

**UFFINGTON FOOTBRIDGE**  
**(Uffington, Faringdon, England)**  
**J. Murphy & Sons**

**BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category:** Community Engagement

**Project overview**

Uffington Footbridge is part of the Greater West electrification programme to replace an existing level crossing with a footbridge to accommodate for the electrification of the railway line whilst maintaining a safe walking route across the tracks.

As part of the project Sustainable Delivery Plan, the project team invited the local scout group to construct a ‘bug hotel’ with left over construction materials – including pallets, pipe cut-offs, vegetation waste and bricks.



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

Due to matters regarding land ownership at the construction site and along the railway line, the bug hotel was located to Uffington Community Gardens as an enhancement where resident bugs can provide services such as pollination, control of pests & weeds and the recycling of soil nutrients.

**Were there any specific reasons that led to this project?**

The aim of this project was to increase biodiversity awareness at a local level with the Scouts in regards to the importance of bugs and the ecosystem services they provide, as well as providing an enhancement to the local community.



*Completed bug hotel ready to be relocated to Uffington Community Gardens.*

## What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Aside from engaging the community, the other aim was to increase biodiversity and conservation awareness at a local level with the Scouts in regards to the importance of bugs and the benefits they provide through ecosystem services.

We educated the Scouts by providing a workbook detailing the different types of habitats that bugs favour, the reasons why we need to protect and conserve bugs, services bugs provide and how to construct the bug hotel.

The bug hotel was built in layers on site by groups of Scouts with assistance from the project team. It was then built up with a roof of planted wildflowers to assist pollinating bugs. These bug hotels can provide both hibernation and breeding habitats for bees, ladybirds, butterflies, lacewings, beetles and other critters.

This initiative resulted in other benefits including the re-use of left over construction materials that would have otherwise been disposed off, and providing a biodiversity enhancement opportunity to support the Uffington Community Gardens.



*Uffington Scouts constructing the bug hotel.*



## How would you best describe the project?

Enhancement.

## Further information

This initiative was made possible with the support and involvement of the Uffington Site Team who collected all the materials around the site to construct the bug hotel, provided the lighting and equipment for the Scouts to have safe access to the site and working with the Scouts to construct the hotel outside their normal working hours.

During their visit the Scouts excitedly became the first members of the public to cross the new bridge on their way back to the Scout hall and they were given the opportunity to ask the project construction team questions about the construction of bridges.

This was a simple yet effective initiative with both the Scouts and project team enjoyed doing and is easily transferable across other construction projects.

Advice for other schemes:

- Reach out to local community groups such as the Scouts early in the works
- Identify where the hotel can be located – particularly in rail jobs where there are certain land requirements and rules along the track
- Throughout the works collect materials such as pallets, de-vegetation waste, pipe cut-offs, bricks, scrap timber etc. that can be re-used in the bug hotel
- Make sure permission from the Scout group is given for any photo opportunities



*The project team and the Uffington Scouts who became the 1<sup>st</sup> members of the public to cross the footbridge.*

## What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

When working in different communities we feel it is important to properly engage them in the work that we do and maintain a good relationship. This was a great opportunity to involve the community while also providing a biodiversity enhancement to the local gardens using recycled materials.