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Sustainable

garden design

CASE STUDY

Where style doesn't have to be at the expense of substance.



Sustainable garden design

THE PROJECT

Clyde Road

THE BRIEF

Domestic garden

THE SOLUTION

ACO HexDrain® Brickslot

While primarily focused on transforming private gardens into pockets of paradise, the company also provides support for larger developments, particularly new-builds that require some of Daniel's landscaping flair.

Indeed, it was Daniel's striking designs that helped him scoop a Future Designer Award in 2016, and subsequent membership in the Society of Garden Designers. With a wealth of experience under his belt, Daniel approached a recent project with confidence that he could deliver his typical naturalistic landscaping, in what transpired to be a fairly challenging location.

Clyde Road Project

Tasked with transforming a family back garden in London into a space that was suitable for entertaining guests and spending time in, Daniel began by assessing the site:

"It wasn't straightforward, as it was essentially on two terraces, with the lawn sloping away from the house. This required a design that would ensure the entire space remained useable, but also meant a considered approach to water management would be required in order to prevent pooling at times of heavy rainfall.

"The design culminated in two main entertaining areas – one immediately adjacent to the house, and the other slightly further into the garden. This created two distinct zones that had their own feel, really maximising the space. The plot is full of greenery and plants that surround the patied areas, to really evoke that sense of nature which is crucial in a project like this."

With a warming climate and rising levels of urbanisation, water management is becoming increasingly important in garden design and landscaping. For Daniel Shea, Founder and Owner of Daniel Shea Garden Design, this means embracing the virtues of nature, and carefully incorporating naturalistic elements into landscaping designs to deliver projects that look and feel great.

"I think with any project, it's important to understand that you are dealing with areas that were once natural environments," begins Daniel. "That's one of the reasons I try to mimic nature in a lot of my designs. It helps to soften landscaping, and not only is it better for wildlife, but it generally feels better to be in that kind of surrounding."

Operating in North London and the surrounding area, Daniel Shea Garden Design is built on bespoke, contemporary design that has a notable naturalistic influence.



Managing water discreetly

Given the topography of the site, it was vital that appropriate drainage was installed to ensure that rainfall didn't pool. The perennial challenge for landscapers is balancing aesthetics with hydraulic performance. Owing to its slimline design and discreet look, Daniel opted for the ACO HexDrain® Brickslot, with its black discreet grate to provide a sleek effect.

He continues: "We positioned the Brickslot at the lowest point in the garden, to ensure that even in the worst cases of rainfall it wouldn't flood. Something that is always an important consideration in drainage is the type of soil you are working with, and in this area of the country it can be very clay-dominated. This adds a further layer of importance to getting drainage right, and throughout my time using ACO's Brickslot, it has always performed perfectly."

"Increasingly, landscapers and garden designers are on the lookout for products that don't just do their job discreetly, but can actually contribute to the overall look of a project. Again, the HexDrain® Brickslot has proved fantastic in this regard, really emphasising that substance doesn't have to come at the expense of style."

The future of garden design

First and foremost, Daniel Shea Garden Design is dedicated to delivering results that align with a customer's desires, be it a place to relax or an outside space that takes the breath away. But talk to Daniel about the future of landscaping, and it becomes clear that beyond the visually-arresting gardens, there is a deep regard for his personal role in sustainable design:

"Designers, and I include myself in this, have a responsibility to take water management seriously. Changing conditions mean there will be longer dry spells, followed by more



intense storms and rainfall in the years ahead. On the one hand, you want to make sure that gardens are equipped to handle this, and implementing rainwater harvesting features not only mitigates the effects of droughts, but also reduces bills for customers. It's the same with Mediterranean plants, which I use frequently as they are hardier when it comes to periods without rainfall.

"It is also the case that water should, wherever possible, be collected and kept on site. This is something that all projects are required to do, and looking to the future I think it's only going to grow in importance."

"My primary concern will always be to give the customer what they want and help them to achieve their dream garden, but I think water sustainability must be a high priority for everyone. It's great when you find products from a company such as ACO that align with your ethos, ultimately ensuring the best results for customers and environmental concerns at the same time."

For more information, please visit: www.aco.co.uk and www.danielshea.co.uk



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