

**DEPOTS IN BLOOM
EAST ANGLIAN STRATEGIC ROADS DEPOTS
KIER**

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: Pollinator

Project overview

Project spread across several depots, with liaison from offices, to use upcycled materials to make planters in which to put pollinator-friendly plants, as well as planting native trees and the creation of a small vegetable plot for employees. Outside nature areas created for employees to enjoy in their break times.

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

The depots did not have much in the way of green spaces, consisting mainly of tarmac, salt barn, and buildings. Some of the depots had a small area of rank grassland. There was nowhere to sit outside during break times.



*Spooner Row waterfall and pond filter
in construction and end result – J
England*



*King's Lynn depot's terraced planting
– C Parsons*

What were the reasons behind this project ?

The BIG Biodiversity Challenge has been great for staff engagement; getting employees to take pride in something and working together on things that they don't normally do. Looking to have a positive impact on local wildlife, such as pollinators, hedgehogs, ducks, and newts. At Spooner Row depot the area was developed initially for 2 new porter cabins, but then the area was so nice, it continued to grow in scope from there. The improvements were made to their outside areas, which they use during their breaks.

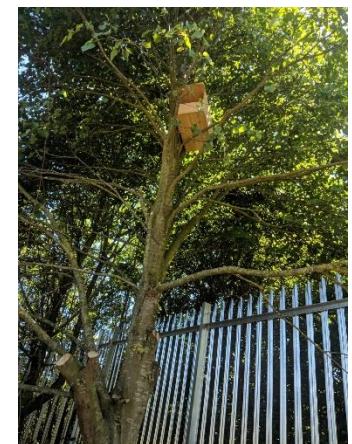
What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Our initiative was spread across several of our operational depots, with liaison from the offices. Staff were informed of the competition via email, newsletters and posters in break-out rooms/canteens. Then they brainstormed ideas that would work in the space they had at their depot and the materials they had available locally to make upcycle planters for pollinator-friendly plants, such as lavender and marjoram.

Kestrel boxes were put up at all depots. Ardleigh depot also created a vegetable patch. In Breakspear and Spooner Row depots native trees were planted (a mix of hawthorn, cherry and pear trees), which will provide sources of nectar, pollen and fruit for wildlife, as well as fruit for employees to enjoy. Spooner Row depot created a bug hotel using waste products, such as wood pallets, pipes and cleared branches. They also cleared up the pond, added koi carp and built a filter system for the pond. This included a waterfall! A patio area and paths were made from left-over materials. This developed area now allows for an outside break area for depot staff to enjoy their lunches outside, get fresh air and enjoy the natural setting.



Ardleigh depot Fruit & Veg Planters and Patch – S Farthing



Spooner Row depot bee B&B and bug hotel at the back. Kestrel box in tree – J England

What were the biodiversity measures taken? Continued

Plants were bought with employees' own money for the initial planting, and another batch of plants provided by the company. The wildlife gardening and works were carried out either at the beginning or end of shifts, in the employees' own time.

The initiative has also been great for staff. About 90% of the workforce were engaged in the wildlife gardening initiative. It is noticeable that they are making more effort to clean up minor spills and are taking more care when fuelling vehicles, as the run-off from the depot goes into the pond. The fish have been in the pond for a year now without any issues.

Further information

The Ardleigh depot planted a vegetables patch, which should give employees the joy of growing their own vegetables on a recurring basis. The trees that were planted at the Breakspear and Spooner Row depots will continue to grow and provide fruit for employees to enjoy every year.

At Spooner Row depot they would like to move a fence, to create a nature walk around the pond and have a picnic bench to the rear of the pond (where the fruit trees have been planted). They are also keen to build some bee B&Bs and add some

more fish to the pond.

As the improvements were made to areas that are in constant use by employees, it should be easy to ensure small tweaks of maintenance are made regularly.



Breakspear depot planting of native trees

Further information continued

There have already been some positive impacts for local wildlife. The improved pond at Spooner Row depot was soon colonised by a mother duck and 8 ducklings, which are now residents. Someone has also spotted a newt. Kestrel boxes were installed to both help our birds of prey and naturally keep pigeons out of the salt barns.

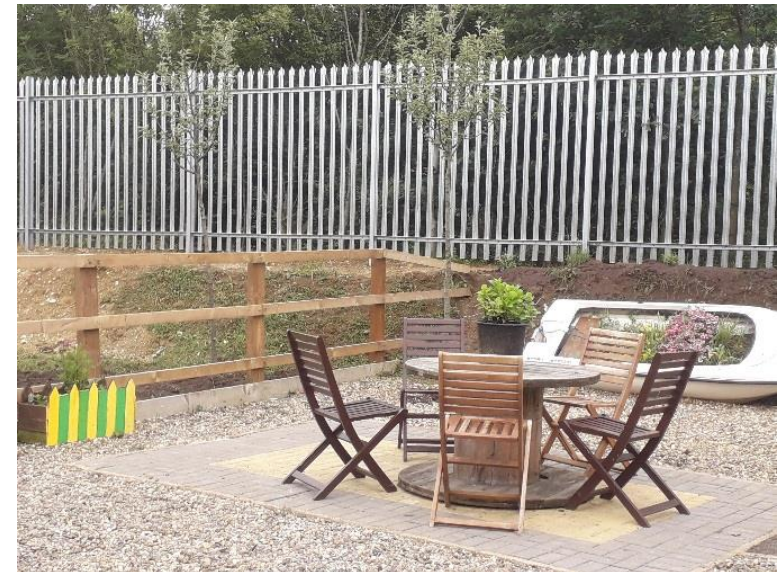
No official continuous recording is in place at the moment. However, the arrival of the duck and ducklings to the pond had been communicated to all within 10 minutes. Furthermore, the Environment Team will record wildlife at the depots during the audits every year.

Project Team

- Funding from Nick Carter, Contract Director Area 6 & 8 Kier Highways
- Scott Farthing, Jamie England, Sean Farrow and other depot managers
- Operatives at the depots (planting and creation)
- Olivia Maes, Neil Grimwade and Claire Parsons (coordination)

What was the motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

Engaging our staff with nature whilst getting them working together on a project that they would own; providing new habitats for wildlife; giving pollinators a helping hand; taking up the challenge of the BIG Biodiversity Challenge.



Spooner Row depot outdoor break area with upcycled boat as planter – C Parsons