

Falkirk Depot – Bird Boxes Middlefield Industrial Estate, Falkirk Kier (Utilities)

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Small Scale Permanent Award

Project overview

We have lots of waste pallets which are put in wood skip and regularly taken away by lorry. Our yardsman enjoys DIY in his spare time and used his skills to recycle some of the wooden pallets to make bird boxes for birds to use to nest in a warm/dry environment. He made 6 in total and put a lot of effort into getting them right, sanding them and painting them. We have a problem with nesting seagulls around the surrounding community and he took this into consideration, making the access holes small enough so larger birds couldn't gain access.

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

Low biodiversity on site as it is part of an industrial estate, with no suitable wildlife habitat.

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

We did this to reduce the waste pallets that were being taken away to be recycled and recycling them ourselves. This reduces the emissions from the skip lorries, as well as helping us achieve our company biodiversity targets, by reducing the frequency of the skips being picked up.



Two of the 6 bird boxes fixed to an exterior wall in our Falkirk Depot.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

In creating these boxes for our depots we have ensured that birds have a safe place to nest and nurture their chicks until they are ready to fledge the nest. We have also started on a biodiversity journey which will not only benefit our depots but can also be replicated to help on our sites.

During our works we sometimes have to remove trees and plants, and although we try to preserve these as much as possible, we can now also use the wooden pallets to create bird boxes and planters for our customers gardens. This will further increase the reduced emissions as it will reduce the number of times the skips have to be emptied.

These were an innovative idea as our Yardsmen did not just make bird boxes, he took all factors into consideration including the poor Scottish weather. By using paint he had around his house to paint them he reduced **the effect the weather will have.** He also ensured that the "roof" of the bird boxes were slanted so that rain water would easily run off.

He will look after these, maintain them and ensure that they are cleared out after birds have used them ready for next years nesting period.

This has contributed towards our businesses biodiversity targets and is a small contribution towards our local targets and further innovations for the future.



Side view of our bird boxes in situ.

How would you best describe the project?

An enhancement

Further information

Our yardsman used his DIY skills to prepare the wood, build the boxes and also put a lot of consideration into getting them right.

He installed them himself in an area which is open and could be easily accessed by birds but that is given some shelter from adverse weather by structures that are placed near their location.

Long term benefits of this is to encourage bird nesting and allowing their young the protection from the poor weather and other larger birds until they are ready to fledge the nest.

Throughout this process it has been recognised that the wooden pallets can be used for other projects such as building planters. We can also use these to install in customers gardens where we have had to disturb their gardens to repair and maintain their sewer pipes.

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

We were given the challenge from the Kier Group and recognised that we were not doing enough to help our environment and that this was a good starting point for us to put something back.



The "Prototype" Bird Box