

# **£15million to help put nature at the heart of our towns and cities**

01/10/2024



Pearson Park in Kingston upon Hull.

New support for local authorities and community organisations to improve access to green space within our urban neighbourhoods.

Everyone feels the benefit when nature is part of our daily lives. Evidence shows it makes us healthier, happier, more connected and more resilient.



But years of squeezed resources and competition for urban space means nature, green areas and historic parks have been neglected or lost from many neighbourhoods.

Our new strategic initiative, [Nature Towns and Cities](#), aims to enable 100 places across the UK to transform access to green space in urban areas and bring nature closer to home for us all to enjoy.

It is backed by a partnership between us, the National Trust and Natural England, working closely with NatureScot, Natural Resources Wales and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

We are delighted to be part of this partnership initiative to ensure nature is championed across our urban environments and across the UK.

*Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive, The National Lottery Heritage Fund*

Through collaboration with councils to shape the initiative, building strong networks and funding, we'll help deliver greener streets alive with trees, river and canal-side paths and historic parks full of energy and life.

## **New funding available**

As part of the initiative, we've committed £15m to support local authorities and community partners across the UK to put natural heritage and green infrastructure at the heart of their plans, priorities and investment, improving the climate resilience of their places and enabling access for all.

There will be one round of funding with grants available from £250,000 up to £1m.



Big City Butterflies connected people in London with nature and their local green spaces. Credit: Chris O'Donovan.

## What we're looking for

We want to fund projects focused on capacity building that will enable local authorities and their partners to put public green spaces like parks, linear walks, nature sites and community gardens at the heart of their thinking to realise the benefits for health, prosperity, heritage, nature and local pride.

Your application should identify what resources or support you will need. For example: additional expertise to engage local communities, develop partnerships or unlock new investment.

## How to apply

Read the full application guidance for a [Nature Towns and Cities grant](#).

We're accepting Expressions of Interest until 12noon on 12 November 2024.

If your initial proposal is successful, you will be invited to submit a full application between 16 December 2024 and 7 March 2025.

## Book onto a free webinar

View the [Introduction to Nature Towns and Cities webinar recording](#) to find out more about the funding available. There are more events coming soon, including themed webinars. [Book your place](#).





Royal Caledonian Horticulture Society volunteers in Saughton Park, Edinburgh. The park was transformed into a welcoming and inclusive community space.

## Additional benefits and support

All funded projects will be supported by a network of experts from the partner organisations, providing free advice on topics such as green infrastructure planning, community engagement and green finance.

Eilish McGuinness, Chief Executive, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: “We are delighted to be part of this partnership initiative to ensure nature is championed across our urban environments and across the UK.

“It fits with our ambitions to increase our support for strategic projects that help habitats and species thrive, reducing and mitigating the impacts of climate change, while helping people and communities connect to our unique natural heritage and supports our vision for heritage to be valued, cared for and sustained for everyone, now and in the future.”

## Find out more

Visit the [Nature Towns and Cities website](#) to find out more about the ambitions of this partnership. The website will continue to be updated as a learning hub, sharing case studies and news.



[Wildflower meadow in Queen's Park. Picture © BCP Council/ Mark Holloway. © BCP Council/ Mark Holloway](#)



[at a vital public resource parks are](#)

Volunteers tend to rose garden.



The project is giving opportunities for local communities to get involved with nature on their doorstep.  
Credit: Froglife.

**London Blue Chain: creating thriving networks for nature**