

Target area: Biodiversity

Chapter 13

What have we been doing?

The Departments estate does not generally provide many opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. However, where feasible, enhancement activity is encouraged.

Flowers Hill in Bristol is living up to its name, having had nectar bars planted on site, along with bug hotels and reduced mowing regimes to encourage insects and wildlife. This is the second site to undergo such a make-over by LST.

The Heywood site has been subject to a more far reaching environmental project involving the creation of a pond and the planting of a small copse of trees to help with site drainage. An owl has regularly been seen on the site and a planned wildflower meadow next year is expected to further increase the flora and fauna.

Targets in detail

PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

- 95% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to be in target condition by 2010.

TARGET VISION

- Well conserved and managed land.

LEGAL REQUIREMENT

- Section 40, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act: Every public authority must have regard to the purpose of restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.

At a glance...

- One SSSI site on the estate in excellent condition. (That office site is not part of the DWP estate from May 2008.)
- Limited opportunities for biodiversity improvements.
- Implementing planting schemes on some suitable sites.



Plans are already being made to enhance the grounds at Gabalfa, in Cardiff and will include the encouragement of greater staff involvement.

Badgers in residence

For several years, there have been badgers in residence on the estate. It is a great achievement that DWP can conduct business as usual without disturbing these interesting but elusive creatures.

Green wall

A feasibility study is underway to establish whether Five Ways in Birmingham would be suitable for an experimental green wall. This entails facing the building with horticultural matting that can be planted up to cover the outside walls. These innovative vertical gardens not only enhance biodiversity but provide an improved environment and sense of well-being for those working in and around the building.

