

The Met Office

Head Office, Devon



In 2008, a group of enthusiastic Met Office staff volunteers led the organisation to really appreciate and recognise the importance of what the Met Office head office site in Exeter has in terms of biodiversity. This initial interest led to an understanding of the diversity of wildlife which could

be found within the grounds. A full integration of biodiversity management within the Met Office's wider Environmental Management System was developed and a Biodiversity Working Group was formed to advise on biodiversity matters.

The Met Office was keen to demonstrate its support to deliver national and local biodiversity priorities identified in the area e.g. Exeter Wild City Living Landscape, as well as to have its commitment to biodiversity work formally recognised. The Met Office chose The Wildlife Trusts' Biodiversity Benchmark standard to help achieve this.

Working towards the Biodiversity Benchmark gave the Met Office a focus to its work and the knowledge that it was doing everything it needed to do to truly enhance the biodiversity of the site.

Achieving the Biodiversity Benchmark produced positive publicity for the Met Office, especially as it is the only public sector organisation to have obtained this rigorous and demanding standard.

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The achievement of the Biodiversity Benchmark is recognition of the initial hard work and dedication of many staff volunteers who spent their lunch breaks planting wildflowers and recording observations of the wide variety of flora and fauna the Met Office has at its Exeter head office site. Met Office staff have the opportunity to engage in the continuing biodiversity enhancement work and now have a pleasant environment where they can recharge their batteries at lunchtime.

It is the Met Office's aim to continue to enhance the biodiversity of this site and maintain the Benchmark. The Met Office also hope to encourage other organisations to undertake the process and will endeavour to offer advice and guidance to other organisations that are interested in achieving this rigorous standard.

"I share with many Met Office staff a passion for the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. I am delighted that the Met Office is the first government organisation to hold the Wildlife Trusts' Biodiversity Benchmark. We will look to build on this on our own site and alongside partner organisations to make our work environment better for wildlife and staff." Penny Endersby (Chief Executive)



Date Benchmark Achieved: 2011

Nature of Business: Public Sector Weather and Climate Service