

## The Hive @ Bournstream in Gloucestershire, August, 2011 .

First and foremost the Hive team were a pleasure to have around – they worked hard, developed lots of creative ideas & made the whole experience fun.

Their 'team' consisted of 5 men & one woman & was led by a graduate in landscape architecture – all friends who work together on green & creative outdoor 'builds' for children to enjoy.

For Bournstream, they had visited the play site some months before – to get a feel for our project, to tune into our needs & to inform their ideas. Their 'team' leader, Jono Burgess then kept in e-mail contact with a variety of suggestions & sketches, then firming up designs & agreeing materials, costs & timings. In this way the final scheme felt collaborative & thorough – yet also left space for other original, or organic, features to be added once the team were on site, actually building.

\* The Hive's brief for Bournstream was to take a weedy, neglected hillock & to transform it into a series of play or sensory areas – using a locally-sourced range of materials, including some taken directly from our surroundings – linking the children with the wildlife, creating a new space with play possibilities we have never had before.\*

Whilst camping on the play site the team were considerate & respectful, conscientious & interactive – forming relationships with Bournstream families, neighbours & those who run the charity that they met.

So, what of the finished "product"?

To be honest it exceeded my expectations, which were already high & hopeful given the plans & drawings I had seen.

Though faithful to the original designs, the way their ideas all wove together ended up being much more aesthetically pleasing, more imaginative in its finish & more adventurous in its potential.

\* At its summit the hillock has a robust, climbable wigwam tower ( reached by winding pathway or daring stepping-logs ), nearby are hazel & willow sculptures & an archway over the path, then a gently sloping percussive terrace, with sleeper seating & 'instruments', & down below it a secret "nest" or hide-away. \*

There is also an insect stack along the hedge-line above it & large log seat.

\* The overall feel is of a place to explore, of movement & discoveries, tactile & varied in its materials but also with private, shady, peaceful places too.\*

And on a very practical level, the Hive team achieved their original budget – for materials & costs – saw the project successfully through in five busy days, saw a spectacular shooting star, charmed our neighbours with their energy & ideas & made many friends along the way with all they have left for us to enjoy.

Mark Pasco – Chair of the Bournstream Trust.