



# BRENTHAM GARDEN ESTATE

## Conservation Area

### SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE FOR MAINTAINING HEDGES

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Hedges in Brentham are protected by the Article 4 Direction as they are considered a valuable feature of the conservation area. They need regular trimming to remain in good shape and stop them encroaching over access paths or pavements. Ealing Council can require a resident to cut back a hedge if it is obstructing a pavement and other residents can require a hedge to be trimmed if it is preventing them from using a path.

Every 7 to 10 years most privet hedges will need to be heavily pruned to avoid them becoming too deep. This is referred to as “splitting”. It is best done in early autumn or late spring. One side of the hedge is pruned back to a position a few inches from the centre (The vertical line where the main stems of the plants spring from the soil). This is also the right time to reduce the height if it is needed. This heavy pruning leaves the branches bare so only one side should be done in a season if you wish to retain screen of leaves.

A year or two later the other side can be pruned in the same way. It looks very drastic but privet responds well to heavy pruning and can regenerate if cut back severely. The new leaves will grow back more quickly if you feed it with a general purpose fertiliser such a GROWMORE and water during dry spells in the following spring and summer.

While removal of a hedge needs a planning application an application is not needed to prune or split a hedge as it is considered on-going maintenance. If plants are diseased and need to be removed this can be done without an application so long as the replacements are put in place quickly so that the boundary hedge is retained.

Yew, laurel and hornbeam hedges can be treated in the same way although they usually do not need to be split so often. Other hedges may need different treatment. The Brentham Society can offer advice about specific hedges.