



**PUBLIC OR COMMERCIAL OUTDOOR SPACE**, sponsored by CED Natural Stone.  
**PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD**, sponsored by *Homes & Gardens*.  
**JUDGES' AWARD**, sponsored by David Harber.  
*Horatio's Garden in Salisbury by Cleve West MSGD*

Created by a charity for patients and staff at a spinal treatment centre in Salisbury, this garden sets a new benchmark for landscapes concerned with health and wellbeing. It is cleverly detailed, with curved paths and limestone walls that echo the surrounding landscape and lead to a central gathering space. The planting is dynamic, lively and full of texture, movement and scent with colourful flowers, fruit trees and spring bulbs. Importantly, it includes some necessary architectural formality through the use of garden structures, a summerhouse and a long flowing rill of calming water. All in all, this is a beautiful garden bursting with life and

hope. As well as awarding this best Public or Commercial Outdoor Space, there was a unanimous decision among the panel to give it the Judges' Award, in recognition of its role in the promotion of excellence in the design of public outdoor space. It was an opinion that readers of *Homes & Gardens* and the wider general public clearly agreed with as they made the garden their People's Choice, choosing it from a shortlist of 15 designs.

**What the judges said:** "This is what healing gardens should be like; if only they all had a similar design. It has beautiful planting that works with the scale of the building and helps to reconnect people to nature."

# DESIGNED TO WIN

Dynamic planting and use of space in an exciting range of locations distinguish the winners of the 2014 SGD Garden Design Awards

The Society of Garden Designers' (SGD) Garden Design Awards, now in its third year, has become the major showcase for the best gardens designed and created by SGD members within the past five years. This year, the judges were very impressed by the quality of the entries and, in many categories, found it hard to single out a clear winner. Here are the results.

## JUDGING PANEL

### Main awards

**TRUDI ENTWISTLE** Senior lecturer in landscape architecture, Leeds Metropolitan University.

**RICHARD SNEESBY** Landscape architect, garden designer, author and recent course leader in garden design, University College, Falmouth.

**BILL BURFORD** Lecturer and course leader in landscape architecture, University of Gloucestershire, landscape architect and garden designer.

**JULIE TOLL, FSGD** Garden designer.

### Main awards and Student award

**ARABELLA ST JOHN PARKER**  
Houses and gardens editor, *Homes & Gardens*.

### Lighting award PAUL NULTY

Owner of Paul Nulty Lighting Design.

### Restoration award DEBORAH TRENTHAM

Garden historian, The Garden Historians.

### Student award

**SARAH EBERLE, MSGD** Landscape architect and garden designer.

**PHILIPPA O'BRIEN, MSGD** SGD chair and garden designer.



**INTERNATIONAL GARDEN**, sponsored by Landform.  
*Guernsey garden by Debbie Roberts MSGD*

The winning garden is closer to home than in previous years and exemplifies, the judges felt, a meeting of the best of French and English traditions to create a Channel Island "tour de force". The garden has the rare quality of being dramatic and homely at the same time, and uses a selection of plants and building materials that effortlessly connect it to its island location. Courtyards, dining terraces, complex level changes, steps, walls

and a formal pool have all been fashioned from bare surroundings and, with the exquisite and unifying planting, combine to be a worthy International garden winner.  
**What the judges said:** "An amazing garden with intense displays of colour and form. Vistas are resolved and connected. This is a very natural design, specific to the site, which establishes a calm, beautiful and textural atmosphere."



**LARGE RESIDENTIAL GARDEN**, sponsored by Sculpture by the Lakes.  
**GRAND AWARD**, sponsored by Europlants.  
*Surrey garden by Ian Smith MSGD*

This scheme achieves one of the most difficult goals in garden design; it really feels as if it has been in situ for several decades. In fact, just four years ago, most of the site was covered in grass that has since been completely reworked into distinct areas. There is a new walled kitchen garden, a long pleached avenue leading to a focal pool, a circular lawn surrounded by clipped hedging, an enclosed pool garden and access to a forgotten lake, with large-scale structure planting separating the various parts from each other, while also creating a unified feel. It is a master class in garden design and, in addition to Best Large Residential, it also receives the Grand Award – the top honour given by the judges.

**What the judges said:** "This is a transformational project. Devised as a journey through spaces, it feels composed and perfectly linked. The garden has a period ambience, exhibiting confidence of scale. It is a well executed, integrated design with sharp edges softened by sophisticated planting."

**MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL GARDEN**, sponsored by Gaze Burvill.  
*Wimbledon garden by Charlotte Rowe MSGD*

A rectangular, open garden dominated by a large lawn has been completely reimagined as a series of architectural spaces that sit comfortably within semi-rural surroundings. The sloping setting has created the opportunity for dramatic level changes, reinforced by crisp hard landscape detailing and stepped hedges used as structural elements. The rectilinear shapes are repeated throughout with the use of raised hedges, an infinity water feature and an outdoor room complete with bespoke soft furnishings and an open fire-grill. In contrast to the linear geometry, combinations of spherical clipped balls, soft textural planting and multi-stem trees draw the eye around the garden to reveal further details, ornaments and illusions of space. It is a very sophisticated example of contemporary garden design at its best.

**What the judges said:** "Good proportions, beautiful sight lines and an amazing finish. A harmonious garden that works perfectly with the house. It displays crisp design detailing, is slickly executed and will endure well. It feels like a sublime haven."







**SMALL RESIDENTIAL GARDEN,**  
sponsored by Stonemarket.  
*Hertfordshire garden by Sue Townsend MSGD*

The curved rear elevation of the house demanded a garden that respected its geometry. It was a difficult design challenge, where hard landscaping had to be accurately detailed and built without using straight lines and, to make things even more complex, the garden sloped away from the house towards a boundary fence. The answer was to create a single change in level, with wide steps leading down to a seating area that is used for outdoor entertainment and relaxation. Planting is minimal but effective, serving to reinforce the shape of the space and providing a subtle separation from the house. Lighting changes the character of the garden into a quiet retreat at night.

**What the judges said:** "The design of this challenging L-shaped space unifies three distinct areas, which merge effortlessly through level change and the inclusion of lively textural planting. It has made use of all aspects of small-scale garden living, from the connection with and extension of the indoor living space to the detail and delight of close association planting."

**POCKET GARDEN,** sponsored by Platipus.  
*Hertfordshire garden by Rosemary Coldstream MSGD*

A small garden plot that slopes down to wetland has been designed as a contemporary space in which to eat, relax and enjoy the views. Simplicity is the key with carefully placed elements that make the most of sunny areas and provide privacy from the neighbouring houses. In such a small space, the quality of the detailing is critical. The contemporary lines and materials make a brave contrast to the unspoiled landscape beyond and separate the human space from the natural. The timber deck, reminiscent of a jetty, links the garden to the water's edge, drawing the eye towards the wetland.

**What the judges said:** "A thoughtfully designed space offering an individual solution to an unusual location. Interesting ideas, seamlessly executed with very pleasing lines."



**SMALL BUDGET GARDEN,** sponsored by Fire Magic.  
*Hampshire garden by Rebecca Smith*

Inspired by the landscapes of Kenya and southern France, this garden can be seen from the house day and night, so it needed to work as both an outdoor space and a visual composition. From a practical point of view, the garden had to be very low maintenance. The use of gravel surfaces, organised lines and Mediterranean planting supplemented with roses complements the house and leads the eye downwards rather than towards neighbouring properties. A line of pleached crab apples provides privacy and frames the garden.

**What the judges said:** "A designer's most common commission is to create a low-maintenance space with a low budget. This is an excellent example of how to work with both, and how to transform an under-used area into the garden the house deserves."



**PLANTING DESIGN,**  
sponsored by Barcham.  
*Suffolk garden by Sue Townsend MSGD*

An Arts and Crafts house and restored Gertrude Jekyll mini moat with steps have inspired the planting style of this garden. Away from the classic planting near the house, a bolder prairie style dictates the planting around the pool, while energetic hot coloured borders enclose the front lawn. In contrast, a new courtyard and kitchen garden required a different approach to the planting, bringing the house and garden into the 21st century. Paths have been mown through long grass to link other parts of the scheme and to develop a more naturalistic feel further from the house.

**What the judges said:** "The designer displays complete control of spatial design through the use of texture, colour and form of plants. The character of the spaces ranges from classical simplicity at the entrance and intense intimacy in the courtyard, terrace and orchard through to structured woodland, a moat and meadow, before leading back to the wild formality of an Arts and Crafts pergola. It is rich with variety."



**LIGHTING DESIGN,**  
sponsored by Paul Nulty Design.  
*Wimbledon garden by Charlotte Rowe MSGD*

Already a winner in the Medium Residential Garden category, this design is a lesson in how to turn an outdoor space into a place to linger long into the evening. Lighting enables the garden to take on a different quality at night, with individual elements picked out and a calming ambience. A loggia is also subtly lit so that it provides a relaxing night-time space without creating a distracting focal point for neighbouring houses.

**What the judges said:** "A good, subtle design. A worthy winner."



**HISTORIC GARDEN RESTORATION,**  
sponsored Harrod Horticultural.  
*Berkshire garden by Dan Pearson MSGD*

This garden was laid out in 1912 by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll and is one of the most complex examples of their collaboration. However, only incomplete planting plans of some of the garden areas survive. The clients wanted to completely renovate the garden, work that has involved the meticulous restoration of the historic hard landscaping, the creation of new naturalistic planting schemes inspired by Jekyll, installation of a new lake to attract wildlife, and the completion of a new design for the one-acre productive walled garden, which was never completed in Lutyens' lifetime.

**What the judges said:** "The lack of evidence for certain areas of the garden has become a positive factor in the hands of Dan Pearson. His new plan is composed of plants that were known to be favourites of Jekyll, using her written work and more detailed



extant archival planting plans for other properties from the same period. He has created new schemes with her planting style and colour palette and the result is a sensitive, beautiful and intelligent response to the client's brief."

**FUTURE DESIGNER,**  
sponsored by Deepdale.  
*London gardens by John Davies*

These clever designs for a development of six houses share a unified concept, but each has its own identity. Each acts as an extension of the house and features hard surfaces for outdoor living alongside water, lighting and woodland-inspired planting. The style is contemporary, with clean lines and architectural planting that provides a range of visual compositions which complement each other and the modern building development. In addition to the ground-floor area, all the houses have roof gardens where the light levels allow for a wider range of plants to be used.

**What the judges said:** "Individually, these gardens would be worthy winners, but to have six of such high quality is unusual and hugely gratifying. There is a lot to be learned from this approach, and this is an excellent example of how gardens can add value to the properties."



**HARDSCAPE DESIGN,** sponsored by Stockscape.  
*Wimbledon garden by Charlotte Rowe MSGD*

Yet another award for the Wimbledon garden, this time for the quality and execution of its hard landscape elements. Much of the beauty of a successful garden is derived by a limited palette of hard landscape materials, in this case York stone, matching gravel and Western red cedar. For this classical contemporary design, the layout, accuracy of construction and attention to detail needed to be as close to perfection as possible. This is best illustrated by the central infinity pool (see previous page), which is precise and effortless in equal measure.

**What the judges said:** "Attention to detail is so important in this type of garden, where the concept and composition are about contemporary luxury. Hats off to the designer, contractor and client, who have all understood the critical role of hard landscape in this sort of project."





**STUDENT DESIGN, sponsored by Topsoil.**

Students were asked to enter garden designs that were created for specific sites but that need not necessarily have been made. The field of entries was impressively large and varied in style, and the judges decided on two winners for very different but equally astounding designs.

**Joint winner: *New Great Square, Plymouth, by Joanna Midwinter***

**What the judges said:** "Practical for public use, but also extremely beautiful, this mature garden displays a sensitive approach to an iconic design by Geoffrey Jellicoe while creating something wonderful for 21st-century use."

**Joint winner: *Deep Simplicity, Rotherhithe, by Jiyoung Kim***

**What the judges said:** "An incredibly impressive and dynamic design, and a creative and ingenious use of the existing site. The concept is phenomenally challenging but the approach to the sheer scale of the project is very mature."



**JOHN BROOKES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, sponsored by Alitex.**

**Awarded by the Council of the SGD. *Beth Chatto***

Philippa O'Brien, Chairman, said: "Beth Chatto was a natural choice for this award. She has influenced generations of gardeners and garden designers through her passion for plants, her ecological approach and her inspired garden writing, continuing the important cycle of sharing and learning about plants. To a whole generation of garden designers, she is considered the guru of shade planting."



**PAPER LANDSCAPE, sponsored by The Modern Garden Company.**

***Birmingham garden by Gavin McWilliam and Andrew Wilson FSGD***

A stylised forest of birch and pine was intended for a redundant space in central Birmingham, but when the project was put on hold this conceptual design was created as a temporary solution. The site, built on top of an old glass works, features textured steel, a bridge and a main plaza; so the trees of the original design have been reimagined as carbon fibre rods "planted" so that they sway in the breeze and are topped with a red LED light, symbolising the glass that was once made here. Benches provide seating and patterns of fractured basalt lead to a gateway of monolithic building blocks. **What the judges said:** "A beautifully conceived, conceptual design which will energise a temporary landscape. This type of project is increasingly important with the transient nature of urban spaces."

**COMMUNITY SPACE, sponsored by Vande Moortel.**

This category celebrates the work of designers in the creation and redevelopment of public and community spaces. The judges decided on joint winners for two quite different projects.

**Joint winner: *Tufnell Park School Infant's Playground by Jackie Herald***

Anyone wanting to develop a school playground on a very limited budget could learn a thing or two from this project. The school community was involved at all stages and to the extent that they did much of the building work and sourcing of materials. The design has turned an empty space into a fun, diverse, creative and energising play and learning area, which brings children closer to the natural world despite being located in the centre of London. It has transformed the life of the school community.

**What the judges said:** "This playground scheme has been planned very thoughtfully with the school curriculum in mind. It is a great design that shows real community spirit and one that is also an inspiring use of a challenging budget."

**Joint winner: *Guy's & St Thomas' Courtyard Garden by Annie Chapman***

A series of circles has been used to unify this oblong space with multiple entrances, as well as to create separate, more intimate areas. The scale has been manipulated so that some parts are big enough to accommodate gatherings of patients, staff and visitors, and others comfortable for individuals and small groups. The composition is simple – flowing lines, raised grass platforms, timber benches and higher-structure planting to divide and separate. It is also a design to be viewed from the windows above.

**What the judges said:** "A clever piece of design that has achieved a complete transformation of the site. Close attention to proportion and scale is supported with great detailing. This is a calming space that adds beauty to the building's façade." □



FEATURE: RICHARD SNEESBY PHOTOGRAPHS: MIMI/MARIANNE MAJERUS, JASON INGRAM, RACHEL WARNE, ANDREW WILSON, SIMON KENNEDY