

Coventry Science and Health Building Coventry, West Midlands

BAM Construction Ltd

BIG Challenge 2015 submission category: Pollinator

Project overview

BAM Construction is building a new Science and Health Building (SHB) which is located in the heart of Coventry.

This will be a flagship project for Coventry University to extend the Faculty of Health and Life Science's ability to offer state-of-the-art facilities for teaching and research.

The vision is to consolidate the University's existing science laboratory and health simulation facilities into a new modern multidisciplinary building that will include state-of-the-art healthcare simulation, research and 'super-lab' environments.

When the bees were found on site the concrete slab was being poured and drainage works had started.

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

The site was an existing car park with a few trees so there was little ecology on site and it was certainly not a haven for bees.



Photo: Temporary home for the bee swarm at Coventry SHB

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

Not specifically - but the project is targeting a BREEAM rating so this action will be included in the ecology calendar by the nominated Biodiversity Champion.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

5,000 bees decided to make a bucket on the Coventry University Science and Health Building (SHB) site their new home in the first week of July. Luckily BAM Senior Project Engineer John McGoldrick and Assistant Site Engineer

Agamjot Singh spotted it and Project Manager Alan Bell called a local bee keeper to move the swarm safely.

"Bee keepers pay for bees so it turned out to be a favour for him as he got free bees!" said Alan.

Bee keeper Richard Bones came to site with a net and placed this over the top of the bucket and removed the entire swarm from site to a new home in Warwickshire Wildlife Park.

"When a new queen bee is born, the old one has to leave the hive as each hive

can only have one queen.” explained Richard.

“These bees appeared on site because the drone ‘scout’ bees who look for the new accommodation for the queen found a bucket at Coventry SHB and once they put the word out, their queen plus a swarm of about 5000 bees appeared within an hour.”

“Sadly the bees who weren’t in the bucket at the time will die because they can only survive as part of the swarm with a queen!” he added.

Meanwhile, the BAM team has completed the Coventry SHB foundations, poured the ground floor slab and installed the drainage.

“As long as we don’t get any more swarms on site, we’ll be starting on the concrete frame soon.” said Alan.

If you have a swarm of honey bees on your site, contact the British Bee Keepers Association to find a local bee keeper to come and remove it safely.

How would you best describe the project?

An enhancement.



Photo: Bee keeper translocating the bees from the bucket to their new home

Further information

The project team were very concerned about the safety of the bees and wanted to make sure they were rehomed safely to somewhere suitable so that they didn't swarm again.