

Suburb Character – hedges

Most residents are aware of the importance of Suburb architecture; many also know that the street trees are an important part of the street scene, but how many residents look at the hedges?

Hedges are a very important ingredient in what makes the Suburb so special. The beautiful uninterrupted lines of green along almost every road are very unusual in an urban setting and create a sense of unity for the eye.

Early planting schemes were chosen by a committee of residents. Determined to make the Suburb different they chose to plant Privet in Asmunds Place; Beech in Hampstead Way; Privet again in Asmunds Hill; and then from the corner of Asmunds Hill along past the Orchard into Temple Fortune Hill, Box. From the corner of Temple Fortune Hill for a short stretch opposite Queen's Court, Hampstead Way has unusual Maple hedges.

As with the street trees a variety of species were planted. Edmunds Walk, The Leys and South Square were *Lonicera nitida*; parts of Corringham Road, Meadway and Willifield Way were Wild Plum; and Eastholm, and parts of Erskine Hill and Hampstead

Privet in Hampstead Way



Way were Golden Privet. Ingram Avenue and Wildwood Road were planted with Holly: some of the original leases even specify the hedge species. Many of the leases specify the height: front boundary hedges should be no higher than 3' 6" (1.07 m). Just as importantly, the leases stipulate that hedges should be kept clipped back to the boundary line.

Many of the roads were planted up with Privet, and over the years other hedges across the Suburb have been wrongly replaced with Privet. More recently Leyland Cypress was a popular choice and currently large leaved shrubs such as Laurel or Photinia are in vogue.

As part of the Area Character Appraisal (see Gazette issues 4 & 5) Suburb hedges are being surveyed by members of the RA's Trees & Open Spaces Committee. A list will be available to assist residents who need to replant and the Trust will be asking that any new hedges should, if possible, follow the original planting scheme. However, the hedge police will not be out to get you. One of the prettiest hedges in the Suburb is a mix of Privet and pink Roses. It is in Oakwood Road and should be Cotoneaster. The owners should not worry: the Trust will not be insisting that a new Cotoneaster hedge be planted at once.

Privet in Fallosen Way



Yew in Willifield Way



Privet in Hill Top



Lonicera nitida in Edmunds Walk



Yew in Erskine Hill