



At a glance

Client

Horticolous Landscape & Garden Design

Garden designer

Jon Wheatley

The challenge

To create a stunning centrepiece for the Horticolous garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2013.

The solution

SOLARDOME[®] Haven

Dome specification

- 3-frequency geodesic dome
- Diameter – 4.52m/ 14ft 10in
- Height – 3m/ 9ft 10in
- Volume – 36m³/ 1274ft³
- Floor area – 15.95m²/ 171.68ft²
- Single-glazed, including five window vents
- Exterior metal components polyester powder coated green

Supporting companies

Paignton Zoo, Suttons Seeds, Hydrogarden and Foras Stone

The challenge

Award winning design and landscaping company, Horticolous, wanted to create a gold medal winning show garden for the RHS Chelsea Flower Show centenary year. Attended by 157,000 visitors each year, the show is recognised as one of the most prestigious flower shows in the world.

Lynn Riches and Mark Lippatt, the team behind Horticolous, planned a garden of two parts 'The Secret Garden of Past & Present'. One half of the 64m² garden would take visitors back to horticulture 100 years ago, and the other would showcase the very latest horticultural products, plant varieties and build materials.

Recommended by horticultural expert Kevin Frediani, Curator of Plants and Gardens at Paignton Zoo, Horticolous approached Solardome Industries to help realise their vision of the modern garden. As well as providing a show-stopping centerpiece, they wanted to demonstrate the best growing environment for the modern gardener who strives to produce the best plants and utilise the most innovative techniques.

By teaming up with plant and technology specialists they planned to maximise the space of the dome and show how well it supports advanced techniques of aquaponics and hydroponics and allows a diverse range of plants to flourish.

Another key requirement was to have a practical structure that could be built with minimum foundations and assembled quickly and easily in the enclosed space of the Great Pavilion.



The solution

A 4.52m diameter Solardome[®] Haven was selected to perfectly complement the Horticolous' garden design. A new green dome was created in celebration of the show's 100th year and to demonstrate how well they blend into country garden surroundings.

The innovative geodesic design creates the optimum environment for growing, which meant it was the ideal choice to demonstrate the latest technological advances in growing techniques.

Superior air distribution and airflow help maintain a more uniform temperature and keep it fungus and disease free. Plus, maximum solar gain is achieved as a result of 97% light transmission to the multiple facets of the geodesic dome.

With no need for foundations, the Solardome[®] Haven could be quickly assembled onsite and easily anchored to a wooden platform. It is installed by hand and so requires minimal construction space and no large equipment.



"We loved the product and felt we could incorporate it into the design incredibly well and create a huge wow. We needed something to showcase the hydroponic systems and although there were other products that we considered, the Solardome[®] glasshouse was by far the best and a perfect combination."

Lynn Riches, Horticolous



The results

'The Secret Garden of Past & Present' won a prestigious gold medal in the Great Pavilion Awards. It was a beautiful, well-thought out garden that showcased the creativity and expertise of everyone involved.

The 21st Century Solardome[®] glasshouse enabled Horticolous to complete their garden with a stunning and innovative design. It also provided a practical and superior growing environment for a wonderful array of plants. Hydrogarden were able to utilise the dome to showcase their hydroponic products, aquaponic systems and plant grow lights demonstrating the latest technologies for the modern gardener.

The new green colour of the aluminium frame was a first for the dome and now forms part of the standard Solardome[®] glasshouse range. This gives Solardome customers more choice and scope for customisation.

The Show was covered extensively on television for the BBC, with 'The Secret Garden of Past & Present' providing the backdrop for a series of interviews and celebrity photo opportunities.

