



Aftercare Of Your New Tarmac Driveway

Introduction:

Thank-you for choosing HORNSBY TARMACING AND DRAINAGE CONTRACTORS to carry out the construction of your Tarmac drive.

Your driveway will need a little time for it to harden before you can drive on it with a vehicle, therefore, on completion of your new driveway surface we would recommend that you do not use it for at least 48 hours, but pedestrians can walk on it straight away.

Properly cared for it should give you many years of service. These aftercare guidelines have been drawn up to help you look after your drive and to help you sort out problems if they arise.

General Information:

Your new drive is made from asphalt, a mixture of hard aggregate bound together with bitumen, a flexible, black, waterproof substance derived from crude oil. There are many different types of asphalt surfacing that are used on driveways, the more common being Stone Mastic Asphalt (SMA), Dense or Close-graded Bituminous Macadam (DBM) and Hot Rolled Asphalt (HRA). Some of these are stronger and more durable than others, but the same basic principles apply to looking after all of them.

Our driveways are predominately surfaced with the SMA (Stone Mastic Asphalt) materials as these offer an improved durability and scuffing resistance from the forces of power steering vehicles at slow speeds compared to that of normal asphalt designs. SMA when laid can have an open textured appearance, this is a characteristic of this material and is in no way detrimental to the strength of this material.

Guidelines

Hot Weather:

Because your drive is black it can absorb heat in sunny weather, becoming quite hot. Under such conditions, the bitumen binding agent becomes softer and the surface becomes more prone to scuffing from tyres and indentation from point loading from ladders and the like. It is sensible to take care not to overstress the surface in hot weather, particularly by sharp turning of wheels with power steering when your vehicle is not moving, as this can distress the surface. This is particularly

important in the early life (first summer) of your driveway when it will be black and shiny and prone to soften. As it ages, the surface will turn grey and the material will harden and the risk of damage will be much less. It is however wise to remember that there is always a risk of such damage in very hot weather.

Whilst scuffing damage like this may give you concern, it is usually only superficial and will largely disappear as the surface which has been scuffed, will weather and blends into a uniform appearance with the rest of the drive.

This guidance is particularly appropriate to sheltered south facing drives where surfaces retain heat for longer periods and to heavy vehicles, such as people carriers and four-wheel drive, off roaders.

Oil & Chemical Spillages:

Bitumen bound surfacing's are resistant to occasional oil droppings but can be softened and damaged by significant oil spillages. If left in contact with the asphalt, any oil product will dissolve into the bitumen binder and soften it. Where oil spillages have occurred, the best course of action is to soak up the oil before it has time to damage the asphalt. Use the best available material close to hand to do this such as cat litter, sawdust, dry sand, paper or cloth. If the oil has already penetrated the asphalt, you should protect the surface from stress (keep traffic off where possible) and give the contaminant time to evaporate away. With petrol this will be very rapid whereas diesel fuel will take several months to evaporate but should eventually return to normal.

Such spillages will leave marks, which should diminish with time. Great care should be taken trying to wash such marks away as this could wash away the asphalt itself. If an oil or petrol spillage has recently occurred, apply water to the area with a hose pipe and as oils float on water you should see rainbow colours appearing on the surface film of the water and this is the oil lifting out from the tarmacadam surface. You will need to carry out this procedure until the rainbow colouring diminishes (approx. 1 to 2 hours). Where appropriate, it may be recommended to wash the surface of the asphalt with luke-warm water and a brush, Alternative cleaning products are available from DIY stores but it should be noted that water-based solutions are preferred and a small discrete area be tested before treating larger areas.

If chemicals such as gardening products have spilled onto the surface care should be taken to read the guidelines on the bottle with regard to dilution. In many cases simply washing the driveway with copious amounts of water is recommended.

Point-Loading Trailers, Caravans, Motorbikes & Ladders:

The jockey wheels of trailers and caravans, and feet of ladders concentrate a large load over a small area and can give rise to indentation of the driveway surface. Newly laid driveways and warm south-facing driveways are particularly prone to this kind of damage.

You are advised to use items such as a block of wood, a plank, a sheet of plywood, or a paving slab to spread the load.

Weeds, Vegetation & Soil Debris:

If weeds are present before the new driveway is constructed, these will be excavated out and a weed killer applied (Where appropriate). However, it is not always possible to kill the most stubborn of weeds such as docks, dandy lions & especially mares tail which has a very long root system. Although not very often, the occasional weed may pop up through the tarmac surface especially in the spring time. We can easily deal with this problem by applying more weed killer to the weed and reheating the tarmac with an infra red heater and compacting the tarmac back into place. This operation will leave a black patch to the area as the heater regenerates the tarmac, but this will fade over time.

If soil or similar gardening products are to be placed onto an asphalt driveway a plastic sheet is recommended to prevent clay and soil getting stuck into the surface of the driveway presenting a difficult cleaning problem.

Soils and sand deposited directly on to an asphalt driveway should be carefully brushed from the surface whilst dry and the remainder removed with water and a stiff brush.

**If you have any further queries regarding the aftercare of your driveway,
please get in touch with Hornsby Ltd on: 01283 219 845**