

St Mary's Road (Phase 1)

Stowmarket, Suffolk

Lovell Partnerships

BIG Challenge 2015 submission category: Community engagement

Project overview

Two phases of demolition of existing post-war concrete houses and pre-fabricated garages with the construction of 14 dwellings for Orbit Homes (2020) Ltd, together with associated external works (including planting, landscaping, sheds, fencing) services, drainage, adoptable road and sewers.

What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?

The site comprised of four properties and two rows of garages to be demolished. The site had a low ecological value with only a marginal ecological value of the hedging and trees on the south boundary of the site, which were retained.

Were there any specific conditions that led to you carrying out this work?

Discharge of a planning condition required the key recommendations and additional recommendations for the ecological enhancement as stated in the Ecological Survey be implemented.

This included tree protection of the southern boundary



Photo: Home made wildlife box

and to retain existing nesting areas. The key and additional recommendations included formal landscaping, including *Lavendula Hidcote*, *Phlomis Fruiticosa* and *Cotoneaster Decorus*; new tree planting to the front of the site, replacement hedging, bird boxes & bat tubes.

By completing these recommendations, we were able to enhance the area to encourage migration from developed habitats nearby.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The aim was to support not only the biodiversity in the area but also the local community. As a result we firstly donated off-cuts of

wood to a member of the local community who makes various bird boxes and tables, hedgehog boxes and bat boxes.

Some of the boxes were sold on providing a profit for the local worker, some were installed on the project to encourage biodiversity and some of the boxes were donated to a local hedgehog fosterer who we worked with on the project.

The hedgehog fosterer worked with us to remove hedgehogs during the demolition phase of the project. The fosterer also raised awareness amongst all of the operatives on site to educate them about the importance of biodiversity

and the role of hedgehogs.
On the development 4 nr
open fronted nest boxes
and 4 nr small hole nest
boxes located 2.5 m high
were installed.

Healthy flowers, shrubs and
plants were also removed
before the demolition works
occurred which we made
available to the local
residents to replant in their
own gardens.

This not only saved a
number of plants but it will
also helped encourage
biodiversity in the local
community. 12 trees were
also planted on the project
to replace those that were
removed during the project.

**How would you best
describe the project?**

An enhancement.

**What was your personal
motivation for carrying out
the enhancement?**

You don't need to spend a
lot to support biodiversity.
Just by saving existing
plants or using spare
materials to create a bird
box, the local biodiversity
can be supported.