



Claire's garden designs are living works of art

The gardens designed by Claire Healey, of Rosalind Claire Landscape and Garden Design, are simply stunning. The Suffolk-based independent gardener's attention to detail and sensitivity to the landscape combine to produce striking outdoor spaces that reflect and enhance their surroundings.

Claire, who studied garden design at the internationally renowned Capel Manor College, in north London, says: "Plants need to fit in with what is around them. Every aspect has to be considered. Each plant is selected for its flower and foliage, height and spread and seasonal interest, shape and form as well as suitability to the soil. My gardens need to suit the house and the people who live in it."

Past work has included garden transformations for homes as distinct as cottages, designer barn conversions and new builds. Claire has a talent for coupling eye-catching hard landscaping focal points with imaginative planting so they complement each other, ageing together into a beautiful yet maintainable garden that people want to spend time in.

A recent job saw Claire creating a wildlife-friendly garden in Boxford, Suffolk, planting exclusively with native species and featuring a number of square CorTen steel planters planted with evergreen flowering shrubs.

Claire says: "CorTen is the material used to build the Angel of the North. I saw the house had lovely orange tiles and I knew CorTen weathers to a striking rusty brown so it would complement the property's roof tiles and the rust-coloured veins of the grey slate patio. I was over the moon with how the garden turned out. I still maintain it to this day."

The creative gardener, who started her own business 14 years ago, is often asked to maintain the gardens she designs

She says: "I create living gardens. I bear in mind what they will look like in weeks, months and years to come. There should be something of interest in the garden every season. If the client asks me to, I come in once a fortnight to look after it.

"Every time I come to the garden I see something new that has flowered and I say to myself 'that worked'".



Before Claire began her garden design business, she explored her interest in horticulture by working at a garden centre in King's Lynn and looking after her allotment. However, as a "naturally creative person" she knew she could do more.

She says: "A few friends of mine worked for a property developer who was working on three homes with very nice gardens. I was asked to look after them and I realised I had a talent for it."

The talent was honed at Capel Manor, and through word of mouth Claire has developed a portfolio of gardens which are like works of art, even down to the sketches she produces, which give customers an image of her meticulous plans.

Claire is among the exhibitors each year at the Polstead Exhibition, in August, where her garden sketches are on show.

From top to bottom, the garden in Boxford with its CorTen steel planters, Claire's gardens are striking outdoor spaces that reflect and enhance their surroundings and each plant is carefully selected.

Pictures:
ANDREW
HOWARTH

If you want a garden that always looks a picture, find out more at www.rosalindclaire.co.uk or call 07900 524780.