

COMPOSTING TOILET INSTALLED FOR THE LOCKERBIE TRUST NETHERCLEUCH, LOCKERBIE, SCOTLAND SIR ROBERT M^CALPINE LTD

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: Community Engagement

Project overview

As part of our M6 ROM (Routine Operation and Maintenance) contract, we worked with the Lockerbie Wildlife Trust to replace a chemical toilet at the Eskrigg Nature Reserve with an aerobic composting toilet.

The aim was to install a more environmentally-friendly toilet and encourage participation (particularly by disabled people) in enjoying the wildlife within the nature reserve managed by the Trust.

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

The nature reserve had a chemical toilet which people found to be unpleasant and not very dignified. As the whole point of the nature reserve is to promote enjoyment of nature and natural processes it did not seem appropriate to be using a chemical toilet. Chemical toilets can lead to a reduction in biodiversity by neutralising natural biological aids to waste disposal. Composting toilets encourage biological activity.



Location of installation

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

As part of a project commitment to engage with the community local to our project base, various community projects were considered for our involvement. The Lockerbie Wildlife Trust was selected as the project was environmentally-friendly, inclusive, and benefitted and engaged the local community.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The Trust had enough capital to purchase the toilet but not enough for installation. This is where the project team were able to provide help. We offered to install the toilet for the Trust as we have operatives with the appropriate training and experience and had all the necessary equipment on hand. All time and resources required were donated to the Trust.

Installation involved:

- Clearing the area and digging the hole for the containment tank.
- Using the soil generated from the above tasks to create a bund area and soakaway for the drainage of liquid waste.
- Creating a concrete foundation for the containment tank before transporting the tank to site and installing it.
- Installing the drainage pipes and dressing the area back to a level surface prior to erecting the toilet building.

The new toilet encourages biodiversity through swapping chemical disposal for a natural process of biological transformation into a usable manure. By improving the amenities available on site it also has the benefit of encouraging awareness of biodiversity at a local level by encouraging participation within the nature reserve. Throughout the year the manager of the reserve encourages groups to take part in biodiversity studies by counting the numbers and diversity of various animals and insects.



The erected building, awaiting access ramp

How would you best describe the project?

Mitigation through removal of chemical toilet. Enhancement through providing usable compost for the nature reserve.

Further information

This type of community engagement activity could be replicated in a variety of contexts. Many local organisations or groups would be extremely grateful to receive a donation of labour and materials to carry out small-scale works to make a positive impact on biodiversity.

Tips for similar schemes:

- Engage and build relationships with a variety of local organisations and groups to understand their needs and determine where the project team could assist.
- Engage with project staff so that they understand the importance of the local community and how their time and skills could make a difference.
- Agree the budget, timescales, design and layout with all parties ahead of work commencing.
- Involve those receiving the assistance throughout to ensure they feel part of the project and will maintain ownership.
- Ensure that the work will be adequately maintained going forwards, where applicable.
- Ensure that the work is photographed and captured so that the good work can be shared and lessons can be learnt.



The completed structure

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

Our motivation for this project was to continue our engagement with the local community and use our skills to make a positive impact. The new toilet represents an improvement in biodiversity and should lead to more people using the nature reserve and enjoying the local wildlife.