

CITY/COURTYARD



Plan & photos: McQue Gardens

EDINBURGH

Tracy McQue | McQue Gardens | www.mcquegardens.com

Garden details

Size	17m x 10m
Aspect	North-west facing garden with a sunny, open aspect
Soil	Loam, free draining
Project started	March 2008
Project completed	July 2008
Cost	£22,000
Design fee	£2,000
Contractors	Tree Landscape Services (TALS) of East Lothian

Brief

McQue Gardens was asked to create a garden for the whole family that could be used for dining, entertaining and relaxing, with a small area of lawn.

The house was newly built and the owners wanted to create a series of outdoor rooms that reflected the interior's modern design. They were keen to use a pale, neutral colour palette with high specification finishes and low-maintenance architectural planting. The existing garden was a wide, shallow plot laid to lawn, providing a perfect blank canvas.

Design

The final design incorporated three separate 'rooms', each with their own identity and use: somewhere to eat breakfast, dine formally and sunbathe all linked via a path, an area of grass and a rendered block planter.

The first area is a polished natural sandstone breakfasting patio leading out from the French doors. It is flanked on two sides by ground-level planting and on the other by a raised, rendered block planter. A small, stainless-steel water feature creates a relaxing sound nearby. A wide path leads

up two shallow steps to a polished sandstone raised sun terrace, surrounded by planting on three sides, creating a sense of seclusion and separation from the rest of the garden. The more formal dining area is built with pale wooden boards to contrast with the surrounding lawn and polished sandstone. Black planters containing box balls furnish this room. To tie the sun terrace, lawn and dining area together, a rendered block planter runs the entire length of the garden. A dark slate rill connects the lawn and terraces.

This large planter contains a variety of architectural evergreen planting like *Fatsia japonica* and box balls, while the foliage of plants such as *Imperata* 'Red Baron' and *Sambucus* 'Black Beauty' provide colour contrast and *Crocsmia* and *Allium* provide seasonal colour. A beautiful cloud pruned *Ilex crenata* tree provides a focal point next to the breakfast terrace and the owners' favourite tree *Acer* 'Bloodgood' can be found next to the dining deck.

White LED lights create an inviting glow along the dining area step and stainless steel spot lights shine across the terraces, highlighting the architectural planting.

