

Tesco One Planet Community Sustainability Challenge

Welwyn Garden City

Tesco

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: **Innovation Award**

Project overview (50 words max)

- On the 11th of November 2023 our colleagues were brief was an opportunity for our colleagues to come together to work on a problem statement on sustainability. **Problem statement:** *What changes would you like to see to improve environmental sustainability on campus?*
- Date completed: 11/06/2024 to on going

What were the biodiversity conditions on site prior to the enhancement? (100 words max)

The campus is already quite green seeing this our colleagues saw that there was opportunity to go a further step to enhance and capitalise on this opportunity even more. Our campus is a business park similar biodiversity levels to most offices.

What were the reasons behind this project? (100 words max)

The colleague community is made up of a group of extremely passionate colleagues that want to challenge the business to go further than what we are already doing. The project aims to enhance biodiversity and colleague wellbeing at our business park. Motivated by our commitment to serve customers, communities, and the planet better, our planet strategy guides efforts to reduce environmental impact and promote healthier lifestyles. By creating green spaces, promoting healthier eating, and fostering learning about sustainable food production, we support physical and mental wellbeing among colleagues. Our goal is a biodiverse campus that enhances education, provides recreational opportunities, and bolsters climate resilience by sequestering carbon dioxide.



Mood board of one of the ideas that were pitched



Day of presenting to the panel

What were the biodiversity measures taken? (300 words max)

The Tesco Colleague One Planet Community organised a successful pilot competition to improve campus sustainability. The problem statement posed was: "What changes would you like to see to improve environmental sustainability on campus?"

The competition process included:

1. Volunteering and Team Formation: Colleagues from various departments, including People, Strategy, Technology, and India-based colleagues, volunteered and formed teams after the briefing. Important to note this was all done on voluntary working hours and not part of anyone's day jobs.

2. First Drafts and Feedback: Teams submitted extensive initial proposals, receiving feedback from the sustainability team to ensure feasibility and quality.

3. Upskilling Sessions: Regular sessions provided upskilling and further feedback to refine proposals.

4. Final Presentations: Teams presented their proposals to a panel consisting of the sustainability director, climate change manager, head of facilities, and the chairs of the One Planet Network.

All pitches were required to be Specific, Measurable, Accurate, Replicable, and Time-bound (SMART), providing both long-term and short-term strategies with budgets. All ideas were given specific baseline measurements they would consider to see the biodiversity net gain on campus. Not only do these ideas offer a biodiversity net gain it focused on educating our colleagues hoping to have a domino effect on inspiring colleagues to implement these practices to their day jobs.

Proposed Measures

Some examples of the proposals, now entering the second phase of implementation, included:

5. Habitat Creation: Building log shelters, wildlife ponds, and replacing fences with hedges. Installing bat boxes, bird boxes, bug hotels, and hedgehog houses.

6. Native Planting: Developing wildflower meadows and placing planters with wildlife-friendly flowers. Creating living roofs and walls on small structures.

7. Sustainable Practices: Ceasing pesticide use and creating compost from organic waste to enhance ecological balance.

8. Colleague Engagement: Training colleagues in wildlife counts, tree planting, and building bee hotels to promote community involvement and sustainability awareness. Engaging with local communities and schools in Hertfordshire to do joint volunteering.

9. Environmental Management: Implementing varied grass mowing, introducing hedgehog tunnels, and turning off streetlights after 9 PM to reduce wildlife disturbance.

The competition saw excellent engagement, educating colleagues in sustainability. These proposals go beyond normal business practices and was designed to be a test to see if we can roll out to our stores, DCs, technology office, Central Europe Offices and more, promoting broader application. Promising extensive biodiversity benefits and addressing habitat loss and pollution, these measures have the potential to create lasting ecological value and contribute to the sustainability goals of the One Planet Community. Though still in the idea phase, they offer a model for future construction projects and broader corporate practices.

Further information (250 words max)

In your response, please consider the following:

The legacy of the Tesco Colleague One Planet Community's sustainability initiative lies in its potential to create lasting impact on biodiversity, colleague engagement, and corporate sustainability practices. Whilst being entirely colleague led. By creating habitat enhancements and promoting sustainable practices, the project leaves behind a campus enriched with wildlife and green spaces, contributing to ecological balance and climate resilience. By this being colleague led it shows the passion our colleagues have to make change and cascades this across the business of needing to do more on biodiversity. The competition caught the attention of our senior leaders in the business and was a forum for colleagues to echo their passions to them. Key lessons learned include the power of voluntary initiatives driven by passionate colleagues to drive meaningful change. The initiative demonstrated the importance of cross-departmental collaboration and upskilling sessions in fostering innovation and commitment to sustainability. Moreover, it underscored the value of SMART goal-setting and measurable outcomes in ensuring project success and scalability. Participants in the Tesco Colleague One Planet Community's Challenge benefited through skill development, team collaboration across departments, personal satisfaction from contributing to environmental sustainability, learning opportunities in biodiversity and sustainable practices, recognition for their efforts in presenting proposals to leaders, and enhanced community engagement fostering a shared commitment to environmental stewardship within the workplace

Project Team

- One Planet Community Network Core Team and Member
- Tesco Sustainability Team
- Tesco Facilities Team

What was the motivation for carrying out the enhancement? (100 words max)

The motivation for enhancing campus sustainability stemmed from a passionate group of Tesco colleagues advocating for change and education. The initiative was entirely voluntary, driven by the Tesco Colleague One Planet Community. The competition outputs were announced on the day the community organised a one planet event for the whole office, having talks from the environment team on biodiversity and having over 10 suppliers come to have stalls to hand out their products that have sustainability agendas. The team organised a competitive pilot aimed at improving environmental sustainability on campus. The motivation was genuinely driven by colleagues who are extremely passionate about the planet and the community saw this need and had to find a way for this to be shown to our senior leadership.