTS

The Vale have been using Foamstream since early 2018. It is used right across the Vale on their Green Flag Award feature parks and sites. This year, the Vale were awarded 10 Green Flag awards. This has made them one of the best performing authorities in Wales for the quality of our outdoor spaces. Foamstream has been a major part of the Vale's weed control strategy in helping to achieve this.

Foamstream has started a lot of conversations. Since using the system, the Parks Department have had a huge amount of interest in how they manage the Vale's green spaces. This has allowed them to position themselves as forward thinking in their approach to non-chemical weed control. It's been a great environmental talking point and they have received an overwhelming amount of positive feedback from the public and the press as a result. They have become the go to organisation for other members working not only in the Green Flag network interested in moving to a herbicide-free alternative but also those in other authorities, housing and social services landowners and the military.

Foamstream has meant that across the grounds team, all types of surfaces and planted areas such as shrub beds, wildflower prep areas, play areas, gravel and paved areas can be treated with one system rather than having to previously use additional methods. It has also given them flexibility to work in all weathers with no impact on effectiveness. Its high efficacy has been especially notable on treating moss and ivy and it is used across all types of weeds including those which are deep rooted.

Having initially thought on the face of it that Foamstream seemed like a fairly expensive way of replacing herbicides, since adopting the technology, it has made a radical difference to the way the Vale now look at green space management with a number of additional beneficial spin-offs and ideas what were not initially considered. A notable one is as an additional revenue stream from schools and colleges within the Vale along with other departments in the authority such as the Country Parks Service.

Going forward the Vale are looking to use Foamstream as a central part of their land management strategy, to sensitively manage all open spaces in the Vale in a greener, more sustainable way than that of the past.

[Watch Jon Greatrex talk about implementing Foamstream in the Vale here.](#)



M1200 out and about in the Vale



Foamstream treatment



Block paving after a Foamstream treatment