

Hard surfaces

The use of natural paving materials is expensive. They imbue a garden with an air of quality and permanence which justifies the cost and the effort of searching for recycled materials.

Riven sandstone flags.

These massive slabs were split by hand along the grain of the stone and carry the marks of the hand tools that were used to finish the edges. This red sandstone came from now derelict quarries near Blyth bridge that used to supply farms and households throughout the Tweed valley with paving slabs.

Pebbles.

A cheap product graded from sand and gravel quarries. Pebbles formed in prehistoric rivers and deserts.

Sculptures

The limestone bowl is carved by Susheila Jamieson (tel: 01899 830443) a graduate of Edinburgh College of Art. It is one of series of sculptures which will be on show at Logan Botanic Gardens this summer. The white limestone comes from Derbyshire- it is hard and will weather to a slightly softer grey.

Thanks to:

Martin Swan - Stobo Sawmill, Susheila Jamieson - sculptor, Alex Staerck of Archetype

James Gordon

Beechwood, Rachan, Broughton, Lanarkshire, ML12 6HH

Phone: 01899 830443
Mobile: 07810 837068
email: james@rachan.co.uk
website: www.rachan.co.uk



a quieter garden

www.rachan.co.uk
James Gordon

A quieter garden

This Scottish patio garden takes some of its elements from the Japanese tradition of gardening. The intention is to recreate the rhythms, balance, and the texture of the Japanese garden; to achieve its sense of harmony and quiet. Like the Japanese garden this garden's character depends principally on the local climate. It draws its inspiration from nature. It uses natural paving materials which gain patina with age. Timber is used in a simple way to construct a garden shelter and log store. Foliage, texture and ease of maintenance has been paramount in the plant selection. This is a haven from the outside world; a quiet place for meditation.

Timber

Wood for outdoor use has to be selected with care. Long lasting species are dense and full of natural preservatives e.g. oak, European larch and chestnut. They can last for twenty years with no treatment at all. The sawmill offcuts are rejects too beautiful to throw away.

Plants

A high proportion of the plants are wild species that are indigenous in Scotland. *Luzula sylvatica* - Greater Woodrush features largely; this is a perennial sedge which provides an effective ground cover year round. Other woodland grasses such as *Deschampsia flexuosa* and *caespitosa* lend texture and interest to a shady corner.

Green roof

The native fern *Polypodium vulgare* naturally grows in a thin mat of its own roots, colonising rock faces and living tree limbs. It is drought resistant but in the drier east of Scotland will need occasional irrigation. The timbers in the roof are European larch. The uprights are larch pole thinnings, stripped of bark to slow rotting but otherwise untreated. The fastening system holds the timber off the ground and is secure even when the timber shrinks and splits.

Regeneration

The cycles of birth and death are part of the attraction of many grasses and ferns. On the roof top - last summers spore carrying evergreen fronds are dying back after a winter of frost and cold and new fronds are uncurling at the base which will eventually cover the roof in fresh green. One contemporary garden trend finding beauty in the processes of setting seed and decay. Leaving grass seeds and herbaceous flowers to wither over winter adds another dimension to anybody's garden particularly in heavy frost. 'Dead heading' is often more to do with intolerance of nature's untidiness than good gardening.

