

How to limit flooding

Many of us have nicely paved patios or front gardens. It means that you don't have to cut the grass and it becomes easier to park your car. But did you know that it also causes a higher risk of flooding?

Bad for drainage

The water that no longer can soak into the soil stays on the surface and eventually ends up in the drain or a stream. If you do have a drain on the site, it still means that this drain and the sewer system will have to take more water than if there was uncovered soil. That means there is a higher risk of flooding.

Green front and back gardens are better

If you already have a paved-over front garden, consider removing some of that pavement and using two lanes of pavement instead if you want to park your car easily and don't want to go "all natural". Using gravel between the strips of pavement is much better for drainage than paving over the entire area with asphalt or concrete. Green your back garden too, if you can, and remove at least some of those stone or concrete slabs.

Habitat and biodiversity

If you have plans to put decking or some other cover in your back garden or front garden, keep in mind that you will also remove habitat when you do so. You'll destroy a piece of your local ecosystem. You may, for example, have heard of a declining number of sparrows. That could well be related to an increasing number of paved-over front gardens and a resulting decrease in numbers of insects.

Planning permission needed to pave your front garden

But there may be more. For instance, did you know that in the UK, you actually need planning permission if you want to cover your front garden with asphalt? DEFRA announced new legislation in 2008 and it came into force in 2009.

Keeping your front garden green is cheaper

Last but not least, keep in mind that permeable pavement (instead of asphalt) not only is expensive, its pores may clog up over time. So do yourself a favor, and go with gravel, or with just two lanes of pavement. If you currently do have a green garden, do nothing at all and use a hand mower to keep yourself and that lawn in good shape.

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