



# An eye for design

Lucy Redman  
has created a  
garden in Suffolk  
unlike any other.  
Don't miss your  
chance to visit

WORDS: LAURA FANTHORPE PHOTOGRAPHY: TOM BAILEY

FIND OUT THE  
SECRETS OF  
LUCY'S GARDEN



"I am a maximalist," explains garden designer Lucy Redman. "I don't want any of that minimalist gardening rubbish!" If you get the opportunity to visit her creative garden in Suffolk, you will soon be won round to her way of thinking. Bursting with unusual plants, sculptures and artefacts, its sense of fun will appeal to children and adults alike!

Wrapped around the 1930s thatched farm cottage, Lucy's ¾ acre garden is a wonderful place to explore. "When I first moved here the plot was just a row of poplars, a telegraph pole and no-man's land," she explains. "My husband was happy with it until he met me! I am the plantswoman."

Lucy has always been a keen gardener with a passion for plants, and her enthusiasm for the subject was ignited as a small girl. As an adult she worked at RHS Garden Wisley, before gaining her Diploma in Garden Design at the English Gardening School. Lucy launched her own garden design business in London in 1989, relocating to Suffolk in 1995.

She now runs a school of garden design from her sedum-roofed pavilion in the garden. Founded in 2000, the school offers practical gardening and design courses, and even troubleshooting visits to students' gardens. In addition to teaching adults about gardening, Lucy is keen to get rural studies back into the school curriculum, and is helping to reinstate her old



### Visitor information

■ The Lucy Redman Garden  
6 The Village  
Rushbrooke  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP30 0ER

■ Tel. 01284 386250

■ Visit [www.lucyredman.co.uk](http://www.lucyredman.co.uk)

■ Admission £2, children free.  
Open every  
Friday from  
1 April-30  
September  
2011,  
10am-5pm  
Please arrange  
large group  
visits in advance



The wonderful Pebble Parterre

school's garden at Hadleigh High School, near Ipswich.

There's a keen sense of fun in the design of Lucy's garden, and she is keen for visiting children to enjoy it too. Rather than cold, restrained design, she believes that gardens should be entertaining, quirky, and a place for the whole family to enjoy. Lucy has combined her love of

sculptures and crafts with the exuberant planting schemes. She likes to use reclaimed products and prefers craftsmen to create original features rather than buying mass-produced items. "Other people go to France and bring back Gucci and Chanel," she explains. "I bring back rusty watering cans!" The garden is divided into

compartments with different themes. One of the most wonderful is the Pebble Parterre created on the lawn in front of the house.

"I wanted to match the age and style of the building," says Lucy. "So the parterre pattern is inspired by a reclaimed 1930s mirrored gate I've placed at the base of the lawn. The pattern looks superb in snow or



Lucy Redman

frost when seen from the house." The petal shapes are planted with snowdrops, purple ajuga and snake's head fritillaries.

The nearby Sunset Border is so named because it is the last place the sun's rays touch at the end of the day. It's filled with plants in warm hues such as yellow carex and deep red rose 'Dusky Maiden'

with its golden stamens. Opposite is the Pink, Purple and White Border, which contains alliums and pink sedum 'Matrona', along with a Maryanne Nicholls sculpture of the Walking Man. Behind this border are fan and espalier trained apples and pears.

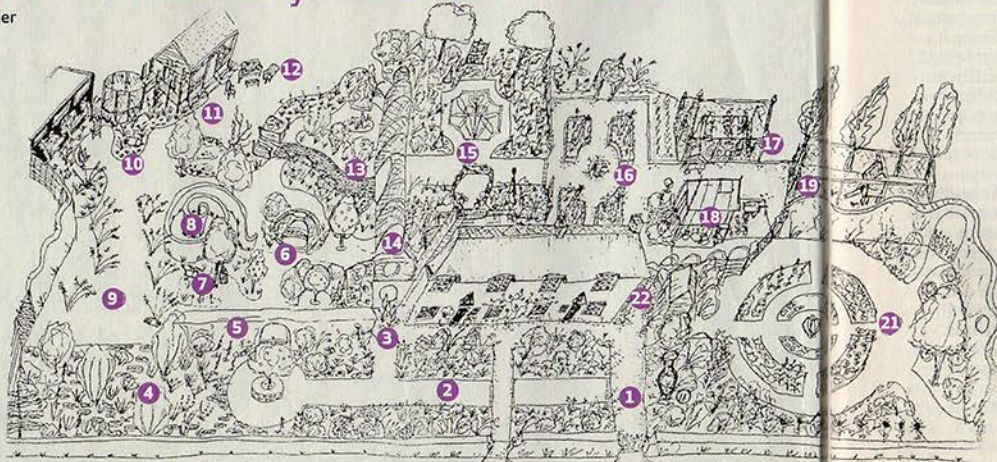
Visitors can follow the lawn through to the bulb and rhizome



One of the sculptures that add fun to the garden

## What's where in the Lucy Redman Garden

- 1 Plants of Asian Origin Border
- 2 Long Borders
- 3 Breast Sculpture
- 4 Woodland Border
- 5 Beech Hedge Cloister
- 6 Willow Igloo
- 7 Wildflower Meadow
- 8 Copper Beech Spiral
- 9 Butterfly Walk
- 10 Trampoline beds
- 11 Garden Pavilion
- 12 Celtic Racetrack
- 13 Falkland Islands Beds
- 14 Willow Tunnel
- 15 Stone Parterre
- 16 Unusual Bulb & Rhizome Garden
- 17 Shaded Seating Area
- 18 Cedar Greenhouse
- 19 Palais de Poulet
- 20 Redman's Rare Plant Nursery
- 21 Dominic's Potager
- 22 Scented Corridor



The pebble path in the Falkland Islands Beds



A woven metal turf seat at the base of an apple tree



area, which is divided into four equal beds. These contain tall bearded irises, eucomis, tigridia and a "gaggle of recycled bits and bobs". Next is a shaded seating area – formerly a fruit cage – covered in wisteria, passion flower, and sweetly-scented *Akebia quinata* (chocolate vine).

As well as being home to rare and unusual decorative plants, the garden has a functional side.

In the potager, Lucy grows organic fruit and vegetables in curved beds radiating out from a central Copper Pod sculpture by Cary Norman. This area is surrounded by a curving 'rollercoaster' hedge and there is a go-cart for visiting children!

Nearby is the grand Palais de Poulet, which is home to some very happy free-range hens. The chicken house is painted aubergine, and the coop entrance is made from reclaimed gates. The hens regularly follow Lucy around the garden in the hope that her digging will unearth some tasty worms.

A scented corridor lined with viburnums, choisya and *Ptelea trifoliata* leads through to the front garden. Here the Plants of Asian Origin border is filled with unusual varieties such as *Lindera obtusiloba* and *disporopsis*. A central fibreglass sculpture called The Vessel, by Maryanne Nicholls, towers 3m (10ft) high above the plants and is subtly lit up by night. "Plants should do the talking," says Lucy.

## WHILE YOU'RE IN THE AREA

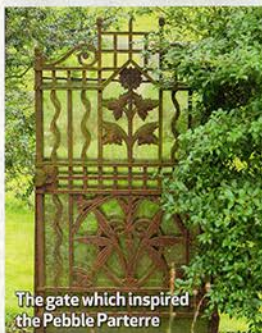
■ **Fullers Mill Garden**  
West Stow  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP28 6HD  
Tel. 0870 803 0248  
Visit [www.fullersmillgarden.org.uk](http://www.fullersmillgarden.org.uk)

■ **Wyken Hall Gardens**  
Stanton  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP31 2DW  
Tel. 01359 252372  
Visit [www.wykenvineyards.co.uk](http://www.wykenvineyards.co.uk)

■ **The Walled Garden**  
Langham Hall  
Langham  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP31 3EE  
Visit [www.bellflowernursery.co.uk](http://www.bellflowernursery.co.uk)



The sedum-roofed pavilion



The gate which inspired the Pebble Parterre



'As well as being home to decorative plants, the garden has a functional side'



The Breast Sculpture, made from plough breasts

"But sculptures are added fun!"

A grass path with borders on both sides runs the length of the house, offering fantastic views in both directions. The borders are filled with purple, red, lime green and white plants, including heucheras, day lilies, hydrangea 'Snow Queen' and miscanthus. Here texture and form are just as important as colour, and, as Lucy says, "the flowers are just a bonus".

The borders end in a woven metal turf seat at the base of an apple tree.

Down this end of the garden there is a woodland border with silver birch, trillium, snowdrops, ferns and brunnera 'Jack Frost'.

Lucy created the nearby Breast Sculpture from plough breasts found in the farm skip. It is surrounded by grasses that mirror the metalwork's shape and colour.

A gap in the hedge leads to the dark Beech Hedge Cloister, a walkway with an austere, religious

feel, which ends in a gate created from salvaged greenhouse grilles.

From here, visitors can wander through the more informal area of the Butterfly Walk – "Giving it a name gives it a reason for being," says Lucy – filled with different coloured buddleias. Wildflowers scramble delightfully over a rusting lawnmower reclaimed from a skip, while children adore the copper beech spiral and willow igloo.

Acting as a magnet for visiting children, the Celtic Racetrack is an interwoven metal structure, topped with 250 sedum and sempervivum. "It's part toy, part sculpture," says Lucy. "It even has remote control cars for children to play with!"

In between the raised beds, the mahogany bark of *Prunus serrula* mirrors the colour of the rusty metal.

At the end of the garden, the sedum-roofed pavilion has a wooden walkway leading to a trampoline, and beds are filled with

miscanthus 'Cosmopolitan' and bamboo. The pavilion faces a curvaceous border planted with arching *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Overdam', wildlife-friendly *Cirsium rivulare* 'Atropurpureum', and *Cortaderia richardii*.

From here, leading back towards the house, the Falkland Islands Beds are filled with themed plants. These were planted in 2007 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Falklands war, in which Lucy's uncle played a major role. The intricate daisy pattern path was painstakingly created from marbles and pebbles.

In 2008 Lucy achieved one of her long-held ambitions, when Beth Chatto took a tour of the garden. "It's not often you get to be in kissing distance of your hero!" says Lucy.

A visit to The Lucy Redman Garden is bound to inspire you – and Lucy will soon become your gardening hero. [GA](http://www.gardenanswersmagazine.co.uk)



The Walking Man sculpture in the Pink, Purple and White Border