

Sustainable Ideford A-Z G is for.....

'Greener' Gardens (from [10 ways to be more sustainable in your garden / RHS Gardening](#))

Living where we do we are surrounded by greenery so it is important that the way we manage our gardens compliments and compensates for the way the countryside around us is managed. Imitating what is happening in fields on our doorstep may be less valuable than adding to the portfolio of habitats and therefore the diversity of wildlife that already has a home in Ideford and surrounding villages.

10 tips for greener gardens.

- 1. Plant a tree** (or at least avoid felling one)- great for carbon capture!
Chose a species that is not common in the area around you and preferably a native species that will extend feeding opportunities for insects and birds particularly in early spring and late autumn.
- 2. Switch from mains to rains in your garden to save carbon.**
From a butt, or use washing up or bath water. Think before you pull the plug out whether that water could be useful for plants, particularly trees and shrubs in dry weather.
- 3. Go peat-free**
Keeping peat in bogs – not bags – is a crucial part of the fight against climate change.
- 4. Make your own compost**
Every 1kg of homemade compost typically saves over 0.1kg fossil CO2 emissions, which could save more than 5.1 kg carbon, per gardener, every year. It will also help reduce landfill and use of vehicles to transport organic waste to the recycling centre.
- 5. Pull up a paving slab**
Garden soils and perennial plantings play an important role in storing carbon.
- 6. Plants for Pollinators**
Pollinators need our help. Loss of habitat is one of the main reasons why we see fewer bees, butterflies and other insects visiting our gardens. Choose a wide variety of native plants that have long flowering periods and include some that flower early in spring and late in autumn.
- 7. Grow your own cut flowers**
Some imported flowers have up to 10 x the carbon footprint of home or UK-grown bouquets. Flowers from abroad may have been cultivated using pesticides and herbicides that are banned in UK.
- 8. Electrify your garden**
An average petrol power tool emits 0.848 kg carbon per litre of petrol used. It's not only carbon, they emit harmful particulate and noise pollution too.
- 9. Grow your own veg**
Eat more home-grown UK, local and seasonal fruit and vegetables from local sources or from your own garden or allotment. They will have higher nutrient content and represent fewer food miles. Picking as required will also reduce food waste.
- 10. Cut out pesticides**
We are made increasingly aware of the long term devastation caused by indiscriminate use of pesticides. Seek out alternative methods to protect your plants. Growing seedlings in trays first may help them survive mollusc attack and choose varieties of plants less susceptible to attack from pests and diseases.