

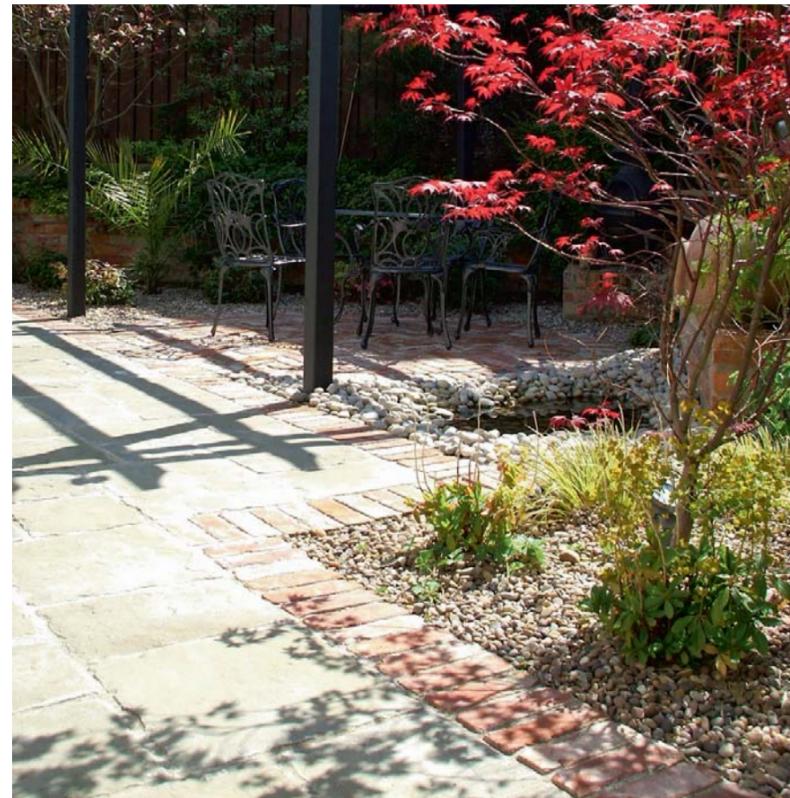
Paving the Way...

Landscape Designer Kevin Cooper gives an insight into one of the key design elements of any garden or outdoor space... the Paving.

When designing any garden, it is crucial that all the elements come together in a seamless and coherent way that combine to create a bigger and more beautiful picture. There can be no single ingredient that has such a pivotal role in this than the choice of the paving material.

The choice of the right material is as crucial to the feel and style of an outdoor space as any other room in the house, maybe more so, as it not only has to look good in its own right, but it can be the one key element that brings the inside and the outside of the home together to seamlessly create something special... a home.

The decision of which paving to choose can be determined by several factors, firstly we have to decide which materials actually suit and work with the house, as a general rule of thumb choose a paving that will contrast with the house rather than trying to match with it. When a well chosen paving comes together with the right walling they combine and work together, and rather than fighting each other, they combine to create a harmonious picture. The style or mood desired for the space will have a major bearing on the decision, whether it is traditional, contemporary, rustic, clean lines or soft around the edges, there is a material to suit. Completing the lifestyle can often mean continuing the theme of the interior to the outside, this has to be approached with caution however as it may not suit the external style of the building.



We are extremely fortunate that there are now a myriad of different materials to choose from, with products being sourced from all over the world as well as here in Ireland. There are some lovely and very striking granite and limestone paving originating from China that are of particular use when creating a more contemporary space or having the same material in say the kitchen or conservatory flowing out to the terrace. India is providing us with some lovely sandstone, with its warm tones useful in creating warm, inviting and slightly more rustic schemes.

Closer to home there are stunning quartz paving and sets coming from Donegal, perfect for adding that extra bit of style or luxury. There can however, be nothing more inviting and pleasing to the eye than some stunning reclaimed Yorkstone, perfect for the period home. Whichever one is chosen, there is a timeless romance and beauty with natural stone that adds true depth and character to any space.

There are so many facets to the creation of a garden, design, lifestyle, material choice, plant selection, water, structures etc, all important in their own way, but few having such a pivotal role as the paving. It is well worth taking extra time on the choice and crucial to have it installed correctly. Respect and thanks must go to Trevor Ford and his team at the landscape and paving company Hardscape for their skill and patience in helping turn my designs into reality all these years.

When all the elements come together correctly, the result can be a magical place which one can savour for years to come...enjoy! 🌿

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