

apassiflora
garden design and management



CASEBOOK 2015

RECENT PROJECTS: BEFORE AND AFTER

WATLINGTON GARDEN Renovation and development of gardens surrounding an historic house on the edge of the town, an ongoing project with distinct areas each with their own challenges: kitchen garden, woodland walk, family garden, tropical garden and back garden, driveway and formal front garden.



A lovely house, the original section being Queen Anne with Victorian and Edwardian additions, the garden had also grown 'organically' over the years having had its last major overhaul in the 1970s with piecemeal attention since. The new owners have lovingly brought the house up to date, losing none of the original character so were looking for a similar treatment for the gardens and had ideas of their own which they were keen to incorporate.



Planning commenced in 2009 but as the property stands within a conservation area there were hoops to be jumped through. So after comprehensive plans had been drawn up for each section, work started in 2011 with the removal of a number of large trees mainly on the perimeter which were overshadowing much of the garden itself and a few willows closer to the house which either threatened the structure or stood in the way of planned building work.

While work progressed on the house renovations, the garden work was concentrated on revitalising the planting within the existing box edged beds in the 'kitchen garden', creating a fruit cage, raised beds and compost heaps before the crowning glory which is the bespoke greenhouse arrived in the winter of 2012-13, and it all started to come together

It was then the turn of the family garden and pool area for a makeover, reshaping beds, erecting a new pool enclosure and replanting borders to evoke a tropical feel, which in the coldest longest winter in living memory took some imagining!

Unable to practically complete the major work required on completely remodelling the back garden until the builders had finished their work on the barn, and not helped by the weather, the looming deadline of a family party in the spring of 2013 helped to focus the contractors attentions and the pressure was on. Builders, plasterers, electricians, painters, scaffolders landscapers and gardeners, somehow managed not to trip over each other and retain their sense of humour in the final push to get thing done.

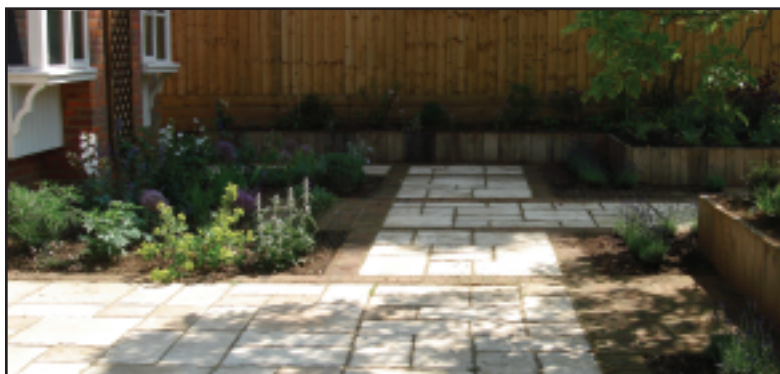
The sun finally came to order out and although it looked more like late March than early May, there was indeed a garden to be enjoyed on what turned out to be the first day of summer!







EAST HADDON FRONT GARDEN To transform the current access via a narrow path across a muddy lawn to provide a welcoming and colourful approach, retaining impressive Magnolia after which the house was named.



DUSTON FRONT GARDEN Having reworked the back garden of this 1980's detached estate house 5 years previously, the owners wanted to update the front to more accurately reflect their tastes and be individual within the estate setting. All traces of the developers' legacy were removed...



PURY END GARDENS A site sloping steeply to a brook, with views over open countryside framed by ancient willows. A tempting proposition, but the new owners found the site unmanageable and an extension proved the catalyst for finding a long term solution, blurring the boundaries between garden and beyond.



All the ground work for the proposed terracing would need to be completed before the side extension could be built as the access would subsequently be restricted, so once a plan was in place, the construction team moved in to make a combination of gently descending steps and terraces, linking a much larger and more practical formal paved top terrace to the lower, now level lawn, by way of informal planting areas retained by oak sleepers. The banks of the stream were then planted with a mixture of wild flower plugs and native inspired perennials.



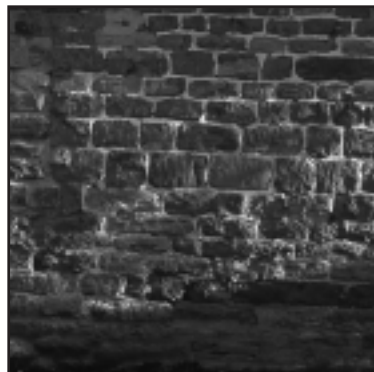


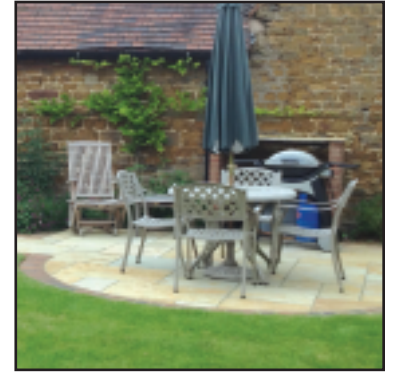
STAVERTON REAR GARDEN Built 20 years ago and owned since new, the owners are hoping to spend more time in the garden as they near retirement so felt that it needed a complete overhaul, trees and shrubs had outgrown their spaces, it was time to let in more light and introduce some colour and structure.



Being keen gardeners, they had cleared the majority of the site of most of the old shrubbery and consulted the parish council regarding removal of trees exposing lovely brick and stone walls and with the exception of an old and wonky cherry, leaving a fairly blank canvas. This had also left them exposed to their neighbours on one side so screening became an issue.

Cottage style, some formal structure and space for a few veg with seating to make the most of the sunshine at various times of day was the bones of the brief, together with one unusual request: a secure area to house a dog again should they succumb to the temptation of another labrador, a local blacksmith was most helpful. By midsummer they were making the most of the long evenings after work surrounded by lavender and the hum of innumerable bees.





HARLESTONE GARDEN The old thatched cottage fronts onto a busy main road, so parking is at the rear and the main route for visitors is through a gate into the back garden. The client requested a smarter and more distinctive approach whilst retaining the family friendly function for his small girls and mad spaniel.



NAPTON FARM GARDENS More of a planting renovation than a redesign, the client asked for help to bring back the colour to the three separate gardens surrounding his manor farmhouse which had become neglected and overrun with perennial weeds during the years spent bringing up their children.

The weeds were one thing and all in a days work, but other more unusual challenges came in the form of a couple of aged and incontinent collies, an athletic Australian sheepdog, a brace of Jack Russells, a seemingly never ending clutch of escaping chickens and even the occasional adventurous Tamworth pig. The unwary gardener would also be subject to frequent and sometimes violent ambushes by Cato the resident tabby. But somehow a garden emerged.

