

## Biodiversity enhancing Community Herb Garden Tattenhall, Cheshire

Redrow Homes

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Temporary Award

### Project overview

Redrow's Pathfinder teams are volunteers who on improve our relationship with the environment and the community around our developments. The Head Office and North West team of nine volunteers created a biodiversity community herb garden on Redrow's Tattenhall site carpark. The temporary improvement project can be separated and easily moved around the site to fit with the build plan, without have any impact on the plants. It can also be moved to a different constriction site once the development is finished.

The temporary aspect of the herb garden is what benefits the project most as it shows how construction and nature can thrive together.

Every aspect of the project was planned with improving biodiversity in mind, this included using waste materials to make

the planters, education for the community on biodiversity and seeking advice from pollinator specialists regarding the type of plants to best suit the area.

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

Prior to the project the construction site had little that benefited biodiversity and consisted of short grasses or bare ground. Tattenhall had previously won numerous horticulture awards and therefore the herb garden compliments the village well and help bring biodiversity in the new community being created.

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

The location of the temporary project was chosen due to its location within a

well-established community who would benefit from the herb garden, appreciate the increase in biodiversity for the area and have easy, safe access to the area it was located on within the site.



*Before, during and after process pictures!*

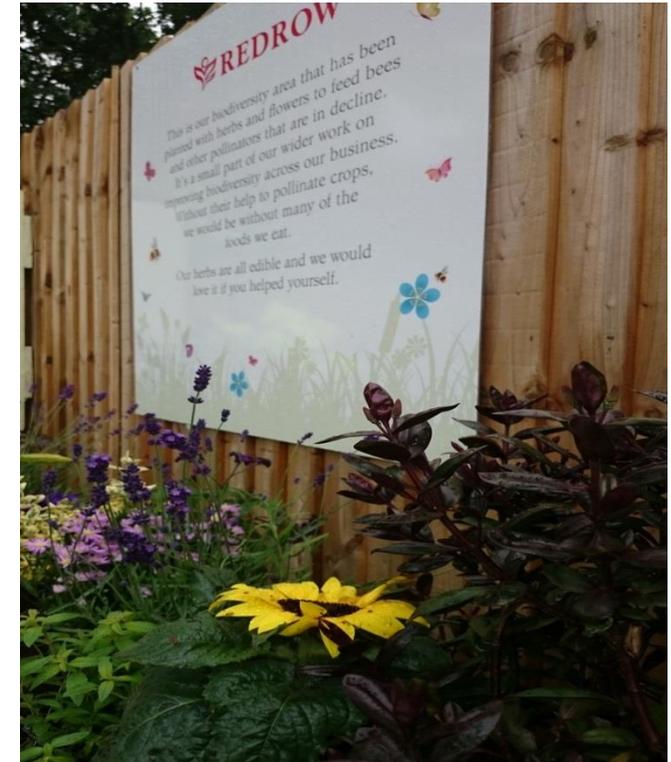
Being in a semi-rural village there were varying types of nature within close proximity to the development and Redrow wished to ensure the area saw an overall improvement through creating a thriving community. The Pathfinder teams within Redrow focus on improving the places we build through projects with the environment.

### What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The main objective was to show that biodiversity can be increased during the construction phase without any restrictions to the build process whilst engaging with the local community about the benefits of improving biodiversity.

To meet this objective we created an entirely new habitat for the construction site that was well suited to the existing biodiversity within Cheshire. Seeking expert advice from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust regarding the best herbs and flowers for pollinators we then matched their suggestions to local surroundings. To ensure the area benefits the local community the herbs planted can be used in easy-to-cook recipes recommended by local chefs and sourced all plants from a local nursery.

We made insect homes using waste from site such as plastic piping and broken bricks that attached to our planters in addition to installing bird boxes around the construction site. This ensured the site is contributing to a biodiversity net gain when teamed with the other initiatives on the site such as public open space and wildflower planting which help to meet the biodiversity action plan for the area. The planters also help drainage and can be moved to impermeable areas when required. In addition to this the planters were made out of waste materials from site and hand crafted by our apprentices teaching them skills in creating biodiversity habitats they can replicate on other sites.



*The beautiful signage attached people to the herb garden and explained the importance of pollinators. The sign can be unclipped from the fence and moved to another location with the garden.*

Engagement was a key factor in this project, to educate the local community and subcontractors we put together leaflets and signage which explained why biodiversity is important and outlined how we made it central to our improvements during construction. We also created recipe cards that allowed the herbs to be used by everyone in the local area and further promoted how the community can help nature in their homes.

### How would you best describe the project?

An enhancement

### Further information

When planning the project we held initial meetings to decide what biodiversity improvements we wished to make on our sites. The herb garden was decided because it pulls together varying factors of education, homes for nature, supporting pollinators, reusable materials as well as being very aesthetically pleasing and can be moved to different areas of the construction site or other developments.

The project was undertaken over two months including initial planning and research into suitable biodiversity improvements for the local environment. The installation was a learning curve as due to sizing the planters had to be reduced in height on the day of planting, however to ensure all plants were utilised we reused the site crafted troughs with additional plants. If we were to undertake the project again we would definitely measure twice! The installation brought in an array of interest from the community, contractors and people viewing the nearby show homes.



*A close up of the final herb boxes and flower trough, we were lucky enough to see bees using the area shortly after they were planted!*

The herb garden was a simple design which has been part of the reason of the success and why the project is now being replicated on other developments. The maintenance and need for revisiting initiatives has been avoided where possible, but ownership and occasional watering is taken by our site operatives. We have been lucky enough to see a significant increase in the amount of bees and insects take up residence within their new habitat which is closely monitored by the community and site operatives.



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

We understand the need to undertake biodiversity and environment improvement projects to help improve knowledge and best practice during construction, temporary projects are a key way of achieving this. Engagement in biodiversity and the environment is one of the key drivers from our volunteer Pathfinder teams.