

A9 DUALLING

Kincraig to Dalraddy

More than a road

PROJECT

A review of community benefits delivered during construction

Community

Range of local community benefits provided

Environment

Considering the Cairngorms National Park

School

Successful partnership with Alvie Primary School

Scaling the heights at Alvie Primary School

Promoting fun, healthy living and safety for pupils

Welcome

More than a road

Welcome to an overview of some of the 'other' work and benefits we have delivered for the local community – aside from building the new road!

In December 2011, Scottish Ministers confirmed a commitment to upgrade the A9 between Perth and Inverness to full dual carriageway as part of their Infrastructure Investment Plan. Upon completion, this will bring a number of benefits including supporting sustainable economic growth, improved road safety and better journey time reliability.

The 7.5km stretch of road between Kincaig and Dalraddy was the first section of the A9 Dualling Programme to get under way, in September 2015, and was completed in Autumn 2017.

For Transport Scotland and its contractor, Wills Bros Civil Engineering John Paul Construction Joint Venture (WBJPJV), it was always about more than just building a road. Since the project began, the people working on it have strived to become part of the community.

We hope this review highlights how this construction project has delivered so much more for the local community than the core infrastructure of the road. Furthermore, it also demonstrates how the construction team felt part of the community which they were living and working in, and how the community has benefited from their hard work.

A9 Dualling Kincaig to Dalraddy project team, Transport Scotland

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Benefiting the local community

The local community has benefited from the project in a variety of ways including:

- Employment for 26 people who live within the area, in a wide variety of roles, from cleaners and catering staff to site operatives.
 - Vocational training opportunities for three people.
 - Many of the remaining workforce lived within local communities during the project, boosting the revenue of the local amenities such as shops, accommodation and leisure facilities.
 - Support for the local economy with the award of subcontracts and employment for local people. The award of eight subcontracts, worth a total of £1.4 million, to local businesses.
 - Production of quarterly newsletters keeping the local community informed.
 - Provision of new playground facilities for Alvie Primary School alongside bug hotels and planter boxes.
 - Improvements to a potholed track leading to the school.
 - Positive relationship established with the local Highland Wildlife Park.
 - Provision of public welfare facilities in Kincaig village during the summer months.
 - The donation of £800 by project partners to the local Community Fund, to go towards the Community Fireworks Night 2016.
 - Assisting in preparations for fireworks night.
- Participation in the Kincaig Village Fair, including donation of construction materials.
 - Attendance at Kincaig Community Hall Association meetings.
 - Attendance at the Christmas festivities at the school e.g. carol service and nativity play.
 - "Building a House" presentation and poster competition at the local school.
 - Helping road users including a family in need of a lift to get to their ski lessons after their car broke down at the side of the road.
 - Providing local employment and training opportunities.



The project has strived to be a good neighbour and has become a valued member of the community through:

A stretch of the new carriageway



Scotland's Economy Secretary welcomes project completion

The A9 Dualling Programme is one of Scotland's largest and most challenging infrastructure projects and I welcome this major milestone that sees the completion of the first section, Kincaig to Dalraddy.

Our public sector invests £4 billion in construction each year, of which a large amount is invested in the construction of Scotland's transport infrastructure. The Scottish Government remains committed to improving the infrastructure between Perth and Inverness to deliver the key benefits of faster journey times, better journey time reliability and road safety improvements. At the same time, this project has also demonstrated that, harnessed correctly, investment in transport infrastructure schemes can deliver significant social, economic and environmental benefits within the wider economy.

Local community

From the outset, both Transport Scotland and the project contractor, Wills Bros Civil Engineering John Paul Construction Joint Venture's approach was to deliver the project on the ground as effectively and efficiently as possible. An integral part of that approach was to engage with the local community in order to minimise any disruption that this major road project could have brought to the small, rural communities sat within the scenic



“This project has also demonstrated that investment in transport infrastructure schemes can deliver significant social, economic and environmental benefits”

Cairngorms National Park, whilst utilising opportunities innovatively to deliver wider benefits for those same communities.

As well as completing new infrastructure, this project has also

provided a number of other benefits including contracts awarded to local suppliers which helped to provide employment in the area. In addition, partnership working with the school and the RZSS Highland Wildlife Park in a variety of ways all demonstrated that the project has delivered more than just a road for the communities in the north of Scotland.

The Scottish Government is working hard to ensure communities along the A9 get the 21st century road network they rightly deserve and want to ensure that the investment made delivers as many wider economic benefits as possible.

Keith Brown, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work

Positive feedback from the local business community



"The dualling of the A9 will bring significant benefits to many businesses in the Cairngorms National Park and beyond. We welcome this investment. We are delighted that this first, significant milestone has been reached and we look forward to continued progress.

"Disruption during construction has been of concern to businesses who use and particularly cross the road but we have been pleased with the level of engagement with the business community both individually and through the Cairngorms Business Partnership, both from Transport

Scotland and the contractors.

"There have been some challenges for businesses during the Dalraddy to Kincaig construction to date, though the contractors and Transport Scotland appear keen to work with businesses to learn and improve as the project continues.

"We have been pleased that traffic has continued to flow throughout the project with minimal impact on people, and particularly our visitors passing along the route."

Mark Tate, Chief Executive, Cairngorms Business Partnership (speaking as traffic started to use the new 4km stretch of dual carriageway between Kincaig and Dalraddy in October 2016)

A9 ANNA KELLY A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

The project contractor has a dedicated public liaison team of two who are committed to keeping the local community informed as the project progresses. A large part of Public Liaison Officer (PLO) Anna Kelly's role involves liaising with residents, particularly those affected by the project, to ensure that work carried out causes as little disruption as possible. We managed to speak to Anna just before the project was completed.

Can you tell us a bit more about your role on the project?

As part of my role, I encourage any local businesses and residents from the surrounding community who may have questions or issues to come and speak to me. I then try my best to obtain the necessary information from site agents so that I can provide a response to their enquiry. I provide notification of road closures, temporary works, night works and so on to landowners, residents and business owners before work commences. I also liaise with our traffic management crews out on site to arrange for the closures. My role also requires me to manage and create a quarterly newsletter which provides the local community with updates on the A9 Dualling Kincairg to Dalraddy project.

What does that look like on a day-to-day basis?

Each day it is important that I stay in contact with the site agent to ensure that I am aware of the programme of work for the days ahead. This allows me to communicate with landowners and other affected parties in order to notify them of any alterations to their access routes. Due to the nature of the construction industry, plans often change, perhaps due to adverse weather conditions, for example, and this is where the community need updates on a regular basis so that they are well informed of our plans.

What is the most interesting aspect of your work?

In order to provide answers to the public, I enjoy being involved in all aspects of the project. This is imperative so that I can keep the community informed in advance where possible and also so that I can respond to any queries with the correct answers as quickly as possible.

What do you like best about your role?

I enjoy chatting to members of the local community, especially the residents directly affected by the project. If I receive a request, I get great satisfaction from working with the relevant site agents in order to get a job done. If the residents are happy it makes working life a whole lot easier for me and also for the guys out on the ground. Engaging in local community activities is always fun, and our input as a contractor is always gratefully received.

What has been the biggest challenge?

I would probably say the biggest challenge would be the unpredictability. Due to the nature of construction work it can often be subject to change. So I can arrive at work to undertake one task only to find that following the morning meeting I quickly need to change my plans and prepare to work on something different. Also, I encourage anyone who has any issues to either pick up the phone or pop in to see me and so, I often get people popping in for a word or phoning unexpectedly which always makes for an unpredictable day. Having said that however, the opportunity to meet other people is part of the role that I enjoy the most but the variety of issues means there are times when it can be challenging especially when we are really busy.

Any advice for anyone living in a community which has a similar project being delivered?

If I was a local resident I would look to attend any pre-arranged community meetings as these will provide useful information about the project. This will give you the chance to ask any questions that you might have at the meeting when there are representatives



“In order to provide responses to the public, I enjoy being involved in all aspects of the project”

from the project there to provide responses. If possible, obtain an email address for the PLO so that if you have any questions further down the line you can get in touch with them, who I am sure will be happy to seek answers to your questions.

What will you miss?

In my role as PLO, I feel I have become a part of the local community and I have got to know many of the local residents well. I will miss being in regular contact with them once the project has finished. I will also miss the fun aspects of the job including my dealings with Alvie Primary School and the events I've attended at the local community hall including Burns Night, the Kincairg Village Fair and Kincairg Community Race Night to name but a few.



Key facts

The contractor, Wills Bros Civil Engineering John Paul Construction Joint Venture (WBJPJV), has a dedicated public liaison team of two.

A9 Local People

BRIAN SHERIFFS & ANDY INNES

The project will leave a legacy that remains long after completion. There were 26 local people employed on the Kinraig to Dalraddy project. For some staff, this has provided exciting and interesting work for the last few years, whilst other members of staff have gained a wide range of industry experience and qualifications, or gained work experience after a long period of unemployment. Here we focus on two of them.



Brian Sheriffs

Who are you? Brian Sheriffs.

Where are you from? Originally from Aviemore, now live in Inverness.

Brief family info? Married with two daughters aged eight and 12 years old.

Your employment history? Previous work included groundworks, telehandler operator, slinger banksman.

How long have you worked on the project? Started working on the project in November 2015.

What's your role? Groundworker.

What do you enjoy most about your job? The sense of achievement from getting a job done.

Biggest challenge to date? The relocation of the hairy wood ant nests and the weather conditions in the highlands.

As a local, what do you think the impact of the new road will be?

The road will be a lot safer with no frustration and better overtaking.

Who are you? Andy Innes.

Where are you from? Inverness.

Brief family info? Married to Jennifer, four children (two girls aged 23 and 26 years old. Two boys aged 24 and 27 years old), seven grandchildren and two cats (Bestie and Milly).

Your employment history? Previous work included groundworks, pipe laying and building works on new housing developments.

How long have you worked on the project? Started working on the project in October 2015.

What's your role? Storeman – general maintenance, diesel runs, 'odd jobs'.

What do you enjoy most about your job? The variety of the job and that no two days are the same.

Biggest challenge to date? Prior to the commencement of works at Allt an Fhearna underpass numerous pumps had to be set up in order to divert the watercourse. This was a huge job due to the size of the burn at this location.



Andy Innes

As a local, what do you think the impact of the new road will be?

I think the dualling of the A9 is a positive thing, it will lessen the frustration for drivers travelling behind slower moving vehicles and reduce journey times considerably.

9 Key facts

ABOUT THE PROJECT



APPROXIMATELY 50 HECTARES OF SITE CLEARANCE (EQUIVALENT TO 35 FOOTBALL PITCHES)



APPROXIMATELY 14 MILES OF FENCING AND STONE DYKES (THE DISTANCE FROM KINGUSSIE TO AVIEMORE)



ENOUGH DRAINAGE PIPES TO HOLD OVER A MILLION LITRES OF WATER (EQUIVALENT TO APPROXIMATELY THREE 25M SWIMMING POOLS)



35 MILES OF ROAD MARKINGS (ENOUGH PAINT TO COVER ALMOST 1.5 ACRES)



260,000M² OF LANDSCAPE PLANTING



APPROXIMATELY 450,000 TONNES OF DEPOSITION OF FILL (EQUIVALENT TO ALMOST 10,000 FULLY LADEN ARTICULATED LORRIES)



OVER 700,000 TONNES OF EXCAVATION (EQUIVALENT TO THE WEIGHT OF WHAT IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED THE LARGEST SHIP EVER BUILT – THE SUPERTANKER MONT)



4,300 TONNES OF CONCRETE (ALMOST THE WEIGHT OF 14 BOEING 747'S)



OVER 18 HECTARES OF NEW ROAD SURFACE (EQUIVALENT TO APPROXIMATELY 18 INTERNATIONAL RUGBY FIELDS)



Community learning: benefiting the local school

A strong relationship between Alvie Primary School and the project was established. The pupils were involved from the start of the project when they attended the ground-breaking event. The pupils also received technical presentations, safety seminars and new playground facilities.

Kick off at Alvie Primary School for new sports facilities

During the summer holidays in 2016, the contractor started a major revamp of the school playground so that work would be completed in time for the new school year to begin.

Pupils are now enjoying an all-weather multi-use games area to enable them to play a number of sports including football, hockey, tennis and netball.

A 3m high, 15m long climbing wall suitable for use by the primary school pupils was also installed. As well as providing the children with a fun activity, the climbing wall is expected to improve the children's balance, strength and flexibility.

Drainage was also installed to weather-proof the ground as much as possible against the extremes of Scotland's weather.

New facilities

On the first day of the new term, Project Manager Paul Gilligan and Public Liaison Officer Anna Kelly couldn't resist visiting the school and were thrilled to see so many excited, happy faces when the pupils saw their new facilities for the first time.

Headteacher Kip Clark said: "The children absolutely love the new playing pitch and climbing wall, it really breathes new life into the school. I've had very positive feedback and the parents have been really impressed with the new facility too. Everyone at



The new playground (above) and (right) how it used to look before the work



Pupils cut the ribbon to the new playground facilities (above) and using the climbing wall (right)



the school is very grateful for the new facility and we look forward very much to making good use of it."

The refurbishment of the playground was agreed with The Highland Council in return for a small area of school land which was required to facilitate the A9 Dualling Kincairdie to Dalraddy project.

"The children absolutely love the new playing pitch and climbing wall"

Quantity surveying students tour site

Seven students and two members of staff were given the opportunity of a visit to the site.

The students, all studying quantity surveying at the University of Highlands & Islands, were given a presentation before a tour of the site. The tour included viewing the structures, temporary works, traffic management, drainage, surfacing and accommodation work before a question and answer session over lunch.

One of the students, Kirsti Chalmers from Inverness,

secured employment working with the project commercial team. She said: "The visit was an excellent opportunity to gain an appreciation of what the key drivers are on a large project and to understand the basis of strategic design decisions from a commercial perspective.

"I thoroughly enjoyed being able to speak to senior managers on a live construction project and I am delighted to be gaining this work experience which will give me some multi-disciplinary site experience."

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Keith Brown and Megan Swan from Alvie Primary School



Megan helps put first spade in the ground

Local schoolchildren were involved from the very start of the project, with Megan Swan from Alvie Primary School helping Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work, Keith Brown to put the first spade in the ground.

This marked not only the start of construction work at the stretch of the A9 between Kinraig and Dalraddy but the start of construction work on the overall A9 Dualling Programme.

At the time, Mr Brown said: "With nearly three quarters of a million tonnes of excavation work to be carried out on this section here at Kinraig alone, we are at the start of a long journey to deliver the entire programme."

That journey would see the contractor excavating over 700,000 tonnes of earth and 18 hectares of new road carriageway, the equivalent of 25 full-size football pitches laid as part of the work.

What it takes to build a home

Site Health & Safety Manager David Peters and Public Liaison Officer Anna Kelly visited Alvie Primary to talk to pupils about the stages of building a house. This was to help with their project on 'Houses and Homes'.

David and Anna took along props such as electrical sockets, copper piping and insulation.

The pupils were really enthusiastic and interested, and asked David and Anna lots of very original questions.

It was also an opportunity to remind the pupils about general hazards around the home via a safety presentation, as well as reminding the children not to play on or near construction sites.

The pupils then had a 'Bob the Builder' colouring challenge and all did a fantastic job, making the judging tough.



David Peters talks to children about house building

Anna said: "Our judges were looking for the colouring sheets that showed the most imagination and initiative, and they didn't disappoint. Many of the drawings had added safety features such as hard hats and glasses."

The winners all received an Easter egg as a prize for their fantastic entries.

Newsbite

ACADEMY9 – PROMOTING ENGINEERING TO PUPILS

The contractor took part in a Transport Scotland Academy9 event held at Grantown Grammar School.

The Academy9 programme provides students with the opportunity to learn more about the civil engineering challenges of dualling the A9. Senior mentors, comprising of graduates representing the engineering companies working on the A9 Dualling Programme, talked to an audience made up mostly of S2/S3 pupils who are interested in engineering and environmental sciences.

The visit was well received and the contractor reported that it was great to see the enthusiasm and energy of the young people taking part.

ALVIE PRIMARY CHRISTMAS NATIVITY TREAT

Site Agent Mike Browne and Public Liaison Officer Anna Kelly visited Alvie Primary School over the Christmas period, giving all the children a festive chocolate selection box.

As a thank you for the opportunities the contractor offered to the school, Headteacher Kip Clark invited some of the contractor's staff to the school's Christmas nativity and carol service – a gesture that was very much appreciated by the staff, many of whom were working away from their own families in the run up to the festive period. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the performance and ensured a truly 'Christmas Spirit' had arrived.





Working in partnership: Highland Wildlife Park

Throughout the project, we developed a strong working partnership with the local RZSS Highland Wildlife Park in Kincaig. The Wildlife Park was an important neighbour of the project. As well as a local employer, it is essential to the local economy as a popular attraction for tourists from around Scotland and beyond. It's been a pleasure to donate several items that the animals in the park can enjoy. We focus on how the good relationship benefited the park and the project in the examples below.

Animal magic – improving enclosures and giving fun

Following discussion with the RZSS Highland Wildlife Park at Kincaig, vegetation material from the site clearance activities was donated by the contractor to provide animal food and furnishings for the enclosures.

Visiting the park at the time, Project Manager Paul Gilligan said: "We are delighted to have had the opportunity to donate tree stumps, mulch and bracken to the Highland Wildlife Park where this material can be utilised within the animal enclosures. These items were directly sourced from our site clearance activities and it is great that we are able to recycle these materials and put them to good use within the park."

RZSS Highland Wildlife Park Head of Living Collections Douglas Richardson said: "We're delighted to have received the materials from the contractor. The animals have been making good use of the various items, which are being used for enrichment purposes and for



Project Manager Paul Gilligan (left), Anna Kelly and Mike Browne, visited the RZSS Highland Wildlife Park at Kincaig



Key facts

The big brushes from the road sweepers are being attached to fences to be used as scratching posts for bison.



bedding and flooring in a number of enclosures."

Paul and other colleagues from the contractor enjoyed a tour of the park, thanks to Hoofed Stock Keeper Marc Enderby, and saw first hand the natural materials being enjoyed by the musk ox, Japanese macaques, bison, camel and yak within their drive through enclosures.

Thereafter, a working relationship

was established to the mutual benefit of both the Wildlife Park and the project, with many more items donated including old traffic cones and drainage pipe offcuts, all used to help provide a stimulating environment for the animals.

Large brushes from the road sweepers were also donated for attaching to fences to be used as scratching posts for bison.



The 'bear necessities'

In Spring 2016, 50 old, and therefore unusable, traffic cones and six short sections of drainage pipe were donated to the park for use within the animal enclosures.

Walker, Arktos and Victoria – all polar bears at the park – had great fun frolicking about with the traffic cones, enjoying throwing them up in the air and hiding things inside. The musk ox also enjoyed being able to head-butt and roll the drainage pipes.

"We're delighted to have received the materials from the contractor"

A bird's eye view – buzzard nest relocation

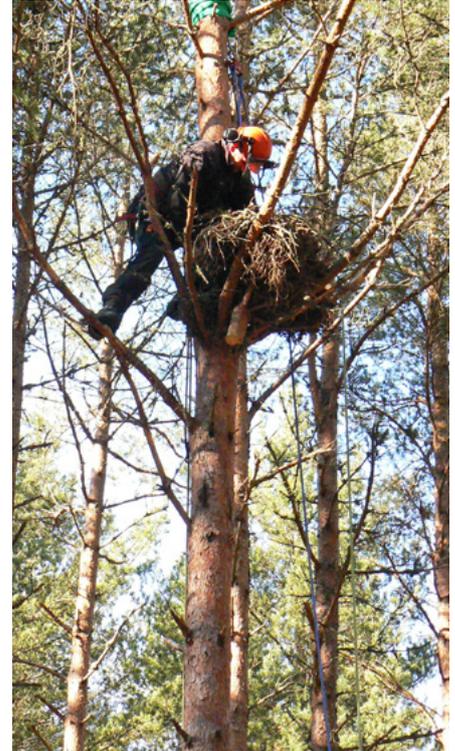
Working in the ecologically rich and diverse environment in the Cairngorms National Park is always a consideration. During the pre-construction surveys, the Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW) noted a large buzzard nest within close proximity to the work.

Following the advice and supervision of the ECoW, the nest was removed by a specialist team at the beginning of March 2016, and relocated to a specially selected donor tree outwith the construction area. This happened before the breeding season started, which was incredibly important.

Monitoring continued and the pair of buzzards favoured the new nest location with potential breeding now a possibility.



Careful relocation of the buzzards nest



Relocation of hairy wood ant nests

The A9 Dualling Kincaig to Dalraddy route runs through an area of coniferous woodland that supports several hairy wood ant colonies. The conservation of hairy wood ants was an important consideration.

In line with a commitment made in the Environmental Statement, before earthworks started, the contractor carried out a programme of ant nest removals to receptor sites away from the footprint of the project.

During 2015 and 2016, a total of 45 hairy wood ant nests were moved in consultation with the Cairngorms



Key facts

During 2015 and 2016, a total of 45 hairy wood ant nests were moved.

National Park Authority (CNPA). The receptor sites selected for these nests were chosen to provide suitable Scot's pine forestry habitat as close as possible to the original nest locations.

The project's ECoW selected a method for moving the nests as a whole structure. This allowed the nest

structure to be kept as intact as possible and to remove the nest as a single unit.

Once the nest was excavated, the ECoW checked that the entire nest had been successfully removed. The nest was then transported to the pre-dug receptor site. All works happened between 7am and 9am when ant activity is low and the majority of ants are collected in the nest, following best practice guidelines on moving hairy wood ant nests.

One of the measures used to help some of the wood ants settle in their new location was to provide them with meal worms and a syrup and bread mixture to provide food for a month, allowing them to rebuild the nest whilst searching for new food sources in the local area.

The nests moved in Spring 2016 produced a far greater level of continued colony survival than anticipated. This was seen during a seven month monitoring period carried out by the ECoW. Of the 28 nests moved in 2016, 24 were found to show signs of rebuilding only three weeks after they had been moved.



Hairy wood ants being carefully moved to their new home

FENCING/MAMMAL FENCING

■ The contractor provided temporary mammal-proof fencing at all water courses to prevent mammals getting onto the A9 carriageway. The mammal fences helped protect the local wildlife populations within the area.

In addition to the temporary mammal fencing, other permanent fencing has been constructed. The project team worked within the Cairngorms National Park, so was well aware of the biodiverse environment that surrounded the construction. There have been approximately 7.5km of deer fencing and 7.5km of stock fencing erected.

Approximately 4km of mammal fencing – which is fully compliant with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) – has been erected at all new mammal crossings, to meet best practice guidelines.



Key facts

We have installed approximately 7.5km of deer fencing and 7.5km of stock fencing.



Work under way to protect river wildlife

A fishy tale at Allt an Fhearna

The Spey Fisheries Trust was consulted about work to be carried out in the stream at Allt an Fhearna. Before the work started, the Spey Fisheries Trust carried out surveys over a 100m section of the river.

Salmon parr, brown trout, European eel and brook lamprey were all caught and relocated downstream a safe distance from the works. The ECoW checked that all measures were in place to allow the work in the watercourse to take place and continued to monitor the work for the duration of the operation.



Inventive solution to water filtration

The project is situated entirely within the Cairngorms National Park and has a number of specific ecological constraints that must be considered, including one Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI).

In March 2016, the contractor came up with an innovative and efficient site solution to filter runoff and groundwater pumped from excavations in the works before it discharges back into the natural watercourse.

The system was demonstrated at Dunachton underpass where the first half of a replacement structure carried the A9 dual carriageway over Dunachton Burn and an access track was built.

Dunachton Burn is subject to special

protection measures as it flows into the Insh Marshes SAC. The new system, which includes a process involving a silt bag, large gravel pit, haybales and silt filter materials, removes silt and fines from water pumped from the excavation to ensure it is clean enough for discharge back into Dunachton Burn.

A further benefit of the implementation of a 'self-built' filtration device is that it saved the contractor time and money by mostly using materials that were already present on site.

The project team's ecologists have been monitoring the water quality of Dunachton Burn at various locations to ensure that it is not being adversely affected by the works.

A Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) inspection found the

water downstream of this discharge to be of a high quality, commending the contractor on their innovative solution.



The self-built filtration device mostly used materials already found on the site

It's a bug's life in special hotels on the A9

The contractor returned to Alvie Primary School towards the end of the project to install planters to brighten the revamped playground they provided in Summer 2016.

Along with the planter boxes, the contractor also donated six bug hotels providing opportunities for pupils to enjoy watching the bugs building their homes. The bug hotels were attached to the fence within the school grounds and filled with materials such as fir cones which provide snug, safe places for the insects to hibernate.

The bug hotels are known to attract lacewings and ladybirds, important species in the garden, which should help protect the flowers that the schoolchildren planted in the five planter boxes with the help of the contractor's team.

Making a difference

Having completed the revamp last year, the contractor kindly donated and installed the planter boxes and bug boxes at their own expense.

Site Manager Paul Gilligan said at the time: "We are delighted to hear how much enjoyment the additional playground facilities we installed last year have provided the children. We were keen to add some finishing touches to the playground by



Project staff helped school children plant the boxes

"The children are excited about the bug hotels and keep checking to see if the first 'guests' have arrived"

adding some colourful flowers and an educational and interesting feature with the bug hotels.

"With work on the stretch now in its final stages as we near completion, it has been pleasing to provide these

additional facilities for the children as our parting gift for the warm reception we have received both from the school and the community in general over the last two years."

Headteacher Kip Clarke, added: "We are very grateful to the contractor for the planters and bug boxes, they will make such a difference. We have lots of rabbits in our grounds, and every summer they strip our garden before we can harvest the vegetables. The planters are really sturdy and high enough to prevent the rabbits from eating the growing veg. The children are going to plant carrots, radish, peas, and beans. We have all kinds of insects in our grounds and mini-beast hunts are very popular.

"The children are excited about the bug hotels and keep checking to see if the first 'guests' have arrived!"

Transport Scotland Project Manager Pat Brassil said: "The contractor is to be commended not only for the work undertaken to upgrade this stretch of the road but for the positive relationships forged with the community, in particular the local primary school over the last two years."



Bug hotels and planters at Alvie Primary

Supporting the annual Kinraig Village Fair

MAKING BONFIRE NIGHT GO WITH A BANG!

Since 2015, the contractor helped ensure the local bonfire night was safe as well as spectacular. A digger was supplied to dig a pit for the 2015 event, covering the hole up afterwards. In Autumn 2016, £800 was donated to the local community's fireworks display. The contractor contributed £400, which was matched by Transport Scotland's site representative Atkins.

NEED TO SPEND A PENNY?

After an approach from Kinraig Community Council, the project funded provision of a portaloos for the benefit of residents and visitors to Kinraig.

Located at the old telephone exchange, opposite Kinraig Convenience Store, the portaloos was a useful asset for the village.

FAMILY BREAKDOWN RESCUE

When HBS Traffic Management was patrolling the work site on a cold day in February, Traffic Controller Billy Morrison noticed a car parked in the northbound lay-by along the A9. On holiday in the area, and on their way for their ski lessons at the Cairngorm Ski Resort, the family from Derbyshire were stood at the side of the road with their broken down vehicle. Billy and Michael (Site Foreman for the contractor) came to the family's rescue, arranging for the mother and children to be transported to the base station at the ski resort whilst the father dealt with the recovery of their vehicle. The family was extremely grateful and the children were pleased to arrive in time for their skiing lesson.

GOING POTTY

After the Headteacher Kip Clark mentioned how bad the road was up to the primary school, the contractor sent staff up with material to fill in the pot holes – a small gesture, but something that we are told made a real difference to parents every day.

The Kinraig Community Hall Association asked the contractor for help with plans for the Kinraig Village Fair.

Public Liaison Officer Anna Kelly attended two Community Hall Association meetings and was very pleased to be able to offer a selection of materials for use in the assault course.

The day was a huge success with over 100 community members registering for their 5km timed trial run.

Anna said: "My colleagues and I were more than happy to get involved in the preparation for this event. The day itself was well-planned, lots of fun and did a fantastic job of bringing the community together. The children had a great time, with the highlight of the day being the slide at the finish line of the 5km run."

Site Agent Mike Browne completed the 5km run in 25 minutes. No mean feat!



Mike Browne stretching off after his 5km run



Community involvement from day one

Meaningful community engagement was key to minimising the disruption that this major road project could have brought to the small, rural village of Kinraig within the scenic setting of the Cairngorms National Park.

Within weeks of work starting on-site, a drop-in event was held at Alvie Primary School so that the local community could come along, meet the team and find out more about the specific details of the project and to ask any questions they had.

With the contractor's site compound located in the village, and with substantial construction work carried out in close proximity to this, the key to achieving a positive outcome for all has been in listening and valuing the voices and opinions of the local community.

This enabled us to better understand those issues that would affect residents the most, and to plan work to accommodate these issues wherever possible.

Further information

For more information on the A9 Dualling Kinraig to Dalraddy project, please visit:

transport.gov.scot/project/a9-kinraig-dalraddy



For more information on the wider A9 Dualling Programme, please visit:

transport.gov.scot/a9dualling