

## Western Power Distribution Term Contract West Midlands

Morgan Sindall

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Pollinator

### Project overview

We are currently working on behalf of Western Power Distribution (WPD) installing underground electricity cables in the west midlands.

We have depots in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Worcester and Gloucester. We had noticed that our Birmingham depot was particularly low on biodiversity and could use some intervention.

There was very little suitable habitat for pollinating species in the depot. The site team identified the stair case as a good potential area for planting as it was south facing and therefore could provide the flowers with optimum growing conditions.

Planting took place through spring to ensure that the flowers could be in full bloom during the summer months.

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

Prior to enhancement, the depot was very low in biodiversity.

The depot is situated within a large industrial estate in the centre of Birmingham. It is fully concreted, with no green spaces.

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

There were no specific conditions that required us to carry out these enhancements, however, some members of the depot team saw increasing biodiversity in their depot as a key focus- not only for the benefit of the local wildlife, but also for their own personal benefit of working around the aesthetic enhancements.

This was the main driver for completing the augmentation.

We discussed the progress of the work and future plans as part of a monthly Safety, Health, Environmental and Quality meeting.



*Hanging Hard Hat Basket at the Depot.*

### What were the biodiversity measures taken?

#### Replication:

Due to the success of this project in Birmingham, we plan to replicate this initiative across our three other depots. They too are in highly built up areas with low biodiversity. Photographs of the good work in Birmingham will be shared through the north and south teams.

#### Long term management:

To keep momentum on the project going, were hoping to continue to identify suitable locations for potential enhancements around our depots. We are also ensuring that the baskets and planters around the depots are always in bloom- selecting appropriate species for the times of year.

#### Reusing waste materials:

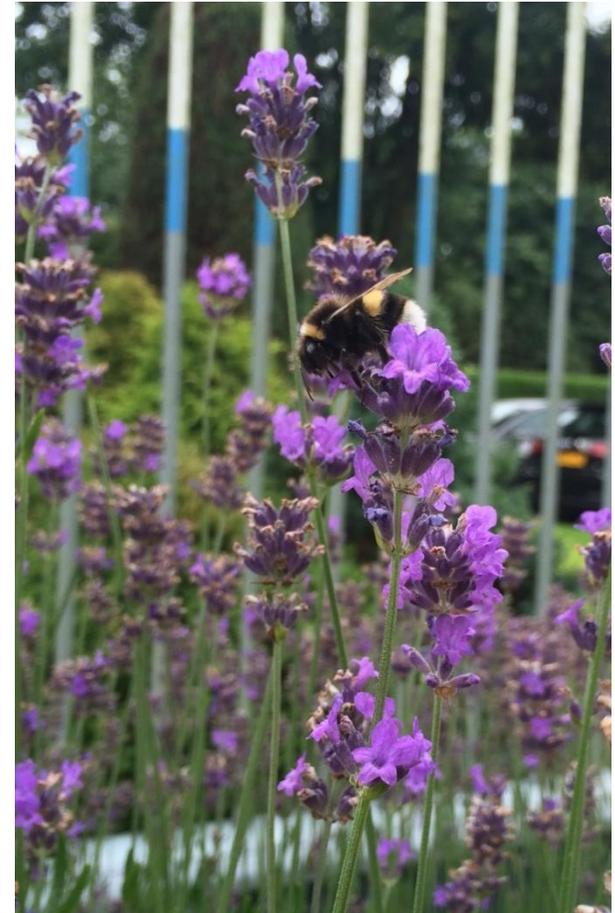
Old PPE was used to contain the pollinators. The hard hats used had passed their safety 'use by date'. **The hats would have been discarded with no further purpose. Since** starting this project, we plan to have far less PPE waste- and far more hard hat hanging baskets.

#### Volunteering:

The enhancement work in the Birmingham depot was carried out by members of the team that felt particularly passionately about preserving and protecting local biodiversity. The team took time out of their day to work on making the depot a more inviting place for insects.

#### Biodiversity net gain:

The biodiversity value of the depot has already increased greatly. We have gone from zero plant or animal life, to flowers in bloom around the depot and buzzing insects all around them.



*Bee on some Lavender in the Morgan Sindall depot.*

### How would you best describe the project?

An enhancement

### Further information

The installation of the planters around the depot has been a really simple but effective process. The old, no longer fit for purpose, hard hats had some holes drilled in so that they could be hung from specific locations – the locations were chosen for optimum growth but also for areas easily spotted by the depot team- in the thought it would provoke discussion and desire for more biodiversity enhancements.

After trialling this project at the Birmingham depot, we will now work to increase the plant and animal life in all of our locations.

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

Along with the depot team who carried out the works, I feel very passionate about protecting the declining natural environment.

By enhancing areas that have been hit hard by industrialisation, I believe we can make a big difference and help turn the tide.



*Hanging Hard Hat Baskets at the Depot.*