



green
your garden

A guide on
managing your
garden sustainably

green
our
herts 

It's estimated that there are around 360,000 gardens in Hertfordshire. Gardens can help the environment in lots of ways: reducing the risk of flooding, absorbing carbon dioxide and providing a home for wildlife. However, in the past 10 years there has been a trend towards paving gardens for driveways and lower maintenance, which has significantly reduced the amount of green garden space.

This guide provides an overview of what you can do to be a greener gardener. Making a few changes to your garden can make a big difference in helping the environment.

Provide a Home for Wildlife

Top tips:

- 1 Plant with pollinators in mind.** Many species of pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, are in decline. Simply adding suitable potted plants or creating a small flower bed can give them a helping hand. Choose flowers and shrubs that are good for pollinators – look at the table at the back of this leaflet for suggested species.



- 2 Add some dead wood.** Old logs placed in a shady corner provide a perfect habitat for hibernating frogs, toads and newts. Rotting wood is also extremely important for a range of insects including the UK's largest beetle, the stag beetle, which is sadly endangered.



- 3 Plant a hedge.** Hedges make a fantastic habitat, providing food and shelter for a range of animals. They can also help to reduce traffic noise.

- 4 Make a hole for hedgehogs.** Their numbers are declining so lend this loveable species a helping hand by removing one brick from the bottom of your wall or making a small hole (13cmx13cm) in your fence to allow them to travel between gardens.



- 5 Put in a pond.*** The best wildlife ponds have both deep and shallow areas, sloping sides and pond plants to oxygenate the water. Avoid adding fish if you want a pond rich in wildlife.

*Young children should be supervised at all times around ponds.



6 Feed the birds. Particularly in the winter when food is scarce. If squirrels are stealing the food, put a little spice in the mix and this will deter them.

7 Put up a bird box. They should be positioned 2-5 metres above the ground, with the opening away from strong winds and direct sunlight. Remember to clean them out annually after any chicks have fledged.

8 Green your walls. Planting climbers such as honeysuckle, clematis and climbing roses will provide additional cover and food for birds and other wildlife. Green walls also provide buildings with an extra layer of insulation cutting down on energy loss.

9 Be species aware. Non-native invasive species are estimated to cost Britain as much as £2 billion every year. Invasive plant species such as Japanese knotweed and floating pennywort can quickly take over an area, preventing other plants from growing. They have little value for our native wildlife and are very difficult to get rid of. For more information on the species to look out for and how to manage them visit:
www.nonnativespecies.org

10 Tell us what you've spotted. If you keep an eye on what wildlife visits your garden, pass your sightings on to the Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre:
www.hercinfo.org.uk

It doesn't save to pave

If you need off street parking and are thinking of paving your front garden, consider:

Planting up either side of the car space.

Creating two wheel tracks with a hard surface (e.g. blocks or tarmac) and then fill in the surrounding area with gravel, or plant with grass.

If your garden is already paved or decked consider reinstating some turf or a flowerbed. Alternatively add some greenery by filling your front garden with pots and planters.

Using materials that allow rainwater to be absorbed such as gravel or grass pavers. This will reduce surface run off and so help reduce the risk of flooding

Remember that if the surface to be paved is more than five square metres you may require planning permission.



Don't waste a drop

Hertfordshire is one of the driest parts of the UK and yet we use more water per head than any other part of the country. You can help to conserve water use in your garden by doing the following:

Use a watering can rather than a hose to water your garden. If you do need to use a hose, remember to fit a trigger nozzle.

Let your lawn grow a little longer, it will stay greener than one that is closely mown and need less watering.

Reuse leftover washing up or bath water in the garden.

Use a water butt to collect rainwater.

Choose plants that tolerate dry spells like lavender. Look at the table at the back of this leaflet for suggested species.

Plant as densely as you can, massing plants together will help to keep the soil cool. Remove weeds that will compete for moisture.

Add a thick layer of mulch to your flowerbeds to help retain moisture in the soil.

Water your garden in the evening to reduce evaporation. A big soaking a couple of times a week can be more effective than a little every day.

REMEMBER

If you are on a water meter, saving water will also save you money!



Home composting

Transform your kitchen and garden waste into a valuable and nutrient rich food for you garden. It's easy to make and use. You can add all sorts of materials to your compost bin; you just need an equal mix of "green" and "brown" waste.



Hertfordshire residents can buy compost bins at a reduced rate from <http://www.herts.getcomposting.com/>



Green Waste	Brown Waste
Fruit and vegetable peelings	Cardboard
Teabags	Shredded paper
Grass cuttings	Autumn leaves
Old bedding plants	Egg shells
Hedge clippings	Hair/fur
Cut flowers	Wood ash
Hay	Wool
Coffee grounds	Straw
Urine	Vacuum cleaner contents



Please do not confuse with your organic kerbside waste collection

Living “The Good Life”

If you’ve always liked the idea of growing your own fruit and vegetables, here are a few tips to help you do it in an eco-friendly way.

Go organic

Visit
www.greenourherts.org.uk
to find out more.

Use controls
like beer traps
to control slugs.

Add an insect house
to encourage natural
predators such as
ladybirds and lacewings -
they will help to
control aphids.

Try companion
planting. Combining
plants in the right way
can help them to ward off
pests. For example, growing
leeks and carrots together
will help deter carrot root
fly and leek moth.

Growing your own fruit
and veg is a brilliant
way for children to learn
where their food
comes from

Reuse

Plant a
fruit tree



Plastic bottle
greenhouse



Use plastic
bottles to protect
your seedlings
from the cold
and slugs.



Rather than
pots, try using
old food containers
to grow seedlings. Old
toilet roll tubes can also
be used and planted
straight into the
ground.



Hang up old
CDs to scare
off birds



Make planters
out of
unwanted
items



Wildlife Friendly Plants

Climbers

Old man's beard *Clematis vitalba*
Ivy *Hedera Helix*
Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*
Dog rose *Rosa canina*

Flowering Plants

Wallflower *Erysimum cheiri*
Primrose *Primula vulgaris*
Ice Plant *Sedum spectabile**
Sunflower *Helianthus spp*

Shrubs

Lavender *Lavandula angustifolia**
Fuchsia *Fuschia*
Hebe *Hebe "Autumn Glory"**
Firethorn *Pyracantha*

* will tolerate dry spells

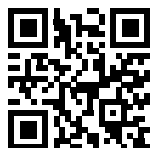
Trees

Field maple *Acer campestre*
Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*
Holly *Ilex aquifolium*
Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*

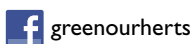
**Keen to buy plants that
will help pollinators?**



Look for the RHS Perfect for Pollinators Logo



For more wildlife friendly plant suggestions and further
information on how to green your garden visit
www.greenourherts.org.uk



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