



# London Bridge Best Practice

Case Study Title: London Bridge Wildlife Week

Month/Year: July 2015

## Key Benefits

- ✓ 'Net gain' of biodiversity in the local area
- ✓ Reconnecting staff with the environment through positive engagement
- ✓ Lasting improvement to wildlife and habitats - leaving a sustainable legacy by encouraging biodiversity within the area

## Objectives and Targets

- ✓ Delivers against the TLP sustainability strategy targets;
  - 20a - Biodiversity net gain and enhanced footprint
  - 7f - Deliver community improvement projects
- ✓ Delivers against the LBS Biodiversity Action Plan – Action 1: Bee forage and pollen rich plants in the public realm
- ✓ Delivers evidence for CEEQUAL – ecology; relations with the local community and other stakeholders

## Wildlife Week Overview

Wildlife Week is Costain's inaugural event for the promotion of biodiversity across all our construction sites, involving the Wildlife Trusts and other wildlife charities. The aim of the week was to raise awareness amongst Costain staff through various themed events about the importance of wildlife.

As part of Wildlife Week the London Bridge project wanted to implement a campaign that focused on today's biodiversity problems. We therefore decided to focus on pollinator awareness. Pollinator awareness has become of particular concern due to the continual decline in bee population because of climate change and the threat of pesticides. Bees are fundamental to our food security and if their population continues on its current rate of decline, we could see a 90% reduction in our crop yield such as fruit, vegetables, coffee and chocolate.

## Events held

Although London Bridge is not known for being a hot spot for wildlife, we adapted to our environment to implement a number of initiatives in the local area. This was achieved by working with the local charity, St Mungo's 'Putting Down Roots'. St Mungo's is a charity that provides assistance to homeless people by getting them involved in gardening and social enterprise events which support local housing estates and community green spaces.

Together with 'Putting Down Roots', we organised a day where a number of volunteers from the project attended an apriary inspection in Waterloo to look at a number of urban bee hives. The inspection raised awareness amongst staff of the importance of pollinator needs and traditional bee keeping methods.



This event was also attended by DEFRA who were running a similar event as part of their recently published National Pollinator Strategy which sets out government aims, including developers and contractors, on how they can support pollinators (*The National Pollinator Strategy: for bees and other pollinators in England*, DEFRA 2014)

In the afternoon the volunteers then went on to create planters made out of donated pallets from the project, using pollinator friendly plans. These included lavender, mint, sage, thyme and tomato.

The volunteer day at Waterloo further led us to realise that we could also create pollinating planters for Beazley House. We ran an event, again working with St Mungo's, where we planted troughs made from our recycled timber that we donate to the charity. With the help from project volunteers, we planted two troughs with Lavender, Calamintha, both pollinating plants and a few additional flowering plants to ensure the encouragement of bees. The purpose of these planters is to attract the bees and promote their foraging and pollination which are all ways of increasing the bee's ability to survive.



## A successful week

Our week at London Bridge was a success. The awareness and message of the importance of the environment was widely accepted across the staff who showed great engagement and enthusiasm. Promotional material such as emails, posters and newsletters advertised our week to all staff to make sure that people who could not attend our volunteers days were a part of this week too. Top tips for 'increasing the pollinating potential in your garden' was also sent to give staff the opportunity to take home their awareness and create their own bee enhancing garden.

