



Garden Design for Stoke-on-Trent

Stoke-on-Trent, UK · March 2026

Design Rationale

EXPECTED PEAK: SUMMER

This design transforms the existing lawn into a sensory and edible landscape for children, balanced with a sophisticated retreat for adults. By introducing soft, curved borders and a central patio, the garden feels larger and encourages exploration.

Site Interpretation

The space is defined by the wooden garden room, concrete garage, and mature perimeter trees. The partial shade and existing straight concrete path provide a framework for introducing meandering lines and layered planting that soften the boundaries.

Climate Considerations

Plant selections are tailored to the regional conditions, prioritizing varieties that thrive in the local moisture levels and tolerate wind exposure. The cooler establishment window ensures roots settle before summer, while careful placement mitigates the risk of late frosts.

Design Priorities

- Integrate safe, edible plants into ornamental beds for foraging
- Create a dedicated lounging area for adults using natural stone
- Establish a functional cooking zone between the outbuildings
- Soften existing straight lines with meandering curves and abundant planting



Proposed garden view

The provided rendering illustrates the garden during an expressive moment of peak summer growth. It is intended to convey the atmosphere and spatial relationships rather than an exact all-season promise of simultaneous blooming.

Planting Instructions

1. Remove the rotary clothes dryer from the lawn to open up the central space.
2. Clear the cardboard boxes and plastic toys located near the Garage Corner.
3. Tidy the loose gravel and debris around the base of the Wooden garden room.
4. Install a circular lounging area in the middle left of the lawn using Natural Sandstone Pavers.
5. Lay a secondary path of Natural Sandstone Pavers to create a meandering stepping stone connection between the straight concrete path and the new circular patio.
6. Position the Oak Barrel BBQ Station in the gap between the Garden Room Entrance and the Garage Corner, using Timber Sleepers to create a level base if necessary.
7. Plant the Dwarf Apple 'James Grieve' as a focal point in the upper-left section of the lawn, ensuring it has space to mature away from the wooden panel fencing.
8. Prepare a curved garden bed along the wooden panel fencing on the left side of the yard.
9. Plant the Lavender 'Munstead' in the curved border, grouping them to create a fragrant hedge-like effect.

Prune the Dwarf Apple tree in winter to maintain its compact shape. Deadhead the Snapdragons regularly to encourage continuous blooming throughout the season.

MATERIALS

Natural Sandstone Pavers

Timber Sleepers

Oak Barrel BBQ Station

WATERING & ESTABLISHMENT

Focus on establishing the new fruit trees and shrubs during the first two seasons.

Water deeply twice a week during the first summer to ensure deep root penetration.

Use drip irrigation for the edible beds containing strawberries and blueberries; use manual watering for the apple tree and any potted plants.

Prioritize the blueberry bushes and apple tree during heatwaves to prevent fruit drop or scorched leaves.

Ensure the lavender and rosemary are planted in slightly raised mounds if the soil is heavy clay. Watch for standing water after heavy rain and keep plant crowns above any soggy pockets. Avoid trapping winter moisture against stems and refresh mulch only after soils have drained.

Planting Instructions (Continued)

10. Intersperse the Snapdragons throughout the curved border to provide vertical pops of color among the lavender.
11. Place the Lamb's Ear along the front edge of the curved border to showcase its silver, fuzzy foliage.
12. Line the edges of the straight concrete path .
13. Plant the Blueberry 'Sunshine Blue' shrubs in the border area near the Garage Corner or along the concrete path, ensuring they are in acidic soil or large pots if the ground is alkaline.
14. Locate the sunniest spot near the Timber BBQ Station or the end of the perennial border to plant the Rosemary shrubs.
15. Focus on establishing the new fruit trees and shrubs during the first two seasons.
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17. Prioritize the blueberry bushes and apple tree during heatwaves to prevent fruit drop or scorched leaves.
18. Ensure the lavender and rosemary are planted in slightly raised mounds if the soil is heavy clay. Watch for standing water after heavy rain and keep plant crowns above any soggy pockets. Avoid trapping winter moisture against stems and refresh mulch only after soils have drained.

Planting Palette & Care

Strawberry 'Honeoye'

An edible groundcover that provides a safe foraging experience along the path edges.

Plant in sun and mulch with straw to keep fruit clean. Keep well-watered during fruit swell.

Blueberry 'Sunshine Blue'

A compact edible shrub offering pink spring flowers and blue summer fruit.

Requires acidic soil; plant in large pots with ericaceous compost if garden soil is alkaline.

Lavender 'Munstead'

A hardy, fragrant shrub that attracts pollinators for observation.

Prune after flowering to maintain shape; requires well-drained soil.

Lamb's Ear

Extremely soft, fuzzy leaves provide a tactile sensory experience for children.

Very low maintenance; divide every few years if it spreads too far.

Dwarf Apple 'James Grieve'

A reliable variety that stays small, providing spring blossom and autumn fruit at an accessible height.

Prune in winter to maintain a compact shape. Watch for aphids in early summer.

Snapdragon

Safe, colorful flowers that add vertical interest and interactive elements.

Deadhead regularly to encourage more blooms.

Rosemary

A fragrant edible herb that is tough and provides evergreen structure.

Plant in the sunniest spot available and ensure good drainage.

Transformation Timeline

Phase 1: Prep	Clear the cardboard boxes and plastic toys near the garage, and tidy the loose gravel around the base of the garden room. Remove the rotary clothes dryer to open up the lawn area. Mark out the new curved perennial border in the middle far left and the circular patio space in the middle left.
Phase 2: Structure	Prepare the base with leveling sand or grit for the Natural Sandstone Pavers in the middle left and the stepping stone path in the middle center near the Garden Room Entrance. Install the Timber Sleepers to create raised beds near the garden room. Position the Oak Barrel BBQ Station in the back far right near the Garage Corner. Place the wooden lounge chairs on the new patio.
Phase 3: Planting	Begin with structural planting by installing the Dwarf Apple 'James Grieve' and the Blueberry 'Sunshine Blue' shrubs. Follow with the herbaceous perennials and groundcovers, including Lamb's Ear and Strawberry 'Honeoye'. Wait for consistent warm temperatures in late spring to plant the Mediterranean herbs, Lavender 'Munstead' and Rosemary, along with the Snapdragons.
Phase 4: Establishment	Water deeply twice a week during the first summer, prioritizing the new fruit tree and blueberry bushes. Apply a natural mulch to the beds to retain moisture, ensuring it is kept away from the stems to prevent rot.
Phase 5: Final Review & Clean-up	Inspect the new stepping stones and patio pavers for stability. Check the irrigation setup for the edible beds and ensure the garden is safe and ready for use.

Living With Your Garden

EXPECTED PEAK SEASON: SUMMER

Ongoing care focuses on guiding the abundant cottage style while maintaining clear access to the edible elements. Regular deadheading, seasonal pruning of the fruit tree and shrubs, and consistent watering during dry spells will ensure the garden remains productive and visually soft. The approach is steady and observant, allowing the plants to spill over their borders naturally without becoming unkempt.

SPRING

Apple blossoms and pink blueberry flowers emerge, while snapdragons begin their colorful display.

Prune the apple tree to maintain its compact shape and monitor the new growth for early pests.

SUMMER

The garden is at its peak with strawberries ready for picking, lavender scenting the air, and the lounging patio in full use.

Water deeply twice a week, harvest ripe fruit, and deadhead the snapdragons to encourage continuous blooming.

FALL

Apples ripen for harvest and the blueberry foliage turns a brilliant fiery red.

Harvest the remaining apples and clear away any fallen debris to prevent rot over the winter.

WINTER

The evergreen rosemary and silver lamb's ear provide structure against the frost.

Avoid walking on frosted grass and ensure the crowns of the Mediterranean herbs are not sitting in waterlogged soil.