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Live. Life. Outside.

Case Study

## Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

**Client**

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

**Location**

Kew, Richmond, London, TW9 3AE

**Requirement**

Walkways and furniture for new 2.5-acre children's garden

**Design and Installation**

Suzie Jewell/Ground Control

**Millboard products used**

Enhanced Grain, Charred Oak/Burnt Cedar and Weathered Oak, Embered

# Embellishing an historical London attraction with outdoor spaces for learning and play

Kew Gardens was established in 1759 and now houses the largest and most diverse botanical and mycological collection in the world. The Children's Garden opened in 2018 and has transformed a previously underused part of the gardens. Designed by Landscape Architect Suzie Jewell, part of Kew's in-house design team, it is the most ambitious design project in Kew's recent history.

Based in a natural setting the size of 40 tennis courts, the project resulted in four interactive gardens themed around the elements that plants need in order to grow: earth, air, sun and water. Jewell opted to use Millboard decking throughout to add resilience to the garden's walkways and play areas, while maintaining natural beauty. This attraction was specifically created to encourage children to 'get up close and personal' with nature, so durability was key to project success.

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## Slip-resistant

Unlike real timber, the sturdy surface of Millboard decking is designed to be safe underfoot, even in the rain.





## Allowing nature to take centre stage

Kew's collections include 27,000 living species and 8.5 million preserved plant and fungal specimens. Kew Gardens seek to preserve the natural environment, protect endangered species, as well as discovering new and sustainable uses for plants and fungi. It is estimated that the 14,000 trees that have been planted at Kew draw around 8.6 tonnes of potentially harmful carbon dioxide from London's air annually.

Kew Gardens is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of London's top tourist attractions, playing host to more than 3 million visitors annually. With such heavy footfall, durability was a key consideration when specifying materials for flooring and furniture applications and Millboard decking was selected as the best fit. The Millboard projects team provided the contractor with ongoing support, including site visits and close collaboration with the designers and installers throughout.

The organic, highly tactile qualities of Weathered Oak decking are in keeping with the characterful charm of the natural setting.



# The timeless appeal of craftsmanship, down to the finest detail

Every length of Millboard decking is designed to look and feel indistinguishable from real timber, without the associated drawbacks. It is this attention to detail that has led Kew Gardens and other leading establishments to specify the Enhanced Grain and Weathered Oak range for walkways, furniture and cladding applications.

A beautiful, reliable and eco-conscious solution that will help to encourage future generations to live life outside.



## Resistant to algae

Unlike wood, Millboard products contain no protein to host algal growth, even underwater



## Not a splinter in sight

No wood content means absolutely no splinters - perfect for benches and tables



“Having previously specified Millboard products on design projects for schools, I knew that I could rely on the range for its durability and anti-slip properties, on top of its natural aesthetic. The black hues of these boards provide a good backdrop for foliage plants, allowing their vibrant colours to really shine through. The Children’s Garden incorporates an amphitheatre design with curved benches; we achieved a good radius by simply bending the fascia boards to create a seamless finish that’s not always possible with timber. The Millboard decking was installed just as easily as real wood, and facilitated techniques like tapered cuts, which help to create that flawless finish we were looking for. It blends really well.”

**Suzie Jewell**

Landscape Architect, Kew Gardens

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