

Introduction

First of all, what is a green roof? A green roof is a roof where vegetation has been intentionally planted, either across the whole roof or just on part of it. This can be done for a number of reasons as green roofs have a wide range of benefits for both new and existing buildings and for the people and wildlife that live in and around them.



- Benefits**
1. Green roofs benefit local biodiversity by providing habitat for plants and animals.
 2. They absorb and use rainwater, which is becoming an increasing problem for our drainage systems to deal with, particularly as climate change deals us more and more unpredictable weather.
 3. They reduce something called the Urban Heat Island Effect, which is where our towns and cities become unnaturally hot due to buildings and roads absorbing the Sun's radiation.
 4. They provide extra thermal insulation for buildings, which reduces the cost of heating buildings in the Winter and cooling them in the Summer.
 5. They provide extra noise insulation. Some airports even install them to absorb the noise from the surrounding planes!

6. They extend the life of normal roofs by protecting them from UV radiation, weathering and frost damage.

7. They improve local air quality by absorbing pollution from the surrounding air.

8. They are visually attractive and improve the health and wellbeing of people. For example, staff with a view of greenspace, including green roofs, have lower absence rates. And hospital patients have been known to recover quicker and use less drugs because they have a view of greenspace from their window!

Black Redstarts

One particularly special reason to install green roofs is a rare, protected bird called the Black Redstart. There are only approximately 100 breeding pairs of this bird in the UK and we are lucky enough to have a population in Manchester. There are several areas, particularly in the City Centre, that provide potential habitat for the Redstart. The canals, old mill buildings, brownfield land and unfinished car parks are just some of the areas that you might expect to spot Redstarts.

