

Multi-million pound boost for green jobs and nature recovery

Action to support 2,500 jobs, plant almost a million trees and boost nature recovery across the country has been stepped up today (Wednesday 28 July) with 90 innovative projects set to receive money through the Government's £80 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund.

The projects, which will receive a share of £40 million, will span over 600 sites from North Northumberland to the tip of Cornwall, and will range from new 'insect pathways' in our countryside and towns, to tree planting projects in deprived urban areas – contributing towards the Government's commitment to treble tree planting rates across England by the end of this Parliament.

The [winning projects](#) include:

- Bringing the Buzz Back to the City – To protect our precious pollinators, Urban Green Newcastle and Northumberland Wildlife Trust are being awarded £697,800 to create a network of 45 nectar-rich public sites, aiming to plant 2,500 trees, 25,000 bulbs and creating 18 hectares of grassland. The work will target young people, with traineeships available including for young offenders, alongside volunteering, and schools work opportunities.
- Trees for Cities – Bringing nature to communities that need it most, Trees for Cities is being awarded £1,229,600 to increase tree cover in deprived urban areas. 55,000 trees will be planted across 83 coastal locations in 7 coastal towns. The project will also increase skills and training opportunities for young people aged 16-24 years.
- Avalon Marshes Wetland Wonderland – Somerset Wildlife Trust in partnership with RSPB, is receiving £906,700 to support the 'Avalon Marshes Wetland Wonderland' project to improve wetland habitats, water quality and hydrological connectivity on our nature reserves, which will benefit a whole range of wildlife including waders, wildfowl, eels, rare insects alongside wetland specialist plants. The project will also begin to restore a 10.6 acre site previously used for peat extraction. With a new hide, onsite and digital interpretation, trails and citizen science events, the partners will remove barriers and seek to engage a wider, more diverse audience with nature.
- More from Trees – To boost nature recovery and connect more people to nature in Merseyside and Cheshire, the Mersey Forest, through Community Forest Trust, is receiving £1,326,700 to deliver its Community Forest programme. The programme will improve biodiversity by creating new green corridors in Liverpool city centre, develop a specialist tree nursery

for native species, improve habitats for a range of species, and deploy natural flood management in two catchments in Cheshire. The project will also create a new green taskforce of retrained military veterans, and offer a range of nature-based activities to improve the health and well-being of local people.

- Chester Zoo Nature Recovery Corridor – Chester Zoo is being awarded £990,500 to create a 6.5 mile nature recovery corridor, covering restoration of wetlands, traditional orchards, hedgerows, grasslands and wildflower meadows in local wildlife sites. The project will be delivered to address demographic inequalities in peoples access to nature by targeting 12,000 people from deprived areas, and providing opportunities for youth trainees and community volunteer schemes.

Today's announcement follows a [successful first round of funding](#) where almost £40 million was awarded to 69 projects. This round saw over 800,000 trees planted, alongside wider conservation work and the restoration of protected landscapes and damaged habitats such as moorlands, wetlands and forests. Combined with the first round, the fund is on track to support over 2,500 jobs.

Speaking from [B-Lines](#), a Buglife project which has been awarded just over £170,000, Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

The diverse and ambitious projects being awarded funding today will help environmental organisations employ more people to work on tree-planting, nature restoration and crucially, help more of the public to access and enjoy the outdoors.

Through our £80 million Fund, we are on track to support over 2,500 jobs, plant almost a million trees and increase nature recovery at a huge scale across the country, which will help us deliver against our 25 Year Environment Plan.

The fund is delivered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission.

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, National Lottery Heritage Fund, said:

From wetland restoration, to creating wildlife-rich habitat for bees, it is vital that we value, protect and rebuild our natural heritage. This new funding will not only allow projects to carry out direct conservation which is essential in protecting our biodiversity, but it will increase awareness of how and why we need to change our behaviours in order to protect our future.

Natural England Chair Tony Juniper said:

Our environmental and conservation charity sector does an incredible job in protecting, improving and restoring the natural environment for the benefit of communities and the economy.

Having begun my environmental career back in 1984 working on a government-funded project comparable to those being announced today, I know from experience how this fund will be able to help a new generation of passionate young environmentalists take the first few steps in their careers. I can think of fewer more important investments in our future than that.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

By supporting jobs from Northumberland to Somerset, the Green Recovery Challenge Fund will help deliver a nature positive future. The fund supports young people to develop skills needed to protect nature, build back greener and prepare for climate impacts, like floods and heatwaves.

Forestry Commission Chair Sir William Worsley said:

This funding will help deliver thousands more trees and help us achieve our target of trebling tree planting rates in England by the end of the Parliament. We need to work towards net zero emissions by 2050; to address biodiversity loss; to better connect people with nature; and to create more green jobs in doing so. Trees are central to this and the projects being awarded these grants will have a hugely important role in helping us realise these objectives.

The fund is supporting a range of nature conservation and recovery and nature-based solutions projects, which will contribute towards the Government's wider [25 Year Environment Plan](#) commitments, including commitments to treble tree-planting rates in England by the end of this Parliament and restoring 35,000 hectares of peat.