



# Case Study



## Overview

<b>Project</b>	Somerton Door Farm
<b>Location</b>	Near Glastonbury, Somerset
<b>Client</b>	Private Client
<b>Contractor</b>	Own workforce
<b>Market sector</b>	Farmer

## Products used



BioWool Mulch Mats 500x500



Bamboo Anchoring Pegs 150mm



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Farmer Andy Bartlett converted 3.6ha of permanent pasture into woodland near Somerton under the English Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO). The plot of land chosen is on a fairly steep slope and would be difficult to cultivate. In fact, it wasn't even cultivated during the second World War when most permanent pasture was commandeered for cereal production.

With few trees already on Somerton Door Farm, Andy was keen to create some useful wildlife/nature habitat and to provide public access for local residents to enjoy. was planted with a mix of species including Silver Birch, Hornbeam, Western Red Cedar, and a rare female clone of Black Poplar.

With funding available for public access, deer fencing and tree guards were included to protect the young trees from wildlife.

The owner was also keen to prevent weed growth around the trees and to provide some moisture retention to aid establishment, and with funding available for mulch mats through the EWCO grant, it was simply a case of 'which mulch mats to choose'?



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## The Solution

To prevent weed growth and retain moisture, Andy needed an effective mulch solution.

Natural fibres such as Jute/Hessian and Coir looked attractive at first glance, but having originated in countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Brazil, not only were they relatively expensive to buy, but they were also considered to place too heavy a 'carbon burden' on the environment with so many 'air miles'.



He ultimately chose BioWool®, a UK-produced material that aligned with his values and met all technical requirements.

**Made from a difficult-to-sell farm commodity, BioWool® proved to be well-priced, strong, and highly water absorbent.**

Its fully biodegradable backing ensures no plastic microbeads are left in the soil, and its natural lanolin content adds longevity while deterring deer (should they somehow breach the deer fence barrier).

## The Result

Planted into typically moist January/February soil, the trees also benefited from some early rain. However, what followed was an unseasonably dry spring no rain for weeks at a time.

Despite the drought, the plantation established very well. Andy is convinced that **the BioWool® mats made a significant difference, effectively retaining the little moisture and dew available and preventing weed competition.**

By June, **the overall establishment rate was estimated to be between 85-90%**, with the broadleaf species performing particularly well.

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