**The environmental benefit of trees and planting in front gardens**

Across the UK we are losing front gardens as they are hard paved, particularly for parking. Whilst the increasing number of cars and finding access to parking spaces makes this understandable for some, it does have significant negative environmental, sustainability and ecological consequences including the following:

* Loss of trees and space for them and other planting to grow and mature.
* An adverse impact on street scene character. Trees contribute significantly to making places attractive place to live and work in.
* A decline in property values: having an attractive front garden increases the attractiveness of the property to potential vendors giving properties ‘kerb appeal’. Houses with trees in the street sell more quickly and hold their value more so than on streets without trees.
* Increases water run-off into drainage systems. Trees, other vegetation and soil they grow in help reduce water run-off and flooding as the water ‘soaks’ into these surfaces. Gravel or shingle as a ‘hard’ area for parking is a better option in this regard.
* An increase in ‘urban heat’ which radiates and reflects of hard surfaces. Trees in particular also provide shade which helps cool us and our properties.
* Reduction in carbon capture and storage: plants take up approximately 25 percent of the carbon dioxide that humans have put into the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas that drives global climate change.
* A decline in garden habitats and biodiversity such as nest sites, food sources and shelter for birds and insects in particular.
* Trees and plants also absorb dust and particulate pollution therefore helping to improve air quality in urban areas.