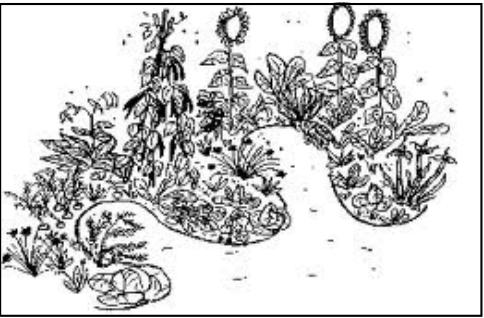


A commonly used design process is 'OBREDIM'. This stands for:

Observation - key to permaculture is good observation. Use all of your senses. Record observations systematically. Try to observe land over the four seasons and in different weather, especially extremes - frost, heavy rain, very warm, etc. Where does the snow clear first? Where does frost collect? Where does it stay wet or boggy longest? What is the wind like in the winter, and in the summer? Where do cats like to sit (the warmest spots!) What wildlife is there? What is the soil like and does it vary over the site? etc....

Boundaries - What are the boundaries of the site? Walk them and see what you find. What is over the fence, how will this affect you? What are the boundaries of the project - its 'scope'.



Resources - What resources exist? Financial resources - what money is available to invest in the project? Is it available in a lump sum or small amounts over many months? What skills are there? What plants, structures or other resources are available? Is funding available from outside bodies?

Evaluation - Analysis of what you have got - how do elements interact? Evaluate your resources, will they make a big project possible, or do you need to design a long programme of small changes?

Design - This is where you can play with all your colouring pencils! A base map of what exists can be overlayed with tracing paper and you can start to look at how different aspects of the design might look. Many design techniques exist and most are relatively easy to use.

Implementation - Consider how your plans can be made real, consider the timing/phasing of the project. Create a plan of action and ensure that everyone knows what the plan is. (Best to involve

"You don't have a snail problem, you have a duck deficiency."
Bill Mollison



them right from the start, if it doesn't reflect what they want to happen, it won't!)

Maintain - Make sure that you consider what maintenance is involved when you are designing. There is no point creating a system that needs 3 days a week to maintain, if there are only 2 days available.

Forest Gardens

Permaculture uses perennial plants wherever possible as they provide the most food for the least maintenance. They also mimic natural ecosystems better than annual plants, can build up soil and develop more complex ecosystems. The ultimate example of this is the forest garden, such as Martin Crawford's at Dartington.

"A forest garden is ... based on trees, shrubs and perennial plants. These are mixed in such a way as to mimic the structure of a natural forest - the most stable and sustainable type of ecosystem in this [UK] climate."¹

Resources

- The Permaculture Association (UK)
www.permaculture.org.uk
 - Permaculture Magazine (UK)
www.permaculture.co.uk
 - Permaculture Research Institute (Australia)
permaculture.org.au
 - Permaculture Activist Magazine (USA)
www.permacultureactivist.net
 - Permaculture Principles
permacultureprinciples.com
 - Agroforestry Research Trust¹
www.agroforestry.co.uk
- Much of the information in this document has been adapted from the Permaculture Association's website.*



home grown - community owned
information sheet



permaculture

Permaculture combines three key aspects:

1. an ethical framework
2. understandings of how nature works, and
3. a design approach

This unique combination is then used to support the creation of sustainable, agriculturally productive, non-polluting and healthy settlements. In many places this means adapting our existing settlements. In other cases it can mean starting from scratch. Both offer interesting challenges and opportunities.

The word 'permaculture' comes from 'permanent agriculture' and 'permanent culture' - it is about living lightly on the planet, and making sure that we can sustain human activities for many generations to come, in harmony with nature.

Permanence is not about everything staying the same. Its about stability, about deepening soils and cleaner water, thriving communities in self-reliant regions, biodiverse agriculture and social justice, peace and abundance.

permaculture ethics

- earth care
- people care
- fair share

EARTH CARE : Provision for all life systems to continue and multiply.

Permaculture works with natural systems, rather than in competition with them. It uses methods that have minimal negative impact on the Earth's natural environment. In everyday life, this may involve buying local produce, eating in season, and cycling rather than driving. Its about choices we make, and how we manage the land. It's about designing and creating healthy systems that meet our needs without damaging the planet.

PEOPLE CARE : Provision for people to access those resources necessary to their existence.

As a part of this planet, you matter! This is about ensuring the wellbeing of both individuals and communities. As individuals, we need to look after ourselves and each other so that as a community we can develop environmentally friendly lifestyles. In the poorest parts of the world, this is still about helping people to access enough food and clean water, within a safe society. In the rich world, it means redesigning our unsustainable systems and replacing them with sustainable ones. This could mean working together to provide efficient, accessible public transport, or to provide after-school clubs for kids. When people come together, friendships are formed and sustainability becomes possible.

SETTING LIMITS TO POPULATION AND CONSUMPTION: By governing our own needs, we can set resources aside to further the above principles.

Setting limits to population is not about limiting people's free movement, tight border controls and a one child policy. Its about working to achieve a stable human population, using a number of key strategies. These include: access to family planning; helping people to meet their basic needs of clean water, adequate food, and basic healthcare and education; education for girls.

The third ethic recognises that the Earth's resources are limited and these resources need to be shared amongst many beings.

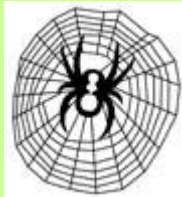
"Though the problems of the world are increasingly complex, the solutions remain embarrassingly simple" Bill Mollison



permaculture design principles



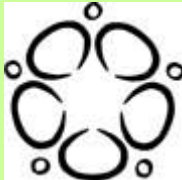
**Principle 1:
OBSERVE AND
INTERACT**
*Beauty is in the eye of
the beholder*



**Principle 7:
DESIGN FROM
PATTERNS TO DETAILS**
*Can't see the wood for
the trees*



**Principle 2:
CATCH AND STORE
ENERGY**
*Make hay while the
sun shines*



**Principle 8:
INTEGRATE RATHER
THAN SEGREGATE**
*Many hands make light
work*



**Principle 3:
OBTAIN A YIELD**
*You can't work on an
empty stomach*



**Principle 9:
USE SMALL AND SLOW
SOLUTIONS**
*The bigger they are,
the harder they fall
Slow and steady wins
the race*



**Principle 4:
APPLY SELF-
REGULATION AND
ACCEPT FEEDBACK**
*The sins of the fathers
are visited on the
children unto the
seventh generation*



**Principle 10:
USE AND VALUE
DIVERSITY**
*Don't put all your
eggs in one basket.*



**Principle 5:
USE AND VALUE RE-
NEWABLE RESOURCES
AND SERVICES**
*Let nature take its
course*



**Principle 11:
USE EDGES AND
VALUE THE
MARGINAL**
*Don't think you are on
the right track just
because it is a well-
beaten path*



**Principle 6: PRODUCE
NO WASTE**
*Waste not, want not
A stitch in time saves
nine*



**Principle 12:
CREATIVELY USE AND
RESPOND TO CHANGE**
*Vision is not seeing
things as they are but
as they will be*

The Design Process

There are a wide range of design processes and methods available. Some require practice and training, others are self-explanatory, and easily used by a beginner. It is worth remembering that we all have some design experience - its part of being human. The design process includes:

- Survey
- Analysis
- Design
- Implementation
- Maintenance
- Evaluation

A basic permaculture tool is the use of Zones in design. Each zone requires different amounts of attention and energy.

- Zone 0 - the house or activity centre (high input and energy needs)
- Zone 1 - herbs, salads, plants that need daily attention, compost, bike shed

- Zone 2 - Chickens, other animals, orchard, greenhouse.
- Zone 3 - Water storage, main crops, field shelters.
- Zone 4 - Forestry, pasture, dams, forage.
- Zone 5 - Wild zone, where nature is in charge and where we go to learn and harvest only that which is abundant (lowest energy input).

Where elements of the design are placed *in relation to each other* is crucial.



"Order is found in things working beneficially together. It is not the forced condition of neatness, tidiness, and straightness, all of which are, in design or energy terms, disordered. True order may lie in apparent confusion . . ." Bill Mollison

Mimicking Nature

Permaculture is not a set of rules; it is a process of design based around principles found in the natural world, of co-operation with people and landscape, the creation of mutually beneficial relationships, and translating these principles into actions. Permaculture works on the idea that natural systems are hugely successful. They are self-making, self-organising, highly resilient, and very adaptable.

By observing natural systems we can see principles and patterns that are used again and again. So permaculture says, 'well if nature works so well, and seems to use these principles, why don't we?' Here are a few ecological principles that permaculture uses:

'Each element has multiple functions'.

In nature each element, be it a fox, a dandelion, a tree or a bacterium, has many functions - a fox predares other animals and keeps populations in

check, it provides manure, and creates burrows that become habitats for other species. We can take the principle and apply it to a human element, even the lowly shed. Usually a shed will just be used to store things. But if we place it so that it faces south, we can add a cloche or mini-greenhouse and grow plants. We can add climbers on the other walls and add a gutter and water barrel and use it to harvest water. Now the shed is providing more than it did before. It's working harder for us and meeting more of our needs.

'Cycling resources'.

In nature there is no waste. Nutrients, minerals and water all endlessly cycle through natural systems. For example, a leaf falls and is eaten by the worm, the worm is eaten by a bird, the bird's droppings fall onto the soil and are taken up by the tree... We can use this principle in every household, by composting our kitchen 'waste', using the compost to grow food, which we then use in the kitchen and chop up, putting the 'waste' into the compost bin...