

**Eurobalise Project – Balfour Beatty
(Reading to Cardiff Railway Main Line)
(Network Rail and Balfour Beatty Rail)**

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: *Community Engagement*

Project overview

Bug hotel has been built by the Eurobalise Balfour Beatty team with support from Network Rail. Bug Hotel built from surplus materials and given to a local school to help education lessons on biodiversity and habitats.

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

The bug hotel was a joint idea from Balfour Beatty and Network Rail with the aim to give back to the local community. The Eurobalise project is a low value project, approximately £700K, that included installation of signage on the railway infrastructure to support the electrification of the mainline from London to Cardiff. Biodiversity on the railway includes protected species such as bats, common reptiles and nesting birds.

What were the reasons behind this project ?

The project delivery had a minimal impact on biodiversity, none-the-less Balfour Beatty and Network Rail's aim was to offset any potential biodiversity loss with the aim of providing the bug hotel as possible hibernacula for many species with donating the bug hotel to a local school within the project area. The school could then use the bug hotel for education purposes while allowing the children to learn more about biodiversity



Balfour Beatty and Network Rail Bug Hotel

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The bug hotel has been donated to Reading Blue Coat School who will use the structure as an educational tool as well as providing the local species a habitat location. The ground staff were engaged in the construction of the bug hotel allowing them to understand that they have an important part to play in local biodiversity and environmental initiatives.

The bug hotel was constructed from material delivery pallets with the contents of the bug hotel being provided from surplus project materials allowing Balfour Beatty to reduce its waste stream volume and reducing waste being potentially sent to landfill.

Following from the first bug hotel being built by the Eurobalise Project team, they have now built three other bug hotels ready to be donated to other local schools. The process of the construction team building the bug hotels has made the team aware of how they can make a positive impact on biodiversity that they previously thought were beyond them.

Further information

The bug hotel was delivered to Reading Blue Coat School by the Eurobalise project delivery team who built the structure. Lessons learnt is that regardless of the low value of the project a simple task of constructing a bug hotel can help local biodiversity along with helping children have a better understanding of biodiversity hibernacula. Other positives include that the project delivery team are more aware of how they can have a positive impact on biodiversity.



Balfour Beatty and Network Rail Bug Hotel



Project Team

- Client – Network Rail
- Balfour Beatty Rail

- John Sims
- Anthony Southwood
- Wyn Thomas
- Steve Evans
- Matthew Herbert
- Claire Woolford
- Lesley Soane
- Maria Jarosz

What was the motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

Motivation for the enhancement included the that Balfour Beatty Eurobalise team reduced waste generated, improved biodiversity net gain and provided an interesting feature that can be used for educational purposes. In completing the construction of the bug hotel allowed the project team to have a better understanding of their impact on local biodiversity and that they can make an impact with the simplest of materials.