



Running and maintenance

People who own and run a water feature will soon become disillusioned with it if it costs more than a modest amount to maintain. Planning should thus aim to avoid high maintenance and running expenses. A number of very creatively successful water features have been closed because of technical problems, the need for frequent repair work and unduly high running costs.

Traditionally fountains and other running water features are closed in winter. But it is possible to run them all the year round if appropriate preventive measures are taken, like frost-proof water storage facilities and a heated water supply.

A thorough planning approach will pay particular attention to the later running of the water feature. More or less elaborate solutions will be selected according to location. The centre of a large city imposes different requirements and thus needs different creative and technical concepts from those appropriate to small towns or villages. An intensively used feature should therefore not just be well designed, but above all well looked after as well. Here we must not fail to recognize that ornately designed components will always be more likely to be damaged than robust elements. The finished product should be selected to match the location in a way that does not encourage increasing tendencies to vandalism.

In the long run, water features work best if they are as clearly and simply planned as possible. Logical arrangements and structures for the various units and sections make them easier to service. To avoid periods of malfunction, or to keep them as short as possible, it makes sense for large water features to use parts from the same manufacturer. This makes it easy to replace components and also simplifies storage.

All electrical devices in the wet area inside and outside the water feature must be appropriately protected and fused to meet safety standards. This includes current failure protection circuits, damp and wet fittings, low voltage installations and appropriate earthing for all live electrical parts.

Staff often find a service manual helpful. This should contain lists of all the maintenance work needed, instructions on how to behave in case of emergency, and guidelines for running the system in winter.

