

A6MARR
Stockport
Carillion/Morgan Sindall

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Community Engagement

Project overview

The A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road (A6MARR) is a project which seeks to improve transport provision within the south-eastern part of the Greater Manchester conurbation and Cheshire East. The road is expected to be open in spring 2018. The construction will include:

- 10km of new single and dual carriageway;
- Substantial ecological mitigation works
- 1.2 million m3 of earthworks which will be balanced onsite
- 4 rail structures;
- 7 other bridges;
- 6 substantial retaining walls.

The A6MARR commitment to Support the Local Community Programme was developed by the Community Liaison staff through the projects commitment to provide biodiversity and educational enhancement to local charities, local community and stakeholders.

The programme now in its second year, allows the A6MARR team to reach out to the local community and ask what support can be provided, whether through education, enhancements or financial support and donations.

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

Prior to initiating the Support the Local Community Programme the local community were not aware of the work that Carillion and Morgan Sindall undertake outside of what is required by the development of a large scale project.

The possible 'easy wins' that could be achieved and required minimal effort to enhance the biodiversity of an area were not understood by the local community and businesses, as well as the ecological benefits that a large scale project can have on the surrounding area.



A6MARR's Environmental Manager, Rory Daines gave a talk on Great Crested Newts to the University of Third Age

Were there any specific reasons that led to this project?

At the design stage Carillion/Morgan Sindall made a commitment to the client to undertake community initiatives and provide support to local charities and schools where possible. There was no specific planning requirement to do so.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

As of June 2017 the Support the Local Community Programme contributed:

- Over 1000 hours of the project team's time to support the local community, charities, schools and deliver educational presentations to over 200 individuals between the ages of 9 and 90 years old. This includes the Big Bang Theory 2017, University of Third Age, Manchester Airport Group job shadow event, Seashell Trust cycle supportive, Seashell Trust sensory garden refurbishment, Seashell Trust work experience initiative, Seashell Trust charity car wash, winter packs for the homeless, Knutsford Academy, Haveley Hey School and Queensgate Primary School.
- Over £10,000 in materials including plants and slabs to the Seashell Trust sensory garden, Easter eggs to the local schools, storage containers to the local parks and topsoil to local allotments for the feed the community initiative.

One of the first groups to benefit was the Friends of Stanley Hall Park in Handforth. Working to see the park returned to its former glory, the group were given a major boost when a new, accessible picnic area was created by A6MARR volunteers who provided both materials and labour. Over four days an area of the park which was previously flat grass land was transformed into a brand new picnic area with plants and landscaping to increase biodiversity in the area.

The A6MARR school engagement programme sees the team present lessons and assemblies at schools in and around the relief road route. Through the visits, the team inspires pupils about careers in the environment, engineering and construction, sharing their experience and expertise and provides information about the biodiversity in the local area.



James with his Carer Tom, helping to log and file waste notes

A6MARR's Environmental Manager, Rory Daines gave a talk on Great Crested Newts to members from the University of the Third Age in Heald Green, Cheshire. The latest eDNA testing techniques were discussed along with the translocation of GCN and the importance of maintaining the connectivity between habitats.

Litter picks are undertaken every Saturday morning and includes litter migrating in from outside the site. Over 500kg of litter has been collected within 2017.

How would you best describe the project?

Enhancement and support.

Further information

In order to select which charities and community programmes to offer assistance to, the A6MARR promoted two application periods over the life of the project. Applications are then assessed by a panel include the Community Relations Officer, Project Manager and Environmental Manager. <http://www.semmms.info/second-wave-of-the-carillion-morgan-sindall-cms-community-space-improvement-project-begins/>

The benefits from the programme will have a long term benefits. The improvements to parks and charity gardens have increased the biodiversity of these areas by introducing more diverse plant life and habitats for wildlife. By holding open days and educational sessions with schools we are encouraging the next generation of project workers and installing into them sustainable behaviours.

A6MARR operatives have also benefitted from the experience, many stating that they to didn't realise the biodiversity gains that could be made from even the smallest of habitat improvements. The willingness of operatives to support the schemes has also been highly encouraging, with many willing to go beyond their normal working hours to assist.

Another outdoor area that the team will be working to improve is the Community Garden at the Wythenshawe Campus of The Manchester College. Working together college staff and Carillion Morgan Sindall volunteers will create a new area from which students can learn practical skills that will be essential for the future, such as horticulture and catering. The community garden will not only be a valuable addition to the college but will also bring pupils, staff and the local community together.



Year 11 students using VR to explore environmental aspects on the A6MARR

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

The majority of the staff on the A6MARR are living as well as working amongst the local community. We are grateful by the welcoming attitudes that have been shown to us and being in a position to offer support and help to those deserving, we feel its our duty to do so.