



EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
with Tim Goom

Dishing the dirt.

Project Manager Goom Landscapes: Steve Vabulis

Steve Vabulis came to Goom Landscapes 10 years ago with an already well established landscaping portfolio behind him.

After travelling to London and a foray in the hospitality and banking industries (like many kiwis!) his travels took him to Sydney, where the stunning climate enticed Steve outdoors into his first landscaping role, and he has never looked back. His next stop was Auckland, where he further honed his landscaping skills on the tools and met his wife, also a displaced Cantabrian. They returned to Christchurch 10 years ago, and Goom Landscapes snapped him up in the role of foreman.

This cemented his already formidable problem solving skills in terms of understanding the 'big picture' of any project. As his role evolved, he soon established himself as a highly respected Project Manager for Goom Landscapes, a role he has now held for 4 years. Outside of work, Steve is a passionate sportsman, with a keen interest in the outdoors. He is also a busy Dad to two young Children - so he's in a phase where his exercise (apart from the odd stolen box fit class) is most likely on the beach chasing his kids. He likes to think it is after the annual summer Kaiteiteri pilgrimage with his family that he is in peak physical condition!

Steve is proud of the breadth of services offered by Goom Landscapes. "Often people don't understand that landscaping is much more than shovelling dirt around, it is full construction in the same way as building. In my role as Project Manager I oversee all those involved in bringing a project to fruition. At Goom, we have everything under one roof - landscape architects, project management, and the landscapers on the ground. If any issues arise, as they invariably do with any landscaping project, communication and problem solving happens in a seamless and efficient manner. Time is not lost seeking external advice or waiting for replies."



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Steve enjoys the challenges of project management, at any one time he will lead 5 to 6 projects. He is involved from the concept design presentation phase to completion. This enables him to work alongside the landscape architect and the client in synergy to really understand exactly what the client wants. Aside from establishing strong relationships and open communication with clients, the biggest satisfaction of his role is project completion. "It is enormously rewarding to visit a client absolutely delighted with the litespace we have created for them".

During his time at Goom, Steve has noted a significant trend in Christchurch towards outdoor living, including outdoor rooms, bespoke fire places and built in barbeques. "I think people better understand that investing in quality landscaping is equally as important in terms of the overall value and enjoyment of your property as anything which happens inside."

Steve defines his role as smoothly transitioning a project through it's different phases and communicating constantly with all involved. "When you are constructing in the outdoors, curveballs are the nature of the beast, but that's what keeps my job varied and interesting. I love nothing more than switching into problem solving mode."

Steve will get a chance to stop and smell the roses when he attends the Registered Master Landscapers Landscapes of Distinction Awards 2019 in Auckland in August, where he has four projects entered, demonstrating how actively involved he is in raising standards nationally within the landscape construction industry. In the meantime, if you have a landscaping vision but need to discuss how to 'get it done', call Goom Landscapes.

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