

Kier holds competition for Ocean Conservation Trust

August 12, 2022



Kier has partnered with the Ocean Conservation Trust (OCT) to design a solution that protects seagrass beds for a design and engineering competition.

The OCT is a global conservation charity and one area that it focuses on is protecting and restoring seagrass, a key marine habitat which grows on the seabed in shallow marine and estuarine environments. It is vital for capturing and storing carbon and critical for biodiversity, as it provides a nursery for young fish.

In recent years, up to 90% of the UK's seagrass has disappeared. While causes are varied, damage by boat moorings as anchors and chains drag across the seabed contribute towards this and it's particularly problematic in tourist hotspots.

The competition provided an exciting opportunity to draw upon the engineering expertise Kier has across the Group to design an Advanced Mooring System, which would keep boats safely secured, while protecting vital seagrass habitats from damage caused by moorings.

The competition has now come to an end and the winning team is going to be spending a day with the OCT, undertaking hands-on restoration work and learning more about this area of conservation.

Mark Parry, development officer from the OCT said: "All teams came up with great solutions and there are things the OCT can learn from them all, as we move onto the next steps of developing the new mooring system. Congratulations to the winning team, we're looking forward to spending a day at sea with you!"

Sophie Timms, Kier's corporate affairs director and sponsor of Kier's Building for Tomorrow sustainability pillar, said: "With net zero targets moving ever closer, it's important to innovate to drive down the amount of carbon in the atmosphere. It's been wonderful to support the OCT with this important project and see the energy and hard work the teams have put in during the competition - on top of already-busy jobs. Congratulations to them all."