

## **Bridge Pottery Review**

Micki reports that she is very happy with the way the project is going. She feels relieved that I am taking responsibility for the management. Sal and I are really enjoying working on the project, especially seeing the development from year to year. It is great also seeing the products of our labours being used – willow, hazel and the logs.

### ***The design process***

I used SADIM for this design. This simple step by step process worked well. I was lucky to be able to get a copy of the deed plan from Micki, which helped with the initial survey and drawing out the design as it hard to see the exact shape of the land from the ground. I did some detailed planning for tree varieties and numbers as these needed to be ordered in advance. The implementation was the strongest section – this is a very hand-on design. If I was doing it again I would put more work into the analysis section – elements and functions etc.

This design is about working on the detail in certain areas, as directed by Micki, rather than doing a whole site design. For example, the design included the hedge and bank by the house but not the vegetable garden, which was already set up. It is a good exercise in balancing my approach with the needs of the client, who already had a pretty clear idea of what she wanted.

### ***What went well***

A thorough initial discussion, plus clear, ongoing discussion with the client helped keep the design on track and ensured we were meeting her needs. The initial assessment helped to pick up the constraints of shading and flooding which were vital to include in the final design.

The coppicing went well, and we were very pleased with the regrowth and also the survival rate of newly planted trees on the bank areas and elsewhere. The system of work was good and we got into a good rhythm for each working period. The coppicing produced lots of woodfuel and it's great to be using the wood products around the site.

### ***What was challenging***

It was challenging in some ways to work on a design that did not include the whole site. This made the process of moving materials around the site more difficult and there could maybe have been some improvements to the site as a whole. The flood area was a challenge – I had to think carefully about the design down the centre of the site - what to plant and how to maintain the trees as this section gets flooded several times during each winter. We were

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### ***Top Tips for a Client based Site Design***

- ✓ Carry out a clear interview and maintain discussions during the implementation process.
  - ✓ Consider site constraints carefully to reduce future plant losses.
  - ✓ Include a maintenance plan as an integral part of the design.
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therefore not able to mulch the alder planting which meant the survival rate is not so good here.

Making time in the summer to go back and do weed clearance was difficult. We managed it in 2009, but not in 2010 and some of the trees in the woodfuel areas did suffer a bit for this, even though they were mulched with carpet. (The weed growth is tall and can completely hide the young trees by late summer.)

### ***What I'd do differently***

The maintenance plan should be more integral to the design, to ensure that summer weeding is not overlooked. My design included creating brash piles, and as Micki had previously burnt her brash, there was some initial negotiation over changing this system. This was reviewed in 2011 because Micki thought it looked messy, even though the brash was laid in one direction in a long row. Also it did inhibit the bluebell growth a bit. A new agreement was made to have the brash chipped. I was happy with both these solutions but Micki may have been happier if had used a chipper from the beginning to create mulch material, rather than stacking the brash.