

ORCHARD ACADEMY BIRD BOXES
ORCHARD ACADEMY, MILTON KEYNES
MILTON KEYNES COUNTY COUNCIL

BIG Biodiversity Project of the year: Small scale

Project overview

The project has involved the installation of 12no bird boxes into the brickwork of the extension to Orchard Academy constructed by Kier Eastern.

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

The biodiversity conditions onsite were extremely limited onsite due to the fact the new building footprint sits within the historic playground area of the existing school. The tarmac playground area previously offered basically no benefit to local biodiversity.

What were the reasons behind this project ?

The reasons behind the scheme included:

- Wanting to improve the overall school site in terms of its value to birds for potential nesting opportunities.
- Provide the client an innovative feature to the front of the building which will also provide a potential learning tool for the pupils of the school.
- It is in keeping with Kiers commitment to incorporate biodiversity into its projects wherever possible.



12no bird boxes installed within the brickwork of the extension to Orchard Academy.

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

The project has involved the installation of 12no bird boxes into the permanent brickwork of the extension to the existing Orchard Academy primary school. The bird boxes have been installed at the front of the extension which is hoped will provide an eye-catching feature if in use by birds during the nesting season.

The nest boxes have been installed in a linear fashion which will hopefully suit species such as swifts / swallows which like to nest in colonies and for which the boxes are designed. It is also possible that the boxes may be utilised by other species.

By providing a new nesting site for local bird species it is hoped that the wider ecosystem in the area will also benefit. It is also hoped that it will inspire the teachers and pupils within the school to undertake further enhancements around the school in the future. If the bird boxes are used then the birds could form a learning vehicle as a topic for a module of teaching within the curriculum of the pupils.

This kind of project is becoming increasingly common within Kiers projects and is easily replicable wherever the construction project lends itself to the installation of bird boxes.



12no bird boxes installed within the brickwork of the extension to Orchard Academy.

Further information

The bird boxes were installed as part of the brickwork by the specialist brickwork contractor. The boxes are standalone units which are installed behind the external brickwork with a small semi-circle opening cut into the external brickwork to allow entrance to the boxes. The boxes are sealed to the external brickwork to ensure the integrity of the wall is maintained. Once installed the boxes are relatively self-sufficient and don't really require maintaining. It is not known whether the boxes have been a success as yet as they have only just been installed so next year's nesting season will be their first year in potential use.

Project Team

- Milton Keynes County Council
- Project Site team – Steven Tristram

What was the motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

Kier's motivation for undertaking the project comes from its continued commitment to promoting ecological enhancements on developments wherever possible. It is hoped that the environment created will act as an invaluable learning tool for the pupils of the school in the future. The school should also provide a stimulating environment for the pupils to learn and play within.



12no bird boxes installed within the brickwork of the extension to Orchard Academy.