

## Real life garden makeover



# Cottage industry

Home Plus Scotland's new hands-on garden guru, Claire Reading, talks us through the rejuvenation of a stunning cottage garden in Edinburgh's New Town.

### The Brief

This was a fantastic garden to work on mainly due to its size and great location. The client wanted to give the garden a substantial overhaul while retaining a relaxed, informal and romantic 'cottage' feel. The lack of anywhere to eat outside in the evenings had always been an issue for the client so this was a priority when considering the design. Apart from this, the client gave me free reign to come up with a new design for the garden. //

### The Project

Unusually, the sole access to the property was along a meandering flagstone path through the garden. This pathway was therefore a key feature to take into consideration when designing the new garden. We retained and repaired the path and decided to enhance it by planting an informal lavender hedge either side.

The client was keen to have a patio to incorporate a large area for outdoor dining which was easy to achieve given the size of the garden. The new patio has been sited in a south-facing position and enjoys the evening sun, while also being conveniently close to the kitchen window for passing food and drinks out. The new patio area was constructed using the closest match we could find in terms of colour and texture to the existing flagstone, thus blending well against the existing stone used throughout the rest of garden.

Other features added include a white wooden arbour in a previously dark and gloomy section of the garden. Virginia Creeper has been planted against the bare boundary wall and will form a wonderful warm and colourful backdrop to the arbour once established.

The existing lawn was very patchy in places so it was turfed and edged to redefine its curvaceous lines. We also decided to include three obelisks in the north-facing border to provide interest, against which have been planted shade-tolerant varieties of clematis. Rambling roses, jasmine and honeysuckle have grown up over the front door and around the windows, thus providing the perfect backdrop while sitting out on the patio in the evenings. The overall informal style of planting and the species selected keeps the lines of the garden soft and enhances the rambling cottage garden look that the client wanted to achieve. //

Claire Reading runs the Edinburgh-based Brown Earth Landscapes and is happy to offer a free consultation service to Home Plus Scotland readers. Visit [www.browneathlandscapes.com](http://www.browneathlandscapes.com) for further details.



Claire turned this shabby garden (above) into a haven of relaxation and calm (main pic and left).