

# Lavant Horticultural Society

**'What Makes a Great Garden'**

**Annie Guilfoyle**

**13<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

*Some notes from Annie's talk:*

The award-winning garden designer Annie Guilfoyle combines a successful consultancy, Creative Landscapes, with lecturing and writing on the subject. She has a long association with West Dean College, where she organises all the garden courses and teaches some of them; she also teaches garden design at Great Dixter. Internationally, Annie lectures and runs garden design courses in several Europe locations and in the USA.

Annie used her wealth of experience and knowledge to give an audience of over fifty a masterly overview of garden design (*these sparse notes just cover a few points*).

Architecture and landscape should influence the design.

Annie stressed the importance of focal points in the garden. A garden should offer a journey with some mystery, rather than displaying everything at the outset. This also helps to make small gardens look larger; an example would be paths that start off without, in fact, leading anywhere – just giving the impression of hidden areas even though there are none. Seating, and its location, is a significant factor in the design of a garden.

In the case of narrow gardens avoid the eye being taken immediately to the end of the garden – for instance, a feature that masks the very end or a patio adjacent to the house that could be offset at 45°.

**Here are some of the gardens that Annie highlighted:**

- Barbara Hepworth Museum & Sculpture Garden, St Ives;
- Lamorran Gardens, Cornwall;
- Keith Wiley's Wildside in Dartmoor;
- Great Dixter;
- The Eden Project;
- Derek Jarman's garden near Dungeness – inspiration for...
- Beth Chatto's Gravel Garden;
- Highline, Manhattan disused railway line transformed;
- Hauser & Wirth, Somerset – an excellent example of Piet Oudolf's garden design;
- Knoll Gardens, Wimborne, Dorset, with its nursery specialising in grasses;
- Long Barn, nr Sevenoaks – the first garden of Vita Sackville-West & Harold Nicolson, before they moved onto Sissinghurst.

For the best writing on garden design Annie recommended John Brookes.