



## CONTEMPORARY FAMILY GARDEN

### The Project

With an active young daughter and two teenagers, the stylish owners of this house and garden in a Hampshire market town wanted some extra spill-out space for the warmer months.

The project presented a few challenges, not least that the family were intent on keeping their vast trampoline – to our initial dismay. How on earth could we incorporate it into a stylish garden design?

There was also a huge Scots Pine tree that shed fir cones everywhere, and the garden looked out onto unsightly areas on three sides. Oh, and our clients had a long 'wish list,' including wanting to store quite a few items outside.

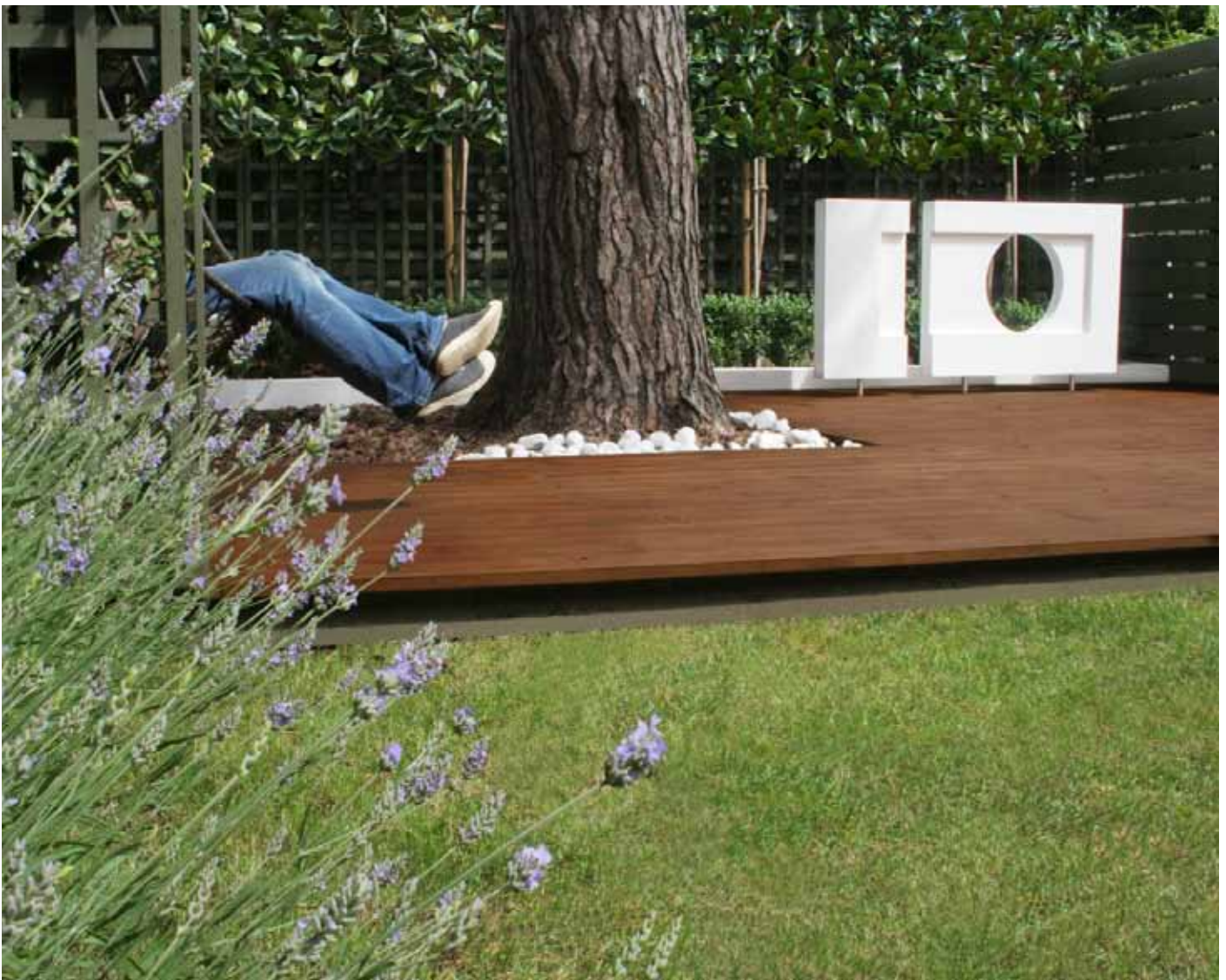


## Focusing In

What we needed was a focus. If you can't use views beyond the garden, it is always a good idea to direct the eye where you would like it to rest. We decided to have some fun and design a striking sculpture board.

Our next task was to design in some major screening that also gave the garden structure and ensured the existing tree appeared less severe. For this we looked at a fabulous row of flowering *Magnolia grandiflora*, pleached onto large frames and trimmed into a continuous screen at high level.

This gave us the maximum amount of space below, and a wonderful perfume in the spring. With a limited budget, we decided not to tear down the garden's nasty red fence but instead replace broken panels and repaint it a subtle green, creating a further screen to plant against.



## The Result

The garden needed to be low maintenance, but we wanted striking planting. Among the plants we chose were three beautiful *Betula* that make a wonderful sound in the breeze and 'green up' the garden, as well as lots of lavender to soften hard edges.

And so to the dreaded trampoline, which actually became a real landscape design success story. Once dug into the ground, it made a fantastic play area and is perfectly unobtrusive: We love seeing little kids running out and jumping around on it. We didn't forget teenage needs either, building a hanging chair for the older ones to 'mooch' in.

The real fun began after practical considerations were out of the way: we factored in two seating areas to make the most of the sun, and we made sure we bought a good-quality fire pit so the garden could still be used on cooler evenings.

The family's verdict on their garden makeover? Fantastic!

