



# Greening Our Streets Street Verge Landscape Guidelines



## Table of Contents

<b>What is a street verge? - Responsibilities and Permissions .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Greening our Streets - Green Plan.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Caution: Service Locations .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Street Verge Landscape Guidelines.....</b>	<b>5 - 14</b>
Lawns, Reticulation and Verge Gardens .....	5
Planting Guidelines .....	6
Mulching Guidelines .....	7
Verge Garden Design & Waterwise information .....	8 - 10
Approvals for Paving & Synthetic Turf .....	11 - 12
Other Surfaces, Materials and Edging.....	13
Written Application for Approval to Install Paving and/or Synthetic Turf to Verge.....	14
<b>Maintaining Your Street Verge.....</b>	<b>15 - 16</b>
<b>Plant List – Verge Gardens.....</b>	<b>centre pullout</b>



# What is a street verge?

A verge is the area of land located between a street kerb and boundary of an adjacent property. The verge provides access from the street to private or public properties. It also accommodates above and below ground public service utilities, such as street lighting, power, water, sewerage, gas, telephone and optic fibre cables.

## Whose responsibility is the street verge?

The City is responsible for the planting, removal and maintenance of all street trees.

Verge landscaping, including natural lawns, verge gardens, and other treatments, is the responsibility of the householder of the property adjacent to the verge. The City encourages residents to take pride in their verges, to enhance the aesthetic value of their properties and the streetscape as a whole.

## Do I need permission to landscape my verge?

### You do not need permission for:

- ✓ A natural lawn;
- ✓ Reticulation;
- ✓ Verges mulched with organic mulch; or
- ✓ Low growing waterwise verge gardens.

**Provided the verge guidelines have been observed to ensure that your verge garden will not interfere with vehicular and pedestrian sightlines and access.**

A waterwise verge garden is strongly encouraged by the City.

### You do need permission for these verge treatments:

- Paving (i.e. brick and concrete paving etc);
- Synthetic (or artificial) turf.

A written application to the City is required and approval granted prior to installation.

### The following verge treatments are not permitted:

- ✗ Inorganic mulches such as gravel, stone or crushed brick or rock;
- ✗ Particular items that protrude above the natural level of the verge.

Refer to the **Street Verge Landscape Guidelines** on page 5 for more information.

## Contact us

### Civic Centre

cnr Sandgate St & South Tce, South Perth

### Operations Centre

199 Thelma St, Como

**Telephone:** 9474 0777

Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5pm

### Collier Park Waste Transfer Station

199 Thelma St, Como

Monday - Sunday 9am - 4.45pm

**Telephone:** 9367 2492

**Email:** [enquiries@southperth.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@southperth.wa.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.southperth.wa.gov.au](http://www.southperth.wa.gov.au)

## Greening our Streets – Green Plan

The City of South Perth Green Plan aims to protect, link and enhance public and private green spaces and biological resources within the City.

Trees play a vital role in providing fauna corridors between bush sites and in establishing ecological links. The City plants local native species of street and park trees wherever possible.

Street trees, natural lawns and verge gardens reduce storm water run off which ends up in our rivers and other waterways. Excess nutrients from stormwater contributes to unhealthy water and algal blooms.

Residents can contribute to environmental links and aid stormwater management by planting local native plants on their verges and in their gardens.

## Caution:ServiceLocations

Before any landscape or excavation work, call 'Dial before You Dig' on 1100 or go to [www.1100.com](http://www.1100.com) to find out the location of any below ground services on your verge.



**Note** - Anyone who installs a verge treatment of any type, or purchases a property with an already installed verge treatment, acknowledges that they:

- Maintain the verge installation so that all Street Verge Landscaping Guidelines are met; and
- Indemnify the City of South Perth against any claim or action whatsoever that may arise as a result of the verge installation.



# Street Verge Landscape Guidelines

These guidelines will help you establish and maintain your street verge to a high standard.

**The following verge treatments are permitted without approval from the City, provided the guidelines outlined are met.**

## Lawns

- Refer to the brochures *Environmental Guide for the Establishment and Maintenance of Home Lawns and River Friendly Lawns and Gardens*;
- Natural lawns should be kept mown to the height recommended for that season.

**Note** - Synthetic turf is not considered a substitute for natural lawn, but may be approved as a verge treatment in particular situations. Approval is required from the City prior to installation. Refer to page 12 for more information.

## Reticulation

- Reticulation should be designed to avoid waste – minimise spray drift outside the verge area and don't spray onto footpaths or roads;
- Sprinklers should be retractable or 'pop-up' types;
- Sub-surface and drip irrigation are recommended.

## Low Growing Waterwise Verge Gardens

The establishment and maintenance of a 'waterwise' low growing verge garden is encouraged by the City.

Verge planting with low growing shrubs and groundcovers is the City's preferred verge treatment. Low fertiliser and low water use plants such as local species are preferred as these will reduce pressure on our depleting water supply and aid biodiversity.



*Eremophila glabra and ficinia nodosa, Henley St roundabout*

# Verge Garden Planting Guidelines

These guidelines help ensure that the sightlines and safe access of pedestrians and road users are maintained.

Please follow these guidelines when planting your verge:

- Street trees, including the tree roots, should be protected and not damaged during all verge works. If you require a street tree/s for your verge, please contact the City (see page 3).



- Plants should not interfere with vehicle or pedestrian sightlines and must be maintained to a height of less than 75cm. Refer to the Plant List at the back of this brochure for plants that naturally grow to this size, including low growing groundcovers. Choosing suitable plant species will minimise the need for regular pruning.
- Plants should not encroach onto footpaths or roadways.
- Where a footpath does not exist on your side of the street, a two-metre-wide unplanted area for pedestrian access must be maintained along the length of the verge at the kerb edge.
- Prickly, thorny, 'spear like', poisonous, toxic, or weedy plants should not be planted on the verge. This includes roses with thorny stems, yuccas, cacti, and agaves. Refer to [www.weeds.org.au](http://www.weeds.org.au), for information on plants considered weeds in Perth.
- There should be no holes, stakes (other than street tree stakes), bollards, dividers, trip hazards or other physical barriers that protrude above the level of the verge.
- Areas not planted with lawn must be mulched with organic mulch, as this assists in controlling weeds and maintaining moisture – see next page.

# Verge Mulching Guidelines

- Organic mulch (mulch from plants such as bark mulch) should be installed to all verge gardens to a minimum depth of 75mm;
  - Mulched verges may be left unplanted, or planted with a verge garden;
  - Use large particled mulch heavy enough to remain in place and not drift onto footpaths and roads. It must not contain sharp or otherwise dangerous material;
  - Do not use mulch containing peat as it retains moisture on the surface of the soil, encouraging shallow root development and increasing reliance on irrigation;
  - Use seasoned mulch. Do not use 'green' mulch that has too recently been produced, as it causes draw down of nutrients which adversely affects plants, and it often has undesirable seeds that may germinate;
  - The finished level should be no higher than the surrounding top of kerb and footpath heights. This may require some soil removal in preparation for your garden.
- Mulch is available for City residents only. It can be obtained from the Collier Park Waste Transfer Station (see page 3).**



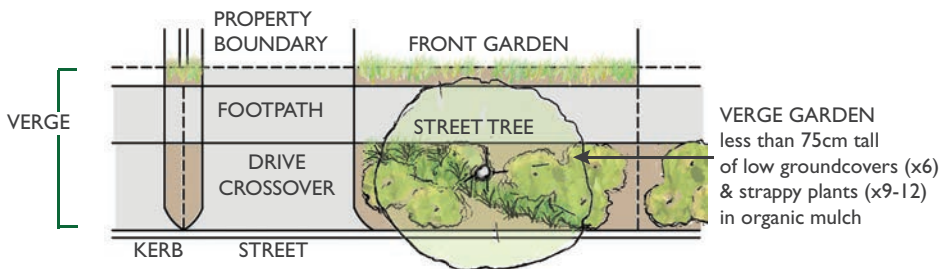


# Verge Garden Design Tips

- Plan your garden on paper as a sketched plan so that you know what plants to acquire;
- If you wish to include an edge or divider between components of your verge garden, or the adjacent property's verge, use the guidelines under 'Other Surfaces, Materials and Edging' (see page 13);
- Choose plants suited to the site's environmental conditions – group plants with similar water/ fertiliser/ shade/and sun requirements;
- Mass plant the same species for increased effect as well as ease of maintenance. A simple scheme of two or three species on a verge can be a very attractive option;
- Consider the various forms of the plants – to aid sightlines, place groundcovers adjacent to footpaths and/ or the two metre access edge along the verge, and low shrubs and strappy/grassy plants elsewhere;
- Consider plant form and colour and tie these in with your property's materials and the remainder of your garden;
- Consider 'lawn alternatives' – mass plant low growing groundcovers of one or two species to create an alternative 'green carpet' to the verge.

The following are samples of sketch plans of street verge gardens that would meet the planting guidelines outlined.

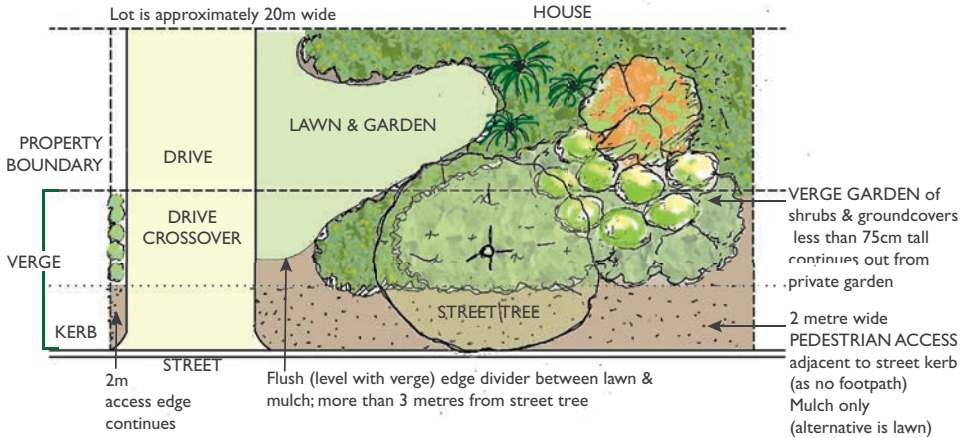
## Plan of Small Verge With Footpath



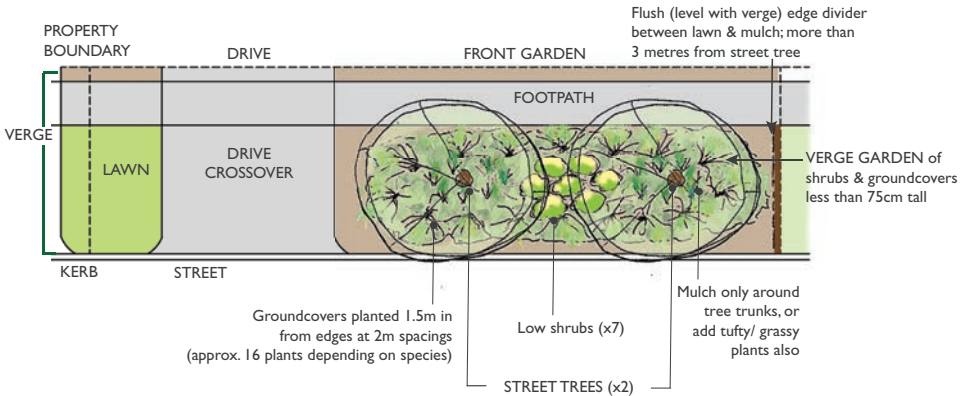
Lot is approximately 12m wide with a 4m wide driveway

Neighbour's verge continues the planting theme

## Plan of Verge Without Footpath



## Plan of Large Verge With Footpath



Verge plans by Karen Lancaster, City of South Perth, 2011

# Where can I see a waterwise garden and get waterwise plant information?

Many of our reserves and gardens have waterwise plants on display which are suitable for verges and home gardens. The City will install a number of demonstration verge gardens in the near future.

Some suggested waterwise verge plants are listed in the Plant List at the back of this brochure, or contact your local plant nursery or a landscaper for information.

The Water Corporation and Great Gardens websites provide information on waterwise plants for Perth at:

- [www.watercorporation.com.au/w/waterwise\\_plants\\_perth.cfm](http://www.watercorporation.com.au/w/waterwise_plants_perth.cfm)
- [www.greatgardens.info](http://www.greatgardens.info)
- [www.beyondgardens.com.au](http://www.beyondgardens.com.au)



# Approval for Paving or Other Hardstand and/or Synthetic Turf

Trees can be severely damaged by soil compaction, damage to their roots, 'collar rot' and lack of water and nutrients. Our street trees are a valuable asset that need to be protected. Refer to the brochure 'Caring for Our Street Trees' on the City's website (see page 3) for more information.

In order to protect our street trees, and aid stormwater management, the following verge treatments require individual assessment by the City.

**These treatments require a written application to the City. They must NOT be installed PRIOR to receiving written approval by the City.**

## Paving

- Public amenity and streetscape aesthetic will be taken into account as part of each assessment.
- Paved areas should not provide formal verge parking, unless approved in writing by the City.
- Verges cannot consist of more than **50 per cent** of hardstand area. This includes driveway crossovers + footpaths + all hardstand materials including concrete, asphalt, paving, and synthetic turf.

(The exception is for verges of less than 1.5 metres wide, not including the width of the footpath; and isolated remnant portions of verge less than 6m<sup>2</sup>; where it is not practical to maintain a natural lawn or garden).

- Pavers used on the verge must be heavy duty and at least 60mm thick.
- Small format pavers (for example cobblestones, brick sized pavers and pavers up to 300 x 300mm) are preferred, as they have a higher level of permeability than larger format paving, allowing for better drainage and water permeation. Porous pavers are strongly encouraged.
- If a property adjoins two streets, each street verge will be considered independently.
- A minimum of 3m, depending on the tree species and size\*, is required between the trunk of a street tree and the installation of paving.
- Installation of pavers and other materials should be to the required standard of the City; including compacted sub base and properly retained edges.

*\*The 'Tree Protection Zone' (TPZ) for your street tree will be assessed by the City as part of the application process.*

## Synthetic Turf

- Public amenity and streetscape aesthetic will be taken into account as part of each assessment.
- Verges should not consist of more than **50 per cent** of hardstand area. Due to the hardstand nature of the compacted sub base required for synthetic turf, the total area of synthetic turf + all hardstand (including crossovers, footpaths, asphalt and paving) should not cover more than 50 per cent of the verge.
- The exception is for verges of less than 1.5m wide, not including the width of footpath; and isolated remnant portions of verge less than 6m<sup>2</sup>; where it is not practical to maintain a natural lawn or garden.
- If a property adjoins two streets, each street verge will be considered independently.
- A minimum of 3m, depending on the tree species and size\*, is required between the trunk of a street tree and the installation of synthetic turf.
- The supply and installation of synthetic turf must be to the required standard of the City.

*\*The 'Tree Protection Zone' (TPZ) for your street tree will be assessed by the City as part of the application process.*



# Other Surfaces, Materials and Edging

## Other Surfaces and Materials

### NOT PERMITTED

- X** Inorganic mulches such as pea gravel, gravel or other stone aggregates, crushed brick or rock are not suitable as surface treatment for verges.
- X** Kerbing, rocks and other elements including bollards, decorative items and garden ornaments that protrude above the natural level of the verge, and physical barriers.

## Edgings

**PERMITTED** as a component of a permissible verge garden, without written approval from the City:

- ✓** Edgings and dividers on verges or between verges, only to the extent required to provide sufficient division, provided they are:
  1. Flush with the verge surface, footpath and the top of the kerb; and
  2. At least 3m from a street tree; and
  3. Constructed of flush concrete kerbing (not raised extruded kerbing), a minimum thickness of 100mm, or bricks or trafficable pavers, which are securely fixed, for example laid on concrete.



# Written Application for Approval to Install Paving and/or Synthetic Turf to Verge

The written application must include:

- A scaled plan at 1:100 of the proposed verge treatment/s, including –
  - Relevant or existing features such as street trees and driveways/crossovers, all clearly labelled;
  - Distances between features must be shown, for example, '2.2m street tree to edge of driveway';
  - Details of installation for hardstand areas; including materials (paver/synthetic turf type), sub base and edge retention;
- Where the installation also includes a verge garden or lawn;
- A list of plants to be used, using botanical names; and
- Proposed or existing irrigation systems.

Application Forms are available from the City's administration office (see page 3).

An Administration Fee will be incurred for processing the application and inspecting the verge.

Approval will be subject to the conditions that the City considers appropriate.

Public amenity and streetscape aesthetic will be taken into account as part of each assessment.

If verge treatments that require approval are installed without City approval, the City may require they be amended or removed entirely, with the cost incurred by the resident.

Applications are to be submitted to:

Director, Infrastructure Services  
City of South Perth  
Cnr Sandgate St and South Tce  
South Perth WA 6151



# Maintaining Your Street Verge

## Street Trees

The City undertakes all street tree care as part of its maintenance program and keeps records of all of the 17,000 plus trees in the City. It is an offence for anyone else to prune or remove a street tree. If you require a street tree/s for your verge, please contact the City. For more information, refer to the City's 'Caring for our Street Trees' brochure on the City's website (see page 3).

## Access and Sightlines: Footpaths and Roads

- In order to maintain access and sightlines to footpaths and roads, all plants and tree branches encroaching from private properties and verge gardens need to be regularly trimmed.
- Any faults or damage to footpaths should be reported to the City.



## Chemicals and Fertilisers

- To minimise over fertilising, fertilisers should only be applied when symptoms of nutrient deficiency occur, such as yellowing. Local native plants require less fertiliser than introduced plants as they are adapted to our low nutrient soils.
- Fertilise in spring or autumn, as summer fertilising increases water use, and fertiliser applied during winter may be washed into stormwater drains or leached into groundwater.

For more information on fertiliser use please visit [www.fertilisewise.org.au](http://www.fertilisewise.org.au)

- Weed, pest and disease control should be dealt with using physical non-toxic means, rather than relying solely upon chemical control.
- Only chemicals such as herbicides or pesticides approved for use in the domestic garden may be used.
- Caution should be applied during application, with manufacturer's directions followed. Targeted application is required, with a preference for wiping, brushing or hand held spraying.
- You may request the City not to spray your kerb or footpath during the City's street maintenance program.





## Levels and Trip Hazards

- The level and grade of a verge should remain consistent with the surrounding levels. Edging and dividing materials, and service pits should remain level with the ground.
- There should be no holes, stakes (other than street tree stakes) or trip hazards, including bollards and physical barriers on your verge.

## Verge Works and Service Maintenance









- When carrying out verge works, to reduce the risk to yourself, pedestrians and road users, safety precautions must be taken.
- Please remember that service providers, including the City, retain the right to access the verge for service maintenance works that may disrupt or damage verge gardens and other verge treatments. Reinstatement is generally at the cost of the land owner.

## If You Are Building – Verge Licences







No materials are to be stored on the verge without a Verge Licence. Verge licences can be obtained from the City (see page 3). Refer to *Form of Application for Verge Treatment Approval* on the City's website (see page 3).






# Plant List – Verge Gardens














Some suggested waterwise plants that generally grow less than 75cm tall. However, growth habits of plants will vary with soil condition and watering, therefore some may require pruning to remain below the required 75cm height.

Grassy and Strappy Plants			
Botanical Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Comments
 <i>Anigozanthos humilis</i>	Cats Paw	Small Clumping to 45cm tall	Brilliant yellow, red and orange paw flowers in spring. A fantastic perennial plant that attracts honeyeater birds. Lime tolerant.
 <i>Anigozanthos ssp.</i>	Kangaroo Paws	Choose the lower growing varieties up to 75cm tall	Many cultivars including dwarf growing hybrids of various flower colours. Make good cut flowers. Best grown in full sun.
 <i>Conostylis candicans</i>	Grey Cottonheads	Tufted to 30cm tall by 50cm spread	A lovely grass-like plant with grey foliage and bright yellow bobble flower heads.
 <i>Dianella revoluta dwarf</i> – (e.g. 'Little Rev')	Blueberry Lily dwarf	Clumping flax-like plant – choose dwarf varieties	This tufted plant has a growth form similar to flaxes. Important for the native blue-banded bee.
 <i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	Knotted Club Rush	Small Rush to 70cm tall by 50cm to 1m wide	Dark green cylindrical leaves. Pruning is effective. Has a tendency to spread rapidly by seed.
 <i>Orthrosanthus laxus / multiflorus</i>	Morning Iris	Clumping Plant – to 50cm high and 50 – 100cm wide	Attractive blue flowers from August to November. Mass plant for good effect.
 <i>Patersonia occidentalis</i>	Purple Flag	Clumping Plant to 60cm tall	Local tufted perennial that produces blue, purple or violet flowers spring and summer.
 <i>Thysanotus multiflorus</i>	Fringe Lily	Clumping Plant to 50cm tall by 30cm	Attractive herb with a flat bladed leaf and delicate mauve purple flowers spring to early summer.

Photos for *Anigozanthos humilis*, *Orthrosanthus laxus / multiflorus*, *Patersonia occidentalis*, *Thysanotus multiflorus*, *Banksia petiolaris*, *Enchylaena tomentosa* © www.plantsman.com.au

Groundcovers			
Botanical Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Comments
 <i>Banksia blechnifolia</i>	Southern Blechnum Banksia	Prostrate plant 25–45cm tall by 1–3m spread	Pale woolly orange Banksia flowers at ground level late winter to spring. Very hardy.
 <i>Banksia petiolaris</i>	Petiolaris Banksia / Creeping Banksia / Prostrate Banksia	Prostrate plant to 1m spread	Ornamental toothed leaves with reddish-pink new growth Large yellow flower spikes.
 <i>Calothamnus quadrifidus prostrate</i>	Prostrate Netbush / One-sided Bottlebrush	Prostrate to 60cm tall by 2m spread	Quick growing, bird attracting, red flowers in spring and summer.
 <i>Dampiera linearis</i>	Common Dampiera	Groundcover 15cm to 60cm tall	Wedge-shaped leaves and attractive blue flowers. Can be grown alongside non-native plants to great effect.
 <i>Enchylaena tomentosa</i>	Barrier Saltbush / Ruby Saltbush	Spreading groundcover 10cm to 60cm tall	Attractive blue-grey foliage produces berries that attract many types of honeyeaters. Effective at excluding weeds once established.
 <i>Eremophila glabra prostrate</i>	Tar Bush / Emu Bush e.g. Kalbarri Carpet	Prostrate to 20cm groundcover to 1m spread	Attractive silver foliage. Yellow / Orange flowers that attract small birds.

Groundcovers continued			
Botanical Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Comments
<i>Frankenia pauciflora</i> 	Sea Heath	Less than 45cm high and 50cm wide	Tolerant of saline conditions. Lovely pink/white flowers from July to February.
<i>Grevillea curviloba</i> ssp. <i>Incurva prostrata</i> 	Narrow Curved Leaf Grevillea groundcover	Low growing – 3m spread **ensure groundcover variety	Light green leaves with perfumed white spider flower in spring. Rapid growing in a moist well drained soil in full sun.
<i>Grevillea obtusifolia</i> Gingin Gem 	Gingin Gem Grevillea	Dense low groundcover to 3m spread	Good lawn substitute – low dense fast growing hardy green groundcover with small pinkish spider flowers in winter/spring.
<i>Hemiandra pungens glabra</i> 	Snake Bush	Groundcover 2-3m spread	Bird attracting mauve/ pink or white flowers in spring.
<i>Kennedia prostrata</i> 	Running Postman	Ground Creeper to 2.5m spread	Attractive prostrate groundcover with red flowers. May need to be replaced every couple of years.

Shrubs			
Botanical Name	Common Name	Growth Rate	Comments
<i>Adenanthos cuneatus</i> 	Coastal Jugflower	Select compact/ groundcover eg. Coral Carpet to 50cm tall by similar width	Silver green foliage with interesting pink/red/pale green new growth. Small purple pink flowers provide nectar for honey eating birds.
<i>Banksia/Dryandra nivea</i> 	Couch Honeypot	Ground cover / low shrub to 50cm tall	Attractive foliage and interesting 'honeypot' flowers. Can be slow to establish, but is very attractive to many native insects and small birds.
<i>Chrysocephalum baxteri</i> 	Paper Daisy, Everlasting	Less than 45cm tall by 50cm wide	Long lasting white daisy flowers with a yellow centre, are produced from late spring to early autumn.
<i>Eremaea pauciflora</i> 	Orange flowered eremea	Small erect shrub from 30cm tall	Stunning bright orange feather flowers spring to summer.
<i>Grevillea crithmifolia prostrata</i> 	Crithmifolia Grevillea prostrate	Low growing – 3m spread **ensure prostrate variety	Aromatic white flowers from winter to spring on a green carpet of very dense low growing shrub. Quick growing.
<i>Grevillea preissii</i> 'Seaspray' / 'Gilt Dragon' 	Seaspray Grevillea / Gilt Dragon Grevillea	Small shrub to 70cm tall and similar width	Soft grey green foliage and small red flowers. Fast growing.
<i>Grevillea</i> ssp 	Various species of Grevillea	Groundcovers and low shrubs to 75cm tall	Various species of Grevillea in addition to those listed above are available that suit verge planting.
<i>Hibbertia racemosa</i> 	Stalked Guinea Flower	Small Shrub to 50cm tall and wide	Bright yellow flowers winter to early summer.
<i>Leschenaultia floribunda</i> 	Free-flowering Leschenaultia	Small Shrub to 60cm high x 80cm	Attractive small shrub with blue to purple flowers. Looks very effective in group plantings.
<i>Leucophyta brownii</i> 	Silver Nugget or Dwarf Cushion Bush	Dense small shrub - choose compact dwarf forms	Silver leaves with inconspicuous yellow flowers in summer.
<i>Melaleuca incana nana</i> 	Dwarf Grey Honey Myrtle	Small shrub – less than 45 cm high and 50–100cm wide **ensure dwarf variety	A dwarf form of the species that forms a dense round dome of grey green slightly weeping foliage.
<i>Philotheca spicata</i> 	Pepper and Salt	Shrub < 45cm high and 50–100cm wide	Small branching, sprawling shrub with slender leaves and pink mauve star flowers in spring. Tolerates reasonable shade.
<i>Scaevola</i> varieties 	Fan-Flower	Less than 45cm high and 50cm wide	A number of varieties of this native plant have been developed. Attractive deep blue, purple or white flowers.