

OUR GARDEN CRUSH

Every issue we share a garden we love. The circular shapes of this small space create interest while planting introduces the feel of a forest floor

This forest-themed garden in Beverley, East Yorkshire, was designed by Jim Lorne (www.bravolandscapes.co.uk) for clients who wanted their space to feel more, well, spacious. They wanted areas for adults to relax in, for their children to play in, and minimal planting.

"The cedar-clad pod was used as an office," explains Jim. "It had been hidden from view behind shrubs so I turned it into a focal point, and introduced circular patterns to the rest of the design."

Jim devised imaginative play areas for the children while retaining the overall woodland theme. "Tree stumps were placed at various levels to create stepping stones to climb. Large vertical timbers were added to the right-hand border, enabling us to create height by drawing the eye upwards. Ropes were hung between them as a mini-assault course."

Sticking to the brief, Jim kept planting sparse. An existing Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Osakazuki') was repositioned to create a clear view of the pod. With its beautiful spectrum, it puts on a colourful show all year, from dark greens in spring to vivid shades of scarlet in autumn.

CREATING A WOODLAND FEEL

Existing bamboos were moved to clear the view of the pod. Hostas and ferns, both resilient and low-maintenance, were introduced between the stepping stones to create the feel of a forest floor, while adding greenery. With its thick trunk and large comb-like leaves, a tree fern was the perfect low-maintenance plant, and in keeping with the forest theme.

Jim was asked to create two different seating areas, where strong circular shapes were used to define zones and give an illusion of size, while replicating the shape of the pod. "The sunken wooden seating area was dressed with cushions and has a fire pit, which helped create a cosy sanctuary," he says. "The second seating area to the right gives an extra place to sit or dine alfresco while maintaining easy access through to the pod."

