

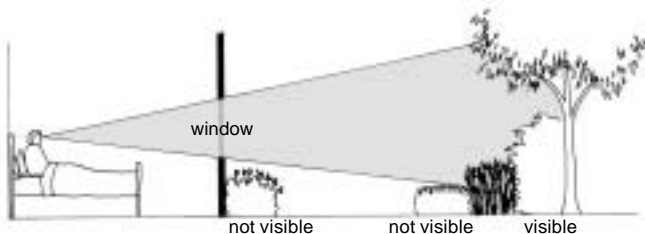
Research over the last decade has shown that good landscape design has therapeutic as well as aesthetic value. Elderly or convalescent people in residential homes may spend a long time inside the buildings where it is easy to lose track of time: the landscape context can be designed to mark the changing of the seasons and day, providing variety and interest and creating connection between the onlooker and the outside world.

## Accessible landscapes

For many residents and convalescents, the landscape context is mainly accessible visually through windows or patio doors. Think about:

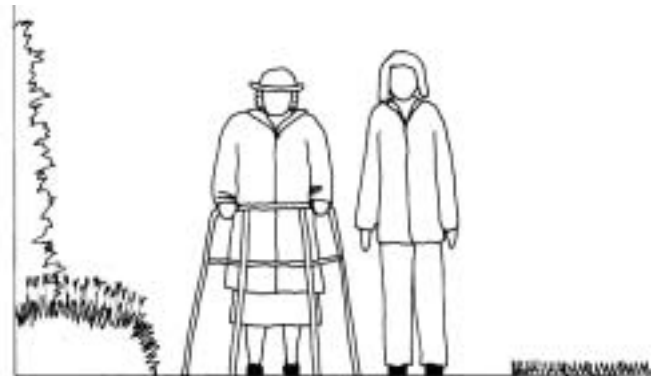
- placing attractive planting to line up with views through windows
- choosing plants that are the right height for best display from the view of someone seated in a chair or lying in a bed within a room (low groundcover may not be visible)
- arranging unattractive features (such as car parking, bin stores) in less visible locations
- windowsill heights and see-through external balconies.

**Design planting to be visible from bed/chair within the room:**



The mobility of elderly residents and convalescents ranges from those able to walk about unaided to those in wheelchairs and electric buggies. Some people may need to use a walking frame, others prefer a walking stick or two. Some people like the comfort of walking next to a friend or carer as an arm to hold if necessary. Details like ordinary kerbs can become large obstacles to those with mobility difficulties - for wheels of a buggy, for those with impaired balance, or as a trip hazard for the visually impaired. Think about:

- making paths wide enough for a carer or friend to walk alongside a person with a walking frame or in a wheelchair, or for 2 wheelchairs to pass (at least 1800mm wide);
- making corners wide enough for an electric buggy, wheelchair or walking frame to negotiate easily;
- resolving changes of level without the need for steps or kerbs;



Path wide enough for walking frame and carer

- providing handrails for extra leverage or comfort;
- providing plenty of seats for rests along a path;
- surface treatment (avoid rough, uneven surface and gravel).

## Interesting landscapes

Looking out of the window at a patch of evergreen shrubs that stay the same throughout the year is boring for anybody! Plants that display seasonal variety help mark the passing of the year, and can trigger memories of other places and times. Plants that attract wildlife such as birds, butterflies and squirrels will add interest and may provoke interaction with the outside world. Get the staff and residents involved in the design so that there is a feeling of shared ownership.

Think about:

- asking residents to name their favourite plants or plants with special associations;
- including plants characteristic of each season including trees, shrubs, climbers, herbaceous plants and bulbs e.g. snowdrops, daffodils, primrose, roses, daisies, iris, maples, autumn crocus, Christmas rose, holly;
- native species such as honeysuckle, hawthorn, field maple and guelder rose;
- including plants known to attract birds and butterflies e.g. Buddleia, plants with daisy-type flowers, plants with edible berries;
- add bird nesting boxes, bird feeding tables and bird baths that are visible from windows.

# Plant list suggestions for nursing homes & residential care homes

## Planting for scent

Buddleia davidii (summer flowers, can be coppiced)
Buddleia globosa (Orange ball tree, orange gobular flowers in summer)
Ceanothus e.g. 'Gloire de Versailles' (Californian lilac, evergreen, blue flowers in summer)
Convallaria majalis (Lily of the Valley, white flowers late spring)
Daphne odora e.g. 'Aureomarginata' (evergreen, purple/white flowers midwinter to early spring)
Daphne x burkwoodii 'Somerset' (half-evergreen, pink-white flowers in late spring-early summer)
Dianthus e.g. 'Mrs. Sinkins' (Pinks, summer)
Endymion non-scriptus (Bluebell, blue flowers late spring)
Hebe 'Midsummer Beauty' (lilac flowers in summer)
Jasminum officinale (white flowers in summer, evening fragrance)
Lavandula spica e.g. 'Hidcote' (Lavender)
Lilium regale (Lily, white trumpet flowers in summer)
Lonicera x americana (Honeysuckle, half-evergreen climber, creamy white/purple flowers in summer)
Mahonia japonica (evergreen, yellow flowers late autumn to early spring)
Narcissus (Jonquil, spring)
Nicotiana (tobacco plant, fragrant flowers in late summer)
Osmanthus delavayi (evergreen, white flowers in spring)
Philadelphus (Mock Orange, white flowers in summer)
R. rugosa scented varieties (summer flowers)
Rosa officinalis (apothecary's rose, summer flowers)
Rosa spinosissima (Scotch rose, summer flowers)
Rosmarinus officinalis (Rosemary)
Syringa vulgaris (Lilac, late spring)
Viburnum x bodnantse (sweet scented pinkish white flowers on bare winter branches)
Viburnum x burkwoodii (spring flowers, evergreen)
Wisteria sinensis (Wisteria, lilac or white flowers early summer)
x Osmarea burkwoodii (evergreen, white flowers in spring)

## Planting for Spring interest

### shrubs:

Chaenomeles
Corylus (hazel, for catkins)
Forsythia
Weigela florida

### bulbs:

crocus, daffodils, snowdrops, tulips
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## Planting for Summer interest

### shrubs:

Cistus varieties (Rock rose)
Hydrangea
Potentilla fruticosa (shrubby cinquefoil)

### bulbs and herbaceous:

Achillea millefolium (ornamental yarrow: white, pink, yellow, red colours available)
Echinops ritro (ornamental blue globe thistles)
Kniphofia (red hot poker, various colours)
Sunflowers (perennial or annual, small or big, very cheerful)
Verbascum

## Planting for Autumn interest

### shrubs:

Acer palmatum (Japanese maple; acid soils preferred)
Cornus alba 'Elegantissima'
Euonymus alatus
Euonymus europaeus (Spindle)
Parthenocissus quinquefolia (Virginia creeper)
Parthenocissus tricuspidata (Boston ivy)
Pyracantha (wall shrub, orange berries)
Viburnum opulus

### bulbs and herbaceous:

Anemone x hybrida (Japanese anemone)
Aster (various)
Crocus
Cyclamen
Sedum x Autumn Joy etc. (stonecrop, colourful in late summer to Autumn)

## Planting for Winter interest

### winter flowers:

Crocus
Erica x darleyensis (Heather)
Erica carnea (Heather)
Galanthus (Snowdrop)
Hamamelis mollis (Chinese Witch Hazel: demands acid soils)
Helleborus niger (Christmas rose), H. orientalis (Lenten rose)
Viola hybrids (winter-flowering pansies)

### interesting bark or twigs:

Acer griseum (Paperbark maple)
Betula utilis var. jacquemontii (Himalayan birch with very white bark)
Cornus alba 'Sibirica' (red-stemmed Dogwood)
Cornus stolonifera 'Flaviramea' (yellow-stemmed Dogwood)
Corylus avellana 'Contorta' (Corkscrew Hazel; summer leaves are twisted which may be considered unattractive)
Eucalyptus niphophila (Snow gum, creamy white/grey mottled bark)
Phyllostachys nigra (Black-stemmed Bamboo)