



EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
with Tim Goom

# Making an entrance!

The old adage that first impressions last, also holds true for your landscaping - many opinions will be formed about your property from the entrance and driveway, as these are the first things visitors see, so it is at this point the “wow” factor should begin!

## Don't fence me in!

Christchurch has the reputation of being the Garden City- but driving through residential areas, one could be forgiven for thinking it has become the city of fences! Your fencing does not need to be a totally solid surface. Mixing materials, such as wood, steel and hedging and including spacing avoids a fortress like impression while maintaining security. Generally, outdoor living happens at the rear of sections, so allowing a view in to the front of your property shows off your home without necessarily encroaching on your privacy.

It is very common for the fence to align exactly with the boundary of the property – but it doesn't have to. An alternative is to set your entranceway back from the boundary, giving some frontage to the street to provide a space in which to make an impact with plantings and landscaping. This will create an interesting and attractive aesthetic when you drive in to your property, but also distinguish it from others when it comes time to sell.

## Drive on in!

Driveways should be attractive and direct the focus of visitors to your home but also durable enough to sustain everyday use. The shape of your driveway can range from functional straight lines to sweeping curves. Rather than having a monotonous, endless sea of one material, interest can be added to a driveway by juxtaposing different materials. Driveways tend to be a large surface, so breaking it up visually creates contrast. It can also signal where visitors should park, and guide them to the front door. Using concrete or tiles to create these thresholds is practical as they double as a path or parking area while withstanding traffic. Incorporating gravel alongside smooth materials such as pavers and asphalt will add texture.



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Another element of your driveway to consider is your gate. Some properties won't be gated at all, but if you have pets (or children!) to contain, a gate will be vital. Having an automated gate for vehicle access and a smaller pedestrian gate will allow visitors easier and safer access to your home.

## Come on in!

Our landscape architects comment that many homes visited for consults can be hard to locate. Once the property is found, the next challenge is often finding the right door at which visitors are expected. Guiding visitors clearly in to your property and to the door you would like them to use is important for creating a welcoming impression. Incorporating your street number clearly in to your entrance will help people find your home from the street. Using backlighting to highlight your number at night-time will also avoid dinner guests squinting out their car windows as they crawl down your street searching for your home in darkness.

Level, clear pathways of an appropriate width, highlighting your front door with the use of different materials and plantings, and night lighting will all ensure visitors feel welcome and are safely guided from the street your door.

A good entrance should hint at what awaits beyond. The materials, style and plantings should create a welcoming statement which ties in with your home and connects the house to the outer landscape, enhancing the overall character of your property. Contact Goom Landscapes to discuss the different options available to make a feature of your entrance.

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