

3a Gardens and Boundary Walls

Gardens and Trees



The Conservation Value of Gardens, Trees, Hedges and Other Greenery



Gardens provide the immediate setting for houses. The character of a garden - the levels of greenery, the presence of trees - will impact the character and appearance of the house. When looked at as a whole, the greenery in gardens has a strong bearing on the character of a conservation area and can give it a rural, village, suburban or urban character depending on the levels of greenery, the vegetation types and tree cover. The loss of trees and other greenery can make a village centre feel urban; a suburb without mature trees and hedges loses its sense of place. The importance of trees to the character and appearance of Conservation Areas means that the Council must receive a 'Notice of Intent' before works to trees begin. This means that you must notify the Council if you intend to fell, remove, lop, crown or prune trees in conservation areas. Contact the Trees Team in the Planning Department for further information.

Historically gardens were a status symbol - the higher one's wealth or status, the larger the garden. Workers' cottages traditionally had little or no garden, houses of the lower middle class or affluent working class generally had small front gardens. The houses of the wealthier middle classes were generally set between front and rear gardens, which could often be substantial in size

and incorporate lines of planted trees, landscaping or water features. The amount of open space afforded to a house and the treatment of it communicates its original status and how it related to the rest of the buildings in the conservation area, therefore gardens are an important element of Conservation Areas.

The Management of Gardens, Trees and Greenery in Conservation Areas - Best Practice

DO...

- ✓ Take the advice of a suitably qualified arboriculturalist or tree surgeon.
- ✓ Give six weeks' notice to the Council's Trees Team before undertaking any works to trees, including pruning.
- ✓ Have work carried out by a suitably qualified local tree surgeon who can prove that they are currently insured to undertake works to trees.
- ✓ Maintain the green and domestic character of your garden, whilst ensuring that it does not become overgrown, particularly hedges at the boundary of the property. Front gardens should offer amenity to both the house and the street.



✓ Plant trees, hedges and shrubs which are native to the region or would have traditionally been planted in gardens in the region. In many of the gardens of larger or higher status houses non-native specimen trees which could thrive in local soils and climate were planted in times past. These plants will be the most appropriate to the local climate and soils and will help to retain the traditional appearance of the conservation area.

✓ Keep the area covered by paving to an absolute minimum. Where possible use traditional natural stone surfacing, such as flags or setts, or a substitute material which convincingly replicates the texture and proportions of traditional stone setts and flags. If tarmac or bitmac is to be used, it should be to an absolute minimum.

✓ Consider planting trees and hedges which are likely to be able to adapt to future climate change, such as

trees which can grow in warmer temperatures, and in drier conditions.



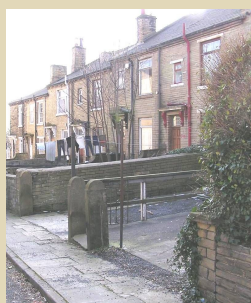
DO NOT...

✗ Undertake works to trees without first consulting the Trees Team. If you cut down a tree in a Conservation Area without giving notice you are liable, if convicted in the Magistrate's Court, to a fine of up to £20,000 or on conviction in the Crown Court to an unlimited fine. Any works carried out to a tree in a Conservation Area that do not destroy the tree are liable to a Magistrate's Court fine of up to £2,500. Felled, removed or dying trees will need to be replaced by appropriate newly planted trees.

✗ Act on the advice of an arboriculturalist or tree surgeon without first consulting the Trees Team, otherwise your works will not be legal and you may be liable to legal action (see above).

✗ Allow works to be undertaken to trees by someone who is not a suitably qualified and insured tree surgeon. If they kill, damage or otherwise harm a tree, you will be liable to legal action (see above).

✗ Pave or provide hard standings over garden areas. This will provide a poor immediate setting for your



house and may devalue it. The lack of greenery will also harm the character of the conservation area.

✗ Allow trees, shrubs and hedges to become overgrown. Overgrown vegetation can hide buildings which were traditionally visible completely from view, negatively impacting the character of the conservation area.



✗ Plant trees, hedges or shrubs which were not traditionally grown in the region. Evergreens such as leylandii are alien to the region, cause problems due to their rapid growth and should therefore never be planted in conservation areas. Some species of conifer are also alien to the district and should not be planted. Climbing and creeping plants, particularly ivy and Virginia Creeper should be avoided as these plants are invasive and can damage the mortar to walls and dislodge roofslates and rainwater goods.



✗ Use modern style concrete paving such as tegula or pavoirs, other small block paving units. The texture, colour and layout of modern block paving is at odds with traditional surfacing and will create an unwanted contrast with the stonework of the house.