

PINEWOOD STUDIOS DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (PSDF) IVER HEATH, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM

SIR ROBERT M^CALPINE LTD

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: Community Engagement Award

Project overview

Sir Robert McAlpine teamed up with our client Pinewood Studios Group, the PSDF contractors HRG and Arup Associates to have a fun 'Ecology Day' with the local Iver Heath Junior School.

The day involved a classroom-based ecology lesson from the project team to teach the children more about local species. This was followed by a trip to site where the students took part in building their own hibernaculum to enhance the site ecology.

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

PSDF and the client team were committed to increasing biodiversity both on site and in the surrounding area. On site, significant measures were taken, including installing green roofs, a reptile underpass and hibernacula on the development roofs.

The fields surrounding the development were scrubland and work was needed to increase biodiversity in these areas to reflect and support the improvements happening on site. So we set out to engage with and educate the local community on how to do this.

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

Protecting and enhancing the ecology of the site was a key element of the project and this initiative provided an opportunity to contribute to this goal while raising awareness of biodiversity and strengthening the engagement of the local community.



Iver Heath Junior School building a hibernacula

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

To start the day, the project team delivered an engaging ecology lesson at the school, describing what species could be living in the children's surroundings. The session also discussed protected species in the UK such as different types of bats that could potentially be in the area.

Whilst under the guidance of the project's ecologists and our team, the students were then able to put into practice what they had learnt in the classroom. Pinewood Studios supplied a minibus service for the children to travel from school to their site destination and Andrew from HRG Tree Surgery joined in the activities, putting on a great display of his skills in creating the materials to build the school's very own hibernaculum.

The children were excited to take part in the activities understanding that by building the hibernaculum they were helping to improve the insects' habitat, which will increase the biodiversity in the area. One student described it as "a bug hotel".

With guidance from our ecologist, Andrew and the pupils used waste materials from our project site to create the hibernaculum. The children were talked through the process step-by-step and took part in a discussion around what wildlife could potentially use it through the seasons and how smaller versions could be created in other locations.

It was a fantastic collaborative initiative from the site's contractors to increase the social value of the project while educating young people on how to create biodiversity in their local habitat.



Andrew (HRG Tree Surgery) with two happy helpers, collecting materials for the hibernaculum

How would you best describe the project?

This enhancement initiative formed part of our work with the surrounding community to increase the biodiversity of the local area.

Further information

We will be holding another session towards the end of the summer to re-visit the hibernaculum and discuss any changes that have happened. A number of students also wanted to make small-scale hibernacula at home and in their gardens this summer. So a follow-up lesson is planned with the group to continue our engagement.

The long term relationship with the local junior school was built upon with Pinewood Studios Group inviting the **school's students** to sing at their traditional Christmas Carol service.

Tips for similar schemes:

- To engage with people living in the local surrounding area, to help ensure that the site becomes part of the community before, during and after construction.
- Forming strong relationships by actively engaging with local individuals, groups and organisations is key to increasing local understanding of what is happening behind site hoardings.
- Encourage both the involvement of the local community in your project and activities to increase biodiversity throughout the local area.
- Engage with a wide range of students, including older students who may be considering going into the fields of biodiversity and/or construction.



Our team discussing what lives inside Hibernacula

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

Through this project, we hoped to educate and inspire young students about biodiversity and that that they would then take what they had learnt home with them and talk to their families about increasing biodiversity around them. The activity also increased understanding of the responsible approach taken to construction of the PSDF project and its focus on protecting and enhancing biodiversity.