

Trees in Front Gardens

WHY TREES?

Trees are the green lungs of our town. Towering cathedrals of nature shading our streets, parks and countryside, and of course our gardens too. There are lots of reasons to add trees into our gardens, like privacy, year round interest, fantastic home for wildlife, and most importantly they provide incredible majesty to our gardens. But lots of people are worried about planting them. They fear the roots will penetrate the foundations of the property and damage it, or that large canopies will shade out the plot and prevent other plants from growing. But I believe if you select the right compact cultivars it is possible to have a tree in a garden of any size. It's a bit like swapping a majestic cathedral for a much more modest spire.

(transcribed directly from BBC Gardeners World 19 Oct 2018)



PLANTING TREES IN FRONT GARDENS

Bring back colour and life to your road. You can help to improve the streets where we live, and contribute to the special character of Penarth.

The “Tree Strategy for Penarth”, published by Penarth Civic Society, follows community concerns about the continued loss of trees in the Town.

Mature street trees have a strong impact on public well being, improving the quality of the environment, and the image of Penarth as “The Garden by the Sea”.

The Tree Strategy proposes a target for Penarth to achieve “Woodland Town” status within 10 years - this will involve protecting existing trees as well as planting new.

A particularly important contribution to this target can be made in the front gardens of houses throughout the town. As part of our Tree Strategy, the Civic Society hopes to encourage householders with gardens to plant new trees and maintain existing trees.

See Tree Strategy for Penarth on [this website](#)

THE VALUE OF TREES

Planting and maintaining trees and shrubs in your front garden will:

- Provide privacy & sense of enclosure to your property.
- Help absorb noise pollution and improve air quality.
- Keep your house & drive cool in summer.
- Provide all-season value: flowers, foliage, fruits, bark.
- Provide a habitat for birds and other wildlife.
- Improve the quality, character and distinctiveness of your property and its surroundings.

SELECTION OF SUITABLE TREES AND SHRUBS

Careful consideration should be given to the choice of species, taking into account the points below:

- Trees and larger shrubs must be suitable for the space available (branches and roots) and their relationship with and distance to neighbouring properties.
- See what grows well in other gardens nearby.
- Balance privacy with the need to let light into the house.
- Soil conditions, drainage and space for root development.
- Location of overhead and underground cables, etc.
- Shape, Height & Spread. Many different sizes and forms of trees are available, including smaller species, weeping or narrow, upright forms. Larger shrubs may be better than trees; they can be pruned and shaped to give good effect.
- Select species whose roots avoid damage to foundations and paving.
- Purchase from reputable nurseries, which will advise on suitable species, planting distances and growth habit.

CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF TREES

New trees and shrubs will need careful management to ensure that they grow well. Watering maybe required until the trees are established. More mature trees also need ongoing care and attention to ensure they keep their natural shape and form.

Advice from a qualified tree surgeon may be needed for large trees, covering formative pruning, crown lifting, crown thinning, crown reduction & shaping.

See <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/advice/caring/>

ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

Guidance on the selection, planting and management of trees and shrubs is available from the following organisations:

- Royal Horticultural Society. www.rhs.org.uk
- BBC Gardening Pages.
- Gardening magazines such as Gardeners World.

Advice on the management of more mature trees may be obtained from qualified professional tree surgeons, and members of the Arboricultural Association. Work on large trees should be undertaken by qualified professional operatives who will undertake work in accordance with best practice and will be aware of statutory, health and safety and indemnity requirements.

PLANNING ISSUES

Planting a tree does not require planning permission. However, work on some existing trees - those which are either covered by a Tree Preservation Order or are located in a Conservation Order - require consent from the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Tree Preservation Orders

Many trees in Penarth are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). Owners of TPO trees are required to obtain consent from the Vale of Glamorgan Council for work they intend to carry out.

Conservation Areas

Much of Penarth is within a Conservation Area. If an owner intends to fell or carry out work to a tree that is in the Conservation Area but not subject to a specific TPO, they must give the Council 6 weeks notice in writing of their intention.

Replacement of Trees

The Council has powers in relation to TPO trees and trees in Conservation Orders to require replacement of trees that are felled. Owners must notify the Council if trees have been felled for safety reasons, and they can be required to plant replacements.

Paving Over Front Gardens

When you are considering paving over front gardens to create parking space, you are encouraged to see whether existing trees and shrubs can be retained or whether new planting can be incorporated. With careful design, it is often possible to ensure sufficient parking is provided whilst retaining existing planting or creating room for new planting. This will normally improve the appearance of the front garden as well as ensuring surface water is drained onto planted areas rather than into drains.

The RHS is running a campaign “Greening Grey Britain” - see the link below.

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/greening-grey-britain>.

This contains more information on the issues involved, and outlines possible design solutions as an alternative to paving over front gardens.

Planning permission is required for creating hard surfaces in gardens if the surfacing material proposed is not permeable or porous. It is preferable to have a permeable or porous surface so that rainwater will drain naturally into the ground and not run off into drains.

PLANT SELECTION - SUGGESTIONS FOR SMALL TREES AND SHRUBS

Trees and shrubs come in a wide variety of size, shape, leaf form and seasonal interest. Many are suitable for front gardens.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) website gives some very useful guidance on the selection of trees suitable for a wide range of situations. This allows you to factor in the soil type, space available, etc, to identify trees that may be suitable for your garden.

See <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/trees>

The RHS website also enables you to order trees on line, and this page gives more details to assist in the selection of suitable trees. This also shows the extent of branch and root spread for each species.

Suggested Trees for Front Gardens

The following is a selection of trees that may be suitable for front gardens in Penarth.

Please note that the links are provided for information purposes only and do not indicate a preference for any particular supplier.

Maximum Height 3m (12 ft)

- [Acer Campestre 'Carnival'](#) - Variegated Field Maple – Deciduous, White/pink edged leaves in Spring plus Autumn colour
- [Acer Palmatum](#) - Japanese Maple – Deciduous, Wide variety of shapes, leaf form and colour.
- [Ceanothus 'Trewithen Blue'](#) - Californian Lilac – Evergreen, Blue flowers in Spring
- Cornus Species - Deciduous
 - [C. Controversa 'Variegata'](#) - Wedding cake tree. Attractive layered flowers along the branches
 - [C. Kousa var Chinesis](#) - Flowering Chinese Dogwood
 - [C. Florida 'Cloud Nine'](#) - White flowering Dogwood
- [Euonymus europaeus 'Red Cascade'](#) - Spindle tree – Deciduous, Red ornamental fruits and Autumn colour
- [Malus 'Profusion'](#) - Flowering crab apple, Deciduous, Deep pink blossom and dark fruits
- [Physocarpus opulifolius 'Diablo'](#) - Deciduous, Purple foliage and clusters of white flowers
- Prunus Species - Flowering Cherry – Deciduous
 - [P. Kursar'](#) - Deep pink Spring flowers and bronze early foliage plus Autumn colour
 - [P. The Bride](#) - White blossom and Autumn colour

Maximum Height 5m (16ft)

- [Amelanchier alnifolia 'Obelisk'](#) - Alder leaved Service Berry – Deciduous, Small slender form with edible fruits
- [Amelanchier x grandiflora 'Ballerina'](#) - Service Berry, Ballerina – Deciduous, Showy white flowers with Autumn colour
- [Cercis canadensis 'Forest Pansy'](#) - Deciduous, Striking deep purple leaves and pink flowers, with strong Autumn colour
- [Cornus kousa 'Miss Satomi'](#) - Flowering Dogwood – Deciduous, Pink flowers with Autumn colour and fruits
- [Corylus maxima 'Purpurea'](#) - Purple leaved Filbert – Deciduous, Large leaves and showy catkins with edible nuts
- [Sorbus Vulmorinii](#) - Vilmorin's Rowan – Deciduous, Heads of white flowers and Autumn fruits. Fern like foliage with Autumn colour

Pendulous and weeping forms of trees and shrubs make ideal small sized specimens for front gardens with their showy spring flowers and Autumn colour.

Maximum heights ranging from 1.5 - 4m (5 – 12ft)

- [Cercis canadensis 'Cascading Hearts'](#) - Deciduous, Dramatic architectural branching form with small deep pink flowers in early Spring before leaves open
- [Cotoneaster 'Hybridus Pendulus'](#) - Evergreen, White flowers and red Autumn berries
- [Prunus 'Cheals' Weeping Cherry](#) - Deciduous, Double pink flowers in Spring. Leaves with a medley of colours through the seasons, bronze, red, green then yellow in the Autumn.
- [Prunus 'Pendulus Rubra'](#) - Deciduous, Pink flowers in Spring with Autumn colour
- [Malus 'Sun Rival'](#) - Deciduous, Showy white flowers with good Autumn colour and Crab Apple fruits
- [Malus 'Red Jade'](#) - Deciduous, Showy pink/white flowers with good Autumn colour and Crab apple fruits