

# HACKNEY LOCAL PLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE NOTE

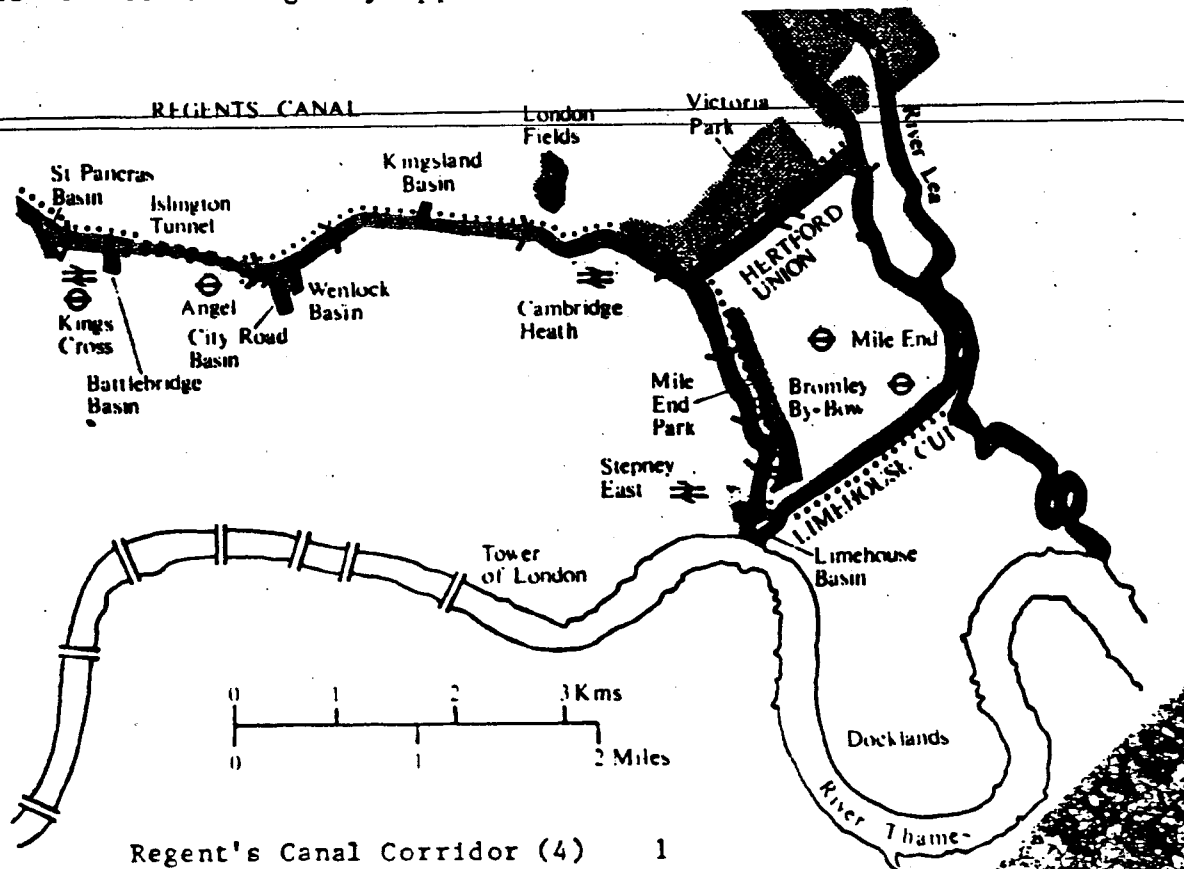
## 9 REGENT'S CANAL

### Introduction

1. This note is about town planning and the Regent's Canal corridor. It is one of a series prepared by LB Hackney in order to explain in more detail the Council's planning policies (which are contained in the Hackney Local Plan) and related standards and requirements. The note is not restricted to those matters covered by planning legislation, where appropriate it includes references to the requirements of other legislation. It is aimed at both people who may wish to submit a planning application and those who are interested more generally in the Regent's Canal corridor.

### What does this Supplementary Planning Guidance Note cover?

2. This Supplementary Guidance Note aims to provide guidance for achieving a consistent approach to development and related planning issues affecting the Regent's Canal and associated features. The Canal has a strategic importance as part of the London canal network as well as offering many opportunities for Hackney residents.



Why is this Supplementary Planning Guidance needed/planning issues?

3. The canal is considered to be an unusual and attractive resource which is of value to both the local canalside workers and residents and to all Hackney communities. It is particularly important as a relief to the surrounding, often traffic congested, environment and also for its historical connections, recreational opportunities and nature conservation potential. The Council will wish to ensure that new developments, alterations, landscaping and other works make the most of this resource, by protecting/enhancing the canalside character and by creating opportunities for local communities to appreciate its special environment.
4. Grants may be made available from the environment programme to assist existing owners and community groups etc., to make improvements alongside the Regents Canal.
5. Much of the traditional urban canalside character found in Hackney results from buildings having been constructed close up against the canal, giving the appearance of "rising out of the water". Along many stretches this has created an enclosed corridor effect. Where development is proposed in such areas, the Council will seek to retain this character by ensuring that new developments - particularly large industrial and commercial development - continue this tradition. In addition, all new buildings will be expected to relate sympathetically in scale and appearance with existing buildings of quality to maintain the traditional canalside character (see policies ENV1, ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4).

**Planning permission**

6. The Council would prefer applications for planning permission for proposals which would be seen from or will have an impact on the canal to be submitted in full rather than in outline because of the canal's status as an 'Area of Special Landscape Character' and because of its recognised environmental and nature conservation interest (see policy ENV16). The application should show how the proposal will affect and hopefully benefit the canal setting. In accordance with policy ENV22(B) no advertising will be allowed within the environs of the canal ~~except where a special case can be justified~~
7. It should be stressed that designations such as Areas of Special Landscape Character and Nature Conservation Areas do not imply any intention to "beautify" the canal nor introduce "attractive" uses. The canal was built and used as an urban industrial and transport corridor and this character will continue to dominate the Regent's Canal. However, industrial and commercial uses do not preclude the introduction of small areas for, say, nature study or a fishing platform; nor do they preclude an overall strategy which allows the towing path and water areas to be more accessible for recreational uses; nor do they preclude the enhancement of the "canalscape" through well-considered designs. Generally Local Plan policies will guide the Council's attitude towards the main use and activities on a canalside site, while this Supplementary Planning Guidance indicates how other uses and sensitive design can be incorporated to make a positive contribution to the canal and its setting.

## Land uses in canalside locations

8. The type of uses that are likely to be encouraged (subject to local plan policies EMP3, EMP6, EMP7 and EMP17) are those that particularly relate to the waterside environment, for example boat clubs, boat building and repair, moorings (particularly near youth facilities), public houses and angling facilities. Use of the canal for transport of goods and people would generally be encouraged. Attention should also be given to the way the internal layout of uses within a building can benefit both occupiers/employees as well as contribute to the overall amenity of the canal. For example, living rooms, rest rooms, canteens and balconies might be located to take advantage of views over the canal and provide interest to passers-by. Certain uses however, may have an adverse environmental impact on the canal and its environment. Such activities, if unsightly, should be adequately screened (in accordance with policies ENV1, ENV4 and ENV16) and the advice given elsewhere in this SPG. Other uses may pose a danger e.g. toxic chemicals to nearby towing path users and to the rich plant and wildlife found in and near the Regents Canal. Occupiers will be encouraged to take a responsible attitude to their activities in accordance with current environmental legislation (see policy EMP10).

### Basins

9. Canal Basins should be retained and on no account be used for tipping and infilling. They provide opportunities for uses such as nature conservation, secure overnight moorings, and water-based recreation. The type of uses that will be acceptable to the Council will depend on their impact and implications upon the existing surrounding land uses, and judged according to their benefits to the local community. (See Policies ENV16, LP13, LP14 and LP 15).

### Canalside features

10. Features of historical and industrial archaeological interest should be retained; these include bridges spanning the canal and features at canal locks and on the towing paths (i.e. opening paddles, old mooring bollards, horse-ramps, rope wear marks on the under sides of bridges etc. (See Policy ENV16).

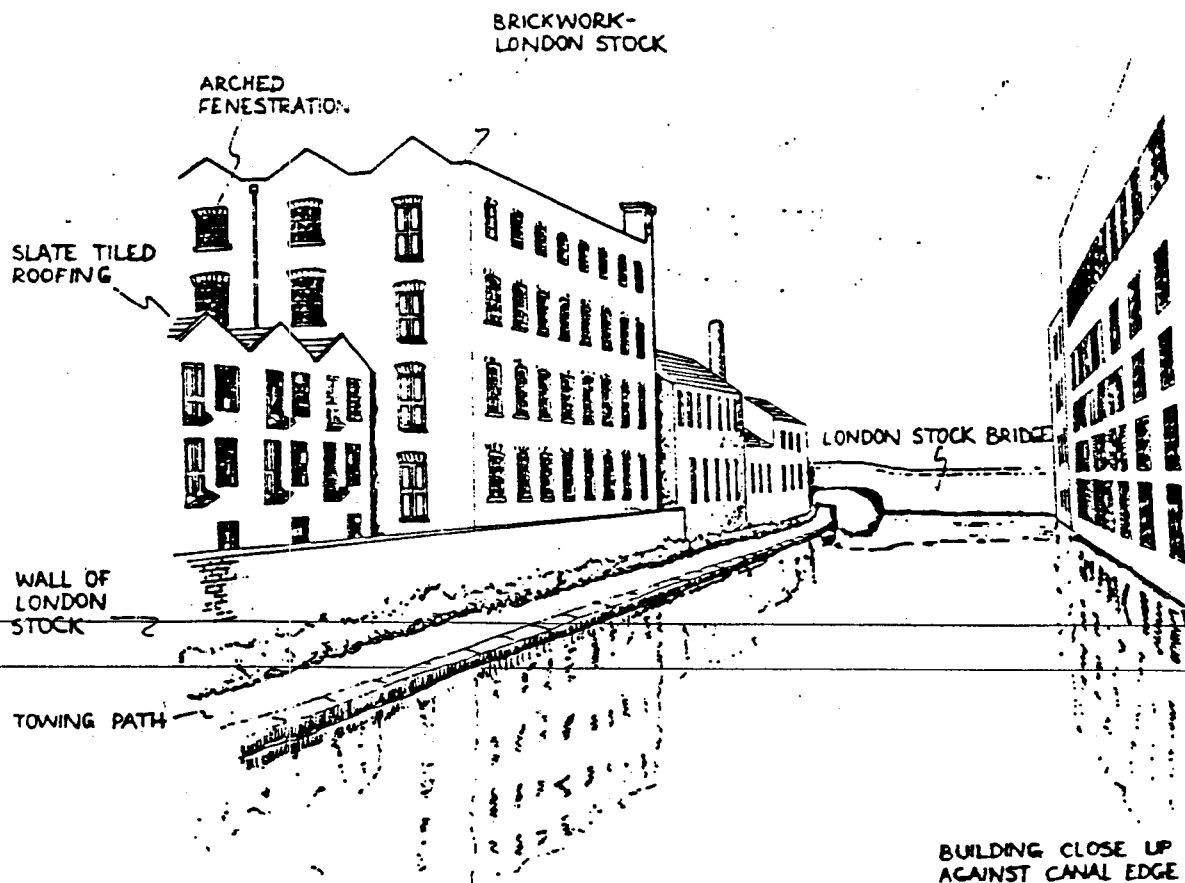
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## Design

### Buildings

11. It is desirable where the character of the canal dictates, for new developments to either face the canal and/or rise sheer from the water's edge in the traditional manner. Where the buildings turn their backs on the canal, they should be articulated or embellished to provide interesting elevations so that the building can have two fronts. Where buildings are slightly set back it would be desirable to include canalside features and amenities (e.g. planting, sitting out areas) appropriate to the use and orientation. It is desirable for the living accommodation of housing to overlook the canal (e.g. private gardens therefore away from the canal) and wherever possible a public promenade or similar feature should be incorporated along the canalside. The canal vernacular would also normally guide the choice of architectural detail and materials; in many places this is

characterised by London stock brick, red engineering brick string course detail, changes in plane within roofs and facades and a robust, bold scale are usually appropriate. Bright colours are generally not appropriate except in special circumstances. The British Waterways Board's Environment Handbook is a useful reference but in all cases the local canal vernacular style should be the guiding theme. Some of the fine canalside warehouses are not listed but have a unique character of which very few examples now remain along the Regent's Canal. In all cases external alterations of such buildings should respect the existing character, particularly the canalside facade. Conversion of such buildings is encouraged wherever possible and in some cases may be suitable for new canal-related uses such as workshops or boat (dinghy) clubs. If the building is of good quality and contributes to the character of the canal, refurbishment should be considered rather than demolition. On larger sites the Council is in the process of preparing more detailed planning briefs and planning officers should be consulted at an early stage (see policies ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, ENV4, EMP1, EMP2, EMP7 and EMP8).



TYPICAL CANALSIDE VERNACULAR ALONG AN INDUSTRIAL STRETCH OF THE CANAL SHOWING ITS SPECIAL CHARACTER

## Car parks and service areas

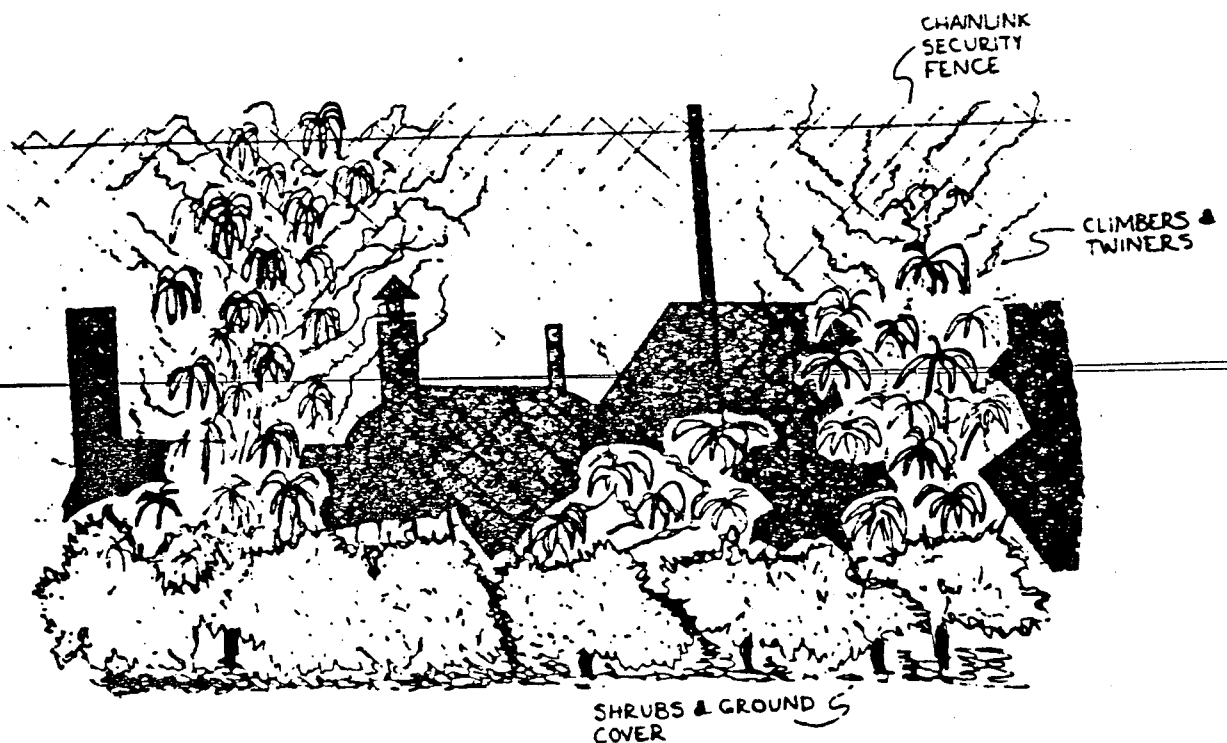
12. In order to prevent unused and litter strewn areas along the canalside, car parks and service storage areas should be located as far away from the canalside as possible and carefully screened (planting, fencing - see below) so they are not visible from the canal (see policies ENV4 and ENV16).

## Enclosures of industrial and commercial premises

13. Canalside premises should be secured by brick walls preferably built with London stocks. As an alternative, walls may be rendered and planted with self-clinging plants such as ivy, climbing hydrangea and Virginia Creeper (the appendix includes details of species). As these plants do not need any support once established, they can also be used to cover concrete, plastic coated steel, and timber, and screen fences made from boards on 4" x 4" (100mm x 100mm) uprights, provided they are not treated with creosote. Wood preservatives that do not kill plants are available.

Where chain link security fences are unavoidable, brown and black are the best colours as they are less obtrusive and can be screened with shrubs and climbers that will quickly cover them. Evergreens, such as ivy and Japanese honeysuckle are best, but fast climbers which lose their leaves in winter such as Russian Vine and clematis montana are also suitable.

Corrugated iron sheeting and coiled barbed wire are not acceptable.

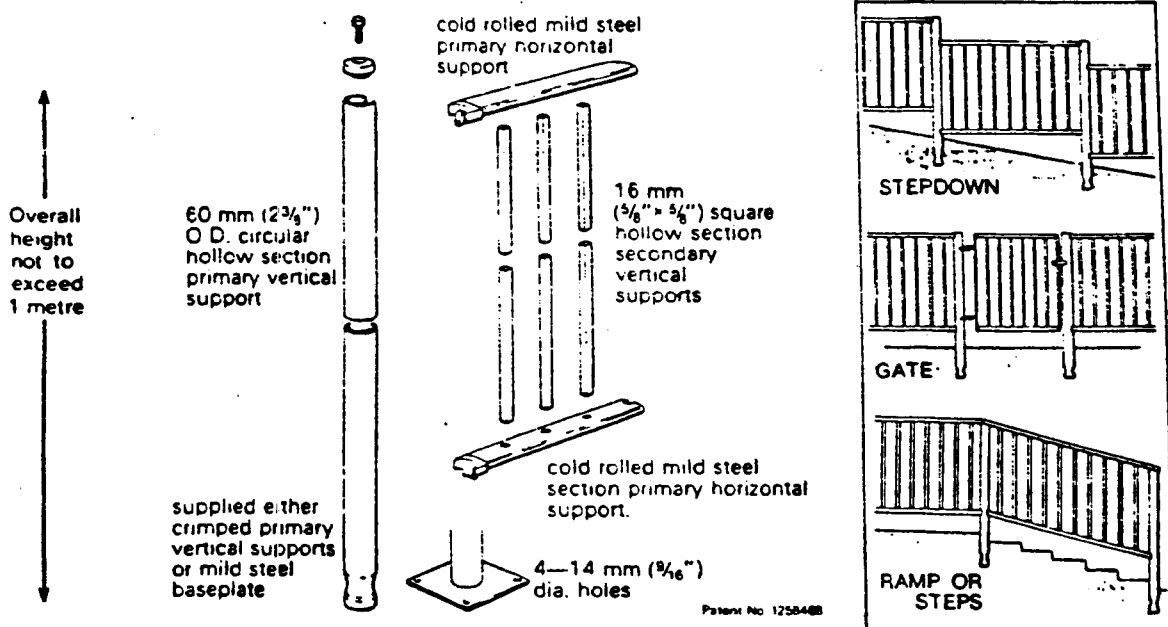


CHAINLINK SECURITY FENCE SCREENED WITH SHRUBS AND CLIMBING PLANTS

## Enclosure of housing and public open space

Wherever possible fencing should be avoided at or near the canal edge, but where it is considered necessary for safety reasons near housing or public areas then a low (less than 1.4 metres preferably about 1 metre high) vertical iron or mild steel railing is considered most appropriate in most circumstances; this type has been successfully installed along many existing canalside housing and open space schemes in Central London. Not only is this type of fencing visually desirable, but it also allows a rescuer to get to the canal edge should someone in the water require help (see policies ENV4 and ENV16).

### CONSTRUCTION DETAILS OF A SUITABLE EXAMPLE



## Landscaping and ecology

15. The Regent's Canal provides a wildlife resource of outstanding value in Inner London (see ENV27). The aquatic, emergent and marginal vegetation in places rivals the quality of any other water resource in London, and contains several species which are either regionally or nationally rare. The pathside plants include unique native and alien weed species which provide an historical link with the past as a commercial waterway. Other semi-natural habitats of value to wildlife include secondary scrub, tall herbaceous vegetation and neutral and acid grassland (see policies ENV4 and ENV16).
16. The canal also acts as a biological corridor, transporting and distributing species to aid colonisation to other regions along its route. It also has much potential as an educational resource, particularly as there is not much waterspace to be studied in the built-up area of southern Hackney. The basins at Wenlock and Kingsland are of special interest - Wenlock being suitable for a Local Nature Reserve (see local plan proposal 373).
17. For these reasons all landscape proposals must take account of the ecological importance of existing vegetation and this will often involve consultations with planning officers and their nature conservation advisers.
18. Most of the canal is suitable for an ecological approach using suitable native species which are hardy, and support more varieties of insects and small mammals. Trees must be planted at least 3.5 metres from lockside culverts and 4 metres from the canal edge. Pockets of trees can be planted around bridge abutments and on the offside where arrangements have been made with the British Waterways Board (BWB) or other owners (see Appendix for list of suitable trees and shrubs).
19. Where appropriate, a grass margin should be retained at the rear of waterside copings 1 metre wide (inclusive). Planting areas should be at the rear of the towing path in rough grass using indigenous planting species (see Appendix for lists). There are certain situations where a more "designed" approach may be necessary, such as areas of heavy pedestrian and wheelchair use and the most suitable approach should be discussed with planning officers. ~~Sitting out areas for staff to eat their lunch is an asset for canalside employees. These areas should be made pleasant by the careful use of soft and hard landscaping. In most cases a security fence can be moved back from the water's edge to create such an area. Any fence can easily be screened by using suitable climbing plants (see Appendix) and the use of trees and shrubs. All landscaping schemes should take into consideration orientation and aspect to the canal. Adequate arrangements should also be made for the continuing maintenance and management of vegetation.~~

## Amenities and facilities

20. The Council will seek the incorporation of facilities for people with disabilities whenever possible in all types of developments. This may include (in addition to the requirements for all development set out in the separate Supplementary Planning Guidance "Access for People with Disabilities") ramped access to any towing path or canalside walk, handrails and other safety features and safe places to fish. Angling facilities may be best located on the non-towpath side of the canal where conflict with towpath users can be avoided; very few existing sites have these facilities at present, and their provision would be a desirable feature in redevelopment proposals (sites generally need to be level, easily reached by and spacious enough for wheelchairs, with sills and other features to ensure safety) (see policy LP15 and EMP17).
21. There are a wide variety of other amenities and facilities which can often be incorporated into existing developments, particularly where buildings and facilities are underused. These could benefit both the occupants of the development, the local community and the character of the canal generally. Uses which could take advantage of underused space include boat repair and construction workshops; storage facilities for boat and angling clubs; and covered and open moorings. Major new or redevelopment schemes may wish to explore the possibilities of incorporating public houses, cafes and information booths, or simply lay out landscaped sitting out areas for the benefit of staff or towpath users (see policies LP6, LP9, LP10, LP13 and LP14).

## Consultations

22. Consultations should take place with planning officers prior to submitting planning applications; this may be with both the conservation officer and canals officer, and the officer dealing with the planning applications. The planning department is at 161-181 City Road, EC1V 1NR tel: 01-253 8455.
23. British Waterways Board (BWB) will be consulted on development adjacent to the canal, the towpath or affecting the navigation of the canal, including the location of mooring bollards and rings, access points, boating and angling. BWB can be contacted at Melbury House, Melbury Terrace, London, NW1 6JX tel: 01-262 6711.

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## Further advice

For further advice about Regent's Canal corridor or about the Council's planning policies please contact the Council's Planning Division. Details of the other Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes are also available.

Planning Division LB Hackney 161 City Road EC1V 1NR tel: 253 8455.

## Suitable trees and shrubs for canalside planting

Plant trees and shrubs from October to March. For details see SPG16 *Trees*.

e = Evergreen trees or shrubs

Large trees 18 metres high (plant 8-10m apart, 5m away from canal edge and all walls and buildings).

Fraxinus excelsior  
Carpinus betulus  
Quercus robur  
Quercus petraea  
Salix alba  
Salix babylonica  
  
Salix fragilis  
Tilia europaea

Ash - thrives in most soils  
hornbeam  
common oak  
sessile oak  
white willow (plant 6m from canal edge)  
weeping willow (keep at least 6m away from all walls and canal structures)  
crack willow - likes damp soil  
common lime

Medium trees 10-15 metres high (plant 6-8m apart, 4m away from canal edge and all walls and buildings).

Acer campestre  
Alnus glutinosa  
Alnus incana  
Betula pendula  
Betula pubescens  
Populus tremula  
Prunus avium  
Sorbus torminalis  
Tilia cordata

field maple  
common alder - likes damp soil  
grey alder - likes damp soil  
silver birch  
common white birch  
aspen - use in industrial areas  
wild cherry  
wild service tree  
small leaved lime - don't use in car parks

Small trees 4.5-9 metres high (plant 4-6m apart, at least 3m from canal edge).

Crataegus crus-galli  
Ilex aquifolium  
~~Sorbus aria~~  
Sorbus aucuparia  
Sambucus nigra  
Prunus padus

cockspur hawthorn  
holly - likes well drained soil  
~~whitebeam~~  
rowan or mountain ash  
elder  
bird cherry

## Native shrubs

Amelanchier lamarckii  
  
Betula nana  
Buxus sempervirens  
Cornus sanguinea  
Corylus avellana

snowy mesphilus or June Berry - good autumn colour  
dwarf birch  
box  
common dogwood  
hazel - regrows well when damaged or cut back

|                         |                                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Crataegus monogyna      | common hawthorn                  |
| Cytisus scoparius       | common broom                     |
| Euonymus europaeus      | spindle                          |
| Prunus spinosa          | blackthorn                       |
| Rosa canina             | dog rose                         |
| Rosa rugosa 'alba'      | ramonas rose                     |
| Salix caprea            | goat willow - likes damp soil    |
| Salix alba 'Britzensis' | scarlet willow - likes damp soil |
| Salix alba 'vitellina'  | golden willow - likes damp soil  |
| Salix cinerea           | grey willow - likes damp soil    |
| Viburnum opulus         | guelder rose                     |
| Viburnum lantana        | wayfaring tree                   |
| e Ulex europaeus        | common gorse                     |

**Self-Clinging Climbers - for walls, including brick, concrete and plastic coated sheeting**

|                             |                    |                                   |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| e Hedera canariensis        | Canary Island Ivy) | Keep their leaves and             |
| e Hedera colchica           | Persian Ivy )      | colours all year                  |
| - Hedera helix              | Common Ivy )       | round                             |
| e Hedera helix 'Hibernica'  | Irish Ivy )        |                                   |
| Hydrangea petiolaris        | Climbing hydrangea | - leaves turn yellow<br>in autumn |
| Parthenocissus henryana     | Climbing vines     | - good autumn colour              |
| Parthenocissus tricuspidata | Boston Ivy         | - good autumn colour              |

**Twining Climbers - for fences, screenwalling and ground cover**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Actinidia chinensis                           | Chinese gooseberry - very vigorous in<br>warm position           |
| Ampelopsis varieties                          | Ornamental vines - good autumn colour                            |
| Clematis flammula                             | Clematis - scented flowers in Aug/Sept.                          |
| Clematis montana                              | Clematis - almond scented flowers in<br>spring                   |
| Clematis vitalba                              | Old Man's Beard - Travellers Joy - silky<br>seed heads in autumn |
| Eccremocarpus scaber                          | Glory vine - likes a warm sunny position                         |
| Humulus lupulus                               | Hop - interesting flowers and seed heads                         |
| Jasminum officinale                           | Common White Jasmine - scented white<br>flowers in summer        |
| <del>e Lonicera periclymenum</del>            | <del>Common honeysuckle or woodbine - scented<br/>flowers</del>  |
| Parthenocissus varieties<br>e.g. Quinquifolia | Climbing vines with good autumn colour                           |
| Passiflora caerulea                           | Virginia creeper   |
| Polygonum baldschuanicum                      | Passion flower - likes a warm sunny<br>position                  |
|   | Russian Vine - very vigorous, "mile-a-<br>minute"                |

Vandalproof Plants - for difficult places, these plants will grow away quickly after being damaged or vandalised. Many are good ground cover.

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|---|----------------------------------|--|
| e | Berberis stenophylla             | and other varieties, quickly form an impenetrable thicket                          |
|   | Buddleia varieties               | grow fast, and butterflies like the flowers  |
|   | Cornus varieties                 | coloured stems in winter, good autumn colours                                      |
|   | Corylus avellana                 | native hazel nut, regrows from ground level  |
|   | Continus varieties               | good autumn colour   |
| e | Cotoneaster horizontalis         | excellent ground cover and berries provide food for birds                          |
| e | Cotoneaster - other upright var. | all useful tough plants  |
| e | Eleagnus x ebbingii              | fast growing, tough and evergreen  |
|   | Euonymus - evergreen varieties   | good ground cover, rapid growth  |
|   | Forsythia varieties              | flowers in spring and regrows from base if damaged                                 |
| e | Hebe varieties                   | tough, flowers from spring to autumn   |
| e | Hedera varieties                 | see list on previous page  |
|   | Hypericum varieties              | tough, with golden yellow flowers  |
|   | Kerria japonica                  | yellow, early flowers, re-generation from ground level                             |
|   | Leycesteria formosa              | very tough, with purple bracts and berries   |
| e | Ligustrum varieties              | common privet, tough and evergreen   |
| e | Lonicera pileata                 | bright green leaves, horizontal habit  |
| e | Mahonia varieties                | richly foliaged evergreens, M. japonica has scented yellow flowers                 |
|   | Potentilla varieties             | long flowering period, dense habit and easy to grow                                |
| e | Prunus laurocerasus varieties    | very tough evergreens  |
| e | Pyracantha varieties             | tough, thorny evergreens, with white flowers and red or yellow berries             |
|   | Rhus typhina                     | suckering shrub or small tree, "Laciniata" is especially fine in autumn            |
|   | Rosa                             | various species such as rugosa, which are thick with prickles                      |
|   | Rubus varieties                  | prickly cultivated "brambles" with large flowers                                   |
|   | Salix varieties                  | good in wet soil   |
|   | Sambucus varieties               | good flowers and foliage, especially "Aurea" the golden elder. Regenerates well    |
| e | Senecio                          | particularly Dunedin hybrid Sunshine (formerly laxifolius), good silvery evergreen |
|   | Spirea varieties                 | good quick effect plus flowers   |
|   | Stephanandra incisa              | especially "Crispa", superb ground cover   |
|   | Symphoricarpus varieties         | good berries, regenerates from ground level  |
| e | Ulex europaeus                   | especially 'plenus' - gorse in flower more than half the year                      |
| e | Vinca varieties                  | all excellent ground cover   |
|   | Weigela varieties                | regenerates well when damaged  |