Winners announced for Sustainable Project of the

The team at Lambeth Palace, who are the joint winners of Sustainable Project of the Year 2026. Credit: Hayley Bray.

Lambeth Palace and Gloucestershire Archives have been crowned winners at the Museums + Heritage Awards.

The judges announced the two winning projects at a ceremony on 13 May, recognising their outstanding environmentally driven initiatives from the past year.

The joint prize – which we sponsored – highlights two different approaches: a capital project with environmental sustainability at its core and an easy-to-replicate project with scalable measures.

Be inspired by the winners

Harmonising Heritage and Sustainability at Lambeth Palace, London

The project worked with Historic England to excavate and catalogue finds. Credit: Alistair Veryard Photography.

The restoration sustainably transformed the 800-year-old site, embedding environmental responsibility into every decision while preserving its historical integrity. It's the oldest Grade I listed building to have achieved an 'excellent' BREEAM grade – a major achievement in sustainable design.

The project team removed gas boilers and installed an energy centre powered by three air-source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels, which now delivers 100% renewable heating.

Sustainability considered at every level

The project embedded sustainability throughout, recycling 39 tonnes of timber and saving 20 tonnes of CO2, as well as restoring original furniture rather than replacing it. The site now composts unavoidable waste and converts oils into biodiesel. And produce grown in its 10-acre gardens is used for on-site catering, reducing food miles and supporting biodiversity.

The project also created a space to safeguard heritage skills through stonework apprenticeships and furniture restoration.

Green Pledge Project at Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucester

An installation at Cheltenham Science Festival. Credit: Gloucestershire Archives.

This two-year project boosted the archives' collections, improved the building's carbon footprint, shared the story of Gloucestershire's environmental legacy and encouraged people to take positive climate actions.

An environmental audit inspired the team to install solar panels and electric vehicle charging stations, and increase biodiversity in the car park with five new trees and other planting.

Working in partnership to create lasting change

In partnership with Project Grow, the team transformed its community garden and generated over 63kg of vegetables for the local Wiggly food charity.

The 'Pledgehog' carved by Natasha Houseago. Credit: Gloucestershire Archives.

The project also shared knowledge and advice with 7,435 people through events and talks, and worked with artists to reach over 61,000 people with travelling exhibitions. Innovative approaches such as a carved 'Pledgehog' encouraged people to make personal commitments to be more environmentally friendly. And through all this community engagement, it added 175 new environmental collections to the archive.

View all of the Museums + Heritage Awards 2026 winners.

Run an environmentally sustainable project

We want all types of heritage projects to support nature recovery and protect our natural world.

To help you prepare your application, read our step-by-step guidance on environmental sustainability.

Wild Uplands was a Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture outdoor exhibition. Credit: Nida Mozuraite.

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Volunteers at the Railworld Wildlife Haven. Credit: Railworld Wildlife Haven.

ey to an award-winning attraction

Landscapes, parks and nature