

73-89 OXFORD STREET LONDON, UK

BROOKFIELD MULTIPLEX CONSTRUCTION EUROPE

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Temporary Award

Project overview

The project was born out of an internal environmental competition at 73-89 Oxford Street construction site; a commercial and retail development located at the heart of Oxford Street. 15 entries were submitted for the competition that was challenging everyone to make Oxford Street a greener and healthier environment for the project team, operatives and the public. The idea aptly named “**Green Fingers Planter**” was the winner. The planters were placed at the pit lane, loading bay, but also inside the site so that healthier and more pleasant environment is created. 20 people were involved in implementing the idea: making the boxes from reused timber, painting, choosing the flowers, plants and herbs and finally planting.

To ensure the return on investment and promote further sustainably we reused materials. This meant we delivered under budget at £52.

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

Oxford Street is one of the busiest and more polluted roads in London with little green. Prior to the enhancement here was no green at the site or the hoarding.

The addition of the planter boxes has improved the appearance of Oxford Street both from the outside and inside and has increased biodiversity.

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

The construction site is achieving BREEAM 2011 “**Excellent**” and the nominated Biodiversity Champion is engaging everyone at the project in the promotion of biodiversity. At the Sustainability Week that was held on site, the “**Green inside...out**” competition was organised to raise awareness and help make Oxford Street a greener, more colourful and healthier environment.



Planter box at the entrance of the construction site, visible to the public and welcoming everyone.

Everyone working on site was asked to submit a “Green inside.. out” idea and create a biological enhancement visible to the pedestrians. The entries were reviewed by BMCE’s Sustainability team and the winning idea was implemented on site.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The project was the winning idea of the sustainability “Green inside.. out” competition that was held at 73-89 Oxford Street as part of the Sustainability Week. 15 people took part in the challenge of creating a green environment from the inside to the outside of the site. Green finger planter idea is the reuse of site timber (ex. scaffold board and off cuts) to make a planter. Five planters were made and placed:

1. At the front of the entrance gate, where Dean Street meets Oxford Street to make the project visible and enhance the safety of the public, as it can prevent people from crossing Oxford Street from a non-pedestrian access and enter the pit lane of the construction site.
2. Adjacent to the loading bay to improve the appearance of the outside and make a more pleasant environment for the traffic marshals.
3. At the entrance of the site in order to welcome everyone and create a pleasant and healthier environment for the workforce.
4. In addition 6 old hard hats were used as hanging baskets at the loading bay

Nine different plants that are native (English levander) and evergreen (peonias, zinnias, euphoria characias glacier blue) were chosen for the planters. Herbaceous perennial plants including achillea millefolium lilac beauty, lupin, peonia felix crousse and zinnia cheery were chosen to ensure that there will be flowers within the next year. Attention was paid to matching the different plants at the same planter (hebe with levander and rosemary). In addition plants that attract bees and butterflies were chosen (peonia bowl of beauty, hebe, achillea millefolium lilac beauty, cherry and yellow zinnia) so that a further increase on biodiversity can be achieved.



Volunteers planting at the pit lane

20 volunteers devoted their time to create the planter boxes and assist with planting. A dedicated team is now in place to ensure that the plants are watered regularly.

How would you best describe the project?

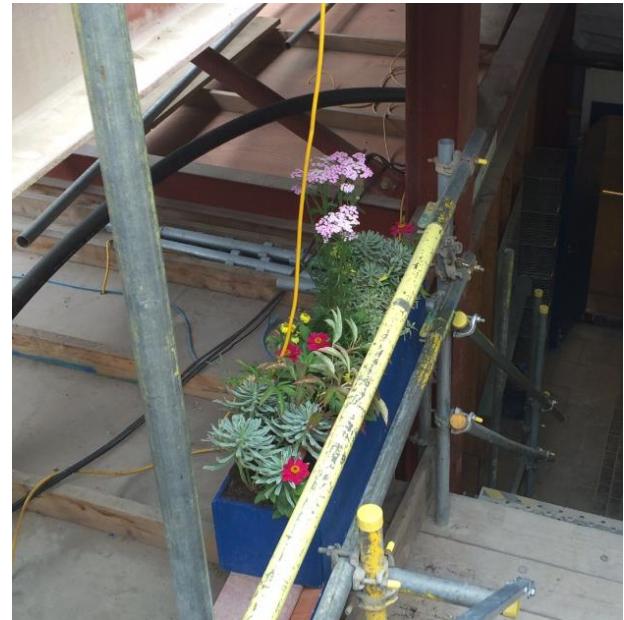
An enhancement

Further information

Timber that was previously used for shuttering was recycled to make the planter boxes. Upon deciding the location of the planters within our site we then discussed and agreed the most appropriate size of planter to maximise the use of the allowable space. Ensuring safety, as well as access to the site, two tailored sizes of planter were chosen: one at 100x25x25cm and another at 100x20x15cm. With future proofing in mind and to enable the sustainable reuse of the planters, holes were provided in the bottom for maintenance and drainage of the plants. In addition a polyethylene cover was attached inside of the timber boxes. The hard hats already had holes; metal chains were attached for hanging purposes.

The plants were selected after discussion with the team. The aim was to have a combination of herbs and plants that grow up in the UK, can last throughout the year and can attract insects and birds. The species include peonia felix crousse, peonia bowl of beauty, peonia Sarah Berhardt, Zinnia yellow, Zinnia Cherry, Hebe, Euphorbia Characias glacier blue, achillea millefolium lilac beauty, lupins . Herbs were also included for a wider range of species: lavendula angustifolia hidcote and rosemary.

Overall the project has a positive net value on biodiversity as a wide range of different species that **didn't** exist before is now making Oxford Street and 73-89 Oxford Street site greener and more colourful. A team has been created to ensure that the plants will be healthy throughout the whole duration of the project.



Planter box creating a green corridor inside the site

The objectives to engage the project team into biological diversity and improve the appearance of the site and Oxford Street and create a healthier environment for the public and the workforce.



What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

As the nominated Biodiversity Champion of the project I am encouraging the team and everyone working at the project to learn more about endangered species, local flora and fauna and create a healthy environment at work. Positive feedback from the team: "an enjoyable, successful and fun team building exercise that has promoted and delivered an environmental message."