



Green Recovery Challenge Fund



The National Lottery Heritage Fund



St Ann's Allotments awarded £109,900 in a huge green boost for Nottingham

St Ann's Allotments in Nottingham, one of the largest inner city allotment sites in the world, has been awarded £109,900 through the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund - for a flagship project called New Roots – which will launch in August 2021 and run until March 2023.

New Roots

New Roots is one of 90 nature projects across England to be awarded funding via the Government's £40 million second round of the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, a multi-million pound boost for green jobs and nature recovery.

New Roots is a unique conservation project that will put the allotments, a Grade 2* listed heritage site and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, at the heart of delivering employment and skills development for a rejuvenated green sector.

The project will offer new skills and training in greenspace management and conservation and increase access to alternative spaces and learning programmes. Providing a valuable and welcome boost to the economic recovery of Nottingham's communities.

New Roots will focus on creating lettable woodland and wildlife plots at St Ann's Allotments to provide structured and supported volunteering opportunities, conservation skills training, and employment opportunities.

The project, which is closely linked to Nottingham City's Green Social Prescribing pilot project, Green Spaces, will also connect new audiences with nature through an engaging, immersive and inclusive programme of land-based activities, and support the physical and mental wellbeing of participants.

Locally, Nottingham City Council has responded to the climate and environmental crisis by setting an ambition to become the first carbon neutral city in the UK by 2028. New Roots

will connect with this strategy as a project working on a vast greenspace less than one mile from Nottingham City centre.

New Roots will also contribute to the government's 25-year environment plan goal of thriving plants and wildlife and enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment.

As part of the Ministry of Justice's sustainability commitment, a proportion of unpaid work placements are expected to have an environmental/sustainability focus. New Roots will contribute towards meeting this commitment in partnership with The National Probation Service's Community Payback team.

The New Roots project will be delivered by The Renewal Trust – the community organisation who manages St Ann's Allotments – in partnership with the National Probation Service's Community Payback and Fit for Work teams and Nottingham Skill Mill. The project will be evaluated by the University of Derby, through its Nature Connectedness programme.

Cherry Underwood, CEO at The Renewal Trust, explained:

"St Ann's Allotments represents so much more than just an allotment site. As a beautiful green jewel in Nottingham's crown it provides communities with 75 acres of prime greenspace in the very heart of the city.

"It has been a vital green lung for Nottingham since the 1830s, and now, thanks to the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, it will breathe new life into the city's post-pandemic recovery.

"We are delighted that the unique role St Ann's Allotments plays in bringing together employment, skills and wellbeing is being nationally recognised."

Kay Finlay from Skill Mill said:

"The Skill Mill are delighted to be able to offer our young people in Nottingham even more opportunities. The skills and confidence which our young people are able to develop through this partnership is fantastic, and the physical and mental health benefits achieved through working in the outdoors are exceptionally valuable".

St Ann's Allotments

St Ann's Allotments brings a wide diversity of local people together for gardening, growing and conservation, providing a much-needed connection to nature for many residents who have limited access to greenspace.

The allotments also provide important natural habitats for nature including allotment gardens, woodland, wildflower meadows, ponds, scrubland and coppices, along with 32 miles of hedgerows and 222 plant species. Those habitats provide an abundance of shelter, food and nesting opportunities for wildlife including 50 species of bird.

Nicola Hinton, St Ann’s Allotment Manager explained:

“Around four acres at the site is designated for wildlife conservation. These wildlife areas and uncultivated buffer zones enable a diverse range of wildlife to thrive in an otherwise urban area where significant wildlife habitats are scarce.

“Alongside this, we’re seeing an increasing demand for allotments that go beyond traditional horticultural plots. This presents us with a valuable opportunity to increase biodiversity through tree planting and management, understory fruit tree planting, coppicing, hedgerow management, and the creation of meadows and grasslands.

“Learning and participation will be at the forefront of the New Roots project, both onsite and online, so that everyone can contribute to the success of wildlife and heritage conservation at St Ann’s Allotments – which is such an important site for the city as a whole.”

Cherry Underwood concludes:

“Parks and green spaces have provided a lifeline for millions of people in the pandemic. Many spaces are now under pressure and as local authorities reduce their funding, it is voluntary sector partners such as ourselves who are leading the way in supporting the protection and conservation of our local spaces.

“Rightly championed as crucial to maintaining people’s physical and mental health, parks and green spaces became a vital part of the national response to Covid-19. Now, as we emerge from the pandemic, green spaces will continue to play a crucial role in the nation’s economic and social recovery.

“I’m thrilled that the Green Recovery Challenge Fund has recognised what St Ann’s Allotments has to offer in terms of supporting the physical, mental and economic health of our communities.”

Notes for Editors:

About the Green Recovery Challenge Fund

The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is a key part of the Prime Minister’s 10 Point Plan to kick-start nature recovery and tackle climate change. Connecting people with nature is another priority theme: by increasing access to nature and greenspaces, projects will support both physical and mental wellbeing.

The Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund was developed by Defra and its Arm's-Length Bodies. The fund is being delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England, the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission.

Work will be carried out on over 600 sites from North Northumberland to the tip of Cornwall, and combined with the first round, almost a million trees will be planted,

contributing towards the Government's commitment to treble tree planting rates across England by the end of this Parliament.

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."

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."

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."

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."

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."

A full list of awards is available to view at:

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/publications/green-recovery-challenge-fund-second-round-decisions-july-2021>