

Living

ESSEX

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FESTIVE STAYCATIONS

CHRISTMAS IN STYLE FROM
THORPE BAY TO WIVENHOE

BRILLIANT BAUBLES

The Southend business
reviving a 400-year-old art

Inside

CHIC CHIGWELL

The £3.95m Grade II listed
pad on the Rolls Park Estate

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CREATED IN ESSEX

TRESS TO IMPRESS

BILLERICAY'S JIM SHAW
ON TOP TRENDS

CHESNUTS ROASTING

Essex's love affair
with wood burners





HOW TO... SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE PAVING

Earth Designs was formed by Leigh-on-Sea-based **Katrina Kieffer-Wells** in 2003, and here in her monthly column she helps navigate the tricky path of garden paving design

There is plenty to consider in your garden paving design. But once you've thought through the level of maintenance are you looking for, your budget and even the size of the slabs you want, here are some options for how to get the perfect patio nailed.

Slate

Modern and traditional, slate can be a great option for your garden paving design. It is readily available and comes in a wide range of sizes. Great for offsetting florals, the darker you go the bolder the scheme will be. Most slate will need sealing, and can be slippery. It will come in either a honed (smooth) or riven (rough) variety. Slate can be prone to chipping or cracking in areas where rain and ice might occur. So it is best used in a milder climate.

Porcelain paving

This has come on in leaps and bounds in the last few years and is predominantly the only paving we use in our garden now. Super tough, it comes in any colour, shape, size or pattern and it really opens up your options. It doesn't require sealing and is super easy to lay. Whilst it might be more expensive than some of the other stones, this can be far outweighed by its durability and non-slip qualities.

Indian sandstone paving

For years this was the king of the garden paving design world. A natural stone, it comes in a wide variety of colours and shapes and complements both period and contemporary gardens. However, it is porous, which can make it easy for water to penetrate, meaning that it can weather much more rapidly than other garden paving

Composite stone

Usually pigmented concrete, this can offer a greater degree of flexibility as it can be precast to look like other stones and cut in a wide variety of dimensions. They offer a broad range of colours, textures and styles. Usually a cheaper option and readily available from many of the major suppliers they are performing much better than they used to in terms of colour holding up over time.

Granite

Cannot be beaten for its durability and makes an elegant garden paving material for formal outdoor spaces. Often sold as cubes or brick shaped pieces known as setts as well as flagstones.



Limestone

London stone is finely textured so it takes on a distinctive, velvety finish. With a limited colour range it tends to be monochrome or grey. It can be compromised with too much rain causing excess wear. A stone that we have not used much in our gardens.

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