

# OUTDOOR DESIGN

PROJECTS AND PLANS FOR  
A STYLISH GARDEN



RIZZOLI  
NEW YORK

Matt Keightley  
Photography by Marianne Majerus

 Royal Horticultural Society



# Introduction

MATT KEIGHTLEY

I have been designing gardens for close on two decades and still get that same rush of excitement and wave of energy when I put pen to paper for the first time for a project. It’s an incredible thrill, planning a space and transforming the way clients both visualise and use their own properties in ways they never thought possible.

I have selected 35 beautiful gardens, some my own work, others created by many of the leading designers working today, and explored their key features, design details, material selection, planting choices and design principles. A handful of the gardens have been created for the internationally celebrated RHS Chelsea Flower Show; the rest are ‘real’ gardens in a variety of locations – from the heart of the city to the wilds of the country. The gardens have been chosen to provide a diverse collection of contemporary styled spaces, ranging from minimalist to family-friendly. There will be something to learn and something to take home, and you will finish the book feeling motivated to make the small alterations necessary in order to turn your good garden into a great one.

Through the remarkable photography of Marianne Majerus, I will take you behind the eyes of the designer in a way that deconstructs the elements of each garden, enabling

**Opposite:** Standing proudly in the RHS Feel Good Garden, designed for the 2018 RHS Chelsea Flower Show. The space showed the ways in which gardens can be used to improve physical health and psychological wellbeing, encouraging users to interact with the garden by following the meandering paths to enjoy the textural planting.

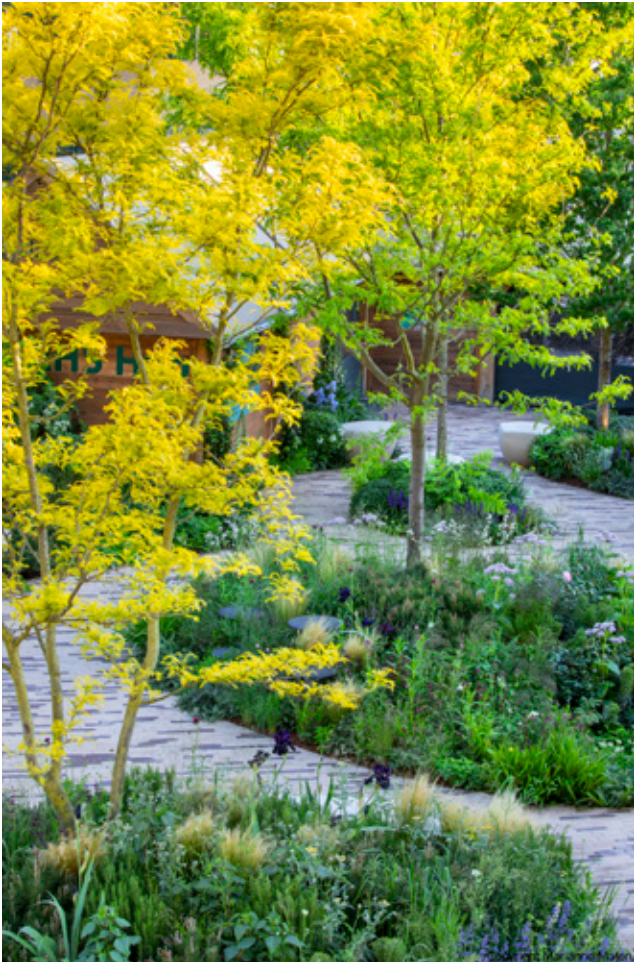
you to see clearly why and how they work so effectively. Annotated plans created by the designer of each garden will help you to interpret the gardens and put the photographs in context, and allow you to see how each designer has started the design process and established the most appropriate way forward for that specific space.

Admittedly, it can be daunting and often tricky to know where to start when redesigning an outdoor space, especially if, like many of the people I meet, you enjoy spending time

A beautiful garden should be regarded as an additional room that is just as important as your other living spaces.

in your garden but cannot envisage its potential, beyond the existing obligatory patio at the back of the house – rammed to the edges with furniture, toys and failing pot plants. So, whether you are looking to completely redesign your garden or just rejuvenate a few features, or are simply seeking some inspiration, *Design Outdoors* is full of incredible ideas, tips and advice that will leave you desperate to improve and care more for your garden.

Rather than shutting the back door on an uninspired garden that you only use when you feel compelled to because the sun decides to come out, your precious outdoor commodity should be considered integral to the planning of your home. Your garden is essentially an additional room that is just as important as the other living spaces in your home, and this book will provide you with the visual inspiration and experienced know-how to help you transform it into an outdoor space like no other.





# The Wider Landscape

Cleverly linking a garden with the wider landscape has a variety of benefits.

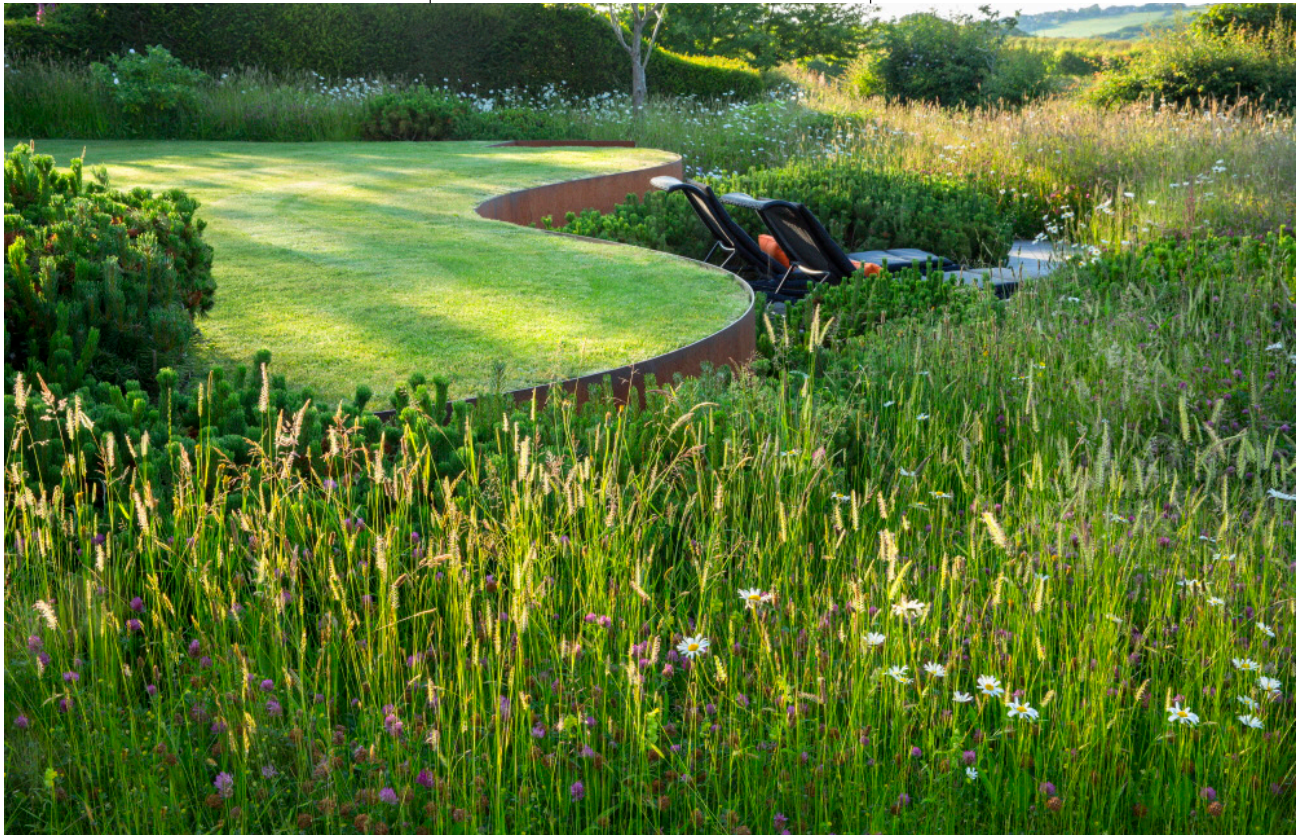
- 1. Create a sense of depth and a feeling of space by blending your garden into the landscape beyond its boundary. You can prevent abrupt stops around your border by planting in front of fences and walls, helping to disguise where your space ends and the adjoining space begins.
- 2. Tree choice and placement can play a huge part in borrowing the wider landscape. Look at existing species

nearby. If you think they will work in your own garden, plant some to gain immediate continuity.

- 3. Use overhanging branches from a neighbour's garden to your advantage; they can often be used to frame views, soften pergolas, give privacy and provide frames for birdfeeders.
- 4. Leading the eye to the surrounding landscape lengthens views and creates the illusion of a larger space. Think how you want the garden to be appreciated horizontally and vertically. For example, softer planting in the foreground with a bold feature at the rear will direct the focus of the viewer.
- 5. Create an exaggerated sense of perspective by exploiting a particular feature in the landscape. This might be a beautiful building or specimen tree. Build drama into your space and gradually draw people's attention

through the garden with changing planting levels before finally focusing on a distinctive object in the distance beyond your boundary.

- 6. The height of nearby trees can be used to create a greater sense of space. Try graduating the level of the planting, from ground level plants through medium shrubs, tall grasses and, finally, medium trees. This makes for a more natural transition between the garden and the wider landscape.
- 7. Monitoring how the sun tracks round your garden, and thus where neighbours' trees are likely to cast shade, will help you plan the layout and design more thoroughly.



# Balance

Create synergy and continuity throughout your garden.

- 1. The balance between hard and soft landscaping is the most important and arguably the trickiest to get right. Put simply, contemporary and minimalist designs have a higher proportion of hard landscaping to planting than classical ones (although they also need to suit the aspect and wider landscape).
- 2. Take advantage of level changes when balancing a space. They create depth in smaller gardens and a larger

surface area to work with. If you need to step down into the garden, add drama by creating a space that requires steps back up to the level of the internal floor.

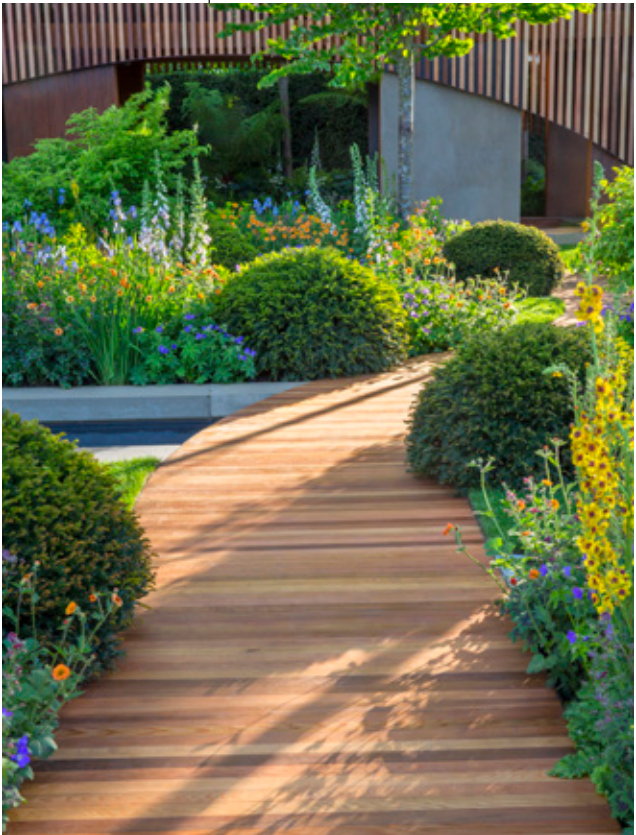
- 3. Using colour to balance a garden is fun. Not only will the space look right if colour is used consistently, but you can also manipulate the way people view it. Once the structural planting is established, drift colours from one side of the garden to the other, providing balance across the width and a rhythm throughout the scheme.
- 4. Selecting the right materials ensures balance and synergy with the interior. Noting a client's preferences in interior finishes and accessories helps create a balanced feel between the two spaces.
- 5. Textural balance can create depth, layers and perspective. Try grasses and perennials in the foreground with some topiary peeping out behind them. This

is more intriguing and satisfying to look at than if they are the other way round.

- 6. Planning a garden proportionally is vital for balance. For example, try using multiple seating areas to stop a terrace dominating the scheme and so create a more aesthetically pleasing space.
- 7. Aim to balance mass and void (busy space versus open ground). In formal schemes, create symmetry from left to right – trees on either side can frame views into a void, giving the garden a sense of place. In an area beyond or around the void (lawn, gravel or a terrace), use mid-height shrubs to add movement around the blank space.



**Opposite:** A contemporary Corten steel retaining wall cuts through this naturalistic planting scheme, accenting the shapes and forms beyond the garden.  
**Above:** The beautiful natural texture and vibrant green fronds of *Dicksonia antarctica* (soft tree fern) contrast with the muted tones of the streetscape.  
**Right:** The warm, honey tones of the timber walkway are picked up in the subtle flecks of orange through the planting, marrying hard and soft.







# Water

Water can transform the atmosphere of a space in a variety of ways.

- 1. Use the sound of running water to enhance the atmosphere of a space. In urban environments, mask traffic noise by increasing the scale of the drop from water source to reservoir.
- 2. Use vertical planes for the movement of water. It draws attention immediately, as you often see the water feature as soon as you enter a garden. It is also a good use of space in smaller gardens, as you can recirculate the water using a compact reservoir.

- 3. Water control is important. Both the level and the clarity of the water make a huge difference to the end result. Position the balance tank and controls away from the main garden or in a nearby shed for easy inspection so that they do not affect the aesthetics of the garden.
- 4. A perfectly still body of water is a great way to create reflections of the surrounding garden or of a feature such as a tree or sculpture. This can work in both open ground and a slightly more enclosed environment. Either way, circulate the water when you can to prevent stagnation.
- 5. If you have room, a rill can be an effective way to guide people through a space. You need a simple recirculating system and then gravity takes care of the movement of the water through the rill itself. Adjust the turbulence through the material you use and design a shallow, yet broad, profile so that children can enjoy the water too.

- 6. Lighting water can transform the look and atmosphere of the space. Be sure to make the fittings as discreet as possible to avoid glare or reflection of the individual LEDs. It is not always necessary to use underwater fittings; if you uplight nearby trees or features they will reflect beautifully on the water's surface.
- 7. Water can be used as a key feature of the garden design to draw immediate attention, or it can be a subtle addition that needs to be discovered, creating mystery and intrigue. Consider carefully how water could best fit into your space.

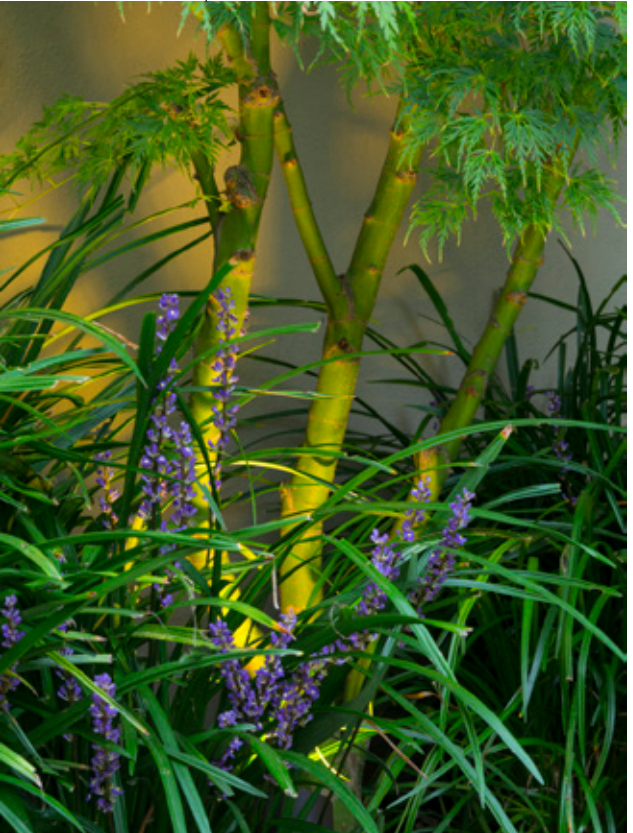
# Lighting

A carefully considered lighting scheme will turn a good garden into a great garden.

- 1. Good lighting is more about the effect than the look of the fitting. Where possible, try to hide light fittings behind benches and among foliage. Always purchase good quality fittings to ensure longevity, but also consistency around the scheme.
- 2. Less is more when it comes to wattage. You have more control over the effect or scene if you stick to low level lights. Rather than using a 12 watt

- floodlight bulb, try four 3 watt spikes so you can control the beam angles and illuminate exactly what you want.
- 3. Practical path and step lights do not need to look utilitarian. Consider the fixing detail and how the fitting can be positioned discreetly. The effect should add to the wider lighting scheme and not look like a runway to a fire exit. Low level strip lighting works extremely well.
- 4. If there are trees or shrubs close enough to a path, try uplighting them and you will get the best of both worlds; the tree will look fantastic and the path will be illuminated.
- 5. Individual light controls are key to creating the right lighting atmosphere for different events. I prefer to use multiple switches or programmed scenes, rather than a single switch for the entire scheme. This approach

- enables you to manipulate how you view and use the space.
- 6. Avoid colour changing lights. Cool to warm white is all you need to create a romantic or atmospheric space. Seek professional advice on the kelvin (colour temperature) required. I usually opt for 2700 3000K, which is warmer than daylight and a good all rounder for most gardens.
- 7. Enhance your lighting scheme by adding candles. Lanterns or tealights add the finishing touches that turn a beautiful garden into a magical one.
- 8. Avoid glare at all costs. If a guest walks into your garden and stares directly into a lamp, it will ruin the experience. Consider the beam angles and fitting positions to ensure you don't walk around your garden squinting.



**Opposite left:** Shards of steel erupt from the planting at different heights as water courses out of each of them, providing turbulence in the pond below.  
**Opposite right:** The brimming water level in these Corten steel troughs reflects the surrounding garden.  
**Above:** Discreet lighting can draw focus to simplistic planting.  
**Right:** Hidden uplighting creates a beautifully warm glow around the base of this Japanese maple.





# Outdoor Living

The position of a seating area can change the way you move through and use your garden.

- 1. A recent movement towards expansive glass fa ades on our homes has implications for the way we design our urban residential landscapes. It is more important than ever to create synergy between interior and exterior spaces. Create an additional outdoor room by using accent themes, colours and styles from the interior.
- 2. Creating multiple seating areas is a great way to encourage more frequent use of a garden. A border at the back

of the garden may look beautiful, but you are more likely to visit if there is a bench nearby.

- 3. Installing fire in some form is a great way to encourage you to enjoy your garden during the colder months. Fire features range from very basic fire baskets to bio fuel tables and bespoke purpose built fire walls.
- 4. Outdoor cooking is a hugely sociable activity in the garden if you position the cooking area correctly. Opt for a traditional approach using good quality equipment (with charcoal/lumpwood) rather than a fancy looking outdoor kitchen that uses gas.
- 5. Enclosure can provide a heightened sense of intimacy, privacy and seclusion. There are many effective structures and planting choices that can help to envelop a secluded spot. Try open roof structures for growing plants and opening up views of the sky.

- 6. Bespoke furniture is often the best solution for a small space. It can be tucked into just about any corner and planters can also be incorporated to add interest. Before ordering expensive materials, create a plywood tester to check proportions the seat pad of a lounge chair, for example, should be 42cm (17in) high with a back at an 18 degree angle!
- 7. Pots and planters often provide the finishing touches to a garden design. These seemingly unimportant accessories can transform a nice looking garden into a carefully considered and truly bespoke space.
- 8. It is worth including storage in your garden to tuck away tools, children s toys and cushions in winter. I prefer to design bespoke sheds or storage units to ensure they are as discreet as possible, tucked in behind planting and often painted dark green so they blend in and are unobtrusive.

**Opposite left:** This open pavilion, which offers both shade and sanctuary, is as beautiful as it is practical.  
**Opposite right:** Cleverly integrated within the scheme, this outdoor shower simulates a monsoon and works perfectly with the style of planting.  
**Below:** Single species planting in this understated yet striking garden accents the hard landscaping.  
**Right:** A seamless transition between material interfaces gives a sense of calm.



# Less is More

It is often harder to work with a restricted or minimalist palette, but if the design is executed correctly, it can result in a garden that feels effortless.

- 1. A restrained planting palette is bold, exciting and, if meticulously planned, can produce a uniquely confident design. Use evergreen shrubs to provide backbone and structure, but remember that undulation and movement are also crucial. Choose a colour palette and limit the number of perennial species, simply increasing the quantity of each for a mind blowing effect.
- 2. Specimen trees can add all the interest and drama you need. Visit

- a few nurseries once you know the species you need and treat your choice as if you were selecting a piece of art. Each and every part of the tree needs to be perfect for a restrained space.
- 3. Constancy of tone is important, so if you decide to use multiple materials you need to be sure that the tones are cohesive and do not clash with one another. Samples and mood boards are helpful at the design stage to establish the final feeling and detailing.
- 4. Less is more doesn t always refer to the number of materials you use. Some gardens benefit from a single choice, while others are just as effective if multiple materials are used this introduces subtle texture, which can bring a change in pace and rhythm.
- 5. Detail is key to creating something truly effortless in appearance and incredibly relaxing in experience. Consider how material interfaces

- are treated; every detail should feel deliberate, seamless and just so .
- 6. Don t worry about leaving blank or open spaces in the garden. Just as the white space in a drawing can create as much intrigue as the detailed sketch, so open areas in a garden can be restful. These areas provide space for quiet contemplation and reduce unnecessary intensity and complexity.
- 7. Consider furniture in a similar way to sculpture in terms of its synergy with the garden. It should look well positioned, without dominating an area, and should be integral to the scheme. Ensure the material choices complement the hard landscaping and flow into the planting.
- 8. The layout of the garden should be as uncomplicated as the palette of plants and materials. Regardless of the level changes, visitors should feel they can move around the space with ease.



CASE STUDY

# Low Maintenance

TONY WOODS

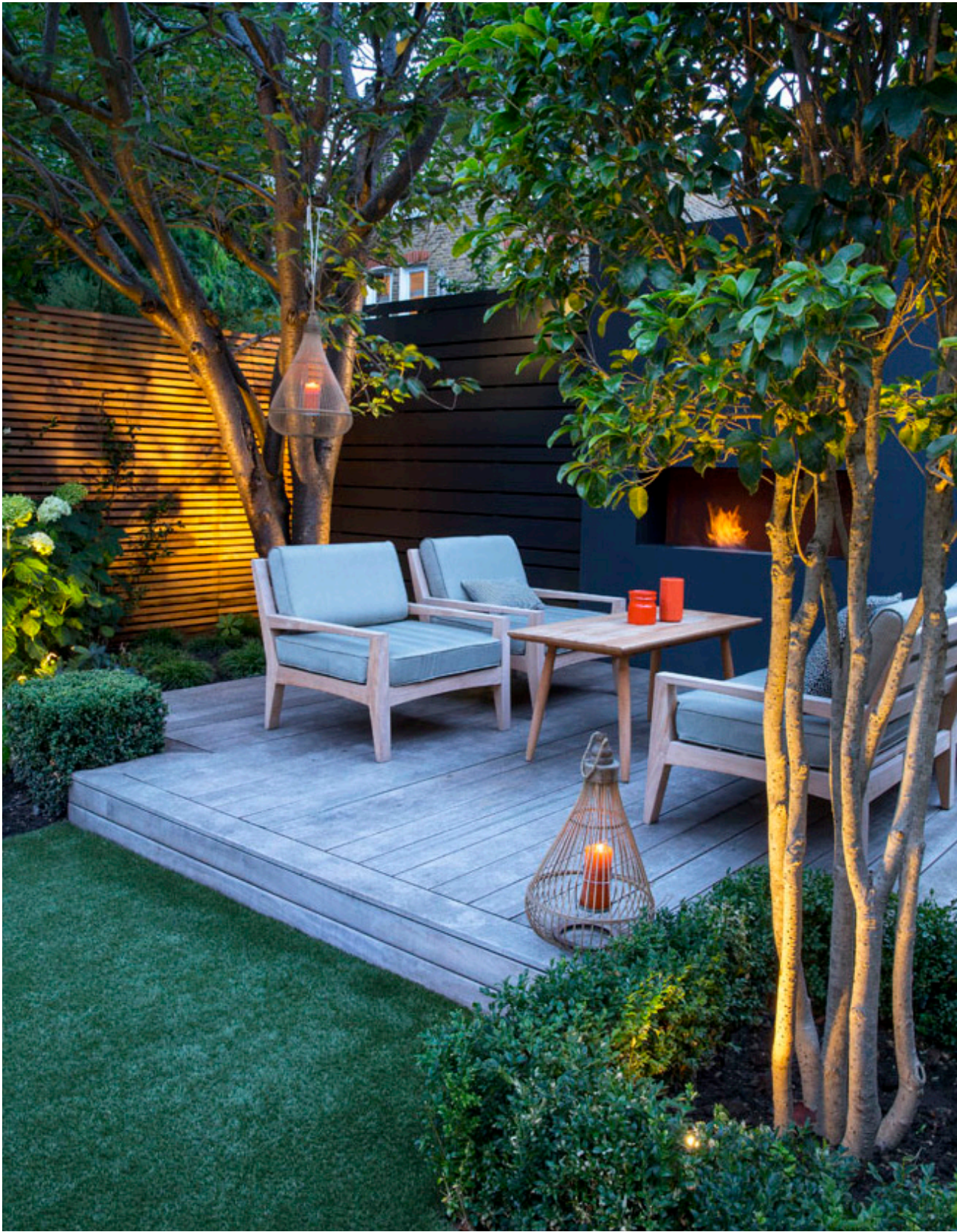
Is it possible to create a beautiful garden that is also low-maintenance? This is a question that garden designers are asked all the time. Here, Tony Woods has worked magic by turning what was a depressingly muddy lawn with narrow side beds and little else into a fabulously chic back garden. Better still, the new garden does not take a lot to keep it looking this good. So how did he do it? First, Tony built a small limestone dining terrace and outdoor kitchen close to the house and another more relaxed area on a raised deck at the back underneath the existing mature cherry tree. A rusted Corten steel fireplace was set into what was once a white freestanding wall that hid a garden shed. Painting the wall dark grey gives it the look of an expensive render. Panels of horizontal fence run down both side walls, in front of which multistemmed and fragrant olive trees are planted at intervals. A couple more olives stand at the edge of the deck, framed in low box squares and uplit at night, creating sculptural forms with their elegant stems.

The borders were widened and the heavy clay London soil improved with imported topsoil and well-rotted manure before being planted with easy-to-look-after hydrangeas, *Anemone × hybrida* (Japanese anemone) and *Hakonechloa macra* (Japanese forest grass). *Trachelospermum jasminoides* (star jasmine) is being trained up the fence. The *pièce de résistance* – and one that the clients were most worried about – is the artificial lawn. Despite their fears, this has perhaps proved the most successful innovation. It stays fresh, clean and green, needs little maintenance and has put off local foxes.

**Right:** Teak sofas sit on the hardwood deck and a steel fireplace has been set into the original freestanding wall. Good-quality artificial turf has transformed a persistently muddy lawn and given the garden a new lease of life.







LOW MAINTENANCE

# Design Checklist

**1. Choose low maintenance limestone paving.** A good alternative to the Egyptian limestone used here is Jura Beige limestone, which is suitable for contemporary gardens as well as more traditional surroundings.

**2. Opt for artificial grass.** This has improved greatly, especially the elite ranges. It is easy to install and maintain, simply requiring brushing to remove leaves and debris. It is ideal for low maintenance gardening and areas where real grass lawns will not thrive.

**3. Go for contemporary fencing.** Western cedar slatted screen fence panels weather to a silvery grey. Horizontal fencing looks smarter and more contemporary than vertical timbers. Panels can be bought in varying lengths and with a kit that contains the necessary battens, posts and nails.

**4. Consider an alternative to box.** *Buxus* can be completely defoliated by box tree caterpillars, the caterpillars of the Asian *Cydalis perspectalis* moth. Consider evergreen alternatives such as *berberis*, *Ilex crenata* (box leaved holly) or *Taxus* (yew).

**5. Satisfy the senses.** The fragrant or sweet olive, *Osmanthus fragrans*, has scented flowers in summer and leathery evergreen leaves that make it an ideal wall or hedging plant. Multistemmed trees should be planted 1.2 2m (4 6½ft) apart. Flowers form on old wood, so pruning will reduce blooms.

**6. Make low maintenance borders high on impact.** To achieve punch, choose a few plants with strong contrasting forms and repeat them throughout the design. Here, *Anemone hortensis* (broad leaved anemones) contrast with bladed *Hakonechloa macra* (Japanese forest grass) and the white spherical blooms of hydrangea.

**7. Add a contemporary feel to your garden.** Bamboo lanterns work really well here, as the orange candle sits beautifully against the dark grey painted wall, echoing the flames in the fireplace. Choose a lantern with a glass insert so that the wind does not blow out the flame every five minutes or singe the bamboo.







The table on the limestone dining terrace with multistemmed *Osmanthus fragrans* (fragrant olive) growing against the fence.



A bamboo lantern with an orange candle hanging in the existing mature cherry tree.



*Hydrangea arborescens* Annabelle is planted with fragrant *Trachelospermum jasminoides* (star jasmine) scrambling along the fence behind.

LOW MAINTENANCE

# The Details



Double direction wall lights on the fence provide a gentle diffused light above and below.



Euphorbia with a planting of variegated miscanthus behind.



*Hakonechloa macra* (Japanese forest grass) and *Anemone* × *hybrida* Honorine Jobert under the *Osmanthus fragrans* at the edge of the artificial lawn.





Copyright Marianne

## CASE STUDY

# Contemporary Relaxed

JANE BROCKBANK

This garden needed to satisfy a range of requirements. First, it had to complement the newly built traditional-style town house. Second, it had to create the feeling of a contemporary but informal English country garden and, while balancing both those requirements, it also had to provide somewhere for children to play. The original garden had a swimming pool, fountains and, unfortunately, a heavy *Cuprocyparis leylandii* (Leyland cypress), as well as four out-of-fashion mature poplars. The space looked exhausted and uninspiring. At 35 × 25m (115 × 82ft) it was, however, a good size. The local council allowed the designer, Jane Brockbank, to take out the cypress, but the poplars had to stay. The swimming pool and fountains went, too.

The design of the new garden blends luxuriant plantings in generous beds with a large lawn, both of which can be seen from the terrace. The fire bowl provides both sculptural interest and warmth on cool evenings, while the four *Sorbus commixta* (Japanese rowan) define the space and restrict the visual impact of the new-build house behind. The whole design is set on a central axis: the gravel path that leads from the terrace to the lawn. Loose plantings of perennials tumble over its edge. In spring, the key colours are blues. In midsummer, the palette moves to pinks. Three fastigiate box columns in each of the two asymmetrical beds provide winter structure. Hidden paths curve through the flower beds, which are fun for children to run through and ideal for maintenance. Lastly, there is a playhouse and climbing frame.

**Left:** The Japanese rowans, with their filigree canopy, soften the brickwork of the house. In the centre of the terrace sits a sculptural fire bowl. From the terrace, the adults can watch the children on the lawn beyond the flowerbeds.



CONTEMPORARY RELAXED

# Design Checklist

**1. Get trees in the ground as soon as possible.** Here, *Liquidambar styraciflua* (sweet gum), *Acer rubrum* (red maple), *Prunus avium* (wild cherry) and *Crataegus × lavalleei* Carrierei were planted at the back of the garden while the house was being built. This gave them time to settle in and helped give the new garden a sense of maturity.

**2. Save money on expensive playhouses.** Children grow out of them quickly, so a cheaper tent style structure could be a better option.

**3. Abandon unwanted features.** Swimming pools and fountains can be more trouble than they re worth. Removing them can be a big job but worth it if the feature doesn t suit your design.

**4. Be pragmatic.** Builders often compact soil or park heavy machinery right in the middle of a bed, while architects rarely allow for beds deep enough to take the amount of soil that plants need to survive. Be prepared to adapt. The four *Sorbus commixta* (Japanese rowan) trees planted here had to have their roots restricted, but the upside is that this restrains their growth, which is beneficial here.

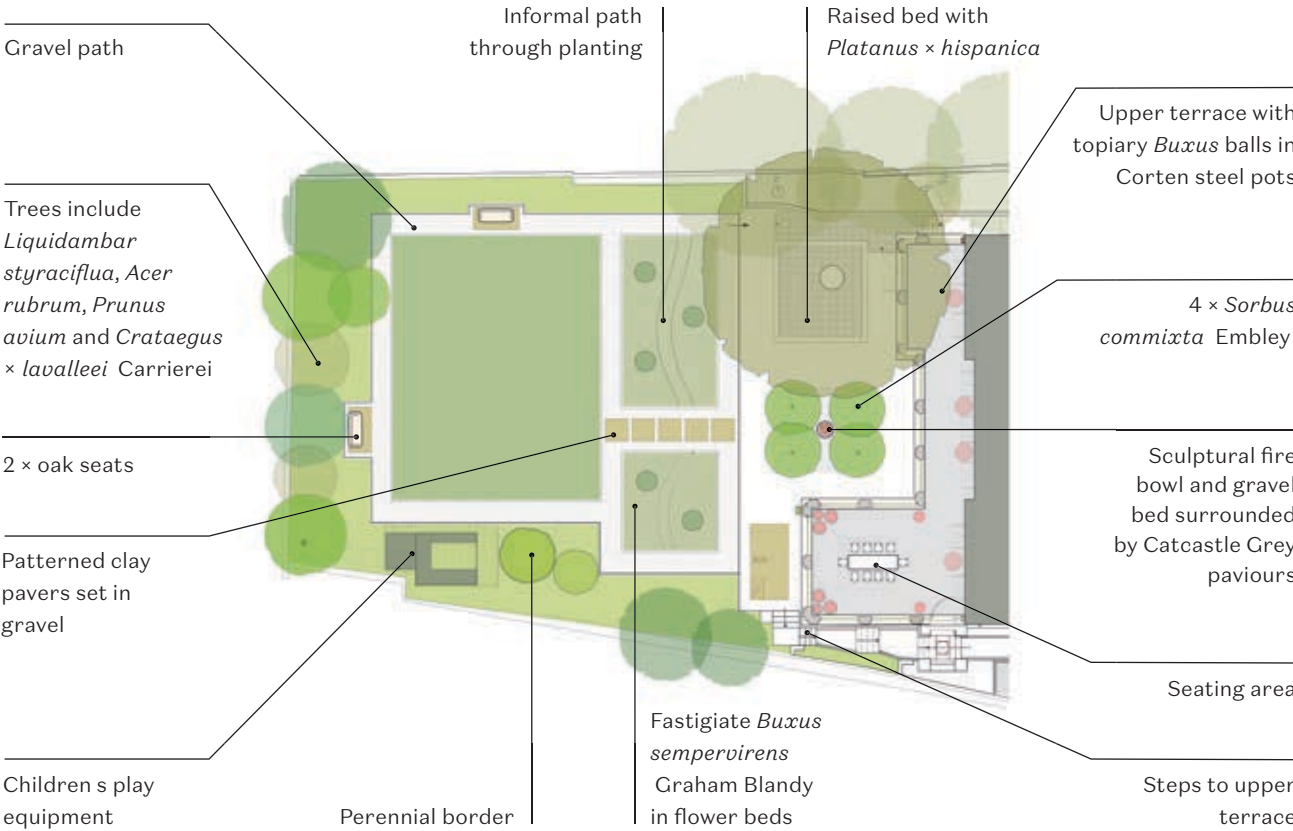
**5. Choose the right paving.** The Catcastle Grey paving on the terrace comes from a single quarry in Yorkshire. It is not cheap, but each stone has unique markings and tones, so it creates a very special surface and is really

worth using in small areas of a garden, such as on a terrace, to make an impact.

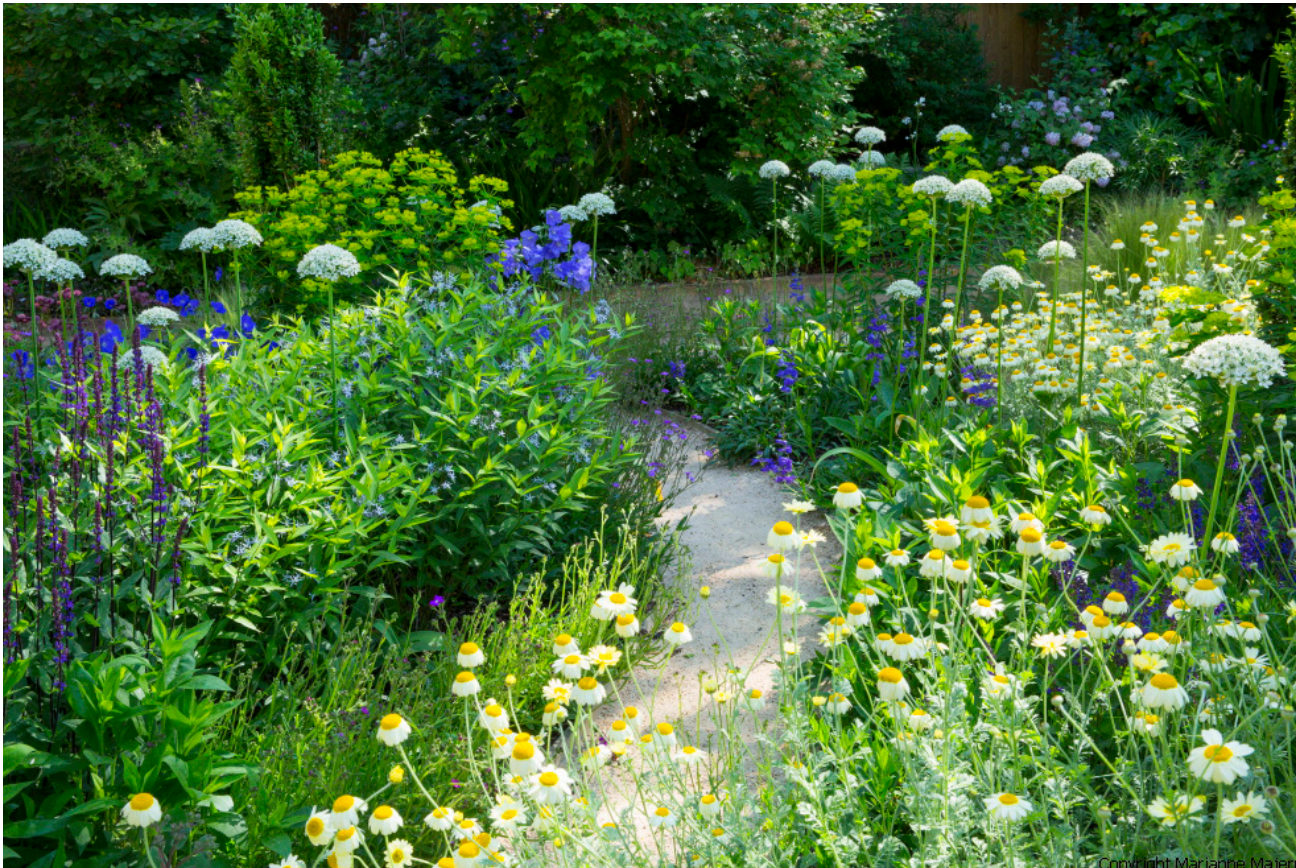
**6. Choose tough plants near children s play areas** to withstand whatever comes their way. Delicate, wispy grasses and perennials may be destroyed by enthusiastic games. The wide gravel path visually separates plants from footballs.

**7. Be safe with fires and children.** The switch that turns on the gas in the fire bowl should be carefully sited high up and well out of the way of children.

**8. Use similar coloured flowers in the bed for impact.** In early summer, the flowers in the central flowerbeds are all blue (*Iris* Jane Phillips , *Salvia nemorosa* Caradonna and *Geranium Rozanne*). From midsummer onwards the focus is pink, with eryngiums, sedums, *Astrantia major* Claret and *Saponaria × lempergii* Max Frei .







Perennial beds planted with white *Allium nigrum*, acid green *Euphorbia palustris* and purple *Salvia nemorosa* Caradonna .



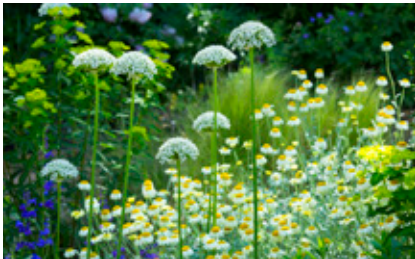
The dark grey hue of the contemporary outdoor rattan furniture perfectly complements the tan brick of the house.



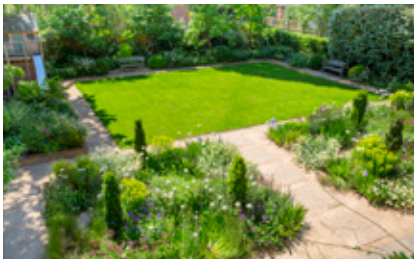
The Japanese rowan, *Sorbus commixta* Embley , on the terrace that overlooks the perennial beds.

CONTEMPORARY RELAXED

# The Details



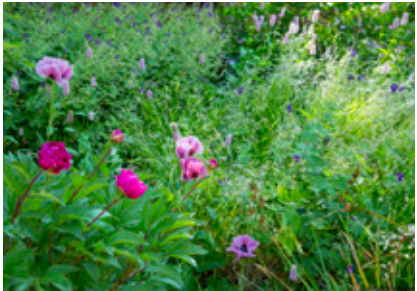
The perennial marguerite, *Anthemis Susanna Mitchell* , is used as a foil for the summer planting.



Fastigate box in the flower beds adds structure and helps maintain the design through winter.



A wooden seat from Gaze Burvill with delicate, white *Libertia grandiflora* in the foreground.



Magenta *Paeonia* (peonies), *Melica altissima* Alba and *Papaver orientale* (oriental poppy) add pops of colour.

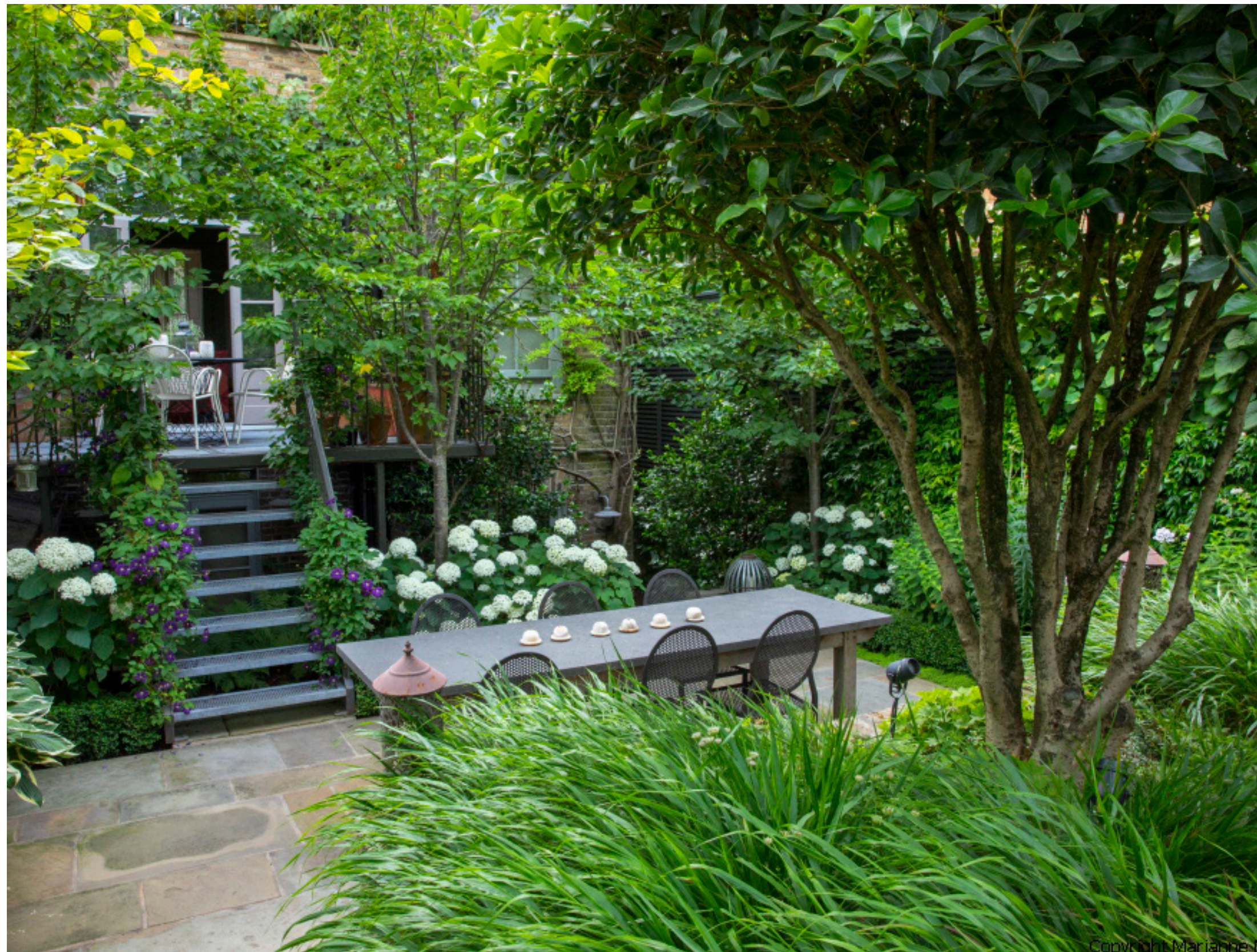


Patterned clay pavers are set like stepping stones on the main path from the terrace to the lawn.



The elegant topiary box shapes in Corten steel pots are a play on the traditional country garden.





CASE STUDY

# City Shade

SEAN WALTER

Shade is almost inevitable in a city garden and is often greeted with dismay, but as this garden shows there are solutions. The planting is as dramatic and inventive as can be. The secret is, as ever, to embrace the conditions and work with what you have. Sean Walter of The Plant Specialist came up with a design that has form and structure while also allowing for a more billowing expressiveness that offsets and partially disguises the stern brick walls and other parts of the hard landscaping. The garden is divided into four levels – the studio garden level, the seating/dining area, a large metal balcony and a basement alley that wraps round the house. A multistemmed *Osmanthus* × *fortunei* stands at the heart of a green sea of *Hakonechloa macra* (Japanese forest grass), helping to create a visual break between the house and the studio. In autumn this produces scented white flowers, while the hakonechloa is interspersed with *Astrantia* ‘Buckland’, *Geranium macrorrhizum* ‘Alba’ and *Tulipa* ‘Ballerina’ for spring interest. This tulip, with its orange, lily-shaped flowers that gleam in low light, is one of the very few scented tulips. At night, uplighters show up the Japanese lines of the pruned osmanthus stems. Steps from this area lead up to more seating on the balcony. The metal railings on either side of these are hidden under the climbing tendrils of the shade-tolerant purple *Clematis* ‘Étoile Violette’. The owner, Charlotte Crosland, is an interior designer and her hand is evident in the clean lines of the furniture, the stone-topped table and the stone sphere that mirrors the green globes of *Buxus* (box).

**Left:** A pair of white flowering cherry trees, *Prunus* ‘Umineko’, reach across the steps that lead from the balcony to the dining area. The heads of white hydrangeas light up the shade while adding to the woodland atmosphere.



CITY SHADE

# Design Checklist

**1. Unify the hard landscaping.** The house walls are of warm London stock brick, which has been matched with reclaimed York stone. York flagstones are used in the eating area and York setts in the garden outside the studio.

**2. Underplant to make a difference.** *Buxus* (box) is used to hide the bare stems of taller herbaceous perennials. (The bed is too narrow for softer, lower planting.) The effect of underplanting the amelanchier with *Melica*, hellebores and ferns is a softer woodland feel.

**3. Light up the dark with whites.** The globe shaped flowerheads of hydrangea work hard to light up the terrace. Other whites in this garden include *Rosa Iceberg* and the stalwart *Anemone x hybrida* Honorine Jobert, not to mention the white blossom of the cherries and amelanchiers in spring.

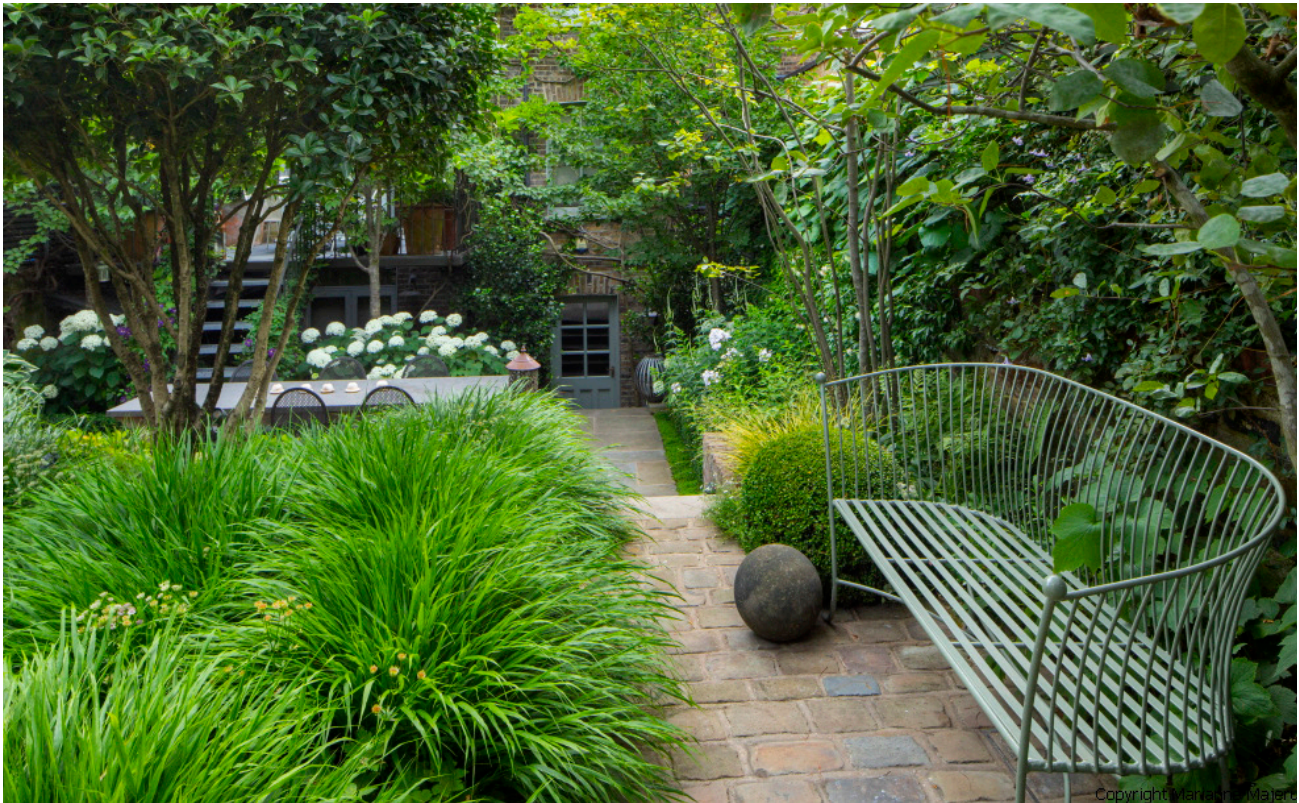
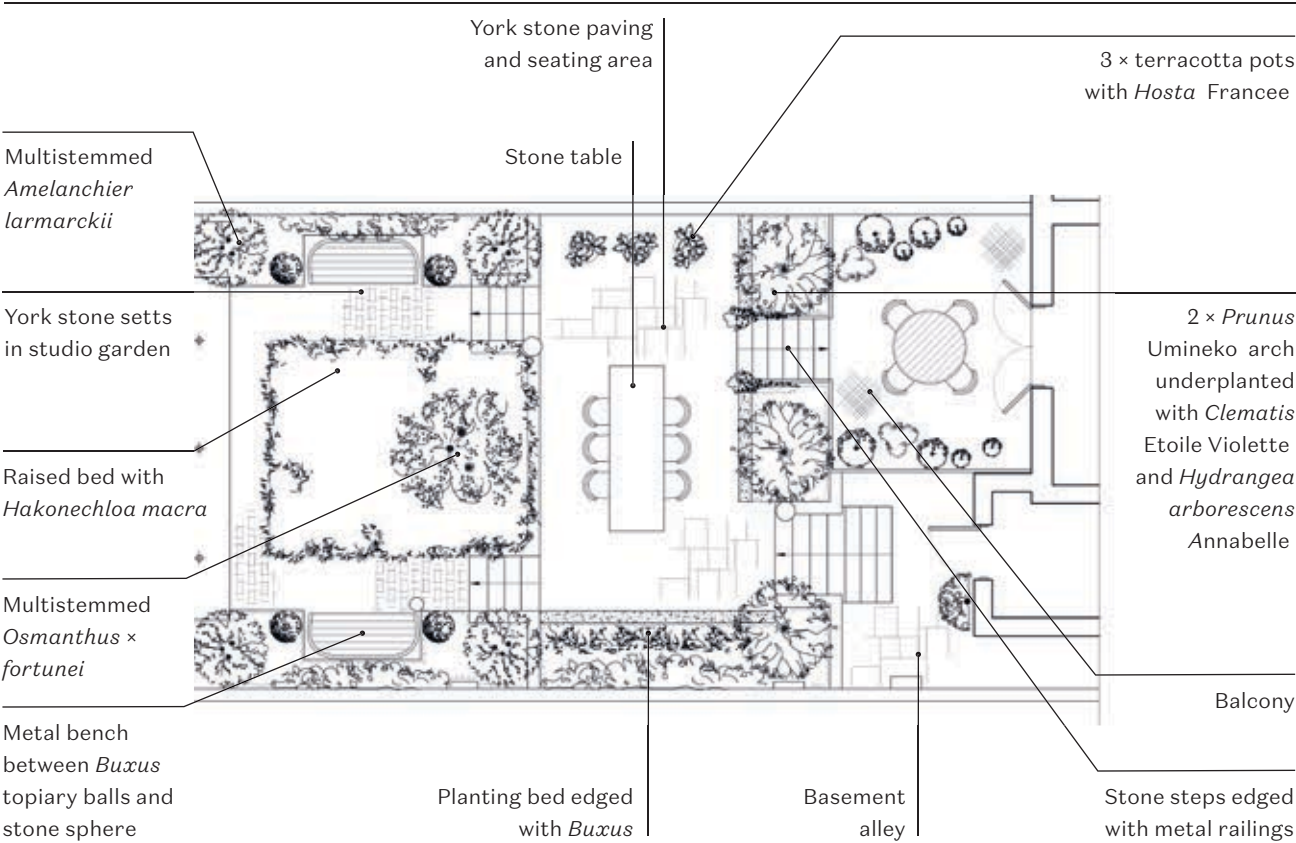
**4. Add character via multistemmed trees.** Tree nurseries prune many tree varieties to create an open vase shape with several stems; these work well as single specimens. They are invaluable in small spaces, especially for their winter silhouettes. Here, multistemmed amelanchiers are planted in each corner of the small studio garden.

**5. Choose plants with different tones.** There are many shades of green. Walk through a wood and you see a range of greens, from the bright green of young oaks to the near black needles of yew. Celebrate this green tapestry.

**6. Make use of repetition.** Three identical terracotta pots planted with hostas make a statement whereas one would not. Use this technique to provide instant impact, remembering that odd numbers are usually more satisfying to look at than even ones, so make groups of threes and fives.

**7. Make the most of leaf shapes.** Textures and details show up well in shade. Consider contrasting flat, palmate leaves with strappy leaves; grasses with heart shaped leaves; and small against large.

**8. Choose the right ground cover.** The box hedge edging the beds in the eating area is rimmed with *Soleirolia soleirolii* (mind your own business), which thrives in shade, making it an invaluable ground cover. However, this is highly invasive and needs to be restrained with hard landscaping or it can spread through beds and lawns.



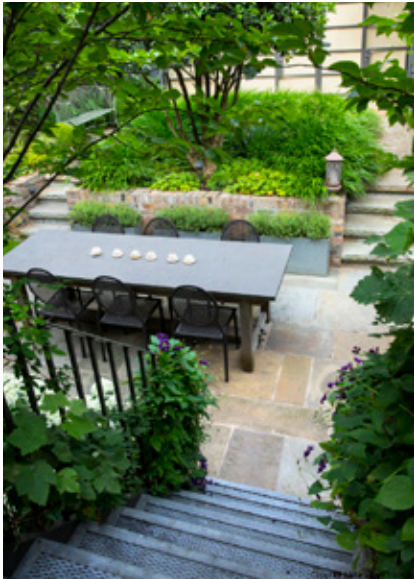




A row of traditional terracotta pots abundantly planted with the plantain lily, *Hosta Francee*.



An underplanting of ferns, rodgersia and grass beneath a multistemmed *Amelanchier lamarckii* (snowy mespilus).



Steps down from the balcony lead to the dining area with the osmanthus in the background.



The lantern (with *Hydrangea arborescens* Annabelle in the background) echoes the shape of the dining chair backs.



As it weathers, the cut metal lantern will rust and blend in with the planting.



Reclaimed York stone setts edged with *Hakonechloa macra* (Japanese forest grass) and offset by *Buxus* (box) globes.



*Hakonechloa macra* (Japanese forest grass) and *Astrantia* Buckland with *Hosta* Francee in the background.

CITY SHADE

# The Details



Shade tolerant *Clematis* toile Violette climbs over the metal railings, bordered by the large, white flowerheads of *Hydrangea arborescens* Annabelle.