

Over the FENCE

REAL readers' gardens!

I'm getting visitor-ready!



Geoff Stonebanks

A seaside garden in East Sussex that opens for charity, featuring sculpture and reclaimed objects.

It's been full steam ahead in recent weeks trying to get the garden ready for its first visitors on June 1.

I've got a new four-wheeled seat and it has been useful.

The wooden decking and subframe at the front created the illusion of crossing a jetty to get to the back garden; after 12 years it was rotting badly but local landscapers did a magnificent job replacing it with composite decking. The beach garden is brimming with colour from *Coronilla glauca*.

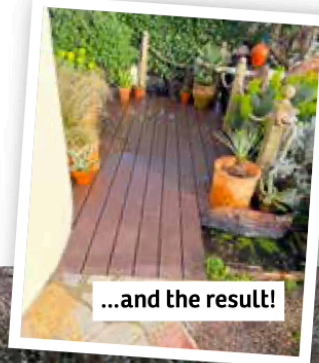
My Japanese 'Deshojo' maple bonsai has dramatic new red leaves after winter; I was praying it would survive on the patio at the back of the house. Visiting Wakehurst last year, I spotted a pretty camellia called 'April Rose' - that's my birth



Camellia 'April Rose'



Replacing the decking...



...and the result!

month. I added it to the garden and it produced a single delicate flower through March and April that does resemble a rose.

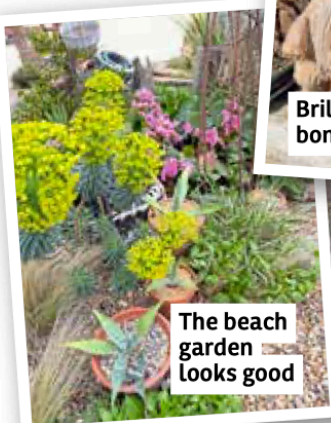
The back garden palms have had their salt-laden, windblown outer fronds removed, giving the garden a better profile. The summerhouse has had a new coat of sage stain and the damaged trellis above the brick wall has been replaced with a bamboo roll.

A respected gardening journalist is visiting Driftwood this month to write a piece about the garden and me which will hopefully make the

pages of the national press this summer. It's an added incentive to get it looking its best!

In late March all the larger agaves were put back in the garden, out of their winter home undercover in the side alley, along with the many smaller babies. Several of these were newly potted up last autumn as they were removed from their mother plants so are still quite small. I may sell them to visitors this summer as my collection is getting vast. Clearing the side alley is always a big job as I cram so much in there over winter; all plants have to be relocated and shelving removed so I can power wash it before setting it up during the summer to store artwork for sale in the garden when we open.

Read more about Geoff's garden at driftwoodbysea.co.uk



The beach garden looks good



Brilliant bonsai!



Agaves coming out of winter storage

My highlight

Camellia 'April Rose' has been a real delight.