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**Garden culture as heritage: a pilot study of garden culture  
conservation based on Norwegian examples**

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**Abstract:**

*The purpose of this paper is to raise awareness of garden culture conservation. In current garden conservation frameworks, garden owners' values of their heritage gardens are rarely considered. What do garden owners value the most? What does it mean to heritage conservation? What are the objectives of garden conservation when taking garden owners' views into consideration? Using data collected through qualitative interviews in Norway, we discover that garden owners most value the interaction with their garden and the feelings gained from the interaction. Also, we find the term 'cultural heritage' is confusing to the interviewees, since over half of them do not perceive their gardens as a cultural heritage. We compare the values of the interviewed Norwegian garden owners with those extracted from historic garden conservation charters and the values of gardens in a broader literature. The comparison shows that the values realised through the interaction between people and gardens are largely missing from current conservation approaches. Next, using theories from David E. Cooper, David Phillips and the Living Heritage Approach, we argue that the values embedded in the interaction between people and gardens are crucial in terms of fulfilling the goal of heritage conservation, and that garden owners' values should be considered in conservation guidelines. In the end, we present a new approach to conserving garden heritage: garden culture conservation. By replacing the term 'heritage' with 'culture', we avoid the confusion of the meaning of 'heritage' to the public and extend the area of conservation to include both historic and ordinary gardens, as well as both tangible and intangible dimensions. Garden culture conservation aims to reinforce the connection between people and gardens, thus keeping alive garden culture in society.*

**Keywords:** Conservation, garden culture, heritage, Norwegian garden, private domestic garden, value

**Introduction:**

Gardens comprise one category of our cultural heritage. Historic gardens as excellent examples of human culture have long been the focus of garden conservation (ICOMOS, 1981). The first international guidelines on historic garden conservation, 'the Florence Charter', defines historic garden as 'an architectural and horticultural composition of interest to the public from the historical or artistic point of view' and a monument that 'must be preserved in accordance with the spirit of the Venice Charter' (ICOMOS, 1981). This means the focus of conservation is to preserve the physical fabric and cultural message of gardens of high historical or artistic value. Along with the development of heritage studies in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the meaning of heritage has expanded. Garden heritage conservation in this stage also starts to include more 'ordinary' gardens that represent the life of broader societies in all periods as well as the related intangible factors such as skills and craftsmanship.

Identifying values of a cultural heritage is the initial stage of heritage conservation, which solves why and what to conserve. There are several methods of evaluation in national and international guidelines related to historic gardens. For example, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* identifies a historic environment as having evidential, historical, aesthetic or communal values (English Heritage, 2008), while the Burra Charter refers to a place of cultural significance having aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value (Australia ICOMOS, 2013). The Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage (Riksantikvaren) identifies the values of historic gardens as knowledge and source values, experience values and use values (Riksantikvaren, 2008). Except for social and communal values that are

applicable to a limited group of people, all values above are the heritage values that represent a public interest in places, regardless of ownership (English Heritage, 2008).

When the focus of garden heritage is mostly on historic gardens, above evaluation systems work well. However, when the meaning of heritage expands and begins to include gardens from all societies and all periods, such evaluation systems show their shortcomings, especially when dealing with private domestic gardens still in use. On the one hand, private domestic gardens are not only the carrier of cultural heritage but also private property. While heritage values reveal the public and professional interests towards such gardens, how their owners value their property is not yet included in current conservation frameworks. On the other hand, unlike historic gardens that are preserved in a relatively static manner and therefore can be recorded by registration or survey, private domestic gardens are places for living and thus change more often according to their users' demands. The registration system can catch a single moment but is incapable of recording the evolution of the gardens.

These facts make us question current garden conservation approaches: Have they taken into account all significant values of garden heritage? What is the best way to conserve garden heritage that would cover both historic and ordinary gardens, both tangible and intangible dimensions?

Here we present a pilot study that deals with these questions. We first study the opinions of a group of garden owners in Norway who own a domestic garden with heritage values. By interviewing the garden owners, we want to know how they value their gardens and how they think of their gardens as a cultural heritage. In the following, three questions are discussed: What are the differences among the values we collected from Norwegian garden owners, values of historic gardens and values of gardens in general? How important are garden owners' values to heritage conservation? What term better presents the objective of garden conservation without confusion? At the end, we introduce a new approach to conserving garden heritage: garden culture conservation.

## **Voice of Norwegian garden owners with 'unique gardens'**

### *A brief review of Norwegian garden culture*

Garden history in Norway goes back to medieval times, when monks first introduced gardens to monasteries on the west coast. At that time, a monasterial garden often had fruit trees and medicinal plants (Bruun, 2007). Gardening further developed and spread to the broader society after the 1750s by interested and educated priests and the bourgeoisie as a means of popular education and improvement, since well-educated landowners were willing to introduce new agriculture methods and species to farmers (Dietze, 2006). However, because Norway was ruled for a long time by Denmark and Sweden in the past, the number and quality of large manorial gardens and estates in Norway are significantly inferior to its Nordic neighbours. As a result, Norwegian garden history is rarely known by international readers.

Norwegians have had a growing interest in gardens in the past few decades. According to national statistics, 85% of the population age 16 and older had a garden or plot in 2015, an increase from 77 per cent in 1997 (Statistics Norway, 2015). This ratio is almost equivalent to, and likely to exceed, that of the UK, a country with by far the highest number per capita of any nation in Europe—and gardening is the nation's most popular and widespread leisure activity (Gross and Lane, 2007; Hope, 2009). In Norway, a private garden is believed to be an important part of good living conditions. It is common especially for a

Norwegian family with children to own a detached house with a garden (Eliesen, 2005; Statistics Norway, 2015).

The conservation of gardens in Norway began in the early 1920s, based on the book on historic gardens by the art historian C. W. Schnitler in 1916. In the 1960s, with funding from the Norwegian Agricultural Scientific Research Council, researchers at the Norwegian Agricultural University in Ås (later called Norwegian University of Life Sciences) carried out a registration that included about four hundred important historic gardens. In 1978, the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage promulgated 'the Norwegian Cultural Heritage Act', enabling the protection of historic gardens. This was earlier than the first international charter on historic garden conservation, 'the Florence Charter' (1981). In the 1990s, a new programme called 'landsverneplan project' asked for all state-owned buildings and properties to undergo an evaluation, in which the most important sites were listed and management plans required. This list mainly included architecture and buildings, but for the first time addressed the relation between buildings and gardens (or parks) on site. The list covers both 'star monuments' and selective examples which represent ordinary lives from the broader society, such as farmer's houses and industrial buildings. Despite the attention to historic gardens starting early, there is not a registration system that specifically addresses gardens in Norway. It was not until 2006 that the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage, together with three regional councils, did a pilot study to register historic gardens and parks (Riksantikvaren, 2008), which aims to cover all kinds of gardens, especially the types that are not on the previous lists, like smaller private gardens. Following this pilot study, all counties are required to carry out a registration, which aims to provide an overview of gardens of high heritage value in the entire country, regardless of their formal status. The project is scheduled to be completed by 2018.

### *Methodology*

In order to collect garden owners' value of heritage gardens, as well as their experience of creating and maintaining such gardens, we needed to find gardens that are both privately owned and have some special characteristics that have given them the potential to be 'heritage' gardens. Since the definition of heritage is subjective and arguable, we tried to avoid using the words 'heritage' and 'historic' when defining the gardens we are looking for. Instead, we asked people to recommend a 'unique garden'. To illustrate a unique garden, we provided a few examples, including those with a long history, a nice design, a good collection of plants, or a unique setting, but pointing out that a 'unique garden' is not limited to the above qualities.

By asking, 'Do you know a garden which is unique in the area?', we first found several gardens through the recommendation of our colleagues and friends, and then discovered more gardens through the garden owners we interviewed. Altogether, we conducted twenty-one interviews between 2014 and 2016. Nineteen of them are in south-east Norway (Oslo and Akershus region), and two in mid-west Norway (Trondheim). Figs. 1–6 illustrate some of the gardens we visited. Fig. 7 is a diagram showing the types of all the gardens, from which we can see that almost all of them contain cultural significance in at least one aspect of history, aesthetics or botany.

[FIGS. 1–7 INSERT HERE]

We chose to use semi-structured qualitative interviews. All interviews were conducted in English. The interviewer first had a walk with the garden owner(s) and let them talk freely. After the tour in the garden, the interviewer and garden owner(s) sat down and had a conversation led by fifteen questions. We used the same set of questions in all interviews. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed

verbatim to prepare for data analysis.

### *Interview results and analyses*

The interview questions can be divided into three groups: facts related to creating and maintaining the garden, values of the garden, and perceptions of the garden as cultural heritage.

In the first group of questions, regarding the creation and maintenance of gardens, we wanted to know what influences the garden owner to create a unique garden. We therefore asked, ‘How did your interest in gardens and gardening start?’, ‘What is the design intention?’, ‘Where did the materials (such as plants, pavement, decorative features, garden building) come from?’ and similar questions. We found that childhood experience and access to a garden played a significant role in arousing owners’ interest in gardens and gardening. In addition, family members, neighbours, friends and garden societies (offline and online) all have an impact in supplying plants and ideas as well as generating passion and inspiration. For example, one interviewee said her interest in gardening went back to her childhood, when she grew up with a big garden maintained by her mother. Another interviewee had no interest in gardens in his early adulthood, but quickly developed an interest when moving from a city apartment to his wife’s house with a garden. One interviewee has a plant given to her by her mother, who got it from her grandmother. It is said to be a tradition to give plants this way. Several interviewees are members of a local garden society. They exchange flowers and experiences through garden visits and online social media. The passion for gardens and gardening also spreads through garden societies, as one interviewee recalled how her interest in gardens started: ‘I found some flowers that I didn’t know the name of, so I looked it up in Google, and found the answers at a place called [hagelag.no](http://hagelag.no). There are lots of crazy people, just thinking about gardens and plants. Suddenly I was part of them. So I sold my flat in Oslo, looked in newspapers for a house with a garden that I could afford to buy. I found an old house with a big garden, and I bought it.’

In the second group of questions about garden owners’ evaluation of their gardens, we asked two seemingly similar but indeed different questions: ‘What do you think has made your garden special?’ and ‘What do you value the most in your garden?’ In the first question, some of the answers were as follows:

I think the trace of four or five generations [is unique]—at least four generations have left their marks on this garden. That gives it an atmosphere of tradition.

It is the creek, of course also the composition of the local trees, and the surroundings with the ecological landscape, and the hills, the beautiful hills with deciduous trees, especially beautiful in the spring time and autumn, the beautiful colours.

I have so many plants—that is what people used to say. I think I have more variety than most other gardens.

In general, most interviewees think their gardens are special because they are old, have a special design or artistic quality, or have a large collection of plants, all of which is similar to what professionals would define as the historical, aesthetic and botanical values of a heritage garden.

For the second question, ‘What do you value the most in your garden?’, answers included the following:

I can sit here for hours just to listen to birds, see flowers.

It is the place to sit, to eat, to relax, to meet friends, to look at, and to be outside with nature.

I think the garden for us is to work, to create something, to enjoy seeing something grow.

For me it is a playground, where I can construct something and relax. I like constructing things. That is the important part for me. Instead of going to a fitness studio, I exercise in my garden.

Being able to work in the garden, something you are interested in, and you are inspired to do things, get ideas ... I don't know if there is one thing I value the most. It's the combination.

Physical activity of doing gardening; mental energy caused by gardening and physical exercise ... A positive effect, even when you are not enjoying it.

I have a job which demands a lot of work in my head. To come home working in the garden in the evenings and on weekends is almost like a meditation. Because I am just occupied in my garden, nothing else, I am free of thoughts. It is health-bringing to have a garden. It gives a lot.

It keeps me busy and lets me find things to do. That is the value. I can do things whenever I want, and do not have to do things if I am lacking energy. It is a big relief to realise that this is the way in this garden—if plants die, that is ok, and then I get new ones.

You get to know other people who are interested in gardening. We visit places, learn about plants, exchange species.

Freedom to experiment ... I like it that I can just try, but not be afraid that it is not good enough ... I don't have much time, but I accept it [imperfection]. No stress. Garden is for life—drink a cup of coffee, sit in the corner.

The answers are clearly concentrated on activities such as sitting, viewing, gardening, experimenting and gathering socially; the freedom to do or not do things; and the fulfilment that such activities and freedom have brought—relaxing, mindfulness, inspiration, surprise and peace.

These two questions reveal the value of gardens from different perspectives. The first question makes the garden owner judge his or her garden from an observer's point of view, that is, how a visitor would admire the garden. Therefore, the answers indicate heritage values similar to those perceived by professionals. The second question allows interviewees to reflect on their own experiences, and the answers turn out to be very different from heritage values.

In the third group of questions about gardens as heritage, we wanted to know what cultural heritage means to garden owners, and if they would like their gardens to be conserved. We asked, 'Do you think your garden is a cultural heritage? Why or why not?'. Nine interviewees replied 'no' and six said they were not sure. Only six out of 21 interviewees thought of their gardens as a cultural heritage, mainly because 'the hedge is original', 'the original design idea can be seen', 'it's the historical site with Viking graves and the old house', 'the trees are old and registered', or 'it is famous, the design reflects the Nordic park style'. Those who do not think their gardens are heritage explained the reasons as follows: 'To be heritage is too ambitious', 'the garden is an experiment. It still changes', 'if we could have made this a grandmother's garden [that is, the garden style that matches the house], then that is cultural

heritage', 'it is not a museum, not a castle. It's a private house', 'cultural heritage must be a state property, like Rosendal [a well-known historic estate with gardens dating back to the 17th century, now owned and managed by the University of Oslo]', 'it's not made for community or other people...it's just for me, and now. The heritage has to be something that other people in other time also appreciate.' These answers indicate that the traditional idea of cultural heritage as something old, grand and static still dominates the public's view.

However, there is one interesting exception. A couple in their 80s spent most of their lives in an old house with a garden designed by the wife's father, who was a landscape architect in the early 20th century. In the 1990s, they sold the property and moved to a smaller house in a community specially designed for old people. After moving in, the couple made a small garden next to the house. Although the garden is rather moderate, the couple confidently believe that it is a cultural heritage, because 'we have made this garden in the way we learned from our parents' (see Fig. 8). When asked if they regret that their previous garden was completely changed by the new owner, they said no. Such forward-looking attitudes in a way can be explained by their perception of cultural heritage, which they understand as the knowledge inherited from forefathers and society. Since they have carried the heritage with them and implanted it in the new place, there is no need to regret the lost garden—even though it could be a valuable heritage garden in the traditional sense.

[FIG. 8 INSERT HERE]

Currently there is no registration system in Norway that protects private heritage gardens. In order to test the attitudes towards such a system, we asked interviewees, 'In the far future, when somebody else takes over this place, do you mind if your garden is entirely changed by them?' and 'Would you like your garden to be on a cultural heritage list? Why or why not?' The answers to the first question were fairly consistent. The majority of the owners said that they did not mind. Typical answers included the following:

This is for me and for now; I have had a great time here.

Each thing has its time; I cannot stop them when my time ends.

The garden is a personal thing. Different people will develop it in different ways.

Such attitudes are also revealed in what interviewees have done, since all of them reshaped their gardens when they moved in, and have plans for what to change in the future. One common answer to the question, 'How long does it take to create your garden?' was, 'You can never finish a garden. It is a continuing process.'

When asked if they would like to have their gardens listed as a cultural heritage, the interviewees' replies reveal mixed feelings. On the one hand, the garden owners appreciate the potential to have their gardens listed, which is a big acknowledgement of their work; on the other hand, they are concerned that the registration would affect the privacy and freedom they have in their gardens:

I won't like it when I live here. We like to keep our privacy, in a very strict sense.



I don't think I would like that. Then you have limitations. You cannot do as you want. I can decide what to do and when to do it—that is important for me. We enjoy being here. It is very quiet here, very peaceful—that is important for us.

I do not want that. Then I have to look after the garden in a special way—but I cannot. That will ruin the value of my garden.

The authorities might intervene and tell me what to do, what not to do. I don't like that at all. But if saying conservation in a big sense—that is, I can still do what I want to do—then that is ok.

That would be fun. You may get competent people to help you—not directing you, but helping you.

My husband has a frantic fear that anybody should have opinions about his things, whether it is his house or his garden.

I think it is almost impossible to conserve this type of garden [private garden], because it absolutely depends on personal engagement.

To summarise the findings from the interviews, we can see that family influence, living environment and social networks all make a contribution to the creation of unique gardens by generating interest as well as providing a source of both materials and inspiration. Although a unique garden has historical, aesthetic or botanical values, they are not what garden owners value the most. Rather, owners most value the 'doings' in the garden, and the feelings that the garden and garden-related activities bring them. Garden owners highly appreciate the privacy and freedom they acquire from gardens. They try out new ideas and experiment in the garden. They reshape the garden when moving in and do not mind the future owner doing the same. Traditional approaches of material-focused conservation are not desired by garden owners. They worry that a strict conservation practice would ruin their freedom but at the same time accept conservation in a 'big sense'. This suggests that there is a gap between professionals' and garden owners' opinions in evaluating and treating garden heritage. It would be a difficult or impossible task to conserve gardens in use if we put them in the current framework of garden heritage conservation.

The interviews also reveal the confused understanding of 'cultural heritage'. This indicates that the meaning of 'garden heritage' may also be confusing or misleading to the public. Is there a more inclusive term that better describes the objective of garden conservation? We will come to this question in the last part of the discussion called 'Garden culture as heritage'.

## **Discussion: what to conserve in garden heritage**

*A comparison of values: historic gardens, gardens in general and Norwegian gardens of interviewees*

Following the interview findings, we have two questions. First, what values are recognised by garden

owners but not mentioned in current conservation charters? Second, are the values we collected only applicable to a small group of ‘unique’ gardens or valid in a broader sense—say, both unique and ordinary gardens, in Norway as well as other parts of the world? To answer these questions, we compare the values we collected from interviews with two other groups of values: values of historic gardens and places, and values of gardens in general (see Table 1).

The values of historic gardens and places are generated from the Florence Charter (ICOMOS, 1981), the Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 2013) and a report on the management of historic gardens and parks in Norway (Riksantikvaren, 2008). The values of gardens in general are extracted from the conference proceedings *Meanings of the Garden* (Francis and Hester, 1987), selected papers from which were also published later as a book (Francis and Hester, 1990). The proceedings have over 40 papers, which present values of a broad range of people from garden professionals, researchers, journalists, and artists to garden owners and users. The gardens studied include domestic gardens, community gardens, healing gardens and others in a widely spread geographical area. We find it a good source to get a broad view of the values of gardens.

[TABLE 1 INSERT HERE]

Looking at the three columns in Table 1, we find that there are some values in common, such as connecting nature and diverse lives, the enjoyment of the view, the sound, the scent and activities, physical and spiritual benefits, and ecological values. The values of interviewed Norwegian garden owners are closer to those of garden owners in general, while they indicate a clear difference from values pertaining to historic gardens. Historic gardens show diversity and excellence of human culture. They represent a collective identity, and many historic gardens have a high economic value as well, mainly realised through tourism. The unique values of the interviewed Norwegian gardeners and gardeners in general (marked in bold in Table 1) are those related to themselves, family and their immediate neighbourhood, and are realised through ‘doings’, such as gardening, experimenting, creating and harvesting, which we can call the ‘doing’ value.

Therefore, we may say that what is missing in the current conservation approach is the protection of the ‘doing’ value. The ‘doing’ value is created through people’s interaction with gardens and is not affected by a garden’s heritage significance, as long as its owner has the authority to make decisions about their garden.

### *The significance of garden owners’ values in garden heritage conservation*

Should the ‘doing’ value from garden owners’ experiences be included in garden heritage conservation? We will discuss this from two dimensions: the importance of the ‘doing’ value to the goal of heritage conservation and the role of garden owners in the living heritage approach.

According to the *Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* (Faro Convention), ‘conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal’ (Council of Europe, 2005). Since ‘human development’ can only be realised when there is a sustainable future, both environmentally and socially, the goal of heritage conservation is indeed about achieving quality of life without sacrificing sustainability. Does the ‘doing’ value satisfy this goal? In answering this question, David E. Cooper’s philosophical thinking on gardens (Cooper, 2006) and David Phillips’s theory on quality of life and sustainability (Phillips, 2006) are particularly helpful. In his book *A Philosophy of Gardens*, Cooper looks into the meaning of the garden and explains why the garden

matters. He says that the garden is ‘an epiphany of an intimate co-dependence between human creative activity in the world and the mystery that allows there to be a world for them at all’. Gardening is like a training process, leading a gardener to reach both an ‘unselfed’ life and the state of eudaimonia (Cooper, 2006). Eudaimonia is a Greek word meaning ‘human flourishing’ (Robinson, 1999), which Aristotle explained as the highest human good (Aristotle, 2009). According to David Phillips’s theory, to ‘flourish’ is one component of an individual’s subjective quality of life. It is compatible with sustainable development, both socially and environmentally (Phillips, 2006). The ‘doing’ value that the interviewed garden owners appreciated is compatible with and can be explained by Cooper’s philosophical discourse. Phillips’s theory linking human flourish with quality of life and sustainability further confirms the significance of the ‘doing’ value to the goal of heritage conservation.

Currently, professionals are the ones who identify values of cultural heritage. Garden owners’ voices are not yet considered. Who has the authority to define values of a heritage garden? The ‘Living Heritage Approach’ suggested by ICCROM (n.d.) provides an inspirational answer. The term ‘Living Heritage’ is ‘being linked to “communities” and the “continuity” of traditions and practices’. For such heritage, ‘value assessment should go beyond experts’ frameworks [...] and [...] allow those emerging from the communities through innovative processes’ (Wijesuriya, undated). Since the gardens we studied are all living heritages, we can therefore use the ‘Living Heritage Approach’ to argue that garden owners should be given priority when identifying the values associated with their gardens. Ultimately, it is they who affect the existence of such garden heritage.

### *Garden culture as heritage*

Our interviews reveal that the term ‘cultural heritage’ is not well understood by the public, which prevents most of the interviewees from recognising their garden as cultural heritage. In addition, the term ‘garden heritage’ is also problematic in delivering the right message to the public about the meaning of garden conservation. We need a new term.

This term should be able to cover various influences of and resources for creating and maintaining a heritage garden, the ‘doing value’ and other values recognised by various groups of people, long-appreciated historic gardens, and representative gardens of all societies, with both tangible and intangible dimensions. Let us call them ‘garden culture’.

Garden culture is a common term in both academic and popular publications. However, its exact meaning is somehow overlooked. There is no item called ‘garden culture’ in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) or the *Oxford Companion to Gardens*. The term is not clearly defined in academic papers or books. This might suggest that either garden culture is no more than a part of ‘culture’ and therefore does not require a separate definition or the meaning of garden culture is too diverse to be defined in a simple way. Since defining garden culture is crucial to our study, and there is no readily made reference to cite from, we start with analysing the meaning of culture. Using the definitions of culture from the OED, we single out key words and group them into four categories (see Table 2). The results show that *culture* has two types of meanings: one is the development or refinement of a subject (that is high culture); the other refers to distinctive thoughts, behaviours, customs or products belonging to a group of people in a certain period, which can be a culture of any level.

[TABLE 2 INSERT HERE]

Now we can illustrate garden culture. Since the word ‘garden’ is both a noun and a verb (garden as a

verb means ‘cultivate or work in a garden’, as in ‘gardening’), garden culture is therefore the culture of gardens and gardening. Using extracted meanings of culture, we define garden culture as 1) the artistic and intellectual development or the refinement of gardens and gardening; 2) distinctive thoughts, behaviours, customs or products associated with gardens and gardening that belong to a group of people in a certain period. The first meaning is mainly about the excellence that a garden culture can reach. We see such excellence in many examples in garden art and history books, and we protect the evidence through conservation of iconic gardens. The second meaning is a collective sense of garden culture. It is embedded in people and society rather than individual gardens. Numerous individuals in a society create their gardens, use and maintain them, and talk and think about them. All these people cultivate and are cultivated by garden culture.

### **Garden culture conservation: a new dimension of garden heritage conservation**

The history of garden conservation has gone through two stages. The Florence Charter produced in 1981 marks the beginning of the first stage, ‘historic garden conservation’, in which garden conservation borrows from the philosophy of architectural conservation, aiming to keep the authentic (i.e. static) design and the physical substance of gardens with outstanding aesthetic or scientific values from the past. Gardens regarded as cultural heritage at this stage are, for example, those on the World Heritage List and various national and regional lists of cultural heritage. At the second stage of ‘heritage garden conservation’, a more flexible attitude towards the change of physical layers of a garden is adopted, in which conservation means ‘the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations’ (English Heritage, 2008). Moreover, the aspects of heritage extend to both tangible and intangible dimensions of a larger variety of gardens that represent all societies at all times. Such philosophy has been widely adopted by various national and international guidelines for heritage conservation since the beginning of the 21st century.

At this point, we would like to introduce a new direction, which may become the third stage of garden conservation: the garden culture conservation (see Table 3). Different from the first two stages of garden conservation, characterised by a top-down approach to heritage designation and conserving them with external intervention, garden culture conservation asks for a more dynamic approach, which may contain both top-down and bottom-up approaches. In this stage, individual gardens—for example, historic gardens—are no longer the entire focus of conservation. Instead of protecting garden heritage, garden cultural conservation protects the link between gardens and people. This means protecting the land that a garden can occupy, the leisure time that people can spend on their gardens, the resources to create and maintain a garden, and society’s passion and willingness to live with a garden, in addition to much more. In general, the essence of garden cultural conservation is to conserve the culture that values gardens and gardening.

[TABLE 3 INSERT HERE]

Through this study, we have shown that heritage values of historic gardens cannot cover the values of garden heritage. Through various interactions with gardens, people enter a state of eudaimonia, and by inheriting, practicing, exchanging and spreading knowledge, ideas, materials and passions in society, a garden culture is sustained and evolves. A healthy garden culture gives birth to more gardens and passionate gardeners, which are the soil for all garden heritage, including historic gardens, and conserves garden heritage in a more sustainable manner. Although we studied the views of only a limited number

of Norwegian garden owners, and their values did not cover all values of gardens, this opens a new direction in garden conservation, that is, seeing garden culture as heritage. Through garden culture conservation, we take care of both human works of excellence and the soil that cultivates such heritage. This fulfils the goal of heritage conservation.

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## Figures



Fig. 1 A garden with design quality. Hedges divided the garden into several 'rooms', each with unique functions. This is one room that is used as an outdoor sitting space as well as an experimental space where the garden owner tests various ways of mixing plant species.



Fig. 2 A garden with a 'forest' in it. Half of the garden is covered by trees from a previous forest on site. The owner added a cabin among the trees. It is an exciting playground for kids and also reflects the owner's childhood living environment.



Fig. 3 A garden at Ullevål Hageby in Oslo. Ullevål Hageby is a well-known garden city developed in the 1920s. The design intention is that all families have a garden. In this case, the family living on the ground floor has a garden immediately outside their back door. And the family on the upper floor has the garden at the top of the slope/terrace (right side of the picture). The garden is not immediately accessible from the house, but there is a good visual connection between the garden and the house, which is appreciated by the owners.



Fig. 4 A rose specialist's garden with a collection of 230 roses.





Fig. 5 A garden nearly 200 years old, where eight generations of the same family have lived.



Fig. 6 A garden used for therapeutic purposes. There are many sitting and lying places in the garden. By gardening and resting in the garden, the owner acquires a state of calmness and fulfilment.

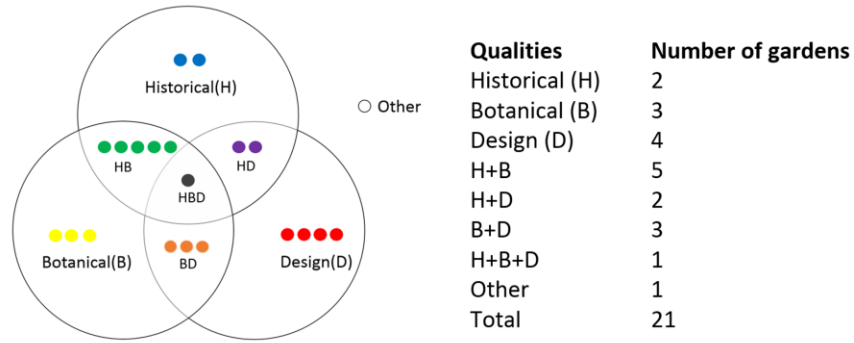


Fig. 7 A diagram of the types of gardens owned by those who participated in the interview. Most gardens contain one or more qualities in history, design or botany.



Fig. 8 A couple who lived most of their lives with an old garden with design qualities (left). Later they sold the property and moved to a smaller house for old people, where they made a new garden (right). They view the new garden as a heritage garden because it was created in the way they learned from their parents. That knowledge is cultural heritage to them.

## Tables

Table 1. A comparison of values: historic gardens, gardens in general, Norwegian gardens of interviewees

	Values of historic gardens	Values of gardens in general	Values perceived by interviewed Norwegian garden owners
Values related to 'connection'	community, identity (national / communal), landscape, nature, past, lived experiences, humans, silence	wholeness: God/Soul, Nature/Universe, <b>personal attachment (childhood, culture, Identity)</b> , group memory (tradition, history, group ID), neighbourhood/community, diverse life and cultures	social gathering, <b>family togetherness</b> , nature, quietness, <b>personal attachment (recall childhood environment)</b>
Values related to 'metaphor'	idealised image of paradise	life/death, power: wealth, politics, beauty, ideology, morality	
Values related to 'use' and feelings	enrich lives, show diversity, public events and activities,	<b>grow food</b> , <b>security: protective space</b> , education: morality, science, knowledge,	sit, view, listen, feel,

<p>evoked through use</p>	<p>inspiration, appreciation, experiences, social, spiritual, artistic, aesthetic, historical record, archive, scientific research, exchange knowledge internationally, economy, ecology (biological diversity)</p>	<p><b>escape/retreat,</b> tranquillity/peace, <b>sense of control,</b> <b>sense of self/ID: self-</b> <b>esteem, self-expression,</b> <b>self-realisation,</b> <b>mental health: meditation,</b> <b>therapeutic/healing,</b> physical health: fresh air, physical exercise through gardening, place for physical exercise, <b>labour, hard work,</b> <b>a process of gardening and</b> <b>harvest (hope and</b> <b>expectation),</b> <b>care,</b> enjoying the view, sound, scent... social activities, <b>hobby,</b> <b>leisure, relax,</b> <b>creativity,</b> source of inspiration,</p>	<p>walk, <b>work...gardening,</b> physical health, <b>mental health,</b> <b>mindfulness,</b> <b>grow food,</b> <b>leisure, relax,</b> <b>hobby,</b> <b>experiment,</b> source of inspiration, <b>create,</b> surprise, <b>passion,</b> enjoyment, <b>care, nourish,</b> <b>privacy,</b> <b>solitude,</b> fulfilment, <b>freedom to decide what to</b> <b>do and what not to do in</b> <b>gardening,</b> ecology</p>
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		<b>start of the career,</b> <b>personal icon,</b> ecology	
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Table 2. Analysis of the *OED* definition of culture

	Actions	Defining terms	Subjects	Scope
Words from dictionary description of 'culture'	Cultivation; development; improvement (by education and training); devoting of attention to; study of; refinement	Artistic; intellectual; distinctive; specified; particular	Mind; faculties; manners; a subject; pursuit; taste; arts; manifestations; ideas; customs; social behaviour; products; a way of life; social environment; quality; thing; people; philosophy; practices; attitudes	Collectively; a particular society, people or period; a group of people; an institution, business or other organisation
Extracted meaning	develop	unique	quality	A group

Table 3. Three stages of garden conservation

<b>Stages (example documents)</b>	Stage 1: historic garden preservation (Florence Charter, 1981)	Stage 2: heritage garden conservation (Conservation principles, policies and guidance, 2008)	Stage 3: garden culture conservation
<b>What to conserve</b>	Historic gardens (mainly grand and monumental gardens); their authentic materials, authentic design and layout	Selective gardens; their historical plants, traditional tools, craftsmanship, design inspiration, original uses	Keep garden culture alive in society by conserving/restoring the link between people and gardens