

The purpose of this information sheet is to inform and encourage the landscaping of Shire road verges. Verges are part of the road reserve and belong to the Crown. Their primary purpose is to provide space for services and utilities (such as water, sewage, electricity and gas), but also provide public connectivity and contribute to the greening of the urban environment. The Shire controls the management of all verges but does not maintain them, and encourages residents to assist in enhancing the streetscape and the appearance of their own properties by landscaping the verges along with their front gardens.

## **Street Trees:**

Street Tree Masterplans, individually prepared for each estate by the Developer, determine the species/type of street tree provided. Each lot receives at least one tree on the front verge, and two or three trees along the side boundary for corner lots.

In some cases where street parking or footpaths are present, there is less available space for verge planting and fewer trees may be required. These lots require an individual assessment.

Within 3-4 years, planted trees can provide shade during hot days for people, cars and houses. This makes the local microclimate significantly cooler and more comfortable and invites birds, bringing residents in closer contact with nature. As well as providing temperature moderation and ambience, trees act as wind shelters and fire barriers, and contribute to passive solar design.

Under the trees the ground should stay soft, not compacted, and be protected by mulch from loss of moisture. Permeability of the ground and soil health matter greatly to the growth and maturity of a street tree. No grass, kerbs, bricks, walls or other structures should be placed within at least 1.5 m of tree trunks. Watering for the first 2-3 summers is essential for the plants' establishment.

Street trees are an asset for the Shire and their details are recorded. Once established, the Shire manages the street trees and replaces any that die. If mature trees are already present on the verge, they are protected and need special treatment. Residents may not prune or otherwise interfere with their street trees; management requests should be directed to the Shire.

## **What does the Shire recommend?**

In residential areas, verge landscaping treatments are encouraged to be of local native waterwise plants (groundcovers, shrubs and trees) with thickly mulched soil.

Recommended plants are low, wide growing shrubs and groundcovers (less than 0.6m tall), planted with one shrub per 2-3 square metres and the soil covered by a thick layer (75-100mm) of coarse and heavy mulch. Mulching will protect the soil from water loss and wind and water erosion, and improve its health and quality.

## **Is assistance available?**

Three programs are available to assist residents to manage and beautify their verges. The Landcare SJ office (9526 0012) runs annual programs for free herbicide (for weed control) and verge plants, providing residents with local native plants. In addition, the Shire has an annual winter street tree planting program, providing trees where they are missing or have died.

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## Contact Us

### Enquiries

Call: (08) 9526 1111

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Email: [info@sjshire.wa.gov.au](mailto:info@sjshire.wa.gov.au)

### In Person

Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale

6 Paterson Street, Mundijong WA 6123

Open Monday to Friday 8.30am-5pm (closed public holidays)



[www.sjshire.wa.gov.au](http://www.sjshire.wa.gov.au)



**Crossovers and parking on Council verges:**

The Shire can permit hardstand on up to 30% of the verge (after the construction of the crossover). Each proposal will be individually assessed. Hardstand is not recommended within 1.5m of trees, to avoid compaction and allow soil aeration and healthier trees. The verge may not be used for permanent parking, unless otherwise approved.

For crossovers information or specifications, please refer to the following link on the Shire's website:  
<http://www.sjshire.wa.gov.au/what-we-do/planning-and-building/crossovers/>

**What does the Shire not recommend?**

The following landscaping treatments are not allowed on verges in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale:

- Loose materials, such as gravel or blue metal
- Artificial grass
- Excessive hardstand, and materials such as concrete, bitumen or limestone
- Obstructions such as raised garden beds or edging, retaining walls, rocks or posts
- Basketball hoops or other permanent structures
- Lawns are not recommended but are not prohibited

**General Information:**

Some examples of LOW (less than 0.6m) growing shrubs and groundcovers suitable for the Byford area are listed below. These are recommended for verges as they will not obstruct sight lines, and can be planted anywhere (even along the truncation boundary on corner lots). More plants can be found in the Landcare SJ publication "Keeping it Local".

Please note that if you select a more wide-spreading plant, this can cover more area and use less resources as it requires fewer plants to establish a good cover.

Mulch should be contained or kept a minimum 0.6m behind the kerb line. Loose mulch near kerbs in urban areas tends to migrate into drains and block them. Planting on street corners should not exceed 0.6m in height.

Please see next page for additional information

**Groundcovers:**

***Grevillea obtusifolia*** prostrate form – one of the most “economical” plants. One plant will thickly cover 2-3 square metres of ground. This may easily replace the green of a lawn without the cost or regular maintenance. Low flammability plant.

***Hemiandra pungens*** – Snakebush – low growing, prickly, will control unwanted foot traffic. One plant covers a large area. Low flammability plant.

***Hardenbergia comptoniana*** – climbing plant. When planted as a monoculture (without other bushes), it can be used as a perfect, thick groundcover. If mixed with other plants it will climb over them. Low flammability plant.

***Billardiera heterophylla*** – Australian Bluebell – sturdy twiner with long stems and blue flowers in summer. Low flammability plant.

**Low growing shrubs:**

***Grevillea bipinnatifida*** – small shrub, spreading, with pretty red flowers. Birds love it. Low flammability plant.

***Banksia dallanneyi*** (previously known as *Dryandra lindleyana*) – small; attractive shape and unusual flowers. A must-have in bush gardens. Low flammability plant.

***Banksia nivea*** (also called *Dryandra nivea*) – Honeypot – attractive, an all-time favourite, similar to the above. Low flammability plant.

***Grevillea wilsonii*** – Native fuchsia – little beauty with red flowers. Low flammability plant.

***Hypocalymma robustum*** – Swan River Myrtle – small spreading bush with attractive deep pink flowers. Aromatic foliage, attracts birds.

**Strappy-leaved plants:**

***Patersonia occidentalis*** – Purple flag – attractive plant with strappy leaves. Low flammability plant.

***Conostylis aculeata*** – great small edge plant with yellow flowers and strappy leaves. Low flammability plant.

***Anigozanthos viridis*** and ***A. manglesii*** – two local kangaroo paws. The first for wetter positions and the second in general bush-garden settings. Low flammability plants.

**Medium shrubs:**

***Beaufortia squarrosa*** – not a dense shrub but very pretty, produces amazing red, orange or yellow flowers. Plant against the fence in groups of 3-5 for best results. Good for windy sites.

***Hypocalymma angustifolium*** – medium size, great flowering shrub, rounded, self-forming compact shape. Plant against the fence; likes wet conditions.

***Calothamnus hirsutus*** – soft to touch shrub, reliable, amazing plant. It will attract birds; they will even nest there.

***Adenanthos meisneri*** – another lovely soft foliage bush. It will attract birds; they will also nest there. Place it closer to fence line. Low flammability plant.