

GREEN NEIGHBOURHOODS

Plants make our towns and cities better places. Plants absorb noise, wind, dust and the harsh heat of the sun. Shade trees in urban areas can reduce the temperature by up to 8°C. Did you know that plants are not only a source of energy, they save it - trees in urban areas can reduce energy used for heating by 20–50% and for air conditioning by 30%! Plants are good insulation.

Read more about trees in chapter 4 on Forests and Trees

Green neighbourhoods where children play safely and residents can relax improve people's mental and physical health. They are happier, more comfortable places that make people feel better about themselves and feel better about where they live.

DIY - 'Do it Yourself'

We can make green neighbourhoods for ourselves, without needing money or government. Flowers, herbs, food crops and even trees can be grown in pots, buckets, bags, in front of, up the side and even on top of a building. Plants grow on balconies, over a fence. There are no limits! If you choose plants that are versatile or naturally do well in your area they will need less maintenance: *Bouganvillea* and lemon grass are good starters in arid, dry and fertile places.

In Rwanda the last day of every month is 'Umuganda' or community clean-up day. Everyone, even the president takes to the streets to clean and pick-up litter. It is why Kigali is one of the cleanest cities in the world. The best way of course, is not to throw litter in the first place.

Why not install some litter bins in your neighbourhood?



ACTION SHEETS - 76: Growing Vegetables in the City, 49: Tree Planting



Watch the films on Urban Greening and Permaculture

