

Western Power Distribution – Bird Boxes & Insect Hotels
Yelland Depot, Estuary Business Park, West Yelland, North Devon
Kier (Utilities)

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Small Scale Permanent Award

Project overview

The aim of the project was to provide bird boxes and an insect hotel within the depot boundary. This was to encourage breeding birds and to help increase local bird and insect populations, hopefully to include slow worms too.

The depot is in a rural business park on the outskirts of a small village. The depot is an old office for a South West Water Waste Treatment Works.

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

The area used to be overgrown with fir trees until recent works by the landlord. It was decided that the cleared area outside the office could be transformed into a small nature area.

Were there any specific reasons that led to this project?

Wayne Cook, who runs the depot has always been enthusiastic about the environment, and opportunities to recycle. He was keen to create a wildlife haven following the removal of the trees, to give something back.



The area outside the office to be developed into a small nature area.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The bird boxes were made using off-cuts of wood from safety signs made in the yard.

The insect hotel was made using a variety of surplus materials from around the yard. Inside - pallets, pipe (off cuts), clean stone chippings, fine sand, wood chippings. Outside and gaps – willow, soft wood and hard wood, bricks, wood bark, slate, granite stone. Both were built by Wayne and a couple of volunteers over two Saturdays.

The boxes and insect hotel were installed in May 2017. Bee activity has already been noted around the insect hotel. There has been interest in the bird boxes, but as they are so high, it is hard to identify the type of bird at this stage.

The plants were donated by Wayne from his garden, these include Lavender, Marguerites, Dianthus (Pink Kisses). The willow was kindly donated by a member of the public, when Wayne explained what he was trying to create.



Insect Hotel

How would you best describe the project?

Enhancement

Further information

The plan is to evolve the area over time, which will be guided by the wildlife that use the area.

It is also proposed that a bench will be installed so that members of the team can enjoy the area during their lunch break. A pond is also being planned to encourage other wildlife.

The aim is to use recycled materials to add to the area around the office and yard, this includes water butts to collect rainfall, and also the use of cable drum containers from the client (WPD) yard as planters.

A young deer has already been seen in the yard – although this was not the intended occupant!



Bird Box

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

“I have always been a keen recycler – the cupboards in the depot office are made from old kitchen units that had been left in a skip. It is my aim to create a tranquil wildlife haven, for everyone to enjoy when on a break at work.”

Wayne Cook, Depot Manager