

Arches landscapers are certainly on right track

► **New garden outlet in Fulham defies the recession to bring in the business**

CAROLINE BUTCHER

TWO talented gardeners have found their niche offering beautiful plants and urban landscaping ideas from inside a Fulham railway arch.

Harrington Porter only arrived in the cosy nook in New Kings Road in April, but co-owners Chris Harrington and James Porter say demand for their products and services is already thriving.

"We've created something new here – there are lots of internet sites about landscaping, but you can't actually go to see what any of it looks like," said Chris. "But we've got a garden at the back, so people can visualise what we're doing. The garden includes a selection of plants suitable for London, and also a range of paving displays."

Chris, 31, who lives in Wandsworth Bridge Road,

and James, 37, began their landscaping business in 2002 – but the Fulham shop marks their first retail venture.

Chris admitted it had been daunting to open in the midst of a recession, but said there was still genuine demand among Fulham homeowners for new ways of making the most of their outdoor space.

"In a lot of ways demand is up. I think it's because of the volatile property market and the fact people are staying in their properties and improving their homes and gardens," he said.

"Garden maintenance is also a big part of our business, and grass and trees still grow despite the recession – people will always need a bit of maintenance doing."

"I would say the number of inquiries has been just as good as any other year, so far."

But the picture is not all rosy, and Chris said the slump in demand for new properties had affected other parts of their garden service.

"We used to do quite a lot of work for property developers, but that has disappeared," he said.

The new Harrington Porter



FRESH IDEAS: Chris Harrington is co-owner of a new gardening business

PICTURE BY KEVIN POOLMAN

store offers a vast array of garden goods and accessories, and indoor and outdoor urban plants.

"We also have a range of window boxes, which are very popular at the moment and yet very few companies stock them," said Chris.

The bespoke boxes come in various sizes and can be planted with either flowers or herbs, and the business also offers a window box maintenance service for those less green-fingered homeowners.

For beautiful flowers inside the home – as well as organic candles, lighting and vases – Harrington Porter is the base of expert florist and stylist Jane Cullinan, previously head florist for Harvey Nichols.

• Harrington Porter is at The Arches 54-55, 419 New Kings Road, Fulham, and is open Tuesday to Friday from 9.30am to 7.30pm, and Saturday from 9am to 4pm.

• Call 020 7731 3552.

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Last year Hammersmith & Fulham saw a reduction in residential burglaries of nearly 12%. This is excellent news but we want to reduce burglary even further.

The summer months often see an increase in burglaries, either because people are away from their property on their holidays, or they leave their doors and windows open for ventilation in the hot weather.

There are a few simple steps you can take to prevent yourself becoming a victim of burglary:

- Don't leave easily accessible doors and windows open, even in the warm weather, or even if you are indoors in another part of the building. They are an open invitation for an opportunist thief
- Make sure side gates and rear entrances to your property are shut
- Put away ladders or gardening tools that could be used to force entry to your home.
- If you live in flats, make sure the communal door is kept closed
- If you are going on holiday, ask a friend or neighbour to keep an eye on your property and clear your mail. Invest in a timer for your lights to make your home look occupied in your absence.

By taking these simple steps, you can greatly reduce your chances of becoming a victim of burglary.

Have a good summer

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