

FRONT GARDENS

What is special?

The pattern of front gardens throughout the estate, with decorative boundary walls and traditional planting contributing to an archetypal suburban townscape.



Current issues

The paving-over of front gardens for car parking, which is damaging to the character and appearance of the area.

Loss of traditional boundaries and front garden planting, which exacerbates the visual impact of existing off-street parking



Design inspiration

Even the smallest space can be green and inviting, while providing room for parking. The RHS suggests:

- Keep paving to a minimum
- Use permeable paving materials
- Grow plants where you can't park
- Get creative. It is possible to park and garden (though note that permission is unlikely to be given for replacing existing front garden with parking)
- Provide a home for wildlife with your plants
- Keep dust and pollution in the street with a hedge



This RHS guide will show you how easy it can be to make a grey front garden green. It includes a list of low-maintenance plants and ways to accommodate both parking and plants.

www.rhs.org.uk/science/pdf/climate-and-sustainability/urban-greening/gardening-matters-front-gardens-urban-greening

Hedges

Although most of the houses are semi-detached, they are closely spaced and the overall impression is of continuous lines of building.

This is why hedges and planting on side boundaries help to keep a green vista along the roads.

The Edwardians chose privet hedging because it was tolerant of pollution and very easy to maintain. They were on to something there!

Double the green for half the space - adjoining householders would share the hedge so it only takes half its width from each garden.



Paths

Decorative tile paths from the front gate to front door were probably originally provided for all, but few have survived.

Yet more and more are being replaced to provide a striking pathway up to the front door and also into the hall.

Olde English Tiles oldeenglishtiles.co.uk and Original Style www.originalstyle.com manufacture Edwardian geometric tiles for external use



Paving

Guidance on the permeable surfacing of front gardens published by Government (2008) describes the problem with paving front gardens, how to prevent the problems and how to design and construct permeable surfaces. Unfortunately you cannot assume all installers understand permeability.

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf

The Council is unlikely to permit new hardstanding for parking; these ideas may help in renovating old areas.

Walls

Front garden walls are a distinctive feature of the estate, originally almost always constructed of irregularly sized brick rubble or 'wasters', a by-product of brick-making. The walls usually incorporated red and yellow bricks, with decorative and bonding courses in good bricks. Clinker is sometimes incorporated. The walls are generally topped with half-round blue coping bricks.

As the designs vary in each road, take a look at those nearby or at old photos for inspiration.



Your story

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Before photograph

After photograph

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