

Improving the biodiversity at our Bracknell store



When constructing a new store, we are very conscious of the impact our development programme has on the immediate surroundings and the local community. Our new store at Bracknell is a good example of how our construction team can make a positive contribution during such a project.

The challenge

Our new Bracknell store is located close to ancient woodland and immediately next to a nature reserve. The boundaries of the site included many mixed native hedgerows, however, they had not been historically cared for and were largely unkept by the previous owner.

Our aim was to ensure the construction and development of the new site could actually improve the biodiversity of the area - leaving it in a better state than before construction started.

What we have done

As construction commenced, we planted new hedgerows extensively along the site boundaries. The aim here was to create a safe habitat for a diverse range of wildlife. Further ecological enhancements were added as the store neared completion. These included bird and bat boxes plus deadwood habitat piles which help encourage further biodiversity.

The local authority, Bracknell Forest Council, already manage several open spaces in the area and this included the roadside nature reserve located in front of the construction.

As a member of the *Considerate Constructor Scheme*, the Big Yellow Construction team are

always keen to get involved and support local projects, so they approached the Council and agreed to help with the ongoing care of the nature reserve. This work includes trimming back hedgerows (out of nesting season of course) and managing any sapling growth to avoid damaging the wild flowers.

The outcome

The new store at Bracknell opened very recently in September 2020 so we are now closely managing and monitoring the biodiversity of the area. We are also considering volunteering opportunities for our store staff to assist with the ongoing care of the roadside nature reserve.

Marlies Boydell, Biodiversity Officer at Bracknell Forest Council was delighted with the approach and stated, "I am impressed with the CSR approach of Big Yellow in going beyond the requirements of BREEAM to make an improvement outside the site."

Historic photo of the area in bloom with numerous orchids and wildflowers.



The boundary hedgerow before the work to tidy it up commenced



Dale and John from our Construction Team get to work



The boundary hedgerow after the clean up

