



Planting Guidelines

What you plant is largely up to you. But there are a few things to think about and a few things that you must not plant. If you are thinking about trees, please ask first: they can get very big. You should only consider native species and the following must not be planted as they pose various risks to the safe operation of the railway (usually leaf-fall but some can get unstable):

- sycamore (*acer pseudoplatanus*)
- horse chestnut (*aesculus hippocastanum*)
- sweet chestnut (*castanea sativa*)
- ash (*fraxinus excelsior*)
- black poplar (*populus nigra var. betulifolia*)
- lombardy poplar (*populus nigra var. italica*)
- small-leaved lime (*tilia cordata*)
- large-leaved lime (*tilia platyphyllos*)
- common lime (*tilia x europea*)

Think about what space you have, what the plants are going to be planted in, what the local weather conditions are like (full sun, partial shade, exposed to high winds, near the sea etc.). What will thrive in that location? Your supplier may be able to advise on plants friendly to bees, butterflies and other insects. We know of station adoption groups who have installed bee hotels and created areas rich in insect life.

You will have to water your plants, but if the area is a sun trap (and it does happen on some of our stations!), are they drought tolerant? Your plants may be brushed by people passing. Are they tough, are they prickly, do they have a poisonous or corrosive sap? If there is any risk don't use them.

We also have stations that provide herbs and vegetables and encourage passengers to pick them on their way home. You could also think about ornamental vegetables or dwarf shrubs: it doesn't have to be flowering bedding plants if you want something a bit different.

Your initial meeting with the Regional Communities and Sustainability Manager (RCSM) or the Station Manager will give you an idea about practicalities such as water supply, how many planters that station environment can accommodate (and how many you feel able to look after) as well as the most appropriate location. Some stations have flowerbeds which you may be able to revitalise, fence-mounted baskets are also eye-catching and work well to add colour.

If you choose to use planters they need to be fixed down. Please include this in your plan and we can discuss how that can be achieved.

Consider the ongoing maintenance required and how much time you realistically have available. We encourage you to chat it through with the Station Manager or RCSM and our advice is don't be afraid about starting small, you can always add more later.