

**Kate Gould** designs for  
**The Magistrates' Association at  
RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2011**



**Kate Gould** has designed a garden full of story-telling symbols and allusions for **The Magistrates' Association** at **RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2011**. The 7m x 5m garden will be part of the **Urban Gardens** category at the Show: a category Kate won previously in 2009 with her gold-medal winning 'Eco Chic' garden.

2011 is the 650<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the institution in statute of the office of Justice of the Peace of magistrates, as they are more commonly known today. The Magistrates' Association is leading the celebrations in a variety of ways to raise awareness of how the magistracy has evolved to the present day and the role that Justices of the Peace are taking for their communities in the justice system today.

The brief to Kate from **The Magistrates' Association** was to create a garden that not only celebrated the magistracy's longevity, but also showed that it was very much active in the here

and now – as well as dedicated to the future. The garden should embody the notion of the Association as ‘a broad and balanced’ arm of the law.

*‘My underlying concept’, explained **Kate Gould**, ‘was to use the concept of balance to create an elegant and symmetrical garden, in which every element refers either obviously or subtly to the story, pageantry and values of the magistracy.’*

The garden is therefore imagined, as a courthouse would be, in a central and modern town location, backing onto the courtrooms themselves and set above an urban car-park. This means that all plants are either in containers or else have shallow root balls to fit this parameter. The garden has been designed for use by the magistrates themselves, to work, reflect or relax in during the working day. It is both pared and balanced so that it could easily be maintained in a real scenario, perhaps by those undertaking community service?