

Chiswick Gate

Burlington Lane, London

Berkeley Homes (West London)

BIG Challenge 2015 submission category: Temporary

Project overview

The Chiswick Gate development is a residential led scheme that will deliver 130 apartments and 43 townhouses, play areas and landscaped gardens.

The houses and apartments are being built to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 and 10,000m² of commercial space is also being built to BREEAM

Very Good. Although situated in London, and bordered by two busy main roads, the development is very much in a suburban setting; within 5 minutes of the River Thames and adjacent to Chiswick House and Gardens, it is very important that the new development fits into the surrounding environment.

The finished project is therefore very much focussed towards increasing the ecological value, with native planting and green roofs being designed, as well as the potential inclusion of 'nesting bricks' within the structures.



Photo: Bird box

With the build programme being 3 years it is also very important that enhancing biodiversity is considered during the construction phase.

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

As part of Berkeley's commitment to the environment, we always carry out an Ecological Survey pre-planning and often pre-purchase of a site.

The survey in this case concluded the site had 'negligible biodiversity value' with species poor habitats and recording no species of any biodiversity importance.

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

Code for Sustainable Homes, BREEAM and Planning requirements all influenced the decision to start the biodiversity project.

However, the key factor was Berkeley's commitment to preserving and enhancing biodiversity and ecological value, and making sure that this consideration becomes Business as Usual.

This was also supported through the findings of the initial ecological assessment and the great opportunity to work towards net biodiversity gain.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Along the western boundary of the Chiswick Gate site, a linear area of trees had been segregated from the site works whilst still being under the control of Berkeley West London.

The site team saw this as an opportunity to use the area to enhance the levels of biodiversity on site and use the outputs to raise awareness of threats to wildlife, both within Berkeley and with Contractors.

The project began with the reclamation of waste site materials (pallets, timber off cuts, plastic tubing) to create a Bug Hotel and a series of Bird Boxes; both increasing habitat types and reusing, rather than disposing of waste.

As more individuals on site were made aware of the newly created Ecology Area they came forward with further suggestions for improvement.

This included the procurement of further Bee Hotels, ideal for solitary bees and other pollinators; Bat Boxes, for locally occurring pipistrelles and noctules, both UK BAP species; Hedgehog Houses, trying to help an animal that has been through a drastic



Photo: Bug/bee hedge

decline; and by establishing a small pond using discarded lining from site and green waste from the construction of the Marketing Suite, providing a watering hole for all types of wildlife.

The position of each of the elements was considered in quite a lot of detail to ensure they had the greatest potential to enhance biodiversity, i.e. the Hedgehog House is close to the Bug Hotel to provide insect prey and the pond is away from shade so sunshine and warmth support plant growth.

The site has also setup a composting area next to the welfare complex so that appropriate waste can be composted and when ready, can be transferred to the Ecology Area.

How would you best describe the project?
An enhancement.

Further information

The installation of the Ecology Area was a joint project between the Berkeley management team and the Contractors on site, supervised and initiated by the Chiswick Gate Sustainability Champion.

Two of the site labour team have are now Biodiversity Champions and maintain and promote the new area across the rest of the site.

To help raise awareness and increase knowledge, ecology and wildlife based Tool Box Talks have been provided to the Contractors.

Although the Ecology Area is segregated from the main site, operatives and site

members have the opportunity to access it (managed by the Sustainability Champion) to see how simple it is to implement enhancements and perhaps take away ideas for their own gardens at home.

Once the development has been completed the enhancements can be taken away by operatives or will be donated to local nature reserves.

The team are always looking to improve the Ecology Area so have contacted Chiswick House and Gardens for advice on the planting of native wildflowers.

This will be carried out in September of this year and again in spring 2016 if the planting is unsuccessful. Due to the success in raising awareness and improving levels of biodiversity, all Berkeley West London sites are now looking to set aside areas, where space allows, for enhancing ecology in this manner.

It has also been noted by the Considerate Constructors Scheme as a great way of communicating environmental issues to the workforce.



Photo: Composter

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

The site team and I are constantly trying to push ourselves to be better.

We understand the need to consider wildlife and ecology during construction projects and by being able to implement the Chiswick Gate Ecology Area we hope this raises awareness of that fact; internally and externally.