

MAYOR OF LONDON

Grow Back Greener Fund 2021

GRANTS GUIDE

June 2021



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Foreword

Our city's wonderful parks and green spaces have been a real lifeline during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for those Londoners without their own gardens. Our green spaces have been a source of respite, a place to exercise, and somewhere to meet friends safely outdoors. Never have they been more important for our health and wellbeing.

But we know that not all Londoners have good access to green spaces. This is a matter of social justice, and like many of our city's existing inequalities, this imbalance has been brought into sharp focus by the pandemic. I want all Londoners to live within a 10-minute walk of green space.

Our green spaces and natural environment – parks, woodlands, nature reserves, rivers, canals and more – have a vital role to play in tackling the climate and ecological emergencies we face. They help to keep London cool, provide shade and reduce the risk of flooding. They also provide homes for wildlife and bring nature closer to Londoners.


That's why protecting, restoring and increasing London's green spaces is at the heart of my Green New Deal for London. Our recovery from COVID-19 must be a green one, and I'm determined to take the bold action required to lead a just transition to a greener economy, healthier city and more equal society.

I'm proud of the environmental achievements of my first term, from introducing the world's first Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) and setting out my ambition for London to be zero-carbon by 2030, to becoming the world's first National Park City and planting a record 340,000 trees. But I want to go much further and faster.

Cleaning London's air and tackling the climate and ecological emergencies will be a top priority during my second term as Mayor. Already, I've recommitted to expanding the ULEZ this October and have launched a 'retrofit revolution' to create low carbon buildings and green jobs. In a year of vital UN conferences for climate and nature, London will lead from the front.

Last year's Grow Back Greener Fund helped to kickstart a green recovery by supporting local projects across London's communities. This year, I'm very pleased that we are working in partnership with Thames Water, and thanks to their additional funding, we will be able to support even more projects to transform neighbourhoods across our city.

This year's fund will help to improve London's network of green corridors, ensure that Londoners have a thriving web of nature on their doorstep and create more climate resilient spaces. It will also support local communities to make a real difference to their neighbourhood and to people's wellbeing. We look forward to receiving your proposals.



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

We're so excited and proud to be partnering with the Mayor of London on his Grow Back Greener scheme.

The goal of providing every Londoner with a green space within ten minutes of their doorstep is fantastic and something we fully support. It closely connects with our own aims at Thames Water to help our customers, communities and the environment to thrive.

We're passionate about protecting the environment, investing in communities, helping those who need it most and creating green spaces. London is at the heart of our region and we can safely say what matters to Londoners truly matters to us.

Throughout the pandemic, we know how important it has been for people's physical and mental wellbeing to be out in nature and breathing fresh air. We've been so proud to play a role in supporting this through access to some of our nature reserves and open spaces.

One example of this is at Walthamstow Wetlands, where we've created Europe's largest urban nature reserve around 10 of our reservoirs. Not only is it the home to many species of wildlife, but it was also enjoyed by over 650,000 Londoners during 2020.

Alongside this, when many people think of London, in addition to the iconic buildings they often think of the River Thames. It acts as a place for recreation, a hub for meeting and a space for nature. The work under way on The Thames Tideway Tunnel, and our broader investment programme in our sewage treatment works, represent an important step towards cleaning up the River Thames for future generations to enjoy.

Of course, not everyone has a nature reserve on their doorstep, or can take a walk along the Thames. That's why I strongly support the Grow Back Greener programme and why Thames Water is co-funding it.

We're committed to being a force for good by helping local communities to improve. To help achieve this, we're creating green spaces, restoring wetlands and waterways, planting trees, installing sustainable drainage systems, and creating new wildlife habitats.

We fully support the Mayor in his inspiring Green New Deal for London, and are excited about working together to create a positive legacy for future generations to enjoy.

Sarah Bentley

CEO, Thames Water

1. Introduction and aims of the fund

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted as never before the importance of London's green and blue spaces for our mental and physical health. Research has shown that the capital's green spaces are worth £950m per year in avoided health costs,¹ and that value has been demonstrated throughout this crisis. Whether as a space for exercising, watching local wildlife, meeting friends safely outdoors or just noticing the blossoming trees, our green spaces have been vital.

However, while London is one of the world's greenest global cities, the pandemic has also brought into sharp focus the inequalities in access to green space across our city. Too many Londoners, and especially lower-income and Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners, live in neighbourhoods that lack good access to quality green space. These same Londoners are also less likely to have a garden of their own. We must therefore do more to ensure that all Londoners can benefit from our parks, nature reserves and waterways.

As well as supporting the health and wellbeing of Londoners, our capital's green infrastructure – our network of parks, gardens, woodlands, trees, rivers, canals, green roofs, nature reserves and more – has an important role to play in tackling the climate and ecological emergencies and building our resilience to the impacts of a warmer climate. Green infrastructure can help to reduce local flood risk, keep the city cool and provide shade, as well as providing habitat for wildlife, improving air quality and storing carbon.

Our recovery from the pandemic must be a green recovery, and the Mayor, Sadiq Khan, has declared his ambition for London to spearhead the transition to a greener economy and a healthier city. In 2020, as the recovery process began, the Mayor launched the [first round of the Grow Back Greener Fund](#), which supported 34 community projects.

Building on this success, the 2021 round of the Grow Back Greener Fund will be co-funded by Thames Water. Thanks to this additional support, the Fund will be able to support more projects, with a total of £1.1m available to help embed a green recovery across London's communities.

The Grow Back Greener Fund aims to:

- enhance London's vital green and blue spaces, and make the built environment greener, to help the capital adapt and respond to the climate and ecological emergency
- address the environmental and health inequalities highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic by prioritising projects in locations with poor access to green space, high vulnerability and exposure to the impacts of climate change, and high flood and heat risk

¹ Natural capital accounts for public green space in London:
https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/11015viv_natural_capital_account_for_london_v7_full_vis.pdf

- create more opportunities for all Londoners, especially those from communities that use green spaces less, to access training to develop green skills, and to access green spaces, including by volunteering
- support communities, civil society organisations, environmental NGOs, local authorities, schools and housing associations to take local action that builds community resilience and supports Londoners to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This guide sets out the objectives of the fund, the grants available and the application process in more detail.

The Grow Back Greener Fund is one of two funds being launched in summer 2021, as part of a package of measures to enhance green and blue spaces, and climate resilience. In July, applications will open for a Green and Resilient Spaces Fund that will support large-scale, innovative projects that transform green and blue spaces and the wider public realm to enhance climate resilience, offering grants of up to £750,000. You can find out more about this fund at: www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/green-space-funding.

1.1. Wider context

1.1.1. *The Green New Deal Mission*

The Grow Back Greener Fund is part of the London Recovery Board's Green New Deal Mission, one of nine missions jointly developed by the Mayor and London Councils to guide the [capital's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

The [Green New Deal Mission](#) aims to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies, and improve air quality, by doubling the size of London's green economy by 2030 to accelerate job creation for all. The mission has four overarching objectives:

- improve London's natural environment, improve air quality, and tackle the climate and ecological emergency
- promote and incentivise activities that sustain and grow London's green economy
- prioritise interventions reducing health inequalities and social injustices
- engage Londoners and businesses in the journey to become a zero-pollution and greener city.

The Grow Back Greener Fund will also support delivery of several other recovery missions, including: [Building Strong Communities](#), [Healthy Food Healthy Weight](#), and [Mental Health and Wellbeing](#).

In his manifesto, the Mayor committed to bringing nature close to Londoners; and to protecting, restoring and improving green spaces in the city. He also set a goal for all Londoners to live within a 10-minute walk of green space.

The Grow Back Greener Fund also supports the Mayor's commitment to support schools, local communities, environment groups, local authorities and housing associations to create or enhance nearby green space.

London became the world's first [National Park City](#) in 2019, and the Grow Back Greener Fund builds on the Mayor's programme since 2016 to improve London's green infrastructure to benefit all Londoners. The programme's outcomes have include:

- supporting 280 green space and tree planting projects through the £13m [Greener City Fund](#), to improve over 400 hectares of green space
- planting over 340,000 trees between May 2016 and March 2021, with a further 90,000 planned this winter
- incorporating ambitious green infrastructure policies into the [new London Plan](#), including an Urban Greening Factor to ensure all major new developments include greening, and stronger protections for the Green Belt and other green spaces.

1.1.2. Supporting Thames Water's public value framework

[Thames Water](#) strongly supports the Mayor's ambition to protect, restore and enhance London's green and blue spaces, and is delighted to be co-funding the 2021 Grow Back Greener Fund.

As the UK's largest water and wastewater company Thames Water plays a significant role in the daily lives of the 15m customers its serves. But as well as providing safe drinking water and sanitation to London and the Thames Valley, Thames Water is also committed to being a force for good in the communities it serves and the environment in which it operates. It calls this broader contribution to society 'Public Value'.

This commitment to generate Public Value has been written into the company's Articles of Association, and supports the company's core purpose to deliver life's essential service so their customers, communities and the environment can thrive.

Thames Water's Public Value activities are focused on four areas of work, all of which align closely with the ambitions of the Grow Back Greener Fund:

- investing in your community
- protecting your planet
- creating green spaces

- helping those who need it most.

As well as a shared ambition for a greener, healthier and more equitable London, Thames Water also has over a decade of experience administering similar funds across the south. Since 2015 alone the company has invested nearly £10m through its own community investment programmes with a variety of partners, from large wildlife organisations to small community groups.

Their programmes have already helped open up more green and blue space to Londoners, such as the multi-award winning Walthamstow and Woodberry Wetlands areas to the north of the city; and the ever popular Greenway, Ridgeway and New River green corridors transecting the city north, south, east and west.

These and Thames Water's other 100 open access sites across the south have provided vital access to nature during the pandemic: something they hope their support of the Grow Back Greener Fund can facilitate right across the capital.

As well as bringing nature to people's doorsteps, Thames Water also wants to see the fund tackle some of the broader environmental challenges facing London and the Thames Valley. Thames Water will screen applications alongside the Mayor and will be looking for proposals that tackle some of the specific ambitions contained within their Public Value Framework:

- committing to net zero carbon by 2030 and beyond
- delivering a net gain for biodiversity
- looking after the health of rivers
- investing in nature-based infrastructure
- supporting local charities
- supporting special-interest groups and citizen science.

1.2. What the Grow Back Greener Fund will support

The Grow Back Greener Fund will support a wide range of projects to help make London greener, fairer, healthier and more climate-resilient. These projects should take place in, and enhance, publicly accessible spaces including parks, community gardens, housing estates, streets, school playgrounds, waterways and nature reserves. They should mainly be focused on making physical improvements to the space.

We will prioritise projects that:

- are in areas of the city with poor access to open space, and at high climate risk, especially where these are also areas of deprivation
- work with, or preferably are led by, Londoners who are less likely to access green space; this includes Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners, lower-income Londoners, and people aged 65 and over
- include opportunities for Londoners to access training or develop new skills.

The 2021 Grow Back Greener Fund will offer grants under two themes: **access to green space**, and **climate adaptation and water**. While these two themes are not mutually exclusive, you should apply to the theme that best aligns with the aims of your project. If you are unsure which theme to apply for, please email greenercity@london.gov.uk or call Kamrul Islam on 07540 126 706.

1.2.1. *Access to green space*

The **access to green space** theme will support projects that create new green space and green cover; open up previously inaccessible spaces; or improve the quality and accessibility of existing green space. We will prioritise projects in locations with poor access to public open space. Projects could include:

- enhancing or creating publicly accessible green spaces for people and/or wildlife
- community gardening and food growing
- permanently greening streets and public spaces, or creating parklets
- planting and maintaining trees or woodlands
- management activities to improve wildlife habitats
- improving access to green space for Londoners, especially under-represented communities
- creating opportunities for children to access nature, and outdoor play and learning, including within and near to schools.

This is not an exhaustive list and we are keen to hear your ideas.

Using the Green Infrastructure Focus Map

The GLA's [Green Infrastructure Focus Map](#) includes a range of data on environmental and social issues that help to highlight where greening is needed. It divides London into 350m 'hexes' to identify needs on a local scale.

You can use the Green Infrastructure Focus Map to find out which areas of the city have poorer access to open space. The Access to Public Open Space layer on the map shows what proportion of households within each 'hex' live in an area of deficiency in access to local and district open space (more than 400 metres from an open space of at least two hectares, and more than 1.2 kilometres from an open space between two and 20 hectares). You can also access a simple version of this Access to Public Open Space layer here: <https://maps.london.gov.uk/aod/>.

Full instructions on how to use these maps to inform your application can be found in [Appendix C](#).

The Green Infrastructure Focus Map also includes datasets such as air quality, flood risk and urban heat islands, which can help to identify the key environmental issues in your area, as well as contextual information such as population density and deprivation.

Access the map at: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/green-infrastructure-focus-map>.

1.2.2. *Climate adaptation and water*

The **climate adaptation and water** theme will support projects that aim to enhance London's resilience to climate change through green and blue infrastructure, and/or nature-based solutions that reduce flood risk, improve water quality, create shade and cool the city. It will also support projects to improve waterways, and increase water and wastewater awareness. We will prioritise projects in locations with high climate risk. Projects could include:

- installing green sustainable drainage features to reduce local flood risk and store water for reuse
- increasing green cover and reducing surface water flood risk by depaving to turn grey to green
- cleaning up, restoring and naturalising water bodies including rivers, canals and ponds
- tree planting to create shade and promote cooling, manage surface water and support natural flood management
- using nature-based solutions such as constructed wetlands to improve water quality
- increasing water and wastewater awareness.

This is not an exhaustive list and we are keen to hear your ideas.

Using the London Climate Risk Maps

The [London Climate Risk Maps](#), produced by the GLA and Bloomberg Associates, highlight climate vulnerability across London. Climate vulnerability relates to both people's exposure to climate impacts, such as flooding or heatwaves, and personal and social factors that affect their ability to cope with and respond to extreme events.

These maps bring together key metrics on exposure to climate risk, such as flood risk, access to open space, air pollution and heat, with vulnerability metrics including concentrations of younger and older people, and deprivation. The maps use the same 'hex' grid as the [Green Infrastructure Focus Map](#), and show overall climate risk. There are also separate maps for flood risk and heat risk.

Full instructions on how to use these maps to inform your application can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Access the maps at: <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/climate-risk-mapping>.



CASE STUDY: Allotment of Refuge, Lewisham

Action for Refugees in Lewisham (AFRIL), working with One Tree Hill Allotment Society, is transforming an unloved allotment into a food-growing space for refugees, people seeking asylum, and people with no recourse to public funds.

The project will enable 10 people to develop horticultural skills and accredited gardening and volunteering qualifications, as well as ensuring a supply of fresh vegetables for participants and AFRIL's foodbank.

Photo: AFRIL



CASE STUDY: Bethnal Green Wetlands Rescue, Tower Hamlets

Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust, working in partnership with Hollybush and Teesdale Residents Association and local schools, is restoring the wetlands areas at Bethnal Green Nature Reserve.

The project is being delivered via a training programme for four Black, Asian and minority ethnic young people, who will be actively involved in the habitat works and engagement programme under expert guidance.

Photo: Bethnal Green Nature Reserve

2. Grants available

A total of **£1.2m** is available in this funding round, and we expect to be able to support about 50 projects. This funding will be evenly split across the two themes.

For the **access to green space** theme, grants between **£10,000 and £50,000** are available.

For the **climate adaptation and water** theme, grants between **£10,000 and £75,000** are available. This is to reflect the higher costs of some of these types of projects, such as sustainable drainage schemes.

Organisations can apply for a maximum of two grants, which should be for different projects, working at different sites. These projects can be within the same theme, or across the two themes. A single application can be made for a project that covers multiple sites.

Funded projects should start from November 2021 and should be completed by November 2022. Grants cannot be used to retrospectively fund work already completed or under way. Projects must take place within Greater London and must be in a publicly accessible location.

A further round of funding will be offered in 2022, with applications expected to open next summer.

2.1. Eligible organisations

Applications are open to:

- registered charities including charitable incorporated organisations
- formally constituted community groups
- social and not-for-profit businesses including community interest companies and social enterprises
- community benefit societies
- tenants and residents' associations, and tenant management organisations
- housing associations
- local authorities, where they are working in collaboration with one or more local community groups, schools or civil society organisations

- schools, including academy trusts, parents' associations and other organisations working on behalf of a school.

Applications must be from a formally constituted organisation that has an organisational bank account and is able to enter into legal contracts. **You cannot apply as a private individual.**

2.2. Grant funding terms

Funding offers to successful applicants will be made subject to the applicant's acceptance of a grant agreement that must be signed before the project can start. Payments will be made according to the following schedule:

- 50 per cent upfront, on return of signed funding agreement
- 25 per cent on submission of a satisfactory mid-project monitoring report and proof of expenditure to date
- 25 per cent on completion, subject to submission of a satisfactory final monitoring report and proof of expenditure.

We understand some organisations may have cashflow difficulties, particularly as we recover from the impacts of the pandemic. We are happy to discuss alternative payment schedules for successful projects.

2.2.1. Match funding

Projects must have a minimum of **20 per cent match funding**. For example, if you are applying for a grant of £10,000, you should have at least £2,000 in match funding. This match funding can be either cash (for example, from another grant or from your own funds), or in-kind (for example, donated materials, or staff or volunteer time).

Calculating the value of volunteer time

The value of volunteer time for "unskilled" volunteering – that is, a task that can be carried out with basic or no training – should be calculated using the London Living Wage (£10.85) per hour. For example, 100 hours of volunteering would be worth $100 \times £10.85 = £1,085$.

The value of volunteer time that relies on specialist skills (for example, a landscape gardener giving a day's work for free) should be calculated using the typical day or hourly rate for that task/profession.

2.3. Eligible costs

The Grow Back Greener Fund can support a range of costs as long as these are contributing to the delivery of the project, and to the core aims of improving London's green spaces and enhancing climate resilience.

2.3.1. *Costs that CAN be supported by the Grow Back Greener Fund, with NO restrictions*

This includes both capital and revenue costs, such as:

- purchase of trees and plants
- purchase of other materials to create or improve green spaces
- machine and equipment purchase or hire
- staff costs for project delivery, including labour, design, project management, volunteer management
- specialist fees, for example, a landscape architect or a designer
- volunteer expenses
- event costs, such as educational workshops
- PPE or other equipment necessary for safe project delivery.

2.3.2. *Costs that CAN be supported by the Grow Back Greener Fund, with restrictions*

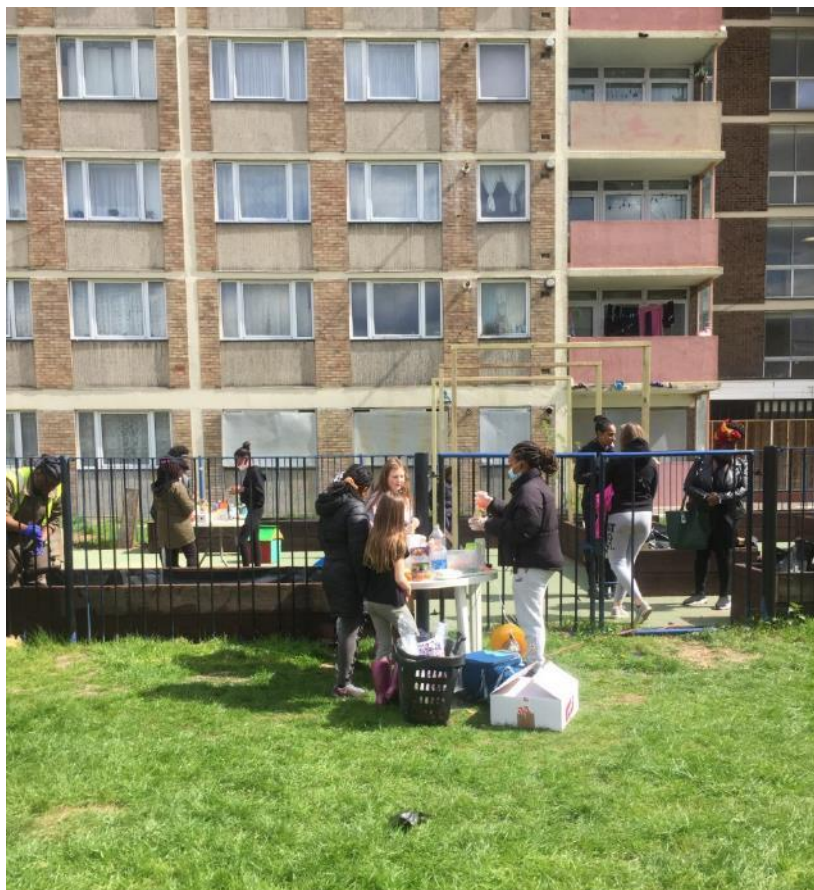
The following costs should not be more than the specified proportion of the total grant:

- a maximum of **15 per cent** of the total grant can be used to contribute towards a portion of organisational overheads necessary for project delivery (for example, rent, bills, administration)
- a maximum of **10 per cent** of the total grant can be used for maintenance costs that will be incurred beyond the end of the project period (that is, after November 2022). For example, this could include watering trees or volunteer sessions to maintain a green space.

2.3.3. *Costs that CANNOT be supported*

The Grow Back Greener Fund cannot be used towards the following costs:

- land purchase
- capital items that are not primarily about improving green space – for example, improving a building or other grey infrastructure
- “business as usual” activities – for example, routine maintenance
- projects that have already started, or are a continuation of existing work
- core staff costs or other core costs that are not project specific (beyond the 15 per cent allocated for overheads).



CASE STUDY: Northolt's Breathing Spaces, Ealing

Building Bridges, working with the London Borough of Ealing, the West London NHS Trust and Medlar Farm Estate is turning three unused and neglected sites in Northolt into “breathing spaces” for growing food and improving air quality.

This includes turning a disused play area into a community growing space at Radcliffe Estate, revitalising an empty garden space at Medlar Farm Estate, and creating a wildlife-friendly garden at Northolt Library.

Photo: Building Bridges



CASE STUDY: Lambeth Loves Nature

Froglife, working with Streatham Common Co-operative, is creating a unique corridor of ponds alongside the River Graveney on Streatham Common.

The project will help to reduce flooding, enhance an existing nature trail and make this part of the Common more accessible. The project is being steered by the local community through a cross-generational approach with a focus on working with disadvantaged young people and people living with dementia.

Photo: Froglife

3. How to Apply

Please read this guidance carefully, including the application guidance and assessment criteria in section four. Applications must be made and submitted through the online application form. You will be asked a series of eligibility questions before accessing the form. Once you have started your application, you can save your progress and return to it before submitting.

[Click here to access the online application form.](#)

You can find a copy of the application form questions in [Appendix A](#). As well as the form, you will need to provide at least three photographs of your project site, and any relevant sketch designs, plans or maps. You can also upload additional files, such as letters of support.

The deadline for applications is 5:00pm on Monday 13 September 2021.

3.1. Support in preparing your application

The application and delivery timeline are outlined in Section 3.2. below. Applications will be managed by Groundwork London, who will be happy to answer any questions you have about the application process, or about your project.

Please email greenercity@london.gov.uk, or call Kamrul Islam on 07540 126 706. We will be holding optional applicant information webinars on the following dates:

- Monday 19 July 2021, 5:30pm – 7:00pm: [register here](#)
- Wednesday 21 July 2021, 3:00pm – 4:30pm: [register here](#)
- Thursday 2 September 2021, 11:00am – 12:30pm: [register here](#).

This will be an opportunity to hear more about the aims of the fund, the application process and assessment criteria. It will give you a chance to ask questions and receive advice on completing your application.

Section four of this guide provides more detail on completing the application form and the assessment criteria.

3.2. Application and delivery timeline

Date	Milestone
30 June 2021	Applications for the 2021 Grow Back Greener Fund open.
30 June – 13 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read this document in full to understand the fund requirements and how to apply. • Contact the team at greenercity@london.gov.uk with any questions about the application process or your project. • Join one of the information webinars for additional support on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monday 19 July 2021, 5:30pm – 7:00pm ○ Wednesday 21 July 2021, 3:00pm – 4:30pm ○ Thursday 2 September 2021, 11:00am – 12:30pm • Complete the application form.
Before 5pm on 13 September 2021	Submit your application online .
Late September – mid-October 2021	Assessment process takes place. You may be asked for more information about your project, or to clarify any queries.
Late October 2021	You will be informed of the outcome of your application. If successful, you'll be asked to complete and sign a funding agreement.
November 2021	Projects start. Grantees receive first payment instalment.
May 2022	Submission of mid-project monitoring report and proof of expenditure. Grantees receive second payment instalment.
November 2022	Submission of final project monitoring report and proof of expenditure. Grantees receive final payment instalment.

3.3. Support for project delivery

If your grant application is successful and you are awarded funding, Groundwork London will be your first point of contact during your project delivery period. You will be assigned a grants officer who will be able to help you with queries, discuss any changes to your project, and help with the required monitoring and reporting.

Groundwork London will host a programme induction session once funding has been awarded, to help successful applicants understand the requirements of the programme and answer any initial questions. This will also be an opportunity to meet other grantees and share ideas.

Groundwork London will also offer several training sessions during the course of the delivery period, tailored to the needs of grantees.

4. Application guidance

This section outlines the application requirements and assessment criteria and provides advice on completing the application form. **Please read this in detail before starting your application.**

4.1. Completing the application form

The [application form](#) for the Grow Back Greener Fund is split into five sections, which will be used to assess your project's suitability for the fund. A copy of the application form can be found in [Appendix A](#). Before accessing the form online, you will be asked a series of gateway questions. These questions are designed to check whether your project proposal is eligible for the fund. They are not scored, but all projects must meet the basic eligibility criteria.

The application form sections are:

- **Section 1: About your organisation** – these questions are designed to check whether your organisation is eligible for the fund, and to enable due diligence checks to be carried out. They are not scored, but all organisations must meet the eligibility criteria.
- **Section 2: About your project** – these questions provide an overview of your project, the activities that will take place and the outputs you aim to deliver. They are not scored, but will be used to check that your project meets the core aims of the fund.
- **Section 3: Meeting the aims of the fund** – these questions form 60 per cent of the assessment of your project (15 per cent for each question). They allow you to go into more detail about what your project will achieve, and enable us to assess how well your project meets the aims of the fund. Further details of the assessment criteria are outlined below.
- **Section 4: Delivering your project** – these questions form 20 per cent of the assessment of your project. They allow you to demonstrate how your project will be delivered successfully, on time and within budget, and safely in the context of COVID-19.
- **Section 5: Project budget** – this question forms 20 per cent of the assessment of your project. It allows you to demonstrate that you have thought about the costs of your project, and that it delivers good value for money.

4.2. Assessment criteria

Your application will be assessed against the criteria outlined below.

Section 3: Meeting the Aims of the Fund

These questions form 60 per cent of the assessment of your project (15 per cent for each question). They allow you to go into more detail about what your project will achieve and enable us to assess how well your project meets the aims of the fund.

1. How will your project enhance green space or waterways, and/or enhance London's resilience to the impacts of climate change?

Your answer to this question should focus on *what* your project will do – how your project will improve and transform a particular site.

If you are applying for the **access to green space** theme, your project should either:

- enhance an existing green space (such as a park, nature reserve, community garden, woodland, or housing estate green space)
- create new green space or green cover
- improve Londoners' access to an existing green space.

Your answer to this question should describe clearly how your project will do one or more of these things and deliver environmental benefits.

If you are applying for the **climate adaptation and water** theme, your project should either:

- create, enhance or restore waterways and wetlands (including rivers, ponds and canals)
- use green or blue infrastructure (nature-based solutions) to enhance London's resilience to climate change by providing one or more of the following benefits:
 - reducing flood risk
 - improving water quality
 - cooling the urban environment
 - providing shade
 - addressing water scarcity.

Your answer to this question should describe clearly how your project will do one or more of these things and deliver environmental benefits.

We encourage you to use our green infrastructure and climate risk maps and tools, and technical guidance highlighted in section five, to inform your project design. You may wish to provide a sketch design or planting plan, or relevant maps of local environmental issues to support your application. Further advice for community organisations on communicating your project visually [can be found here](#).

2. How will your project support the priorities of the fund, and respond to local needs, by targeting a location(s) that has poor access to green space and/or high climate risk?

Your answer to this question should focus on *why* your project is needed – why the location of your project should be a priority for improvement.

If you are applying to the **access to green space** theme this could be a location that is currently lacking green space, where existing green spaces are poor-quality or inaccessible, or where many residents lack access to gardens. You may also wish to outline any local needs or desire to use the space that have become particularly apparent during the COVID-19 pandemic.

You should use the GLA's [Green Infrastructure Focus Map](#) or [Access to Open Space Map](#) to identify the access to open space at your project location. Further details of how to use these maps are provided in [Appendix C](#).

If you are applying to the **climate change adaptation and water** theme, your answer should explain why the location of your project is particularly exposed to risks from climate change, such as flooding and heatwaves. Climate vulnerability also relates to people's personal and social factors that affect their ability to cope with and respond to the impacts of climate change, including extreme events. Your answer should also consider how your project can support more vulnerable Londoners.

You should use the GLA's [London Climate Risk Mapping](#) to identify the levels of climate risk at your project location. Further details of how to use these maps are provided in [Appendix C](#).

3. How will your project provide opportunities for Londoners, especially people who are less likely to access green space, to play an active part in making London greener and to develop new skills, including through training and volunteering?

Your answer to this question should focus on how people will take part in your project, and *who* will be involved.

Your project should involve Londoners in making the city greener. It should provide people with opportunities and support to actively take part in the project, to volunteer and to

develop new skills. We want to support projects that work with local communities, and will prioritise projects that are led by, or will work with, Londoners who are less likely to access green space, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners, lower-income Londoners and those aged 65 and over.

We will prioritise projects that support people to develop new skills, which could be through:

- volunteering opportunities with new and/or established volunteers
- training or education sessions, including structured programmes leading to qualifications
- projects being co-designed and led by local communities and residents.

You should outline who will lead the project, and how local people will be involved, through co-design, volunteering, training or other participation, as well as the benefits people will gain from participating. You could include details of community consultation you have carried out already, or evidence of support from local people. We are keen to hear from user-led and grassroots groups.

4. How will you ensure that your project leaves a positive legacy, including any ongoing plans for maintaining the space, or sustaining community engagement?

Any project must have a clear plan for maintenance, to ensure that the benefits of activities to improve the space are fully realised. In order to support this, up to 10 per cent of any grant can be spent on maintenance beyond the end of the project.

Your answer to this question should detail how any maintenance budget will be spent, who will be responsible for maintaining the new or improved space, and how volunteering or community involvement will be sustained. Maintenance is particularly important for tree planting projects to ensure that any newly planted trees survive and flourish.

Your answer should also describe how the space will be used following the end of the project, and the lasting impact it will have on the site and the community.

Section 4: Delivering your project

These questions form 20 per cent of the assessment of your project. They allow you to demonstrate how your project will be delivered successfully, on time and within budget, and safely in the context of COVID-19.

1. Project plan

In this section you should set out the key milestones for your project, the timeline for achieving them, and the actions you will need to take. Your project must be completed by

November 2022, and the timeline should reflect this. Your answer should demonstrate that you have a well-thought-out project plan, with realistic and achievable timelines. An example of a completed project plan can be found in [Appendix B](#).

2. Risk register

In this section you should outline some of the key risks to your project, and how you will mitigate these risks. You should score each risk according to its likelihood of happening (probability), and how big an impact it would have. The total score (probability x impact) should be assigned a red, amber or green rating. Any red risks may need further mitigation to ensure that they don't prevent your project from being successfully completed. An example of a completed risk register can be found in [Appendix B](#).

3. How will you ensure that your project is delivered safely in line with the latest social distancing and health advice, and how could the project be adapted if restrictions on activities are tightened?

Your answer to this question should set out what measures you will take to ensure that your project is delivered safely in the context of COVID-19, including adhering to the latest public health and social distancing guidelines.

This might include health and safety protocols for volunteers and contractors, how events will be managed to ensure social distancing, use of PPE, and how any track and trace requirements would be implemented.

It should also include details of the how the project could be adapted if restrictions on activities are tightened, for example with stricter social distancing measures. This could include restricting the number of volunteers attending sessions.

Section 5: Project budget

This question forms 20 per cent of the assessment of your project. It allows you to demonstrate that you have thought about the costs of your project, and that it delivers good value for money.

Your budget should be as detailed as possible and should follow the guidelines on eligible costs outlined in section 2.3., above. It's useful to get at least three quotes for major items and check the costs for smaller items with reputable suppliers. An example of a completed budget can be found in [Appendix B](#).

4.3. Assessment process

Once you have submitted your application, it will be assessed according to the following process:

1. **Sifting:** initial review of all applications for eligibility, including: organisation, delivery timelines, grant amount, project remit. Ineligible applications will be rejected at this stage.
2. **Shortlisting:** all applications are scored by a minimum of two assessors from the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Groundwork London, according to the criteria outlined above. Applications will also be reviewed by Thames Water. Applications that score less than an agreed threshold will be rejected at this stage.
3. **Grants panel:** shortlisted applications are reviewed by the grants panel for a final funding decision. The panel will include officers from the GLA, Thames Water and Groundwork London, as well as independent environment and community experts. The panel will review applications collectively to ensure a breadth of project types and locations, in line with the priorities of the fund.

We expect final funding decision on all applications to be made by late October 2021. During the assessment process, we may contact you to clarify points in your application, or to ask for more information.

As we anticipate a high volume of applications, unfortunately we may not be able to fund every good application. The grants panel will prioritise those applications that most closely fit the assessment criteria, and will also consider the location and type of projects to support a balanced programme across London, and across the themes of the fund.

Any offer(s) of funding will be made subject to you accepting a grant agreement which must be signed before your project can start.

5. Advice on designing your project

There are a range of resources available to help you design your project to both deliver environmental benefits and support Londoners' wellbeing. We encourage you to use the data, guidance and advice highlighted below as you develop your ideas. If you have any questions, please contact us at greencity@london.gov.uk, or call 0207 239 1292.

5.1 Maps and data

The GLA has published a series of [maps and data](#) to help Londoners understand, explore and improve our capital's green infrastructure. We encourage you to use these tools to help inform the type of greening activities that your project might include, and to identify locations that are in greatest need. The following tools are particularly relevant to the Grow Back Greener Grants:

- [Green Infrastructure Focus Map](#): this map shows where there is the greatest need for green infrastructure interventions that can tackle local environmental and social challenges. It can help identify where improvements might be best targeted, and what they could focus on. [Appendix C](#) includes more details on how to use the Green Infrastructure Focus Map.
- [London Climate Risk Mapping](#): these maps bring together different datasets to analyse climate exposure and vulnerability across London. They identify the overall climate risk, flood risk and heat risk for different areas, based on both how exposed they are to climate impacts, and where there are high concentrations of vulnerable Londoners. [Appendix C](#) includes more details on how to use the London Climate Risk Mapping.
- [Green Cover Map](#): this map shows how much of London is covered by trees, plants and open water. It helps to identify areas of the city that have low green cover and could be targeted for projects.
- [Tree Canopy Cover Map](#): this map shows how much of London is covered by trees. It helps to identify areas of the city that have low tree cover and could be targeted for tree planting or natural regeneration.
- Deprivation data: you can find out more about different indices of deprivation through the [London Datastore](#), or the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government's [interactive map](#).

5.2. Site permissions

If you do not own the site where your project will take place, you must have written permission from the landowner for your project before submitting an application. We may ask to see proof of this permission before awarding any funding.

While most projects supported by the Grow Back Greener Fund will not need planning permission, if you are unsure you should contact your local authority who will be able to advise. If your project does need planning permission, you should factor this into your pre-application and delivery timelines.

If you are uncertain of the previous use of your site, contaminated land could be an issue, and you may need to design your project accordingly. You can find out more on the [government website](#), or contact your local authority or the Environment Agency.

You should also consider whether the site of your project is subject to any heritage designations, such as Listed Parks and Gardens, Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments. Such designations may affect what you can do on the site. You can find protected heritage sites on the Historic England [website](#).

5.3. Tree planting and maintenance

It is important to follow good practice guidance for tree planting, adopting the principles of “right tree, right place”. You must also have a clear plan for how the trees will be maintained in the long-term.

It is highly recommended that you [contact your borough tree officer](#) before planning a tree planting project. They will be able to provide invaluable local knowledge and advice on the suitability of your project. **You must always have permission of the landowner, which is often the local authority, before planting trees.**

Larger-scale tree planting projects

Larger-scale tree planting projects (creating more than 0.25 hectares of canopy cover, or planting more than 1,000 trees) should pay particular attention to ensure that the proposed planting site is appropriate for tree planting. Tree planting should not take place in locations where this could have a detrimental impact on existing habitats and biodiversity, such as grasslands.

An appropriate ecological assessment of existing habitats should be conducted before proceeding with any larger tree planting projects, alongside consulting existing species records for the site. If you are applying for a larger-scale tree planting project, you should include details of the assessment carried out, or the plans for doing this as part of the project.

A wide range of useful resources are available to help you identify whether your location is appropriate for tree planting, what type of trees might be suitable, and how to plant and maintain them:

- [The Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Manual](#) has advice on selecting the right tree for the right place in urban areas. It describes the benefits of urban trees and also has advice on planting and establishment, and pests and diseases.
- [The London Tree and Woodland Framework](#) has guidelines and a checklist (p.32) for “right tree, right place” – choosing the right species for your location, taking account of site characteristics and the purpose of the trees.
- Your choice of trees should consider the expected impacts of climate change. Find out more at www.righttrees4cc.org.uk.
- You should consider the latest advice on pests and diseases when choosing tree species, and avoid trees with high disease risk such as ash and horse chestnut. Information on tree pests and diseases including ash dieback, oak processionary moth, chestnut blight and massaria disease of plane is available on the [Forest Research website](#). There is also London specific guidance on [ash dieback](#).
- The Trees and Design Action Group guide on [Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure](#) has advice on the benefits and characteristics of over 280 species. Their [Trees in the Hard Landscape](#) report has further advice on incorporating trees into the public realm.
- You should consider the potential allergy impacts of different tree species, especially when planting in areas used by children such as school playgrounds. [Allergy Today](#) and the [Royal College of Pathologists](#) have published useful information on this topic.
- The [Orchard Project](#) has a series of guides on planting and maintaining orchards.
- Our website has [collection of practical resources](#) with advice on planting and maintaining trees.

5.4. Biodiversity

Before starting your project, it is important to understand any existing wildlife and habitats present on your site.

If your project is taking place in an existing green space you can use GiGL's [Discover London Map](#), which identifies public open spaces and states whether they are designated as a Wildlife Site (also known as a [Site of Importance for Nature Conservation](#)). It also highlights key details of the habitats and wildlife found at each site. GiGL can also make [more detailed local information](#) available to community groups on request. If your project is taking place on local authority owned land, your borough ecologist should be able to provide further advice.

For any project taking place on a Wildlife Site, you should obtain advice from a suitably qualified expert (this could be your borough ecologist, an officer from a wildlife charity or another local expert). We will ask you for evidence of this advice. For larger projects, you may wish to [carry out or commission an ecological survey](#).

A number of resources are available to help you identify how best to create space for wildlife, and to manage sites appropriately:

- the Wildlife Trusts has [simple guides to helping wildlife in gardens](#)
- [London Wildlife Trust](#) offers resources and advice on wildlife in London
- the GLA website has [simple actions for helping pollinators](#)
- London Borough of Southwark has produced [guidance on creating habitat in urban parks and open spaces](#)
- [the Royal Horticultural Society](#) (RHS) has advice on gardening for wildlife
- [Rewild My Street](#) has resources on repurposing urban streets for wildlife.

5.5. Waterways and wetlands

If you are planning a project on London's waterways, where relevant you should consult:

- [Thames21](#), which works with communities to improve London's rivers and canals for people and wildlife
- [the Canal & River Trust](#), which cares for 2,000 miles of historic inland waterways across England and Wales
- the [Environment Agency](#), which is responsible for water quality and resources, and also takes a strategic overview of flood management
- the relevant Local Lead Flood Authority (your London borough) which has responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.

Other guidance includes:

- the Freshwater Habitats Trust's [pond creation toolkit](#)
- the Zoological Society of London's [urban wetland design guide](#).

5.6. Sustainable drainage and depaving

Climate change will result in warmer, wetter winters in London, and more frequent and intense rainstorms. This will increase the risk of the drainage system being overwhelmed, leading to surface-water flooding.

Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) manage surface-water runoff by capturing, using, absorbing, storing and transporting rainfall in a way that mimics nature. SuDS slow the flow and reduce the amount of rainfall that drains into streams and rivers. There are several resources available with guidance on installing SuDS in a range of settings:

- the GLA's overview of [Sustainable Drainage in London](#) and [SuDS case studies](#)
- the GLA's [SuDS sector guidance](#) explaining how SuDS can be used in different settings, including [schools](#), [social housing](#) and [green spaces](#)
- Transport for London's [SuDS in London guide](#)
- the [UK Rain Garden Guide](#)
- South East Rivers Trust's [guidance on SuDS in schools](#)
- the SusDrain [library of SuDS resources](#).

A simple way of reducing surface-water flood risk is by depaving – turning grey areas of impermeable surfacing into green, intercepting and slowing down the flow of water. Our [Grey to Green](#) guide outlines how to carry out a community depaving project.

5.7. Improving air quality

While reducing emissions at source is the most effective way of improving air pollution, well-designed urban greening, such as hedges and trees planted in the right place, can reduce people's exposure to air pollution. At a local scale, vegetation can have the greatest impact on air quality by acting as a barrier that helps to disperse polluted air, rather than by absorbing pollution. While there is no "one size fits all" intervention, vegetation that forms a barrier between a pollution source (such as a busy road) and a place where people gather (such as a park or playground) is likely to be most effective.

The following resources have advice on using greening measures to help protect people from air pollution:

- the Mayor of London's guide to using [Green Infrastructure to Protect People from Air Pollution](#), based on the latest scientific evidence
- the Trees and Design Action Group's [First Steps in Urban Air Quality](#)

- guidance on [Implementing Green Infrastructure for Air Pollution Abatement](#) from the University of Surrey, including recommended tree and shrub species.

5.8. Greening school playgrounds

If you are planning a project to make your school playground greener, there are several organisations that can offer specialist advice, support and guidance:

- Trees for Cities can offer support through their [Edible Playgrounds](#) and [Planting Healthy Air in Schools](#) programmes
- [Groundwork London](#) can help schools design unique spaces and bring in additional funding – they have also published a [toolkit on green infrastructure and air quality](#)
- [Learning through Landscapes](#) offers a range of resources and advice on outdoor learning and greening school grounds, as well as [Local School Nature Grants](#) that provide outdoor-learning training and £500 of equipment
- the Mayor of London has published guidance on:
 - how schools and early-years settings can [adapt to climate change](#)
 - [reimagining rainwater in schools](#)
 - measures to [improve air quality in schools](#)
- the Woodland Trust offers [free trees for schools](#) and community groups, as well as a [set of resources](#) to help schools with tree planting projects
- [the Tree Council](#) offers free Orchards for Schools tree packs, and a [Branching Out Fund](#) to support school tree planting projects.
- the RHS [Campaign for School Gardening](#) has resources on a range of topics
- [Buglife](#) has a range of resources for schools to support learning about and improving school grounds for pollinators.

5.9. Community engagement and volunteering

[My Community](#) compiles tools and resources from a range of organisations on how to make your community an even better place to live, including:

- a range of resources on [parks and green spaces](#)
- top tips for [community engagement](#)
- how to [listen to your community](#)

- how to set up and choose the [right structure for your community group](#).

The [Conservation Volunteers \(TCV\)](#) have published resources that outline environmental volunteering modules, which can be used to deliver informal and formal learning, masterclasses and “train the trainer” materials.

[Parks Community UK](#) provides a ‘one-stop shop’ of information for friends-of-parks groups, to help them feel better equipped and more confident in their active involvement with their local park.

5.10. Delivering projects safely during the COVID-19 pandemic

While many of the restrictions introduced to combat the spread of COVID-19 have been lifted, it is likely that some social distancing and other public health measures will continue or be reintroduced in the future. It is imperative that all projects always follow the latest guidance. The most recent COVID-19 updates and information can be found at www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus.

With some precautions and adjustments in place, projects delivered outdoors can be delivered safely. There are available resources providing advice on using green spaces, working outside and volunteering during the COVID-19 pandemic. The resources listed below are accurate as of June 2021; however, please check these websites frequently for the latest updates.

Parks and green spaces:

- [Parks for London COVID-19 guidance for parks and green space managers](#), including guidelines for volunteering in parks and template risk assessments
- [guidance on using London’s parks and green spaces](#)
- the Parks Management Forum’s [guide on managing public parks during COVID-19](#)
- the [Parks Alliance guidance](#).

Working outside:

- government guidance for [construction and other outdoor work](#) (including land management and forestry); [working and volunteering at heritage locations](#).

Volunteering:

- NCVO [guidance and resources](#) to support charities, voluntary organisations and volunteers
- TCV guidance on [working safely during COVID-19](#).

Specialist and technical work:

- Landscape Institute [guidance on site visits and fieldwork](#)
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management [guidance on working during COVID-19](#), including [site management and practical outdoor work](#)
- Arboricultural Association guidance on [safe working practices in arboriculture](#).

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic is an exceptional event, the effects of which are ongoing. It is possible that changes to public health guidance on social distancing, or a return to a lockdown situation, may have an impact on the delivery of projects, or more widely on the organisational capacity of grant recipients.

The GLA has previously endorsed [London Funders' statement](#) pledging support to civil society groups affected by COVID-19. This commits to four main ways of working to manage the impacts of the pandemic on grant-funded activities: adapting activities, discussing dates, financial flexibility and listening.



CASE STUDY: Greening Tottenham Lock, Haringey

Stonebridge Lock Coalition worked with Canal and River Trust, Moo Canoes and Thames21 to clean up and improve the Lee Navigation at Tottenham Lock. They held canoe-based litter-picks to clean up the canal and healthy-rivers outreach days, and installed 170m of floating reedbeds to improve water quality and provide wildlife habitat. Almost 100 volunteers contributed to the project.

Find out more:

www.facebook.com/StonebridgeLock/

Photo: Stonebridge Lock Coalition



CASE STUDY: The Wardle Street Project, Hackney

Core Arts, working with Hackney Play Association and the Union of Hackney Gardens, is greening the route between Homerton High Street and Homerton Hospital along Wardle Street.

The project will include a community orchard, a new meadow, street planters irrigated with rainwater, tree pit planting and a green wall. It will also deliver inclusive training sessions and “how to” videos to share learning more widely.

Find out more:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/7050356>

Photo: Core Arts

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