



July 2008
£3.25

The magazine for adding space & value to your home

Move or Improve?

REAL BUILD COSTS FOR EVERY PROJECT

www.moveorimprove.com

20 things you need to know before EXTENDING

✓ Costs ✓ Planning ✓ Design

Kitchen bathroom update

New styles Latest trends

10 brilliant interior design solutions for your conservatory



9 771747 118013

50 PAGES OF INSPIRING PROJECTS!

We've doubled the size of our small starter home for £60,000!

1950s remodelled, extended home
ADDED VALUE
£300,000!

Our kitchen extension has added £48,000 to our detached house!

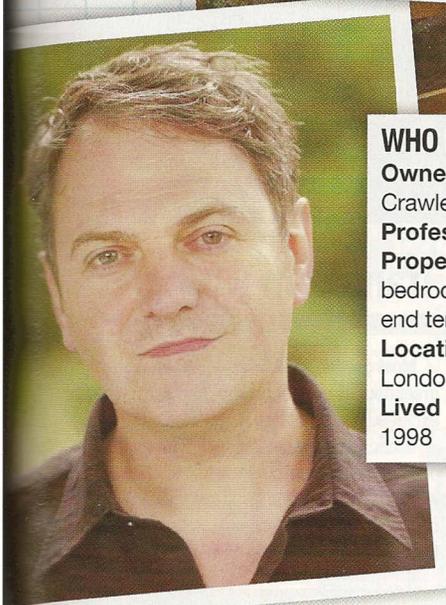
Country garden transformation
ADDED VALUE
£30,000!

PLUS! Property news... Trade secrets revealed... Money advice



BEFORE

The triangular corner plot has a whole new layout thanks to raised beds and seating zones



WHO LIVES HERE
Owners: Paul Crawley
Profession: Actor
Property: Three-bedroom Victorian end terrace
Location: Leyton, London
Lived here since: 1998

PROJECT PROFILE

Complete garden redesign
Design route: Garden design company
Time: One week, plus initial consultation and planning stage
Dates: June 2003
Valuation at start of project (2003): Around £320,000
Cost of project: £14,000
New valuation: £350,000

COST BREAKDOWN
Hard landscaping: £6,000
Raised bed sleepers and soil: £4,000
Planting: £2,500
Pathway sleeper furniture: £1,500

ADDED VALUE
£16,000!

‘My concrete courtyard is now a growing space’

When Paul Crawley decided to improve his rear garden, he never imagined he'd be growing his own vegetables and spending all his free time out there

The awkward shape and exposed aspect of Paul Crawley's garden meant it was only ever used as a courtyard with a few pots and plants to liven it up. But with the help of a garden designer, he has transformed it into a colourful oasis in the city. 'I'd never been enthusiastic about gardening,' says Paul, 'but after living in my house for five years, I decided it was time to update my outdoor space. The garden was basically a courtyard with a few small flowerbeds that,

being concrete, couldn't be moved. I had some ideas about what I wanted to achieve, but knew I'd need help pulling it all together. There was an advert in my local newspaper for a garden company called Earth Designs so I got in touch and it went from there. 'In my initial consultation with Katrina, the designer, my brief was pretty basic: I wanted a tree to offer shade, scented flowers and it had to be low maintenance. I left the rest to her. The only thing I didn't want was a water feature as ►



▲ The redesign has created space for Paul to grow herbs and vegetables in his raised beds. Trellis panels have been added for privacy

► The slate patio provides a seating area directly outside the house with planted terracotta pots to add colour



I have an allergy to insect bites so didn't want to encourage them into the new space.

'The plan was to create a contemporary cottage garden with herbs and room to incorporate vegetables later on. I wanted a relaxed space, nothing too formal.

'The first job was to dig up the concrete, which took six men to break up with drills. It was hard work and unfortunately one of the hottest weeks of the year. Luckily, I had that week off work so I was on hand with refreshments throughout. There's rear access to the garden so despite the chaos and mess outside, the house wasn't disrupted.

'I was amazed by how much space there was once the old shed was moved. Because it's on a corner plot, the garden's a triangular shape so at the end I now have a bench as a focal point. There's also a small table and bench seat, made from railway sleepers, for dining outdoors.

'Katrina also incorporated raised beds into the design – again using sleepers – which are easier on my back when I'm gardening. There's a slate patio by the house and an L-shaped herb bed. The rest of the garden is covered in gravel interspersed with lawn camomile and creeping thyme, both of which release a scent when they are stepped on.

Transform your garden

✓ Most garden structures – including sheds, greenhouses and most detached garages – are excluded from Building Regulations.

✓ Under permitted development rights, you can deck or pave your garden, cover up to 50 per cent of the area with single storey outbuildings (subject to certain conditions) and build fences or walls on the boundaries up to 1.8m (this comes under the Party Wall Act).

'There was never much privacy at the back of the house as the property is overlooked by neighbouring houses so the garden walls were raised slightly then rendered and painted white.

'The project took a week to finish with six men working very long days and Katrina project managing.

'The garden is now fully established and I've become an avid gardener, which has surprised me and my friends. I actually don't like entertaining out there – I prefer to keep it as a private sanctuary.

'Although it's still an urban garden, it does attract a lot of birds and wildlife, and I now grow my own fruit and veg, anything from beetroot and French beans to rhubarb and strawberries.

'The garden's not only improved the value of the house but my quality of life as well. It used to be known as the "urban one" out of my friends but now I'm a member of the Royal Horticultural Society and spend any free time out there. I particularly enjoy inviting friends round for drinks and serving the food that I've grown! 🏡

PROJECT CONTACTS

Design and build Earth Designs:
www.earthdesigns.co.uk 020 8521 9040