

**CHARTER SCHOOL
EAST DULWICH, LONDON
KIER CONSTRUCTION LONDON, LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK**

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: Temporary

Project overview

Charter School is a new-build state school, comprising a teaching block and a sports hall, for the London Borough of Southwark and the Charter Trust. The scheme is £25m and due for completion in November.

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

The area was a brownfield site that which once consisted of dilapidated NHS buildings part of the neighbouring hospital grounds. The site had a very low ecological value prior to the works due to the lack of biodiversity on the site or in the local surrounding areas.

What were the reasons behind this project ?

As specified by the client, a living wall will be incorporated into the development, however we felt that temporary measures should be taken in the meantime to enhance biodiversity until this is installed. The project is targeting a 'Very Good' BREEAM rating as per the planning conditions and, as a team, we recognised the importance of committing to enhancing the local biodiversity to help us achieve this. We also wanted to use this enhancement to benefit the health and wellbeing of staff and subcontractors.

Living wall installed on hoarding at pedestrian site entrance



Large recycled timber planters with herbs and fruit plants



What were the biodiversity measures taken?

With the site being located within a leafy and green area of South East London, there was a great opportunity to add to the local biodiversity.

A concise biodiversity plan was created, which gave clear instruction on how to proceed with existing items, and notes of where there may be opportunities to add to the biodiversity. This was carried out using Southwark Council's Biodiversity action plan. In the plan we specified that we also wanted our enhancement to benefit the wellbeing of our staff and subcontractors.

The main pedestrian entrance to the site proved to be a great location for living wall to be situated. The existing trees near this entrance already provided some greenery and formed a habitat for certain species and, as this is the route taken on to site by all staff, we felt that this would be an ideal location to improve wellbeing.

The ivy wall was produced by the site with a view to install permanently on the school grounds upon project completion. We chose ivy as it is a relatively hardy plant which will provide a year-round enhancement with little management needed, therefore it can quite easily be incorporated into the school grounds when Kier leaves site.

2No large planters have also been constructed by an on-site carpenter using reclaimed site timber waste. The site team have planted tomato seeds, which even if bear no fruits are a great pollinator for bees! A number pollinators and flowering herbs have also been planted in these this spring. The herbs and fruits planted will benefit the on-site staff, and hopefully provide some inspiration to get involved with gardening and planting at home.

Bird feeders have also been installed in the existing trees in the area.



Bird feeders on existing trees along the pedestrian entrance

Further information

The site team are devoted to the biodiversity of the local area, especially since some of the team live in the surrounding area. Once the project is complete all of the items will be donated to the school to further student's awareness of the biodiversity of the local area. The bird feeders have attracted house sparrows that are noted in the local Southwark biodiversity action plan. Throughout the project, the team have liaised with the local urban forester to ensure that all tree preservation orders were abided by.

Project Team

- Client / funders
- Other design team members
- Volunteer organisations

What was the motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

We wanted to take part in the BIG Biodiversity Challenge and help contribute to Southwark's Biodiversity Action Plan to demonstrate that the construction industry can have a positive impact. We felt that this enhancement could not only benefit biodiversity, but could also improve the health and wellbeing of our staff and subcontractors, who we have engaged with along the way.



Hedera Ivy installed along the site boundary hoarding