

1 Common Lime

During WW2 lime blossom was used to make soothing tea. Lime wood is soft and light, and finely textured. It is easy to work and often used in turnery, carving and furniture making. Lime bark was traditionally used to make rope, and lime flowers were considered a valuable source of food for honeybees. The wood does not warp and is still used today to make sounding boards and piano keys.

2 Robinia

Robinia is a member of the pea family. Its flowers hang in dense clusters (racemes) and are a rich source of nectar for bees. Once the flowers have gone, brown, leathery pods up to 11cm are formed. These pods remain on the tree until the following year. Robinia bark is deeply furrowed. The tree is tolerant of many soil types.

3 Yew

A Yew can reach up to 600 years of age. 10 Yew trees in Britain are believed to predate the 10th century. The fruit is eaten by birds such as the blackbird, mistle thrush, song thrush and fieldfare, and small mammals such as squirrels and dormice. Yew trees have long been associated with churchyards and were planted on the graves of plague victims to protect and purify the dead. The trees were used as symbols of immortality, but also seen as omens of doom. For many centuries it was the custom to carry Yew branches on Palm Sunday and at funerals.

4 Common Hawthorn

Also known as the May-tree, due to its flowering period, it is the only British plant named after the month in which it blooms. Its flowers are eaten by dormice and provide nectar and pollen for bees and other pollinating insects. The haws are rich in antioxidants and are eaten by many migrating birds such as red-wings, fieldfares and thrushes, as well as small mammals. The dense thorny foliage makes fantastic nesting shelter for many species of bird.

5 Sycamore

Sycamore timber is hard and strong, pale cream and with a fine grain. It is used for making furniture and kitchenware, as the wood does not taint or stain the food. Trees are planted in parks and large gardens for ornamental purposes. Mature trees are extremely tolerant of wind and so are often planted in coastal and exposed areas, as a wind break. They are also tolerant of pollution and are, therefore, planted in towns.

6 London Plane

The origin of this tree is not quite known. It is thought to be a hybrid of the Oriental Plane and the American Plane, and was brought here from Spain in the 17th century. It can be difficult to distinguish from the Oriental Plane. Very little wildlife is associated with London Plane, although the seeds may be eaten by grey squirrels. Male and female flowers are borne in separate clusters on the same tree.

7 Lombardy Poplar

A member of the willow family, the Lombardy Poplar tree requires large amounts of water and the females make quite a mess when they shed their cones. Male trees are most commonly planted and reproduce from cuttings. Lombardy Poplars are fast-growing trees, growing as much as 6 feet per year, with near vertical branches and a narrow growth-form. This makes them a popular choice when people want 'living wall' privacy screens or windbreaks in a hurry.

8 Common Ash

The Ash tree was thought to have medicinal and mystical properties and the wood was burned to ward off evil spirits. In Norse Viking mythology, Ash was referred to as the 'Tree of Life'. Even today it is sometimes known as the 'Venus of the woods'. In Britain we regarded Ash as a healing tree. The wood is often used for making tool handles as it absorbs shock without splintering.

9 Horse Chestnut

The Horse Chestnut's leaf stalks leave a scar on the twig when they fall, which resembles an inverted horse shoe with nail holes. This association with horses could explain why conkers used to be ground up and fed to horses to relieve them of coughs, and could be the origin of the tree's name. Other uses of conkers include additives to shampoos and as a starch substitute.

10 Holly

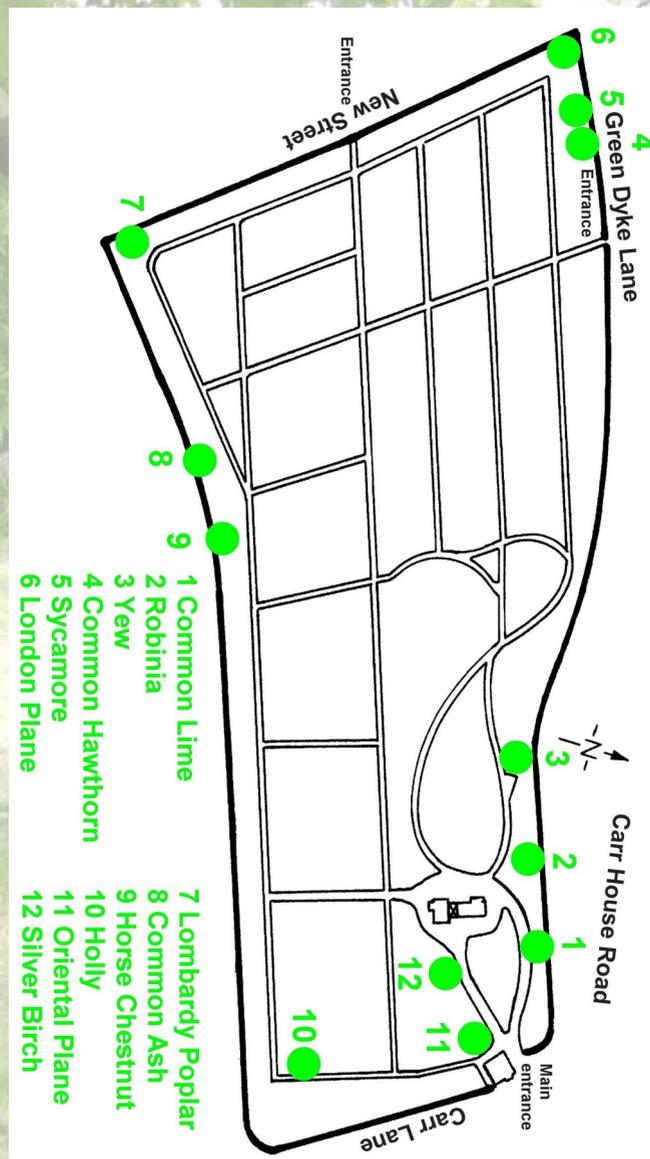
Holly branches have long been used to decorate homes in winter. The tree was seen as a fertility symbol and a charm against witches, goblins and the devil. It was thought to be unlucky to cut down a Holly tree. Holly provides dense cover and good nesting opportunities for birds, while its deep, dry leaf litter may be used by hedgehogs and small mammals for hibernation. The Mistle thrush is known for vigorously guarding the berries of holly in winter to prevent other birds from eating them.

11 Oriental Plane

Its wood has been used commercially for furniture (Oriental Plane veneer is sold as 'lacewood'), barrels and crates. Native Americans have been said to have used infusions prepared from Oriental Plane as a general remedy for all illnesses. The Oriental Plane has also been planted in Hindu holy places.

12 Silver Birch

The Silver Birch can be used to improve soil quality for other plants to grow. Its deep roots bring otherwise inaccessible nutrients into the tree, which are recycled on to the soil surface when the tree sheds its leaves. Silver Birch provides food and habitat for more than 300 insect species. Woodpeckers and other hole-nesting birds often nest in the trunk, while the seeds are eaten by siskins, greenfinches and redpolls.



A project supported through the Community First Neighbourhood Matched Fund programme administered by CDF for the Office for Civil Society.



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