

Depaving

Factsheet

August 2014

What is Depaving?

Depaving is about removing sections of hard paving, such as concrete and tarmac, and replacing it with a permeable surface such as gravel or soil.

The movement first started in Portland, Oregon in the USA. Depave empowers and enables local people to change their front



Photo credit: Depave.org

gardens or other areas of hard surfacing. They also work with the wider community to carry out large-scale projects through their 'parking lot to paradise' scheme. Since 2007 they have carried out a large number of projects at local schools, places of worship and private residences.

This is a movement that is now gaining momentum in the UK.

The issue for London

An area the size of seven Hyde Parks has been lost to concreted front gardens in London. By depaving these areas of concrete the rainwater is able to soak back into the ground naturally rather than run-off straight into drains and sewers as it does with hard

paving. Once water has soaked through the soil and gravel, it helps to replenish groundwater supplies and this also helps to reduce the risk of flooding.

Due to the number of front gardens lost to concrete, in 2008 the government changed planning laws to encourage the use of permeable materials. If you plan to pave more than five square metres of your front garden using non-permeable materials, you will need planning permission.



Photo credit: Depave.org

46,000 households in Lambeth are potentially at risk of flooding from rainfall, and as the climate warms, we will experience more rainfall from short sharp storms in the summer to longer more persistent rain in the winter.

What can I do?

You can help to reduce this risk by getting involved. It doesn't matter if you only have a small area suitable for de-paving. The following case study shows how effective it can be on a small scale.

Depaving in Lambeth – a case study

Lambeth recently worked with residents in Kennington to carry out the UK's first depave.

40% of the paving on the driveways of two properties was removed and replaced with gravel and soil, creating new areas for planting while still allowing the residents to use the space for parking.

Reedworth Street before



Reedworth Street after



Additionally, a paving slab by a downpipe was removed and replaced with pea shingle creating a 'sponge' at the bottom of the down pipe, allowing for a little extra storage of surface water.

Down pipe with pea shingle



The plans for this project were produced in partnership with the residents who volunteered to depave their driveways.

With assistance from Lambeth, the work was completed within four hours, leaving the residents to benefit from new areas for planting and improved drainage.

How you can get involved

If you have a driveway, paved garden or area in your local community that you would like to depave, then please speak to us.

We are happy to visit you to discuss your ideas and help you to plan your depaving project. All waste will be recycled locally and we can provide the tools and compost you need to carry out the work.

If you would like to get involved or find out more, please email flooding@lambeth.gov.uk or call 020 7926 8990.