

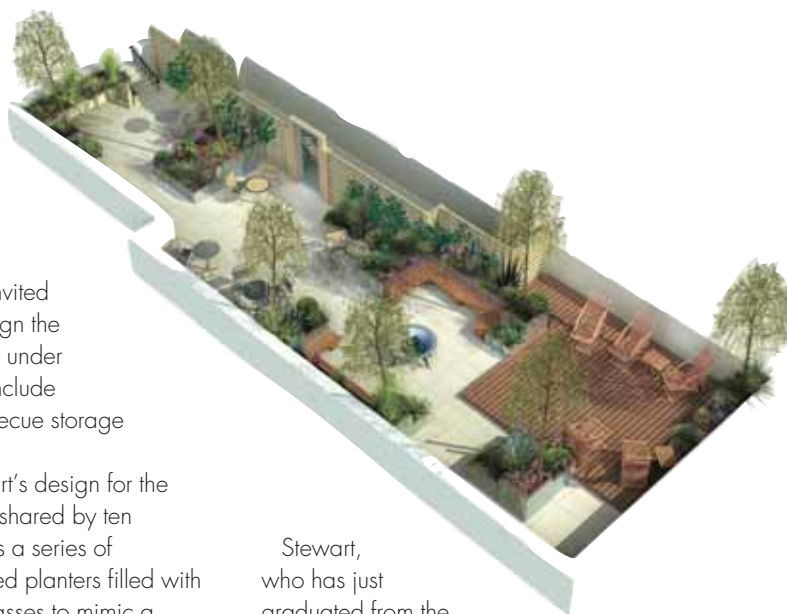
THE NEXT GENERATION

EDUCATION NEWS

Rooftop retreat

A student at Kingston Maurward College, Dorset, has won a competition to design a roof terrace for a property development in Dorchester. Students at the college were invited by a local estate agent to design the roof garden, which is currently under construction. Designs had to include seating, a water feature, barbecue storage and irrigation.

Winning student Jane Stewart's design for the low-maintenance space to be shared by ten two-bedroom flats incorporates a series of wood-edged, galvanised raised planters filled with prairie-style perennials and grasses to mimic a wildflower meadow; a green roof with storage area beneath; a firepit surrounded by benches; and lighting to uplight a series of birch trees added for height and movement.



Right: Three-dimensional still of Jane Stewart's award-winning design for a rooftop garden in Dorchester, Dorset.

Stewart, who has just graduated from the college, now wants to gain a position within a large design studio and ultimately wishes to design internationally. Website: www.kmc.ac.uk

PASS NOTES: getting the most from your design course

27. Joined-up thinking

Many students initially perceive garden design as a process involving a great deal of creative work that results in interesting concepts, ideas and some beautiful drawings. A few details are then settled and it's time to get on with making the garden. But the devil is always to be found in the detail, a fact frequently endorsed by external examiners. This is as true for construction detailing of the hard landscape works as it is for the detail of the planting design ideas.

Interest and a desire to learn is normally present when it comes to planting design. It takes time to build up the requisite knowledge and experience. Construction detailing, however, is sometimes perceived as more of a chore, yet it requires the same attention as the plantings. The same rules of observation, research and building up of a deep, broad body of knowledge and experience equally apply. Detailing should be an area of continual development throughout the designer's career.

In a designer's early work there can often be a failure to carry conceptual ideas through into the detail of the design — the two can appear unrelated. Students should always be able to give a reasoned justification that relates detailing choices and decisions back to the original concepts of the design. The detailing process must also result in gardens that are durable in terms of the hard landscape works, and maintainable in relation to the design of the plantings. Remember that a designed garden is only as good as its longevity when built. Good detailing always addresses the issues of durability and maintenance.

All that said, I usually find most students rapidly take on the importance of joined-up thinking, from inception and the client's brief to the eventual maintenance and management of the finished garden. But getting good at it can take time.

By **Kemal Mehdi**, lecturer in garden design, Hadlow College, Kent/University of Greenwich, London. E-mail: kemal.mehdi@hadlow.ac.uk



Award for new business launch

A student at Myerscough College, Lancashire, who recently set up her own gardening business has won the Student Entrepreneur of the Year competition 2007. Sue Jeffries (*above right*), from Edgworth, near Bolton, is studying the foundation degree in professional gardening and plant knowledge. She launched her garden maintenance and development business, The Nurtured Garden, in May and has already established regular clients and engaged in one-off projects.

The competition is run by the Rural Business Centre at Myerscough and includes a prize of £500 from the Northwest Development Agency.

Website: www.myerscough.ac.uk

Students create college gardens

Final-year students on the BTEC National Diploma in horticulture at Writtle College, Essex, have successfully completed the design and build of three new gardens within the grounds of the college. The students were required to design a garden to a client brief, quantify the materials required and then build the six square metre garden in ten days.

Materials were supplied by the college and included recycled items from previous projects. Plants were from nurseries located within a few miles of the college.

Lecturer in landscaping Simon Grundy says: "It was a pleasure to see how the students got on with their task." The builds were assessed units within the students' course and the gardens will be used as outdoor classrooms.

Website: www.writtle.ac.uk

New online course

London's Inchbald School of Design has launched a new online diploma course in garden design. The part-time course is delivered through an online classroom on the school's website. It is aimed at career-orientated students and takes two to three years to complete.

Website: www.inchbald.co.uk

Fellowship award for Writtle lecturer

Director of educational development at Writtle College, Liz Warr has been awarded a National Teaching Fellowship from the Higher Education Academy. Warr began her career at the college as a lecturer in agricultural science almost 30 years ago. Students have described her as a 'truly inspirational' lecturer.

Website: www.writtle.ac.uk

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Sparsholt students

A garden designed by students at Sparsholt College, Hampshire as part of a competition is nearing maturity. The garden (*below*) was designed for the grounds of a care home occupied mainly by residents with dementia and Alzheimer's Disease.

The garden is divided into smaller areas interconnected by paths to help way finding. It includes wildlife, seaside, woodland-edge, domestic and sensory gardens aimed at stimulating memories. Planting focuses on bright colours: yellow flowering and foliage plants, contrasting red and purple. Raised beds allow residents to garden themselves.

The garden cost £30,000 to install and has already aroused considerable interest from other homes and those caring for people with dementia.

Website:
www.sparsholt.ac.uk

