

General Planting Notes (Detailed Standards Specification)

1. Plant Material

Quality Standards:
All stock to comply with HTA National Plant Specification and BS 3936 (Nursery Stock).
Trees: BS 6545:2014 (Establishment of Young Trees in the Landscape, from Nursery to Independence).
Transplants: BS 4043:1989 (Transplanting Root-balled Trees).
Herbaceous material: HTA standards and seasonal best practice.

Condition:
All stock to be healthy, vigorous, hardened-off, and free from pests, disease, weeds, and physiological defects.

Roots to be moist, not pot-bound, and protected during delivery, storage, and planting.

Rejected stock showing mechanical damage, chlorosis, cankers, or poor form.

Provenance: Preference for UK-grown and sourced plants, or EU-grown where provenance is traceable.

2. Times of Year for Planting

Deciduous trees and shrubs: November–late March.

Bare root stock: Mid-November–end February.

Conifers and evergreens: September/October or April/May.

Container-grown stock: Year-round if adequately irrigated.

Turf: Year-round if not frozen, droughted, or waterlogged.

Avoid planting during frost, snow, drought, or waterlogged conditions.

3. Site Preparation

Clearance:
Remove rubble >75 mm; deleterious material, weeds, and invasive species in accordance with Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

Avoid works during nesting season (March–July) unless approved by ecologist.

Soil Preparation:

Subsoil to be cultivated to minimum 450 mm depth (ripped where compacted).

Topsoil cultivated to 150 mm depth, free of weeds, stones >30 mm, and debris.

Imported topsoil: BS 3882:2015 Multipurpose Topsoil, sandy loam with pH 5.5–7.5, minimum 3% organic matter.

Topsoil Depths:

Grass: 150 mm

Shrubs: 100 mm

Trees: 750 mm minimum

4. Planting Operations

General:
All operations to comply with BS 4428:1989 (Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations).

Trees Pits:
Excavated 75–100 mm larger than rootball, depth to match root collar.

Break up base and sides of pit to prevent glazing.

Backfill with excavated topsoil enriched with PAS 100 compost (20–30% mix).

Trees to be set upright with root flare visible.

Stake using twin short stakes and rubber ties, or underground anchor system.

Shrubs & Herbaceous Planting:

Beds cultivated to 300 mm depth.

Stock planted upright, firmed in, and spaced as per planting design.

Hedges:
Planted in double staggered rows at 300 mm centres, 300 mm apart.

Whips 450–600 mm tall, protected by spiral guards.

5. Mulching:

Apply 75 mm depth of medium ornamental bark mulch (10–65 mm particle size) to all planted beds.

Keep mulch 50 mm clear of stems and trunks.

Alternative mulches (e.g. composted green waste, gravel) acceptable if approved.

Mulch to comply with PAS 100 Compost Quality Protocol.

6. Irrigation & Estimation:

Provide temporary or permanent irrigation for trees >16–18 cm girth.

Irrigation system to allow slow percolation to rooting depth.

Watering to be undertaken immediately after planting and at intervals to maintain moist soil profile.

Establishment watering: minimum 20 L/tree/week in growing season for the first 2 years.

7. Maintenance & Monitoring (5-Year Establishment Period)

Visits:

Month: November; minimum 3 per season.

December–February: as required in frost-free periods.

Operations:

Watering: as required to maintain moist but not saturated soil.

Weeding: remove all persistent weeds by hand or by approved herbicide.

Mulching: top up annually to maintain 75 mm depth.

Pruning: light formative pruning to BS 3998:2010 Tree Work.

Replacement: all failures to be replaced in the next planting season at contractor's cost.

Protection: maintain guards, stakes, and ties; adjust annually to avoid constriction.

Final Handover: Trees considered established at 5 years or once independently self-supporting and showing healthy growth.

Habitat Management Plan – 30 Year Term

Table A. Scheme summary and features to be managed

Item

Site baseline

Soft landscape elements

Planting schedule snapshot

Hard surfaces relevant to habitat function

Table B. Aims, objectives and targets

Theme

Aim

Visual amenity

Establish attractive, neat planting that frames entrances and boundaries

Summer Domestic cortilage with hardstandings, new dwelling, shrub beds and turf as per the approval.

Low hedge of *Lonicera nitida 'Maigrün'* managed to form a low hedge, shrub beds, and amenity turf.

Planting includes ornamental shrubs, hedges, amenity turf and ornamental trees as per approved plans.

Hard surface block paving for drives and thresholds to be kept free draining by routine maintenance.

Table C. Implementation programme and standards

Stage

What to do

When

Pre-commencement

Profile retained surfaces and soil, confirm set out, confirm services, poor free stock to BS standards

Decompress subsoil, import and spread BS 3882 topsoil to required depths, cultivate and level

Before any planting

Soil preparation

Prior to planting

Table D. Five year establishment and maintenance

Task

Completion

Planting

Install shrubs and hedges, water in, apply mulch

Check list against defective plants, provide watering schedule and maintenance log template

Completion

First suitable season, general Oct to Mar

Before first occupation or to an LPA agreed phase

Triggers/remedies

metric with current extent/condition to confirm corrective works within 12 months (grapping up, extra irrigation, reseeding, replacement planting)

Table E. Long term habitat management (years 6 to 30)

Element

Shrub beds

Management prescription

Maintain dense cover with rolling rejuvenation, remove dead/diseased material, gap up promptly

Low hedge 'Maigrün'

Maintain defined height and width, remove dead material, gap up promptly with pruning

Amenity turf

Mow to consistent length, consider one low mow per end of year if acceptable

Hard landscape with SuDS

Sweep and vacuum to maintain infiltration, maintain joints

Table F. Monitoring, triggers and reporting

Item

Method

Establishment inspections

Landscape contractor to check planting, failures, replacements, mulch levels

Biodiversity monitoring

Suitably qualified ecologist to check planting condition, nectar and berry provision

Metric reconciliation

Update statutory biodiversity

Before any planting

Prior to planting

Submit to LPA within 8 weeks

Table G. Roles and responsibilities

Role

Responsibility

Client/management company

Duty holder for 30 years, funds works, keeps records

Landscape contractor

Implements planting, 5-year establishment and routine maintenance

Ecologist

Leads biodiversity monitoring and metric updates, advises on timing and species constraints

Local Planning Authority

Receives monitoring reports and agrees variations as required

Compliance and good practice

- Replace all failures like-for-like in the next planting season.

- Continue like-for-like replacements.

- Maintain 95% minimum survival.

Table H. Long term habitat management (years 6 to 30)

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Table I. Monitoring, triggers and reporting

Item

Method

Establishment inspections

All visits in Years 1–5

Biodiversity monitoring

Years 1, 3, 5, 10, 20, 30

Metric reconciliation

Submit to LPA within 8 weeks

Table J. Monitoring, triggers and reporting

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Establishment inspections

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