

## PORT TALBOT PARKWAY RAILWAY STATION, KIER CONSTRUCTION



### BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OVERVIEW

For the £11 million regeneration project including the rebuilding and refurbishment of the Port Talbot Parkway Railway Station Kier devised a programme to engage with the local school and children.

Delivering to approximately 226 children over 3 days Craig O'Brien, Kier Environmental Manager (rail) and Megan Villic (Kier summer placement) has run several workshops on 'wildlife and the environment' with the children at Central Junior School, Port Talbot. The aim of workshops was to inspire and demonstrate the importance of looking after and understanding the local wildlife and environment as well as introducing hands on activities including making bird feeders and dissecting owl pellets.

For the younger children activities included making bird feeders, while the older ones enjoyed dissecting owl pellets and discovering what owls like to eat!

All the bird feeders were hung up in the school nature area to help encourage wildlife and to contribute to preserving the natural environment, while the sessions, which involved dissecting owl pellets gave the children an introduction to an iconic wildlife species. Children were also given an opportunity to identify different habitats and species as well as enjoying a game where they had to guess the sound of all the owls found in the UK.

An important aspect of the workshops included enhancing the pupil's awareness about the dangers of playing on/near building sites and railways to ensure the children living near our sites are kept safe.

Craig also presented the school with a bird box, bird feeder, fat balls and several books all designed to enhance and inspire their pupils.

### Fact box

**Company name:**  
Kier Construction

**Project name:**  
Port Talbot Parkway Railway Station

**Location:**  
Port Talbot, South Wales

**Biodiversity enhancement:**

- Workshops on 'wildlife and the environment'
- Bird feeders
- Owl box

**Size:**  
N/A

**Cost:**

- 3 days out of the business
- Approx. £100 on resources
- 16 hours pre planning
- 2 hours collecting natural resources (in own time)

**Tips:**

- Always plan for the unexpected, especially when children are involved.
- Make sure you have owl pellets available as they are hard to come by especially in great numbers!
- Engage with the children, make sure they enjoy it, have fun but most of all they remember it.

**Year completed:**  
2014

### Categories:

- Small scale permanent
- Community engagement
- Most innovative

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## BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OVERVIEW (cont.)

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In addition the Project has agreed to sponsor an owl box on behalf of the school through the Hawk and Owl Trust. The box will be located in Wales with the school getting regular updates.

Craig O'Brien said *"Although the project and the school wasn't an ideal location to fix a permanent owl box, adopting one for the children of Central Juniors is the next best thing and will help enhance their knowledge of wildlife and also demonstrate the commitment by Kier to actively engage with our communities, while at the same time helping our wildlife."*

On hearing Kier are to adopt an owl box for the school, Mrs Cath Frudd (class teacher Port Talbot) said *"Thanks Craig, that's great news I'm sure the children will enjoy discovering more about owls over the coming months, now they have their own box"* She also added *"We really appreciate you coming all the way from Norfolk and planning and preparing some great 'hands on' lessons for our pupils. Thank you also for all the resources you have given us which I assure you will be very useful for our environmental learning lessons. It would be great if you and the team could return at a later date perhaps before the project comes to a close."*

Following the sessions children from year 5 were inspired do their own presentations on owls, bats and how to dissect owl pellets.

Nia Furlong (Network Schemes Project Manager – Port Talbot)

*"It was encouraging to see that environmental awareness was including on the agenda for the Kier School Rail Week held at a local school to the Port Talbot Parkway Station scheme. The sustainability and wildlife awareness sessions run at the school provided a fantastic opportunity to promote the environment in the local community and the sessions were very well received by all age groups. Well done Kier!!"*

Craig O'Brien

*"Kier and Network Rail have been really supportive of the sessions and feedback has been amazing both internally and externally and it was a real pleasure to visit Central Juniors. The children were incredible and soaked up the information and it was great to see everyone getting involved with the hands on activities. Putting in the hours of planning paid off as I believe each child who attended got something from each of the sessions."*

### Pictures of the workshops



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