

## Rissington Primary School - Bug Hotel

Rissington, Gloucestershire

Kier Construction - Central

*BIG Challenge 2015 submission category: Community engagement*

### Project overview

Whilst constructing a new-build Primary School for Rissington, a rural community in Gloucestershire, Kier ran a competition for year 6 pupils to design an Insect Hotel to be used as an eco-learning tool in the School's wilderness classroom. Kier's site team briefed the teachers on Bug Hotel construction and they integrated it into their lessons to provide valuable learning on biodiversity and the insect world.

The pupils were given regular site tours by the Kier team and were able to discuss a selection of gather materials which could be recycled into a bug hotel.

Kier judged the winning design and assisted the pupils in building the structure using recycled and untreated materials. 15 pupils, 2 teachers and 4 Kier staff were involved with the project.

Using recycled materials meant no cost was involved and the Kier team donated their time to organise and judge the event.



*Photo: Bug hotel – competition entries*

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

Existing conditions consisted of a partly wooded area next to the new build school which was due to be destroyed and made into playground.

Excellent relationships with the head teacher and staff enabled Kier's site manager to suggest that the area be kept natural for the school to enjoy eco-learning.

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

Tree protection within the planning condition was carried out prior to the new build but did not include the partly wooded area.

The site team were passionate about engaging with the school and community and it was their idea to 'preserve' the area and build a bug hotel in keeping with the School's ethics of innovative learning about nature and the environment.

### What were the biodiversity measures taken?

This innovative way of learning about insects and biodiversity is easily replicable on any of Kier's future primary educational building sites.

The Rissington school pupils and teachers will be responsible for the long-term management of the

bug hotel.

There is a fence to segregate the area from the tarmacked playground and it has become a respected learning area of the school which can be observed over the seasons.

The fact that the pupils were involved from the start and designed the bug hotel themselves creates a sense of ownership and pride.

A new area of habitat for bugs has been created and new bugs have been encouraged into the area to stay in the bug hotel.

Recordings of new bugs to the hotel since it opened have been: spiders, woodlice, centipedes, millipedes, solitary bees and beetles. – all being beneficial to the environment and benefitting themselves from a safe area to stay, feed and reproduce.

Kier's site manager and his team initially instigated this bio-diversity measure and it was their idea to involve the pupils and use it as a learning tool.

In addition the world of construction and biodiversity enhanced the school curriculum. Most of the materials used in the project were waste materials.



*Photo: Bug hotel winner and runners up*

The site team collected the materials to construct the winning hotel.

Wooden pallets were used as the frame and bricks and broken stone used to segregate the hotel floors into 'rooms' Creating as many nooks and crannies as possible to attract a diverse range of insects.

Broken tiles were put on as a roof to create a waterproof insect home. The pupils then helped to fill the hotel with branches and twigs ready for its occupants.

#### **How would you best describe the project?**

An enhancement.

#### **Further information**

Kier's project team took the winning pupil design (see photos) and constructed the bug hotel from environmentally friendly waste materials (see answer to Q12).

The pupils assisted with the construction of the structure and then filled the hotel with branches, twigs, moss etc.

Biodiversity has increased and has been recorded as new species have been attracted to the hotel.

The objectives of creating an interesting challenge by way of a competition, a learning resource for bio-diversity and construction and an environment to attract new beneficial insect



species have been achieved.

In doing so the site team were positively integrated into the local community and built excellent relationships with the School staff and pupils.

The project was also a lesson in how economical it can be to get involved in biodiversity initiatives – this activity was undertaken at zero cost.

**What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?**

Kier's commitment to 'give something back' to the local community acted as catalyst for this project. The site team chose an environmental corporate responsibility initiative which integrated the construction team into the local community, engendered positive relationships with the school and provided a fun and interesting activity for the pupils.



*Photo: Bug hotel*