

**Cuckoo and Maerdy  
Gwent Levels, Newport  
Kier on behalf of Network Rail**

**BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Community Engagement Award**

**Project overview**

Both infrastructure projects involved demolition and replacement of over bridges as part of the Network Rail Greater West Programme. They were located within the St Brides SSSI which is part of the Gwent Levels in Newport Gwent. The sites were suburban and were surrounded by the Duffryn housing estate. The projects were circa £3million in value and were in operation from December 2015 – January 2017.

**Working within the community**

Throughout the Summer and Winter 2016 Kier engaged with Duffryn Community Link (DCL) (Newport City Council community development group) and carried out a series of environmental workshops including, geocaching, pond dipping, leaf identification, natures colour bingo and bug hunts.

The workshops involved children from the age of 2 – 14 and helped them gain a better understanding of the environment and taught them about team work and communication.

The residents were also eager to learn about the Network Rail improvements in their local area.

**Were there any specific reasons that led to this project?**

This community engagement supports the GWP Vision to ‘promote, recognise and embed environmental best practices to become business as usual’ which includes community engagement. This also demonstrates commitment to working with the lineside community and provides evidence that Kier are already on board with the up and coming Network Rail Social Performance Strategy which is encouraged by the GWP environmental team.



*Photos of the family fun day held by Kier at the National Trust Tredegar House*

As part of the Kier Strategy for a Sustainable Business We want to maximise the ‘Kier Effect’, which delivers social value from our projects by Supporting good causes and acting considerately in our communities.

## What were the community engagement activities taken?

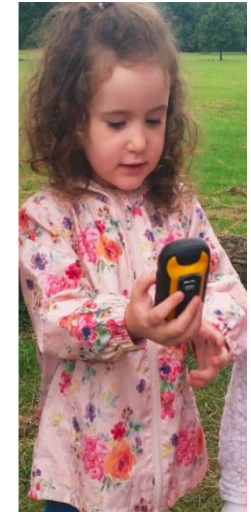
### Youth Club

Gary Colbourne and Danielle Penn (Newport City Council Community Health & Engagement Officers) invited Kier along to one of the many summer holiday youth clubs. An environmental workshop was set up by Kier to teach the youths about team work, communication and the environment. The teams used their navigation skills to find hidden geocaches which had environmental questions contained inside them. The answers to the questions helped the teams unlock a cryptic code and they also faced a time challenge so the heat was on.

Combing technology into the games really motivated the youths to participate but it was a great surprise when they were as enthusiastic about tree identification using a handmade iDial. The tree identification taught the youths about the importance of native and ancient woodlands but most importantly got them in the great outdoors.

### Forestry Fun Day

The DCL team at the Forest Family Centre hosted a Forest Fun Day as part of their public consultation for the Big Lottery Fund Wales Create your Space funding which they hope to secure. Kier were joined by Newport City Council, The National Trust, Keep Wales Tidy, Groundwork and The Great Big Tree Climbing Co. to inspire the local youths to use green spaces, showing them how to care for the environment and have fun outdoors. Pond dipping was enjoyed, especially by two locals who took on the challenge to identify the highest amount of critters during the day.



*Leaf identification adventure (left) Geocaching (right)*

### Family Day

A family fun day was carried out at Tredegar House with DCL Community Health & Engagement Officers Jody Jones and Joanne Short. Geocaching was a hit again and these young ones gave the teenagers a run for their money. Excited at the prospect of finding hidden treasure they were extremely enthusiastic dividing into Girls vs Boys teams at the first opportunity.

The pond dipping was also thoroughly enjoyed; the children got up close to pond life and were pleased to release their finds back into the wild after a good examination with their magnifying pots.

## How would you best describe the project?

Community Engagement involving environmental workshops – educational

## Further information

Jody Jones at Newport City Council said: *“The families really enjoyed spending time in the local community, taking part in activities that they would not have had an opportunity to do otherwise and spending time getting to know new people. The children had lots of fun and Harrie (Kier) was considerate to each of their needs. A great time and would definitely recommend to other community groups. Thank you.”*

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

It’s important to engage with the local community and where possible educate them about their local environment in a fun but informative manner.



Proud bug hunter winners with their prizes



Pond dipping and bug identification



Colour bingo



Green team 'Kickers' trying to unlock the geocache cryptic code