

OVERLOOKED SPACES

PRIVACY CAN BE OBTAINED IN MANY WAYS – FROM THE RIGHT BOUNDARIES TO WELL-PLACED TREES

THE issue of overlooked gardens is a tricky one but there are some easy solutions to fix this. Treat garden boundaries as if you were decorating your interior walls and look for creative ways to enhance the aesthetic. See them as an opportunity to extend privacy and create a more intimate feel in your garden. Use these surfaces as an extension of your garden style, a chance to grow vertically, to help stretch your space visually and to introduce a different mood at night with ambient lighting to make the focus very much on your garden and not those around it.

BORROW VIEWS AND INCORPORATE THEM INTO YOUR OWN DESIGN

The key to overlooked gardens is not to block out everything but to borrow adjacent views that work with your design while screening the things you don't want to see. 'Longer views are less of an issue and remember that you can block a distant building easily with a well-placed small tree,' says John Wyer, CEO and lead designer at Bowles & Wyer. 'If you're being overlooked nearby, an airy tree like an olive can be the solution.' As a general rule, Mediterranean plants and trees cope well on an exposed sunny rooftop.

DRAW THE EYE INTO YOUR SPACE

'If your garden is overlooked the trick is to make it as cosy and inviting as possible, to focus attention on your own space rather than neighbouring properties,' says designer Catherine Clancy. 'Clad the boundaries with greenery, using climbers like evergreen star jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*).' Plant shrubs generously to make the garden as lush as possible.

BLUR THE BOUNDARIES WITH CLEVER TRICKS

Carefully positioned trees, fast-growing climbers and wall-trained shrubs help to create a layered look that disguises boundaries by greening them and instantly



makes a space feel more private. 'This garden [above] was overlooked on all sides,' say designers Charlotte Harris and Hugo Bugg. 'We used a combination of carefully placed tree planting and structures to break up those viewpoints and diffuse them, rather than constructing higher fences or planting taller hedges.'

DOUBLE UP BOUNDARY PLANTING

Creating more privacy in a garden overlooked by the surrounding houses needs thinking through carefully. Sometimes 'double wrapping' the space is an even more effective option. Designer Charlotte Rowe reveals how she dealt with an overlooked garden in a previous project: 'We planted a row of pleached hornbeam trees and tall hornbeam hedging along the far end boundary. Then a second small group of katsura trees (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*) further inside the garden for additional screening'