

KERB appeal

Thinking of selling your property? Then make the most of the opportunity by making a real impact on your perspective buyers as they reach for the doorbell.

Words: Kirsty McLean

It is where first impressions really count. According to research, it takes only 20 seconds for a potential buyer to decide whether they are going to buy a property or not, and that decision starts at the front door. So how do you make the most of your entrance, you ask? Here are some ideas for what to come up with to make a good first impression.

Planting the planters. Keep the planting predominantly evergreen with good colour tones such as a mix of greens, creams and burgundy or winter reds.

If you have a large front garden, ensuring this is always neat and tidy will help.

Window surrounds should be clean and well painted or oiled/varnished if they are constructed from wood.

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Above is a project that I tackled last year and as you can see in the ‘before’ picture, the front garden didn’t make the most of this lovely house frontage and left the impression that it was unloved.

By first of all paying attention to the period and architecture of the house I developed the style to compliment this. The streetscape is important too. Whatever you do, you don’t want to directly copy someone else nor do you want to create something that is so outlandish that it doesn’t flow well with the rest of the street. Thinking of smart and elegant solutions rather than overly bright or whacky ideas, will help to sell your property. Good Luck!

Scotland A NATION OF GARDENERS

When I think about a public ornamental garden, I can’t help but visualise a herbaceous border in full bloom against a hot wall. So how did the concept of the herbaceous border evolve?

Gardening in Scotland is recorded as being practised from as early as the 15th century, but this was enjoyed by the very wealthy, royalty and monastic establishments only. The humble beginnings of the herbaceous border in Scotland is described as an ornamental display within walled enclosures to be found in such places as Drum and Fyvie Castle around the 16th century, but few survived intact.

Scotland’s first gardening book, published in 1683 was ‘The Scots Gardiner’ in which he summarised the discipline in gardens and a century later designed landscape improvement programme, reflecting the trend for naturalism in the 18th century. Scotland had become a nation of gardeners, but it was wealth creation that saw the establishment of the first public gardens as we know them today.

It was during the Arts and Crafts period in the late 19th century that the influence of designers such as Gertrude Jekyll can be found in a number of National Trust for Scotland gardens and in particular in the development of the herbaceous border. Jekyll demonstrated so adeptly what could be achieved in her garden at Munstead Wood, where the herbaceous borders were in excess of 300 feet long and stunning, it is hardly surprising that she created such a strong influence. Herbaceous borders continue to be perennial-dominant as laid out by Jekyll, but have also been developed by designers such as James van Sweden and Piet Oudolf, following the idea of a ‘perennial meadow’ first outlined in the 1930s by a German nurseryman Karl Foerster. Here, there are fewer species planted but in large quantities and often using mixed grasses.

Today you can travel to any of our National Trust for Scotland gardens around the North-East and be sure to be treated to a magnificent display of perennials, carefully planted into a border in a way that provides wonderful colour, texture and scent which will provide a truly breathtaking, and even get a cup of tea!



THE GARDEN DESIGN COMPANY

We may still be in the depths of winter but if you are considering a garden project to be ready for this summer, now is the time to start planning it.

Words by Kirsty McLean

Don’t underestimate the importance of taking time to work through the design and planning phases, the success of your project will rely heavily on how meticulously you have thought through the detail.

One of the questions that should drive the complexity of your design is whether you will be building it yourself, or you will contract the services of a professional landscaper.

If you are doing this yourself, there are a few things to consider:

1. Ensure the design reflects your skills set and physical ability to ensure that your health and safety are not put at risk and this includes considering the weight of the materials you intend to use and how they will be managed.
2. Before you commence works, ensure you have checked with your local authorities that the content of your design does not require planning or building control permissions. If you reside within a Conservation area you must check-in with your local authority.

3. Make sure you know where utilities run through your garden.
4. If your design includes complex elements such as retaining levels or load then make sure you seek professional advice to ensure these items are built to the correct specification.
5. Try to re-use as much material onsite as you can.
6. Both during your build and after, consider drainage and how water is to be managed.

If you are undertaking your project with the services of a professional landscaper, ensure they have all the correct insurances and that you have carried out due diligence on their previous performance through references. Make it your business to ensure that you are contracting a company who can demonstrate that they adopt safe working practices and equip their workforce appropriately.

Considering a garden project this year and looking for support? The Garden Design Company Scotland Ltd., under the direction of Kirsty McLean, award winning garden designer and writer will guide you through the process.

The Garden Design Company has over twenty years Design & Build experience with an extensive portfolio including residential and commercial gardens. The process is simple and modular, making it easy to access what you need and within your budgetary consideration.

In support of the various stages of design, 3D sketches and photorealistic visuals are offered to provide the client with visual confirmation of how the detail and finished garden will look. This ensures that everyone involved in the project, communally understands and buys into the agreed vision thus reducing the possibility for misunderstandings.

So whether you are looking for general advice or want someone to oversee every aspect from concept to completion, a consultation with The Garden Design Company is the first step toward creating the garden you’ve always wanted.

9 Culter House Road, Milltimber, Aberdeen AB13 6EN
Tel: 01224 739184
gardenscotland.com



The beauty of being able to plant from mid-November, which usually is that at this time of year they planted bare rooted.

The structure that a tree or a collection of trees not only creates vertical interest but also provides a habitat for all sorts of insects and wildlife and blooms are so different from species that have their time and place to shine.

The beauty of being able to plant out in the autumn is that at this time of year they can be planted and their roots are lifted.

Generally, bare root trees are much cheaper than container grown but this condition only applies to trees that are planted in the autumn. For most small gardeners, the trees that are planted in the autumn are the best choice.



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