

gardenproject

Labour of love

WITH NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE, BECKY PUSHED HER DIY SKILLS TO THE MAX, BUILDING A PERGOLA, OUTDOOR KITCHEN AND GEODOME GREENHOUSE

HOME NOTES

WHO LIVES HERE?

Becky Russell lives here with her husband Graham and their children Isabel, 11, and Joshua, seven.

THE PROJECT

Knocking down an ugly pebble-dash garage and building a terrace and pergola in its place, with an outdoor kitchen and an adjoining geodome greenhouse.

PROJECT COST
£8,619

'Removing the old garage at the end of our drive opened up our garden,' says Becky. 'The pergola was easy to build and we anchored the posts with heavy-duty fasteners.'

Similar ModBlox extra-wide pergola, 4800x1800mm, £548, eDecks-Raj Blend Indian sandstone slabs, £26/sq m, Stone Traders

Becky and Graham Russell were living in a sixth-floor flat when they came to view this three-bedroom 1950s house – and they instantly fell in love with the 100ft garden.

‘We were desperate to have outdoor space for the kids, and the south-facing garden with three giant oak trees at the bottom was amazing,’ says Becky, a content creator and an entrepreneur (@diyherway). ‘Although the garden was overgrown and we didn’t like the eyesore garage – the first thing we saw when we came outside – we weren’t put off.’

To begin with Becky and Graham didn’t have much of a plan beyond demolishing the ugly garage and extending the lawn. As a DIY influencer with a budget-conscious mind, Becky wanted to tackle the work herself, learning new skills by following YouTube tutorials. ‘Soon we realised it made more sense to create a larger terrace by replacing the old patio outside the back door and extending over the garage footprint,’ says Becky. ‘This inspired me to build an outdoor kitchen and pergola, and later I put together a geodome greenhouse.’

Graham, from South Africa, loves a barbecue, and Becky followed videos to learn how to build an outdoor kitchen on the terrace. ‘Heavy-duty castors elevate cupboards off the ground so they don’t rot and we can move them around,’ she says. ‘I taught myself basic plumbing and set up a £20 butler sink from Facebook so Graham can wash his hands while cooking. The water runs into a bucket! It’s simple but functional.’

There were learning curves along the way, too. Specialists had to be called in to demolish the old garage because Becky discovered asbestos. A metal pergola snapped after heavy rainwater gathered in the tarpaulin she’d rigged up to work on the outdoor kitchen. She replaced this with a wood pergola, which easily slotted together in an afternoon.

Tackling the ambitious DIY project, along with renovating her house, encouraged Becky to set up DIY Her Way, where she runs women-only DIY training workshops.

‘I get so much satisfaction doing DIY and hope my business and channel inspire women and girls to feel the same,’ she says. ‘The whole family loves our social outdoor space – I love our garden even more than I did when we first moved in.’

UPKEEP TIP
Spray Wet & Forget
onto fences, walls and
patios to remove lichen
– no rinsing required



LEFT ‘We replanted pots we brought from our flat and I’ve added to them over time, buying from MarketPlace and garden centres,’ says Becky.

Forget-me-not 9cm plant, £18.99; set of three osteospermum ‘Akila White Purple Eye’ in 9cm pots, £21.98; both B&Q

BELOW ‘This is my favourite corner to sit as I can look out over the whole garden,’ says Becky. ‘I bought the furniture in a sale at a garden show.’

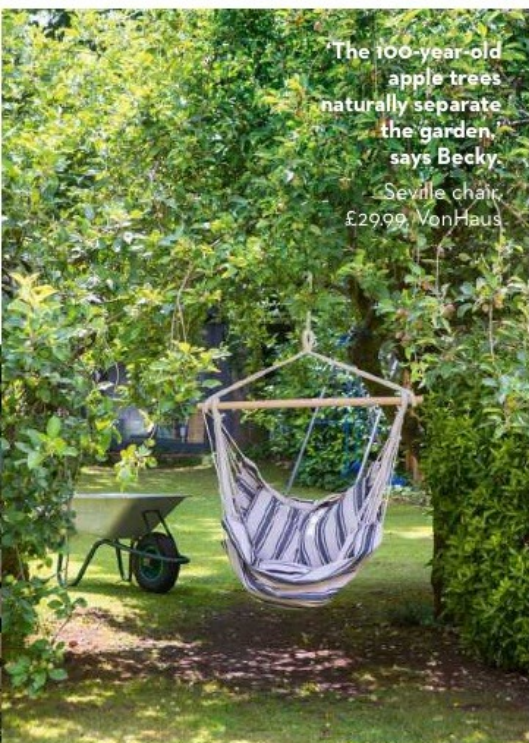
Savannah wicker corner suite is similar, £499, Love Home & Garden. Cleo Nest in- and outdoor rug, £139, Benuta



‘I fell in love with the shape of the arched fence panels – they’re like waves,’ says Becky. ‘I alternated the trellis with the solid panel.’
Forest Dome, £76.99 per panel, 1800x1800mm. Buy Fencing Direct. Sussex Oyal is the same, £70 per panel, 1200x1800mm. Coventry Turf & Landscaping



“
The **GEODOME** is super strong, **WATERPROOF** and works **BRILLIANTLY** as a greenhouse
”



'The 100-year-old apple trees naturally separate the garden,' says Becky.

Seville chair, £29.99, VonHaus

'A picture of a greenhouse geodome on Pinterest really sparked my interest,' says Becky. 'There was the option of having the supplier put it together, but I did it myself.'

Mini Geodome is similar, £899, GeodomeX

GREENHOUSE GARDEN

Position close to an outdoor kitchen for easy access to herbs



“I only spent £850 building the **OUTDOOR KITCHEN** after teaching myself to use **POWER TOOLS** and build cupboards”

BECKY RUSSELL, HOMEOWNER

STYLE MUST-HAVES

INSPIRED BY BECKY'S GARDEN



SUN SHADE

Sandstone retractable pergola, £595, Cox & Cox



...AND RELAX

Ibiza two-person hammock with stand, £69.99, VonHaus

AL FRESCO KITCHEN

Savannah modular outdoor four-burner kitchen set in Birch, £1,899, Atkin & Thyme



GLOW UP

Woven easy-fit pendant lampshade, £32, Debenhams



HANDY STASHER

Large seagrass belly basket, £24.95, Rex London



FEATURE JANE CRITTENDEN AND GINEVRA BENEDETTI
STYLING MARISHA TAYLOR PHOTOGRAPHS JAMES FRENCH