

R1 Building King's Cross King's Cross, London

BAM Construction

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Temporary Award

Project overview

The R1 project at King's Cross is the construction of a 10 storey, academic institutional building for the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN).

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

Prior to our biodiversity enhancement, the conditions on site represented a concreted area which lacked character and colour.

The site team wanted to create a pleasant environment as you entered the project's welfare facilities and the site's office accommodation.

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

This initiative was carried out to engage staff in establishing a garden that will contribute to local biodiversity. This stemmed the idea for the contemplation garden, which we developed to enhance the image of the site, attract wildlife such as butterflies, dragonflies and bees to the site for food, breeding and habitats.



Biodiversity enhancements

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The R1 project team has created a harmonious welfare area, not only for site personnel, but also for wildlife and the environment. It includes bergamot for the bees, bird boxes, insect hotels, herbs, such as mint and thyme, flowers, such as hydrangeas and roses, and a pond to attract damsels and dragonflies.

The Global Generation Skip Garden is located opposite the temporary office accommodation for the R1 project. It is a sustainable urban garden with wild flowers, vegetables, herbs, beehives and chicken coops, and initially began as a moveable vegetable garden built in old skips. This inspired the project team to also reuse materials to provide not only a more pleasant atmosphere for the workforce, but also to create habitats and attractions for wildlife.

Biodiversity initiatives include: planters made out of reused timber, holding a range of flowering plants and herbs. The Skip Garden café, also housing many beehives on their roof. By planting flowers in the welfare facilities on site, we are hoping to provide the bees with more flowering plants for pollination. This also gave us the idea to build an insect hotel, providing habitats for insects, such as ladybirds and bumblebees.

Some wild invertebrates, such as bumblebees and solitary bees, are declining in numbers. By providing insect hotels made from pallets and other surplus materials onsite, we can contribute to their conservation.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The contemplation pool was an idea to provide a better environment for the workforce, and attract damsels and dragonflies. There are aquatic plants and fish in the contemplation pool. This **was also inspired by the King's Cross Pond Club** (adjacent to the site), which provides a natural swimming pond surrounded by wild flowers and grasses that change with the season.



Insect hotel



Site pond

How would you best describe the project?

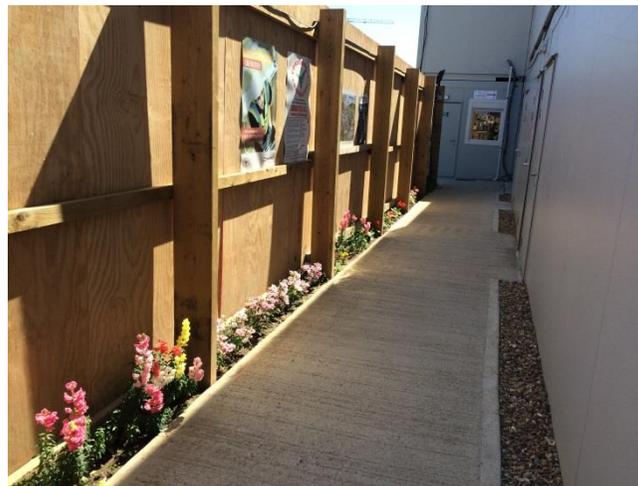
An enhancement of biodiversity, to welfare areas.

Further information

The garden has become very popular on site and is generating a great deal of interest and pride.

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

As stated previously, the inspiration came from the nearby skip garden and King's Cross Pond Club, however the motivation came from individuals on site wanting to use the area to provide a harmonious space for the workforce, and increase biodiversity by providing habitats and biological highways for wildlife that has a greater ecological value.



Site planting