



Edwardian ELEGANCE

How both a front and rear garden became reconnected with their home using harmony and contrast in design...

DESIGN: JAMES SCOTT, THE GARDEN COMPANY

PHOTOGRAPHY: ANNA OMIOTEK-TOTT

Project details**Total value:** £100,000+**Size of project:** 4,000m²**Time to build:** 5 months**Designer and landscaper:** James Scott MBALI
MSGD, The Garden Company Ltd, thegardenco.co.uk

‘We had wanted to transform our garden for several years but had found it difficult to put our ideas together in a coherent way and also lacked the detailed plant knowledge. James was able to create a design that linked the house, the enlarged terrace, and the garden together perfectly. We are delighted at how the garden has matured and how its character changes with the seasons’ – *homeowner*

The owner of this Edwardian property in Hertfordshire wanted to create a rear garden that combined formality and structure with a more naturalistic feel towards the back. As keen plantspeople, they were seeking a design and build team that would allow them to get involved with the plant choices, but guide them with the overall design, working collaboratively throughout.

They instructed James Scott at The Garden Company, who, after hearing that the homeowner felt the garden was disjointed and seeing that parts looked like they didn’t belong to the property, recommended that both the front and rear gardens be redesigned to make the total space feel connected and flow well from the house.

To achieve the brief, The Garden Company created a space that was in keeping with the era of the house. A rear garden terrace was enlarged with defined curved areas for a dining terrace, as a more intimate space for smaller gatherings.

An informal, rock and beach-edged natural pond with a sitting rock makes for a prominent feature in the garden, to the side of which sit shallow steps leading to the upper garden area.

A further set of steps leads through a new walkway with timber arches, that leads to an oak gazebo flanked with planting and has access to the lawn. A rock bank combining sawn stone steps with rocks, handpicked by James at a quarry in Yorkshire, supports the transition to a more naturalistic feel as you travel further from the house, creating the impression that the garden had grown around existing rocks.

As mentioned, the homeowners were keen plants people, and so chose a design and build team that they could collaborate with on the scheme, choosing plants that they could actively nurture and enjoy.

Previous: The pond creates a haven for wildlife

Clockwise: Stone steps framed by *Perovskia* ‘Blue Spire’; pergola arch and white climbing rose



‘A garden pond adds focus and tranquility... providing a lovely haven for wildlife’



Materials used

Paving, steps and rockery stone: Rand and Asquith, randandasquith.co.uk

Metal work: T Brown and Sons, tbrownandsons.co.uk

Plants: Nederhoff plants (trade only), nederhoffplants.nl

A garden pond adds focus and tranquility to the space, as well as providing a lovely haven for wildlife. The planting around the pond included Hostas, Marsh Marigolds and Water Mint. This is closely linked to a combination of *Origanum* ‘Herrenhausen’, *Persicaria* ‘Superba’ and *Sesleria autumnalis*, which together provide a pleasing effect of buttons, spikes and texture.

The stone steps adjacent to the pond are framed at the top by *Perovskia* ‘Blue Spire’ which flowers in late summer and autumn. The daisy-like flowering plant *Erigeron Karvinskianus* is a lovely ‘infill’ plant and was used to soften the edges of the steps. Grass *Molinia* ‘Karl Foerster’ throws elegant flower spikes up to 2m high and gives a sense of height to the garden.

The eye-catching pergola arch is festooned with a white climbing rose (Iceberg) to frame the entrance and provide a light note, while the shade-loving *Hakonechloa macra* – with its striking and beautiful foliage – adds texture as well as interest.

Clockwise: Wet-tolerant planting around the pond; blending home and garden with planting

At the front of the house, the garden was redesigned to create an elegant space more in keeping with the Edwardian architecture, relating better to the geometry of the house and the flow of people and cars. The front wall was replaced with more delicate iron railings.

A small brick path made from Sawn Yorkstone setts now leads to the front door, and the previous doorsteps were replaced with elegant sawn stone steps, similar to those used in the rear. Brick piers, electric gates and a realigned drive, combined with the introduction of foundation planting, made the front garden feel more unified with the house.

Foundation planting against the building helps the house and garden to blend together. The low clipped hedge reflects the property’s architecture and on a practical note keeps the border planting neat and tidily contained. **DC**

