**DESIGNERS INTRODUCTION TO PRACTICAL LANDSCAPING**

Overview:

A 3-day course at the TASK Academy to introduce garden designers to some of the practical elements of landscaping and facilitate a deeper understanding of some landscaping practices. The course is a combination of classroom-based theory and practical workshop sessions.

The classroom element will cover the basics of landscaping using slides, material samples, and free ranging open discussion. It will provide a non-judgmental open forum where delegates can add to their knowledge of landscaping theory and practice. Delegates will be continuously encouraged to ask questions and share experiences and knowledge.

The workshop sessions are specifically designed for the designers to experience hands on practical landscaping operations and to use a variety of hand and power tools commonly found on site.

The course will involve the following aspects:

Starting with constructing a retaining wall. We introduce the basic theory of the subject using slides to illustrate key points and we use a Q&A format to develop the topic. Samples of materials used within retaining walls will be examined and discussed along with key construction techniques and mistakes to avoid – particularly during specifying phase.

The practical sessions will focus mainly on two of the main elements of a landscaping scheme, paving and walls. Over the course of 3 days (interspersed with class based theory sessions) delegates will learn to set up and construct a low brick wall with a small area of paving in front of it. This will involve setting up and using a mixer, setting out, setting up falls and levels for paving, working to string lines, using a variety of hand tools and power tools like cut off saws, bench/bridge saw and plate compacter.

Delegates will be shown a variety of materials through the course, types of brick and block along with porcelain paving, granite, limestone, sandstone and slate and their specific characteristics and challenges discussed:-

* Communicating with Landscaper
* Sustainable Drainage - SUDs rules for front gardens - how to plan
* Recycled/ Sustainable materials
* Porcelain vs Natural stone - laying methods and considerations of each material  How to find a good landscaper - what to look for...!

The course will deliver the following outcomes:

1. Give the delegates more confidence when discussing and specifying construction techniques and materials with contractors.
2. Increase their theoretical knowledge of materials and construction techniques and enable them to ‘fill in’ their knowledge gaps in a non-judgmental environment.

Delivery

The course will be delivered over 3 days.

Day 1

Start 09:30 am to give delegates time to arrive at the academy. Refreshments, meet and greet everyone and introductions.

10:00 – 13:00 Classroom.

* Health and safety on site including simple risk assessments
* Surveying & Setting Out - Foundations and footings
* Walling materials
* Retaining and free-standing wall anatomy and construction techniques

Refreshments 11.30 – 11.45

Lunch 13:00 – 13.30pm

13:00 – 16:30 workshop based (Refreshments 15:00 – 15:15)

Setting Out & Levels

* Discussing various equipment for setting out & level surveying
* Setting out right angles correctly
* Setting out levels for paving and obstacles and recording them

Wall construction

* Quick risk assessment of the working area
* Setting up the mixer, discussing types of mortar and sand and other types of bedding mixes, batching mixes, mix consistency and admixtures
* Set up a line and start wall construction

The delegates will aim for a 4 course wall in total with the first being 8 bricks (so 26 bricks total.) Lay 3no 100mm solid concrete blocks to rear of brick wall to a level.

Day 2

Arrive at 08:30 for 09:00 start

09:00 – 10:30

* Wall construction
* Continue constructing brick and block wall
* Practice cutting bricks using cut off saw and table saw

10:30 – 11:00 refreshments

11:00 – 13:00 Wall construction

* + Complete wall construction and discuss drainage options including SUDS

Lunch 13:00 – 13:30

13:30 – 16:30 classroom (refreshments 15:00 – 15:15)

* + Construction layers
  + Setting up and working to falls - recap
  + Types of paving with samples
  + Porcelain paving and its characteristics and laying requirements
  + Discuss porosity of various materials
  + Appropriate use for different types of paving
  + Jointing methods and materials

Day 3

Arrive at 08:30 for 09:00 start

09:00 – 13:00 Practical experience (refreshments 11:00 to 11:30) (Lunch 13:00 – 13:30)

Working in front of Day 2’s brick wall, delegates will lay an area of paving with a sett or brick edge.

* + Using a plate compacter
  + Mixing mortar
  + Demo on porcelain including cutting paving with wet bridge saw.
  + Cutting paving with the cut off saw
  + Laying 2 – 3 sq.m. of level paving to a specified fall and pointed.
  + Laying 2-3 metres of sett edging (or brick) and pointed.

15:00 – 16:30 classroom for discussions

Questions and Answer session, wrapping up and discussing any other subjects that have become apparent during the course.

Finish at 4.30pm