

ESSEX LIFE

THE COUNTY'S FAVOURITE MONTHLY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE SINCE 1952

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Season's eatings

Tasty tidings in Chelmsford & Leigh

WINTER WANDERING
in Prittlewell Square,
Thorpe-le-Soken
& Beaumont



Your
Christmas *starts here!*

- * 13 Xmas markets
- * 50 festive experiences
- * 12 Yuletide towns to discover

STRICTLY
comes to
St Osyth

MEET THE
DAMES
at the panto

£4.50





GARDEN DESIGN DIRT

Leigh-on-Sea-based **Katrina Kieffer-Wells** of Earth Designs shares her garden expertise



PHOTOS: ANNAMARIE TEKTON

Garden buildings

Traditionally, the garden shed has always been placed at the bottom of the garden – but is that really the best spot?

If you have a north-facing garden, the last thing you want is to block the only patch of sun with a shed or garden office. Don't be afraid to bring a garden building closer to the house. This can free up the sunniest, most valuable part of the garden for seating, planting, or simply enjoying the view.

WORKING FROM HOME?

Since the pandemic, garden offices have skyrocketed in popularity. But it's important to be realistic. Picture working in that space on a cold, grey January afternoon – what does it look and feel like?

A basic shed just won't cut it. A proper garden office starts around £10,000-£15,000, and should be insulated, powered and comfortable. As a bonus idea: why not kit it out with a small sofa and cocktail cabinet for social use too? That way, you've got a functional space by day and a relaxing retreat by night – perfect for making the most of your garden all year round.

SHED – A MUST HAVE

Love them or hate them, most gardens need a shed. But be clever with your storage:

- What are you storing?
- If it's bikes, consider a dedicated bike store in the front garden for easier access.
- Do you need a lawnmower?
- If not, skip the big bulky storage.
- Could you store items under bench seating or in a smaller outdoor unit?

IF YOU DO NEED A SHED, BLEND IT IN

Paint it the same colour as the fences – dark shades like black, grey, or navy help it recede visually. Add a climber, or plant a bed in front of it to soften the look. Avoid putting a big path leading directly to it – it makes it feel like a destination, when really, it's just a functional part of the garden.

SUMMERHOUSES CAN BE USED IN WINTER TOO

As a space to relax or read, a summerhouse could be perfect. Just bear in mind the front is usually glazed, so it's not ideal for storing clutter – it needs to look good from the house.

TREAT YOUR OUTDOOR ROOM LIKE AN INDOOR ROOM

Add comfy furniture, bookshelves, ambient lighting, and even a plug-in radiator.

With a few thoughtful touches, it can become a cosy hideaway – even during the darker months.

JOY FROM A GREENHOUSE

No matter how small your garden, if you're into growing your own, a greenhouse will bring so much joy.

From compact wall-mounted models to full Victorian-inspired glasshouses, there's a version for every space.

They're brilliant for:

- Potting up plants
- Growing vegetables
- Overwintering tender plants

Even a small greenhouse can become a productive, purposeful part of the garden. ●

Earth Designs, proud members of the British Association of Landscape Industries and the Association of Professional Landscapers.

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