

T1 Tapestry, Kings cross “Potty Pollinators”

Handyside Sreet, London

Kier Construction Major Projects

BIG Challenge 2015 submission category: Pollinator

Project overview

The T1 Tapestry buildings ‘Potty Pollinators’ involved a collaboration of 15 people; this included Kier site staff, a local charity, Global Generation, local middle school summer students & London 360.

Potty Pollinators was constructed in the inner city of London. The planters where made form old boots & hard hats recovered from our locker rooms and the bug hotel and box planters where made using up cycled materials from our skips.

These are now placed on an external landing between our Kier offices. The total cost, including soil and plants is £300.

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

The site was deemed to be of low ecological value by our onsite ecologist ‘Waterman’s’. The project location is situated within the Kings Cross area adjacent to the euro star rail link



Photo: Student help

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

There were no requirements to increase biodiversity at this stage in the project, but we wanted to improve upon our considerate contractor’s scheme (CCS) scores, as well as continue our good relations with the Global Generation Charity whom we have previously worked with on the ‘Pertwood project’.

It was though this collaboration that we meet and worked with London 360 who are doing a documentary on bee pollinator planting in an urban setting.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Potty Pollinators was created to be replicable, fun and a good use of waste materials, including old PPE.

As the project developed we took into account that the garden can easily be transported to other Kier plots on the Kings Cross site or in other locations on the Tapestry project.

The PPE planters where adapted to suit the drainage requirements of the plants, by drilling drainage holes in them.

The hard hats can also be further adapted to make hanging baskets.

The use of old boots was a completely new idea to us and the people involved and we haven't seen them on other Kings Cross sites – Yet!

The other planters and Bug Hotel were made from unsuitable pallets found on site; (all salvaged from skips).

Global Generation offered their expertise on the types of plants to use and we decided to go with plants that were suitable for bees and other key pollinators, the plant species includes, but isn't limited to; crocus, rosemary, pansy and thyme.

The summer school students assisted with the planting and this was all filmed by London 360.

Additional time was taken to make sure that the areas of the planters, the species of plants and the interface with the summer school students went to plan, nearly everyone in the Kier office has been involved with this at some point and all have commented positively on how nice the balcony area looks now.

We feel that this is a positive gain of biodiversity in the area as well as being a pleasant space for our visitors and subcontracts.



Photo: Bug hotel

How would you best describe the project?

An enhancement.

Further information

The Scaffold planters were constructed by cutting the old boards to length required and then being screwed together and holes drilled within to help with Drainage.

We used old boots and hard hats from our PPE stores that we cut holes in the side of to create drainage.

The bug hotel was constructed of 4 pallets with the top pallet being turned upside down and being used as a planter. We mixed 2 types of soil being top soil, compost and chicken pellets to make a suitable soil which provides drainage and the right nutrients for the plants that

we were putting within the planters.

The left over soils were then donated to Global Generation for their use in the skip gardens. All of the plants that we put within the planters were chosen for being bee and pollinator friendly.

The long term benefit is that we are intending to attract more insects into the area as that will attract other wildlife such as sparrows and bats. If we were to do anything differently we would possibly involve more site staff from other projects in the Kings Cross area alongside other main contractors.

We hope that once the planters and bug hotel have become established that we can then transfer them into

the main Tapestry building's landscaping plans, this has not been confirmed yet.

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

We were motivated to learn more about biodiversity through the local charity and young people from Global Generation following on from our sustainability training.

We also wanted to improve the image of the site balcony area for all staff and visitors as well as making an ecologically friendly place.



Photo: Planted boots and hats