



**AGM**  
**Large Garden Update**  
November 2023

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Committee / Large Garden Horticulture



KENSINGTON GARDENS SQUARE GARDEN ASSOCIATION

# Kensington Gardens Square



Garden Highlights



**Tree Works**

- Annual tree inspection and safety works – by Arboriculturist.
- Tree Removal and Replacement.
- Tree shaping and management of smaller trees.

**Shrubs**

- Hedge maintenance and care to ensure healthy growth.
- Large and medium shrub maintenance and care.

**Planting**

- Plant distribution throughout the gardens to ensure to develop healthy soil and ecology.
- Plant care and maintenance.
- New seasonal and perennial planting.
- Additional bulb planting.

**Lawn**

- Lawn care and seeding

**Garden Nursery**

- Provide and include planting left by residents where possible.

**Ecology**

- Birdbaths, nesting, insect biomes and biodiversity improvement work and care.

**Edging**

- Maintaining and ensuring a variety of edging throughout the garden.

**Pathways**

- Maintain and improve gravel pathways.

**Soils**

- Develop and enhance healthy soils and stormwater management.

**Irrigation**

- Maintain and irrigate garden as needed.

**Composting**

- Follow a 100% garden waste return policy.
- Compost development and use.

**Garden Structures**

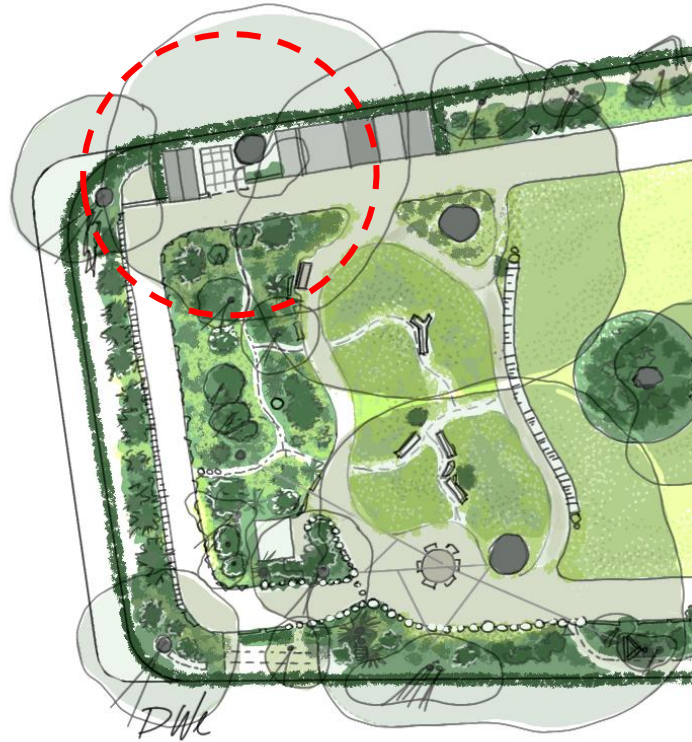
- Upkeep and maintenance of the various garden structures including fence and gates.



# New Garden Shed

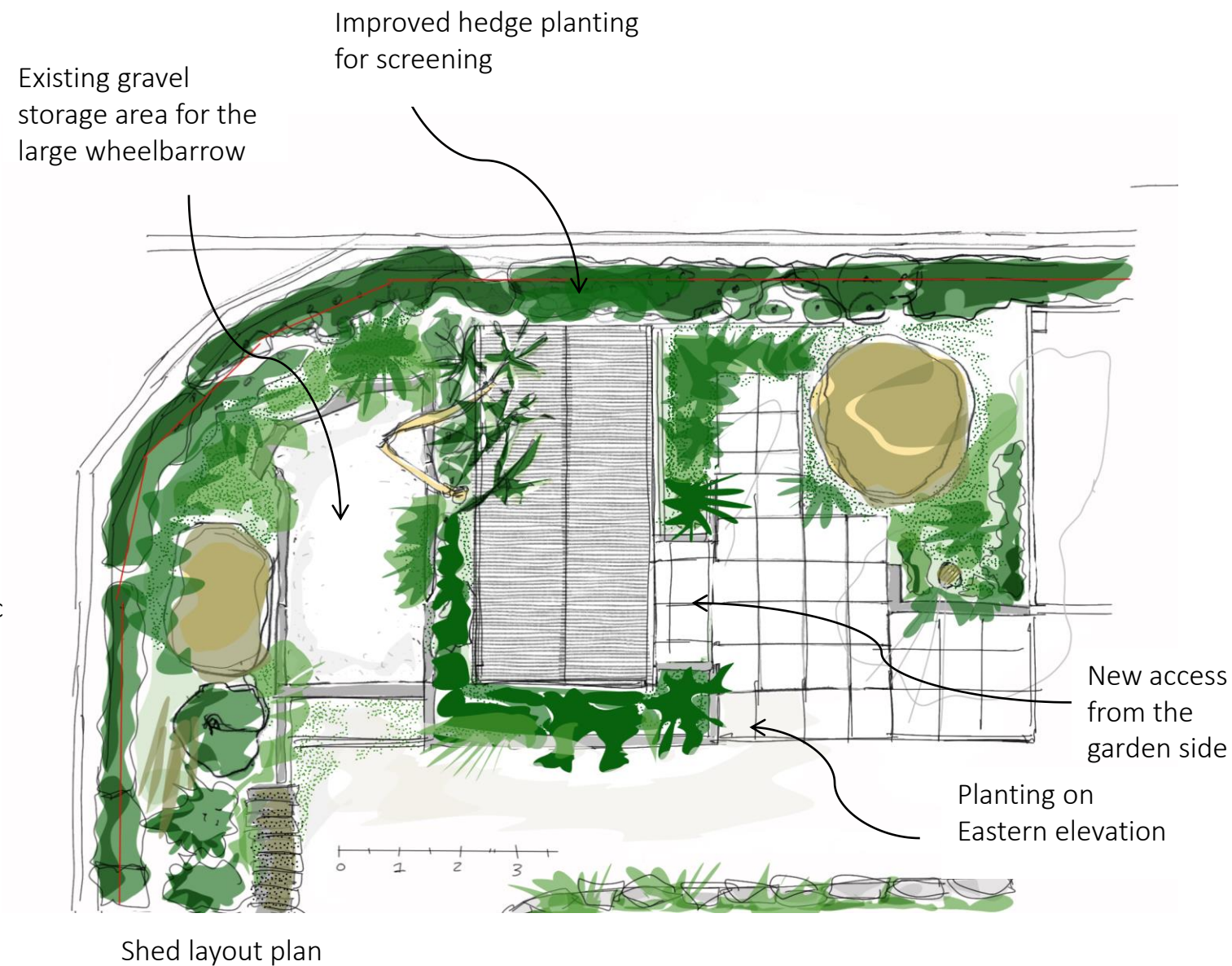
## Description

The shed has been installed and the surrounding landscape will be updated with step provision and landscaping to further soften the visual impact .



## Process

- Committee proposals
- Outline drawings, details and specifications.
- Coordination with WCC tree officer.
- Planning drawings and specifications specific to the shed.
- Drawings related to the landscape improvements.
- Quotations and specific works descriptions.
- Planning application and approval.
- Installation.
- Completion of the surrounding landscape.



Shed blending into the garden.



## Principles

### Ecology:

Adopt and develop current and emerging trends and standards for our horticultural and ecological approach and activities through:

1. Promoting and interconnecting the ecological systems of soil and its development, microbial & fungal soil enhancement, invertebrate and wildlife inclusion to create a more diverse and stable environment.
2. Supporting all wildlife through providing suitable and diverse habitats including nesting, resting, and feeding opportunities for all and ensuring no removal/ killing of any wildlife.
3. Incorporating and developing multi-species adaptable plants to better respond and combat drought.
4. Excluding all chemicals and sprays and specified with minimal use of foreign soil enhancers in line with our aims to being 100% organic.
5. Following a 100% plant reuse and recycling with zero waste policy.
6. Promoting and participating in specific initiatives towards known research bodies: Big Garden Bird Watch / Snail and Slug Survey / Garden Fungi Survey / Insect and Butterfly Surveys.
7. Maintaining and spreading compost from the gardens for continuous soil and biomass enhancement.
8. Promoting different areas for multi-species flowering lawn. Reducing mowing frequency for better floral support to insect and pollinators and to ensure a well aerated lawn for better drainage and healthier growth.
9. Maintaining wildlife support elements e.g., bird boxes, birdbaths, log walls, insect hotels, fungal patches, flowering support for pollinators including maintaining soil regeneration in support of a healthier system.
10. Promoting and developing selected areas as wildlife zones including leaving autumn leave layers for winter soil support.
11. Changing towards environmentally friendly management and upgrading to noise & pollution reduced/ sensitive maintenance practices and machinery.



## Principles

### Horticulture

To maintain and enhance the garden's landscape character, with the Large Garden best described as a shaded lawn garden surrounded by hedge screening with display flower beds, from one of a more 'municipal' nature to that of a 'fine', ecologically sound garden through:

1. Providing protection and care for the Plane trees and other smaller trees alike.
2. Establishing a long-term tree replacement plan to provide character and diversity.
3. Ensuring peripheral garden hedge maintenance such that the hedge is well proportioned, healthy with sufficient access to sunlight for a dense screening from the surrounding roads.
4. Maintaining large shrubs to ensure a well-proportioned shrub presence as part of the flower bed displays without reducing sunlight access.
5. Providing a multi-layered planting that provides structure and greenery throughout all seasons and protects the plant bed surface and all the organisms.
6. Providing flower bed display of predominantly seasonal and colourful flowers with interesting foliage with a specific focus on insect/pollinators health.
7. Providing a seasonal bulb planting display.
8. Maintain and develop a healthy soils system throughout the garden.
9. Maintaining pathways and other related surfaces.
10. Maintain and promote storm water infiltration.

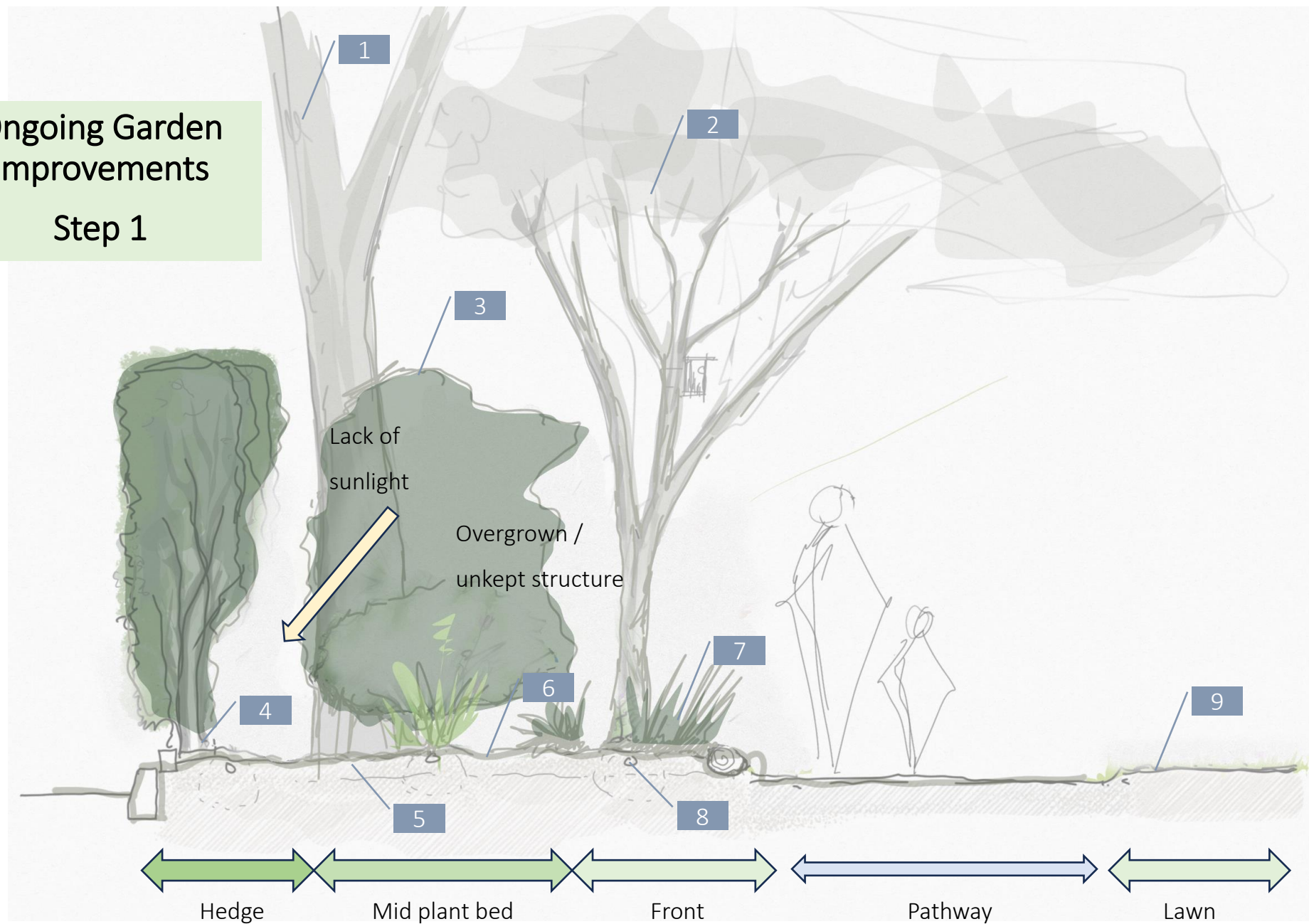


## STEP 1 Plant Bed Improvements

### Description

This garden edge section shows the status and structure starting point from where the garden soil and planting structure is adjusted and enhanced to accommodate and prepare the implementation of the principles. This is a multi-year process and progress is going well. This is ongoing, not a timed or hurried process.

### Ongoing Garden Improvements Step 1



### Ongoing garden development

1. Providing ongoing and annual protection and care for all the trees and ensure that the hedge is not deprived from sunlight.
2. Open and lift smaller trees to ensure upward growth and sufficient sunlight for all plant and hedge areas.
3. Reduce and maintain shrub structure to allow sufficient access to sunlight to surrounding areas and a better display proportions to the garden.
4. New hedge planting and work towards a denser screen.
5. Prepare and develop the plant bed soil profile, structure and surface including insect log piles, mulch layers etc. to further promote a more stable and diverse soils.
6. Redistribute/ relocate successful plants to create a multi-layered all-year plant cover approach. (no cost item)
7. Increase seasonal bulb planting displays.
8. Provide reduced seasonal responsive irrigation to maintain and promote the soil and the multi layered planting as required.
9. Maintain the multi-species lawn and lawn soil structure.

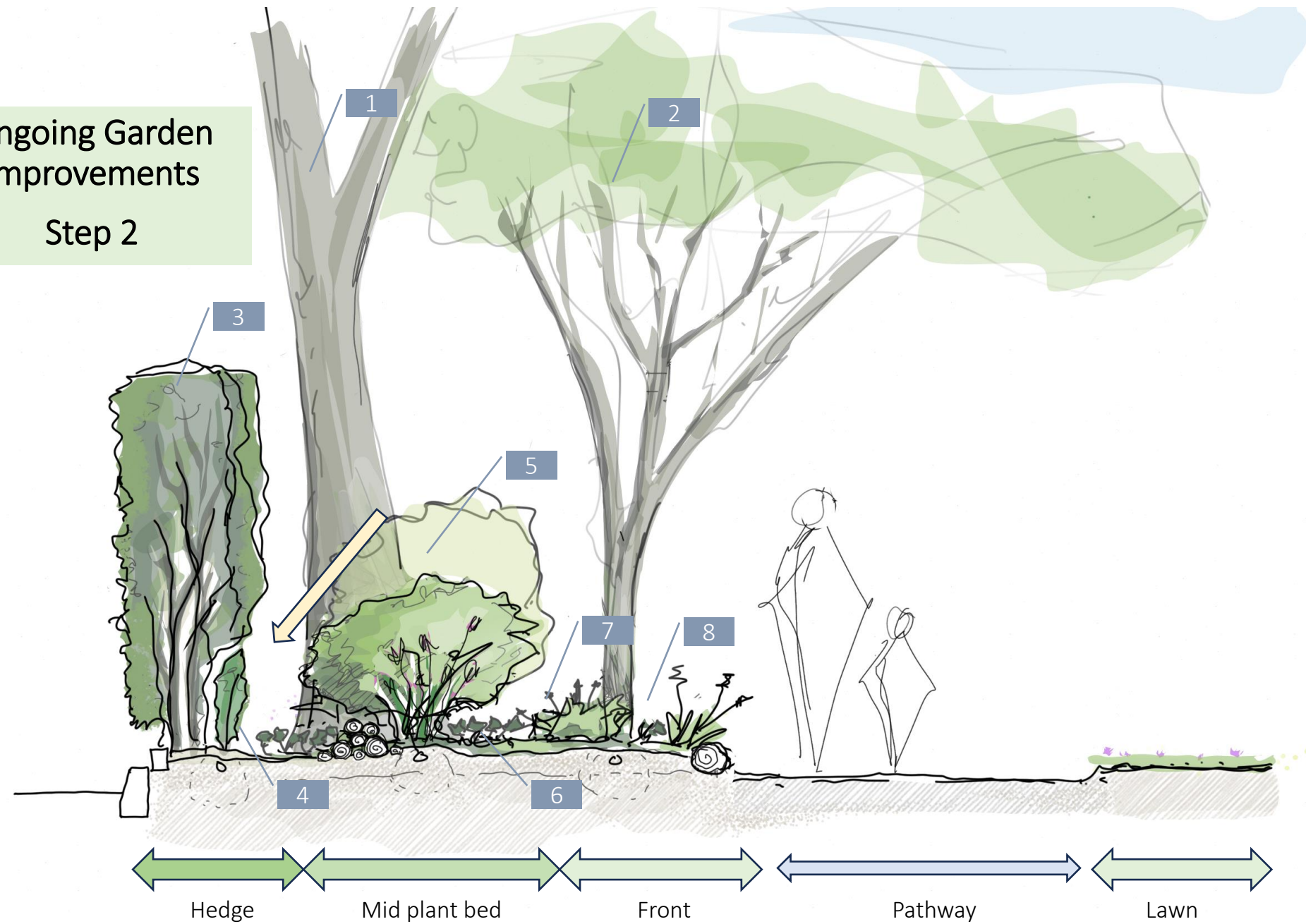


## STEP 2 Plant Bed Improvements – Following the Principles

### Description

This garden edge section shows the intermediate status - reducing shrubs, natural soil improvement, relocating successful planting together with seasonal bulb planting. This continues to provide a full garden display with a multitude of floral display throughout the year.

### Ongoing Garden Improvements Step 2



### Progress

1. Tree works and ongoing care/ maintenance.
2. Guiding new/ smaller trees upwards through selective cutting and branch removal.
3. Ongoing care and maintenance to the existing hedge, thinning out/ removal of deadwood and cutting growing shoots lower to dense up the hedge.
4. Integrate new hedge into existing.
5. Reduce large shrubs in a phased process by reducing their size once or more per year or as required.
6. Prepare and develop the plant bed soil profile, structure and surface including insect log piles, mulch layers etc. to further promote a more stable and diverse soils. Ensure sufficient carbon-based food source for microbial and fungal growth.
7. Redistribute/ relocate successful plants to create a multi-layered all-year plant cover approach. (no cost item)
8. Increase seasonal bulb planting display.

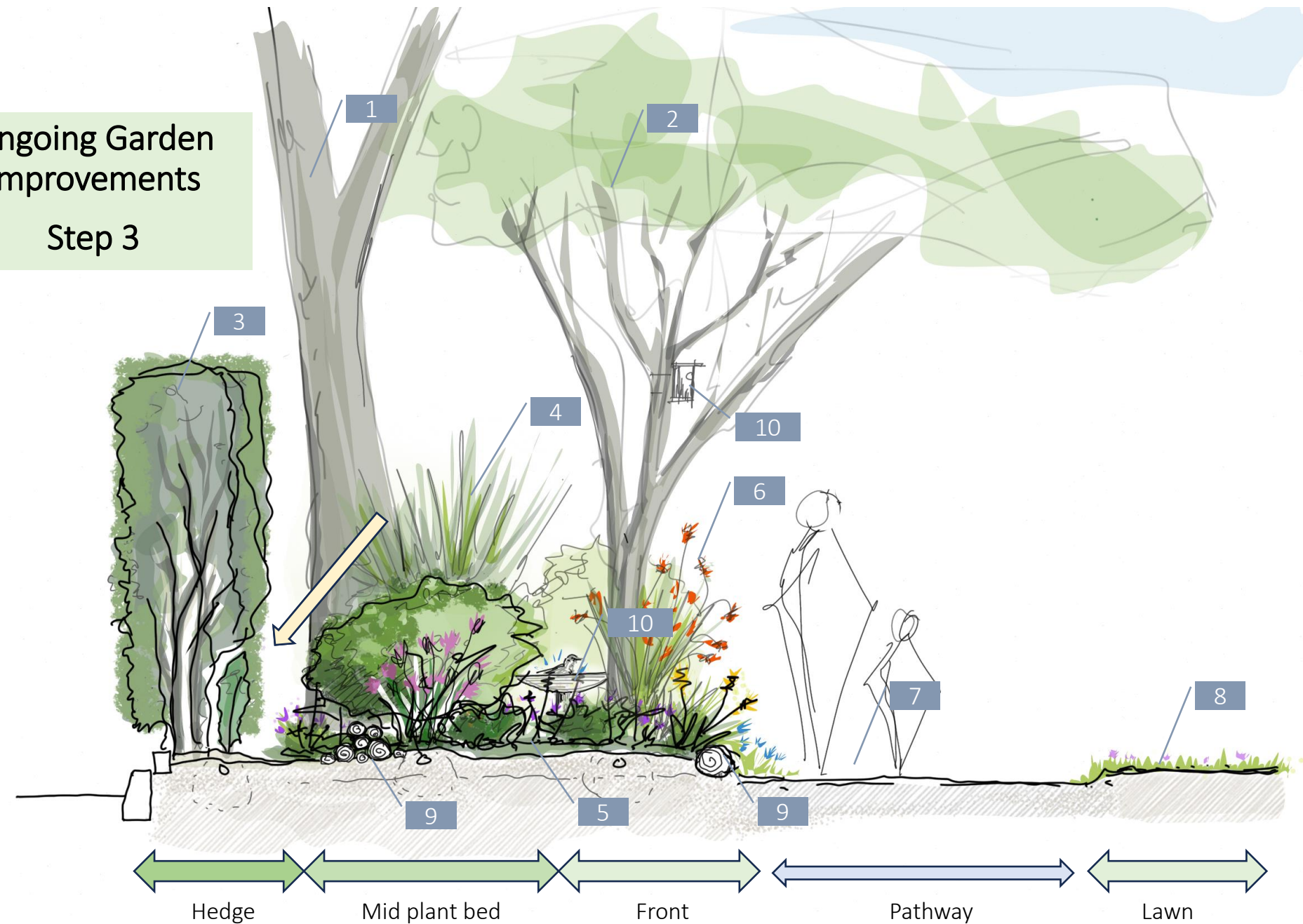


## STEP 3 Plant Bed – Completion and Ongoing

### Description

This garden edge section shows the completed / updated garden structure and planting display following all the principles to provide for a better all-year display and ecological balanced support.

### Ongoing Garden Improvements Step 3



### Horticulture Principles

To maintain and enhance the garden's landscape character, with the Large Garden best described as a shaded lawn garden surrounded by hedge screening with display flower beds, from one of a more 'municipal' nature to that of a 'fine', ecologically sound garden through:

1. Providing protection and care for the Plane trees and other smaller trees alike.
2. Following a long-term tree replacement plan to provide character and diversity.
3. Ensuring peripheral hedge maintenance such that the hedge is well proportioned with sufficient access to sunlight for a dense screening from the surrounding roads.
4. Maintaining large shrubs to ensure a well-proportioned shrub presence as part of the flower bed displays without reducing sunlight access.
5. Providing a multi-layered planting that provides structure and greenery throughout all seasons and protects the plant bed surface and all the organisms.
6. Providing flower bed display of predominantly seasonal flowers and interesting foliage with a specific focus on insect/ pollinators health, including seasonal bulb planting display. (programmed for this autumn)
7. Maintaining pathways and other related surfaces.
8. Maintain the multi-species lawn and its soil structure.
9. Maintain insect log piles and related ecological support items.
10. Maintain wildlife care items – birdbaths, nest boxes etc.



# Trees

## Description

Ongoing tree works programme (other than annual tree inspection and safety check done by specialist January 2023.)





# Garden Hedge

## Description

Ongoing hedge and associated works- completed 250 Lm out of the approx. 300 Lm hedge.

Refer to the maintenance section for specific/ associated tasks.

Ongoing reduction of Holy & Lime hedge growth to allow best chance for new hedge to develop.

Red line indicates ongoing shrub size management to promote a balanced edge to allow sufficient light onto the hedge.

North-western hedge section shows slower recovery due to high percentage shade.

Lift Plum tree canopies to allow light for hedge and plant bed.

Hedge gap recovery making good progress.

Red line indicates ongoing shrub size management to promote a balanced edge to allow sufficient light onto the hedge.

Hedge gap recovery making good progress.

Hedge damage by GH contractor.





## Shrub and Maintenance

### Description

Shrubs are shaped and managed as part of and to ensure peripheral hedge maintenance with sufficient access to sunlight for a dense screening from the surrounding road and presence as part of the flower bed displays at a human experience level.





## Shrub and Maintenance

### Example

Shrubs were reshaped for the benefit of the hedge and presence as part of the flower bed displays at a human experience level. Ongoing pruning is minimal.

**Yellow** indicates large shrubs that require annual shaping and forming.

**Orange** indicates shrubs that require occasional shaping and forming.

**Red** indicates ongoing shrub size management to promote a balanced edge to allow sufficient light onto the hedge.





## Soil/ Plant Bed Preparation Progress

### Description

Ongoing soil improvement to all the plant bed areas towards a better ecological healthy and sustained balance.

Progress in providing a multi-layered planting that provides structure, variety and greenery and colour throughout all seasons and protects the plant bed surface and all the organisms.

Responsive water distribution (irrigation) aligned with the seasonal rain events to maintain good soil health.





# Bulb Planting

## Description

Continue to enhance by selective addition of spring build planting.

This remains a popular community activity and another event will be planned for November proposing we advertise the weekend of 25/26 November subject to receiving the bulbs.





## Description

Wildlife support continues to contribute positively and enhance the variety of habitat provision. More leave mulch zones and 'resting' plant bed areas will be added especially in the north end of the garden. Larger concrete bird baths to replace the existing temporary ones for a more stable source of water. Bird nesting season was very successful, and all the boxes are to be checked, cleaned and resecured in late autumn. Bat boxes to be reinstalled as part of the annual tree works.





# Edges

## Description

The garden has numerous types of border edges which all are maintained and replaced from time to time allowing them to serve various purposes.



Log wall



Stepping logs



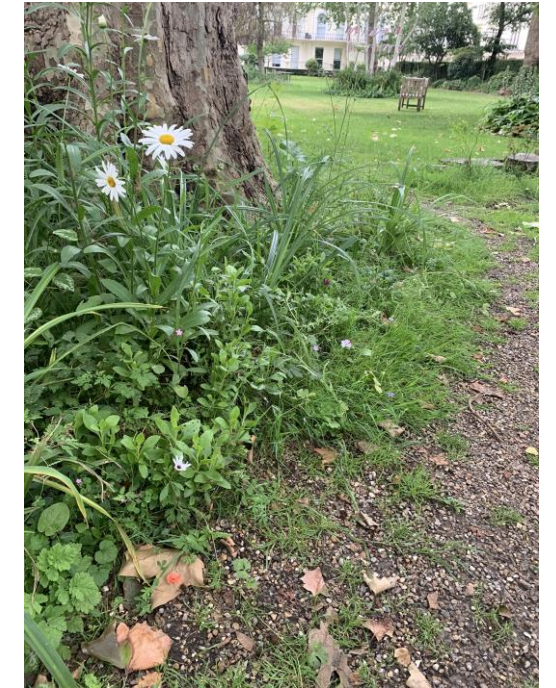
Stone



Horizontal logs



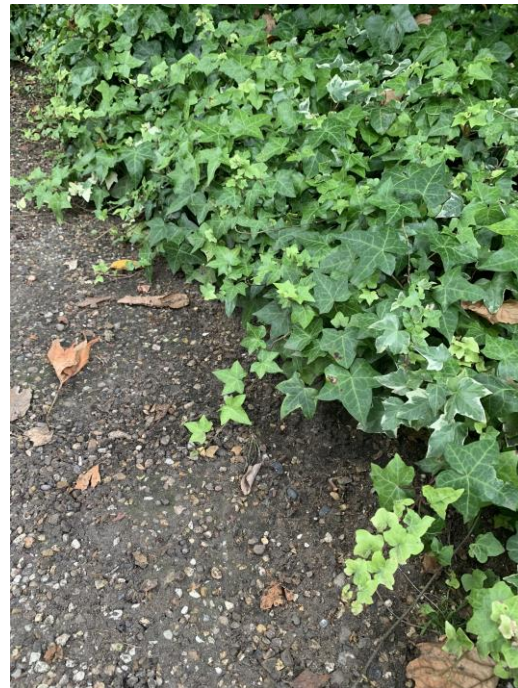
Seating and decaying logs



Soft natural edge to gravel



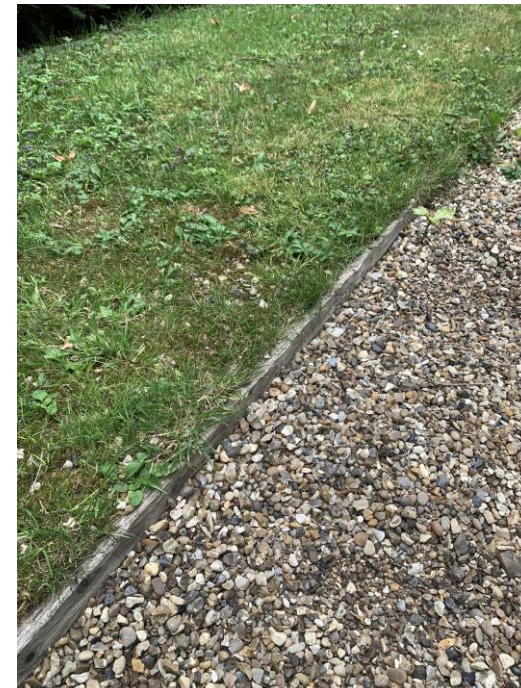
Planted edge over logs



Planting edge



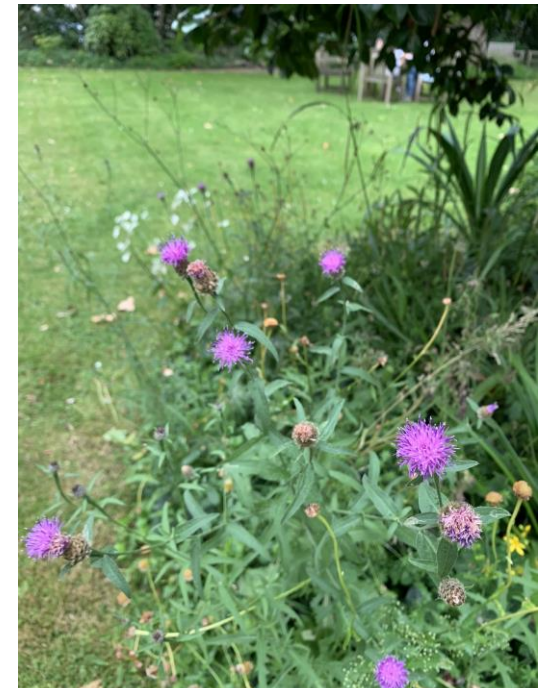
Soil edge (lawn)



Timber edge



Gravel edge



Soft natural edge to lawn



### Description

1. There is a varying watering schedule depending on the seasonal needs of the garden and it's also specific to different parts of the garden.
2. Watering is also understandably flexible around the garden maintenance; how busy the garden is on weekdays and weekends when most of the residents use the garden.
3. We have as a core value, environmental care, and enhancement of the gardens and as such we want to use water wisely and most efficiently and be responsive to the weather events. We are also asked to do this by the water authorities. You will know that many residents are concerned about this.
4. The lawn benefits from the watering which is mostly aimed at providing sufficient watering for the large plane trees to keep them healthy and free of diseases typically caused by stress. They are our greatest asset.
5. Watering is always just on a small portion of the garden and never in a way that requires anyone to move. It's a large garden so there is lots of space. There is also the small garden to consider, that also despite having the same type of sprinklers running, remains usable.

There are several other issues.

- Water also is an important support for soil development, microbial and fungal development and all the other invertebrates that use and develop this ecological drive. It also keeps the soil accessible for birds and other small vertebrates to use and search for food. Composting requires water for the same reasons.
- A further environmental point is that by default with hosepipe bans and warmer and drier summers - experimenting with planting to see which are the hardiest and survive with less water becomes key.
- It is therefore important to have a layered planting for a more varied seasonal display. It keeps the soil shaded, retains water, and benefits the organisms for an all-round healthy garden.

