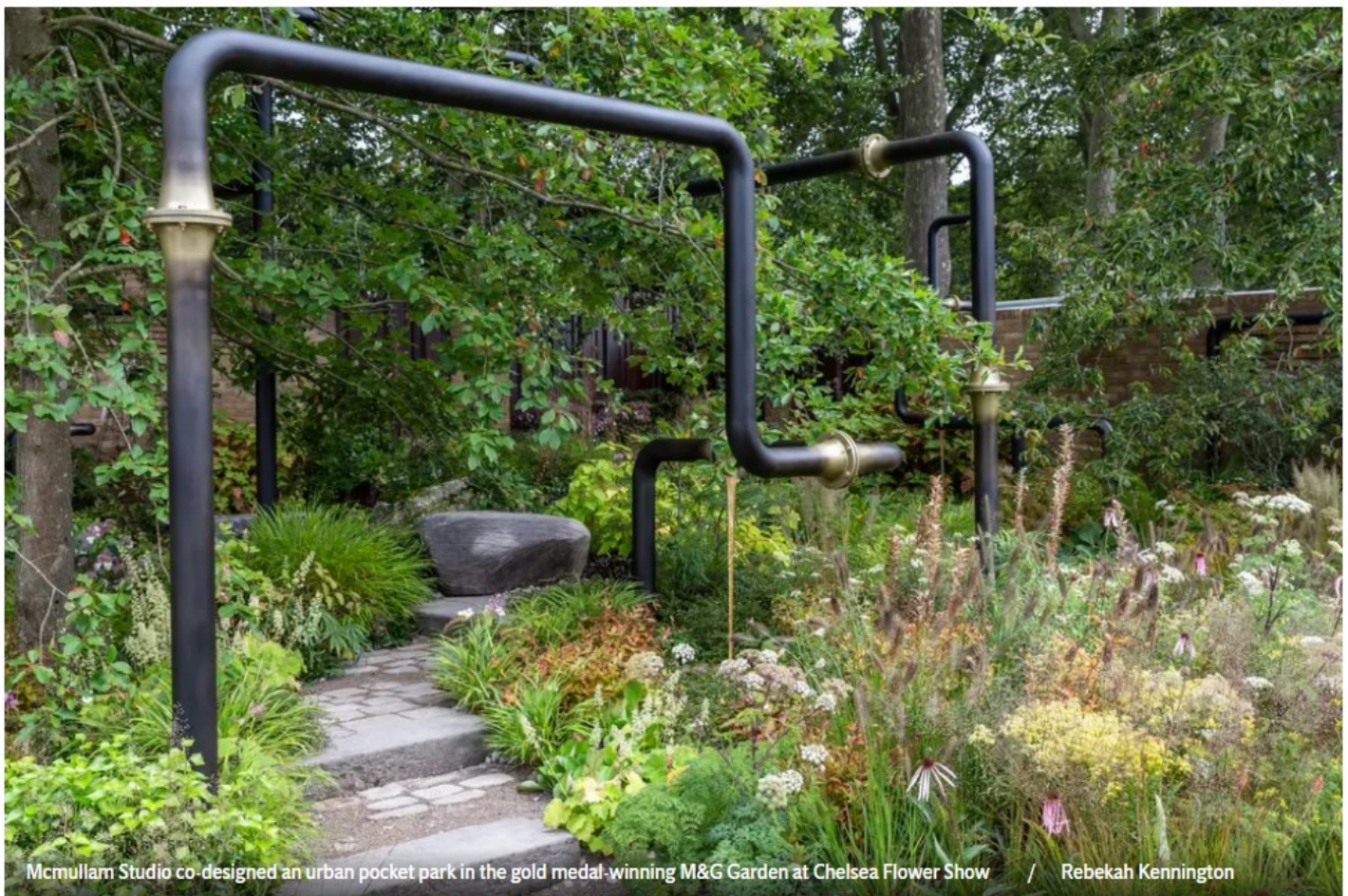


Chelsea Flower Show 2021 gold medal winner on the best places to go and things to do in the 'loveable rogue' London village

Architect Andrew McMullan is the founder of McMullan Studio, a London based practice which has collaborated on the gold medal-winning Chelsea Flower Show M&G garden to create an urban pocket park.

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McMullan Studio co-designed an urban pocket park in the gold medal-winning M&G Garden at Chelsea Flower Show / Rebekah Kennington

By [Amira Hashish](#) | 3 days ago

C [helsea](#) is a loveable rogue; a mix of arty and aristocracy. It's like Peckham in pearls. I love that connection between metropolitan life and nature. My architecture tries to create the same balance between the man-made and natural worlds.

I'm an honorary citizen of Chelsea. My studio has co-designed an

urban pocket park for a gold medal-winning garden at RHS [Chelsea Flower Show](#) so it's home for the next few weeks. Compost bags make a great alternative to mid-century sofas. They're comfier, too.

Working with our friends at landscape design practice Harris Bugg Studio, we've created a beautiful escape from the buzz of King's Road. A network of polished steel pipes takes you on an immersive adventure through the pocket park. The pipes are reclaimed, naturally.

Best eating and drinking

I love Daylesford Organic on Sloane Avenue. It shows that sustainability isn't a sacrifice and is about living better with a mind to the future. The Cornish crab on toast is delicious and there are botanical cocktails including the Market Garden Spritz. The Chelsea store is home to a cafe, shop, butcher, bakery, fishmonger and grocery, so you can graze your way through the menu and leave with something tasty for your own kitchen.

Where I work out

I enjoy high-intensity shrub lifting in our pocket park. What's the botanical equivalent of buff?

For a culture fix

I love to check out the artists' studios on Tite Street. They confirm my belief that great architecture inspires people to do great things. I'm also looking for good ideas for our current project — Preston Farm, a Kent dairy farm being repurposed as a rural co-working campus. Maybe the next Whistler will emerge from its cowsheds.





Hubs like Daylesford Organic and Natoora in Sloane Square make sustainability a great pleasure / Daniel Lynch

To commune with nature

You'll find me in the Chelsea Physic Garden. It's the go-to spot for plant lovers and the worried well. Spread across four acres of land on the edge of the Thames, it was established in 1673 by the apothecaries to grow medicinal plants. These days it is a truly great escape.

Grocery shopping

I prefer Natoora in Sloane Square. It's an amazing champion of biodiversity. And like Daylesford, it's proof that sustainability can be a great pleasure.



Architect Andrew McMullan loves Chelsea for its arty meets aristocracy vibe / Daniel Lynch

Getting around

I walk everywhere. Chelsea's side streets are an amazing source of ideas — and Deliveroo cyclists add an edge of danger.

Dream street

A toss-up between Tite Street and Cheyne Walk. Unlike a lot of modern architecture, the buildings were designed round the lives of the residents — artists and creators. The spaces allowed them to tell their stories, rather than impose the architect's vision on them.



Mcmullan's dream street is a toss-up between Tite Street and Cheyne Walk / Daniel Lynch

Something you only see in Chelsea

Diamonds in the frozen aisle.

What's the catch?

They're not my diamonds.

In three words

Eccentric. Creative. Nature-loving.

My Chelsea Flower Show project

We've co-created an urban pocket park with Harris Bugg Studio that brings to your doorstep the "big park" experience of tranquillity, nature and fun. It's designed for those small, overlooked spaces you see around cities. You'll find it in The M&G Garden.

A network of reclaimed and polished steel pipes runs through the garden, taking visitors on an immersive adventure. We're encouraging people to touch the pipes and leave their own mark on the park.

We're hoping someone commissions us to design a pocket park for their community. It doesn't take up much space. I want visitors to feel like they've escaped King's Road chaos and found a micro-paradise. Visit mcmullanstudio.com

- *The RHS Chelsea Flower Show runs until Sunday 26 September.*

Schools

There are several primary schools rated Outstanding or Good, including Oratory and Shaftesbury Park. For secondary, Kensington Aldridge Academy and St Thomas More Language College are deemed Outstanding. Independent options include Westminster and Francis Holland School.

What it costs to live in Chelsea

Average flat price: £1,360,497

Average house price: £4,638,800

Average price to rent a flat: £3,243 pcm

Average price to rent a house: £7,995 pcm

Source: Rightmove