

Grow Back Greener Fund 2022

Grants Guide

~~3~~ People kneeling down gardening

Key information

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Contents

[Foreward by Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London](#)

[1. Introduction and aims of the fund](#)

[1.1 Other funding available](#)

[1.2 Wider context](#)

[1.2.1 The Green New Deal Mission](#)

[1.3 What the Grow Back Greener Fund will support](#)

[1.3.1 Green spaces and waterways](#)

[1.3.2 Tree planting](#)

[1.3.3 Priority areas](#)

[2. Grants available](#)

[2.1 Eligible organisations](#)

[2.2 Grant funding terms](#)

[2.2.1 Match funding](#)

[2.3 Eligible costs](#)

[2.3.1 Costs that CAN be supported by the Grow Back Greener Fund, with NO restrictions](#)

[2.3.2 Costs that CAN be supported by the Grow Back Greener Fund, with restrictions](#)

[2.3.3 Costs that CANNOT be supported](#)

[3. How to apply](#)

[3.1 Support in preparing your application](#)

[3.2 Application and delivery timeline](#)

[3.3 Support for project delivery](#)

[4. Application guidance](#)

[4.1 Completing the application form](#)

[4.2 Assessment criteria](#)

[4.3 Assessment process](#)

[5. Advice on designing your project](#)

[5.1 Maps and data](#)

[5.2 Site permissions](#)

[5.3 Tree planting and maintenance](#)

[5.4 Biodiversity](#)

[5.5 Waterways and wetlands](#)

[5.6 Sustainable drainage and depaving](#)

[5.7 Improving air quality](#)

[5.8 Greening school playgrounds](#)

[5.9 Community engagement and volunteering](#)

Foreward by Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London

The extreme temperatures and devastating fires that raged across our city this summer laid bare just how vulnerable London is to the consequences of climate change. Homes were reduced to ashes, businesses destroyed and priceless personal belongings lost forever as the London Fire Brigade faced its busiest day since the Second World War. The shocking flash floods that London experienced last summer also caused huge damage and disruption to homes, schools, and our transport network, starkly illustrating that no city can escape the effects of man-made global warming.

We should be under no illusion that we are facing a climate emergency. This means that Londoners can expect to face more extreme heat and weather events more often. Our trees, green spaces and natural environment have a vital role to play in tackling the climate and ecological emergencies we face. Our parks, trees, woodlands, nature reserves, rivers, canals and more help keep London cool, provide shade, reduce overheating and flooding risk and provide precious habitats for wildlife.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw just how essential our city's amazing parks and green spaces are to Londoners' quality of life. Our green spaces were a source of respite, a place to exercise, and somewhere to meet friends safely outdoors. These spaces were vital for everyone, but most of all for those without their own gardens.

We also know that not all Londoners were able to easily access green spaces and the benefits they bring. Parts of London still lack green space within walking distance. This is a matter of fairness and a social justice issue. Like many of our city's existing inequalities, this imbalance has been brought into sharp focus by the pandemic. We must do more to address this inequality. I have committed to bringing nature closer to Londoners and I want all Londoners to live no more than a 10-minute walk from green space.

That is why tree planting and 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. As such, I am determined to take the bold action required to transition to a greener economy, healthier city and more equal society.

During my second term as Mayor, I am proud to continue advocating for ambitious environmental action. I introduced the world's first Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) and recently expanded it to an area 18 times its original size. Transport for London (TfL) is consulting on expanding the ULEZ London-wide next year to make all of London greener, healthier and less congested.

I have laid out a pathway for London to be zero carbon by 2030 and want to double the size of London's green economy and develop the green jobs and skills our city needs. A record 430,000 trees have also been planted. My new Rewild London Fund and the London Rewilding Taskforce of experts will further help improve biodiversity and restore the capital's precious wildlife sites.

At last year's COP26 in Glasgow, as the chair of C40 Cities, I led a global network of mayors. Together, we represented 100 cities and over 700 million people, to demand tougher climate action from governments. And at

COP27 later this year, I will continue to ensure that London leads from the front.

Rounds one and two of our Grow Back Greener Fund have already supported London's communities and grassroots organisations to deliver almost 80 projects that make a real difference to their local environment and people's wellbeing. This has helped kickstart a green recovery and provided more Londoners with access to green space nearer to their homes.

Through this year's fund, we will support Londoners to plant more trees for shade, create new green spaces in their local neighbourhoods, enhance the nature on their doorstep and make their communities more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

I look forward to receiving your proposals.

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 less likely to have a garden of their own. There is also a higher prevalence of mental health issues in Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and amongst LGBTQ+ Londoners. Now, more than ever, we know that nature is crucial for both our physical and mental health. We must therefore do more to ensure that all Londoners can benefit from our parks, nature reserves and waterways. The Mayor, Sadiq Khan, wants all Londoners to live within a 10-minute walk of green space.

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 changing climate. The recent extreme temperatures have highlighted the how vulnerable London is to the effects of climate change. Green infrastructure, including trees, can help to reduce local flood risk, keep the city cool, reduce local flood risk, 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 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. Thanks to support from Thames Water last year, the [second round of the Grow Back Greener Fund](#) supported 45 projects to enhance London's green spaces and climate resilience. Over 90 per cent of projects were in London's most deprived areas and those most exposed to the impacts of climate change.

Building on this success, this year, the Grow Back Greener Fund aims to:

- improve access to high-quality green space for all Londoners in locations with the poorest access and highest vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, such as flooding and overheating
- increase tree planting and 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
- 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.

1.1 Other funding available

The Grow Back Greener Fund is one of three funds which will open in 2022, as part of a package of measures to enhance green and blue spaces, and climate resilience. If your project is large scale or focussed on Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, you may want to wait and apply to one of those schemes. Full details of what the Grow Back Greener Fund will support can be found in section 1.3. See section 3.1 on how to contact us to discuss your project ideas.

Later this year, applications will reopen for the Green and Resilient Spaces Fund to support large-scale, innovative projects that transform green and blue spaces and the wider public realm to enhance climate resilience.

Applications will also reopen for the second round of the Rewild London Fund that will support owners and managers of Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) to improve these key sites and ensure that the network is resilient in the face of the climate and ecological emergencies.

[Find out more about all our green space funds.](#)

The Building Stronger Communities Fund can also support greening projects by voluntary and community organisations. [Find out more.](#)

1.2 Wider context

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[Find out more about all our green space funds.](#)

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1.2.1 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, particularly those Londoners most impacted by the pandemic.

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 Place 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 has 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 Mayor has invested over £20m in green space and tree planting projects. The programme's outcomes have included:

- supporting 350 green space and tree planting projects to improve over 500 hectares of green space
- planting over 430,000 trees
- 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.

1.3 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:

- create new green spaces, and improve the quality of and access to existing green space where Londoners live further than a 10-minute walk from green space
- plant trees in areas of low canopy cover
- are in areas of the city 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, LGBTQ+ Londoners, Deaf Londoners or those with a disability and those aged 65 and over
- include opportunities for Londoners to access training or develop new green skills.

The 2022 Grow Back Greener Fund will offer grants under two themes: **green spaces and waterways** and **tree planting**. 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 126706 or Lewis Fieldson on 07889 756247.

1.3.1 Green spaces and waterways

The **green spaces and waterways** theme will prioritise projects in locations where Londoners live further than a 10-minute walk from green space and/ or at high climate risk.

It will support projects that create new green spaces; improve the quality of and access to existing green spaces; or open up previously inaccessible spaces. It will also support projects that aim to improve waterways and enhance London's resilience to climate change through green and blue infrastructure, including nature-based solutions that reduce flood risk, improve water quality, create shade and cool the city.

Types of projects could include:

- enhancing or creating publicly accessible green spaces for people and/ or wildlife e.g. by creating meadows
- improving access to green space for Londoners, especially underrepresented communities
- community gardening and food growing
- permanently greening streets and public spaces, including depaving to turn grey into green, or creating parklets
- installing sustainable urban drainage features to reduce local flood risk
- cleaning up and restoring rivers, canals and ponds
- greening underused or neglected land within housing estates
- using nature-based solutions such as constructed wetlands to improve water quality
- management activities to improve wildlife habitat

- creating opportunities for children to access nature, and outdoor play and learning

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

1.3.2 Tree planting

The **tree planting** theme will support tree planting projects that aim to provide shade and cool the city, making London more climate resilient. We will prioritise projects that plant trees to provide shade in public spaces in areas with low tree canopy cover and/ or high climate risk. Where possible projects should aim to plant large canopy trees. We are also keen to support tree planting projects which help tackle flooding.

Types of projects could include:

- planting trees in public spaces, including playgrounds, schools and hospitals
- depaving projects to make space for tree planting or depaving around existing trees
- planting trees to shade walking routes
- planting new orchards
- creating small woodland areas or hedges in parks and green spaces
- starting a community tree nursery
- restoring or creating features, such as avenues, in green spaces
- planting trees on neglected and underused land, including within housing estates
- community tree planting activities

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

1.3.3 Priority areas

The London 10-Minute Walk Map

In his [manifesto](#), the Mayor pledged to ‘improve London’s network of green corridors and open spaces’ so that more Londoners live within a 10-minute walk of green space.

To help target action to areas where people live more than a 10-minute walk from a green space, the GLA has created this 10-Minute Walk Map (with the help of [Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC \(GiGL\)](#)). It shows those areas where Londoners may live more than an 800-metre walk (i.e. about 10 minutes) from an accessible green space of at least 0.02 hectares, which is the size of a pocket park.

800 metres is often taken to be a distance someone can typically walk in 10 minutes, although this is an average. GiGL’s mapping uses known access points to green spaces (such as park gates) and the street network to measure a real 800m walking distance. The map divides London into a hexagon grid of 350m ‘hexes’ with hexes that are fully or partially further than a 10-minute walk from greenspace coloured on the map.

The Grow Back Greener Fund will prioritise projects that create new green space in one of these hexes or in an adjacent hex. You should use the map to answer question 3.2 within the application form, full instructions can be found in [Appendix C](#).

Access the map on [London DataStore](#).

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 show overall climate risk and divide London into a hexagon grid of 350m 'hexes' to identify needs on a local scale. 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 on [London DataStore](#).

The London Tree Canopy Cover Map

London has more than 8 million trees, covering around 21% of the capital. In the London Environment Strategy the Mayor set a target to increase this to 23% by 2050. The [London Urban Forest Plan](#) sets out in more detail the goals and priority actions needed to protect, manage and expand the capital's urban forest. We know that London's trees provide a wide range of social and economic benefits including shade and urban cooling, reduced flooding, and health and wellbeing benefits to Londoners.

However, tree canopy cover varies hugely across London, from 3% in some wards to over 50% in others. National guidance is that local areas should aim for a minimum 20% canopy cover. We know that 373 wards fall below 20% tree canopy cover.

The tree canopy cover mapping used aerial imagery to analyse tree cover. Click "Switch Raw / Ward % Canopy Cover" to see data at ward level. If you click on a ward you will see an estimated canopy cover % for the ward.

We will prioritise tree planting projects in areas under 20% canopy cover, with a high priority given to those in areas under 10% canopy cover.

Access the map on [London DataStore](#) (click the "view the full size map" button).

Case Studies

CASE STUDY: Growing Roots in the Community, Hackney

Mountford Growing Community is creating five new green spaces across the Mountford Estate in Dalston, including space for food growing, recreation and relaxation.

The project is being co-designed with the local community and delivered through a series of after-school and holiday gardening clubs led by horticultural professionals from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. The sessions are bringing together older and younger residents, promoting intergenerational skill sharing.

Photo: Mountford Growing Community



Figure -

Growing Roots in the Community, Hackney

CASE STUDY: The Octopus Garden, Southwark

Trees for Bermondsey, working with London Borough of Southwark and other local partners, is creating an accessible and inclusive community street garden in Bermondsey.

The project is transforming and depaving an unloved, grey street corner, planting trees and creating a calm and friendly green oasis.

Photo: Trees for Bermondsey



Figure -

The Octopus Garden, Southwark

2. Grants available

A total of **£2m** is available and we expect to be able to support about 70 projects.

Grants of between **£10,000 - £50,000** are available for both themes.

However, for projects under the **green spaces and waterways** theme that will create new green spaces, grants of up to £75,000 are available. This is to reflect the higher costs of some of these types of projects, such as depaving and installing sustainable drainage systems. We welcome tree planting being included as an element of these projects.

If you think that your project could qualify for a grant of up to £75,000, please contact Groundwork London before submitting your application. Please email greencity@london.gov.uk, or call Kamrul Islam on 07540 126 706 or Lewis Fieldson on 07889 756247.

Organisations can apply for a maximum of two grants, which should be for different projects, working at different sites. A single application can be made for a project that covers multiple sites.

Funded projects should start from December 2022 and should be completed by December 2023. 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.

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. For applications to the **tree planting** theme, local authorities may apply on their own. However, collaborative projects are welcomed.
- schools, including academy trusts, parents' associations and other organisations working on behalf of a school.

Applications should 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.**

*If you have a great idea for a greening project but aren't an incorporated or constituted group, we may be able to offer advice. Please contact Groundwork London to discuss your idea. Please email greenercity@london.gov.uk, or call Kamrul Islam on 07540 126 706 or Lewis Fieldson on 07889 756247.

The Building Stronger Communities Fund can also support greening projects by voluntary and community organisations that aren't legally constituted. [Find out more](#).

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 issues. 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 (£11.05) per hour. For example, 100 hours of volunteering would be worth $100 \times £11.05 = £1,105$.

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. Costs should mainly be spent on making physical improvements to a space.

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 **20 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 December 2023). For example, this could include volunteer sessions to maintain a green space. A condition of grant funding for projects under the tree planting theme will be that trees are maintained for a minimum of three years after planting. This maintenance of 20 per cent can include weeding and watering. Replacement of losses within the three years are at the applicant's cost.

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 Studies

CASE STUDY: Western Road Garden, Ealing

Southall Community Alliance, working with London Borough of Ealing, A Rocha and Southall Transition, is transforming a derelict site in Southall into a new community green space.

This includes creating a multipurpose community garden and orchard for food growing, horticulture, leisure and educational workshops for the local community.

Photo: Southall Community Alliance



Figure -

Western Road Garden, Ealing

CASE STUDY: Connecting to Nature, Camden

Zoological Society of London, working with Camden and Islington Public Health, Camden Centre for Learning, City of Westminster College and Unity Works, are creating a newly accessible green space with an outdoor classroom in Camden.

The new community garden will be co-designed and co-created with local residents and school children, focusing on working with families and young people on low incomes and with learning disabilities.

Photo: ZSL



Figure -

Connecting to Nature, Camden

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.

[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 will also need to provide letters of support from any named partners on your project and written landowner permission for your project to take place as proposed during the delivery period of December 2022 to December 2023. You can also upload additional files, such as other letters of support.

The deadline for applications is 5pm on Monday 26 September 2022.

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.

If this application process is not accessible to you and you require support to complete your application, please contact Groundwork London by phone or email using the details below to discuss your needs. You may require support if, for example, English isn't your first language and you require English language support or if you are Deaf and require a BSL interpreter to attend an information webinar.

Please email greenercity@london.gov.uk, or call Kamrul Islam on 07540 126 706 or Lewis Fieldson on 07889 756247.

We will be holding optional applicant information webinars on the following dates. Some of these may happen both in person, circumstances allowing, and virtually. The same content will be covered at each session:

- Thursday 11 August 2022, 5:30pm – 7:00pm: [register for the session](#)
- Friday 12 August 2022, 10:00am – 11:30am: [register for the session](#)
- Tuesday 13 September 2022, 1:30pm – 3:00pm: [register for the session](#)

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 4](#) of this guide provides more detail on completing the application form and the assessment criteria.

3.2 Application and delivery timeline

Table 3.1 Application milestones

Date	Milestone
28 July 2022	Applications for Grow Back Greener Fund open.
28 July 2022 - 26 September 2022	<p>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.</p> <p>Join one of the optional information webinars for additional support on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thursday 11 August 2022, 5:30pm – 7:00pm• Friday 12 August 2022, 10:00am – 11:30am• Tuesday 13 September 2022, 1:30pm – 3:00pm <p>You'll find links to register for the sessions in Section 3.1.</p> <p>Complete the application form.</p>

Date	Milestone
Before 5pm on 26 September 2022	Submit your application online .
Late September - mid October 2022	Assessment process takes place. You may be asked for more information about your project, or to clarify any queries.
November 2022	You will be informed of the outcome of your application. If successful, you'll be asked to complete and sign a funding agreement.
December 2022	Projects start. Grantees receive first payment instalment.
May 2023	Submission of mid-project monitoring report and proof of expenditure. Grantees receive second payment instalment.
December 2023	Submission of final project monitoring report and proof of expenditure. Grantees received 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 of 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.
- **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 and priorities of the fund.

1. How will your project enhance green space and/ or waterways or plant trees to 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 to the **green spaces and waterways** theme, your project should either:

- create new green space, for example by depaving (removing hard surfacing); or
- enhance an existing green space (such as a park, nature reserve, woodland, community garden, housing estate green space or other accessible public space); or
- create, enhance or restore waterways and wetlands (including rivers, ponds and canals); or
- improve Londoners' access to an existing green space; or
- use green and blue infrastructure (nature-based solutions) to enhance London's resilience to climate change by providing one of 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.

If you are applying to the **tree planting** theme, your project should either:

- plant trees in areas of low canopy cover; or
- use tree planting or management to enhance London's resilience to climate change by providing one or more of the following benefits:
 - reducing flood risk
 - cooling the urban environment
 - providing shade

We encourage you to use our tree cover 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 either poor access to green space, high climate risk and/or low tree canopy cover?

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 **green spaces and waterways** theme, this could be a location that is currently lacking green space. The Mayor has made it a priority for no Londoner to live more than a 10-minute walk from a green space. As such, we particularly welcome applications that create new green spaces in areas where Londoners currently live more a 10-minute walk (800 metres) from an accessible green space of at least 0.02 hectares.

You should use the GLA's [London 10-Minute Walk Map](#) to identify whether your project will take place in one these hexes or in a neighbouring hex. Please identify the level of need at your location (a score of 1 represents the highest need) and refer to this in your response. Further details of how to use this new map are provided in [Appendix C](#).

If your project does not fall within one of these areas, please explain why the location of your project should be a priority for improvement. This could be a location 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.

Another priority of the fund is to enhance London's climate resilience. 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 this map are provided in [Appendix C](#).

If your project falls within an area with a high climate risk score, you should also refer to this in your response to this question. You should explain how the location of your project is particularly exposed to risks from climate change, such as flooding and heatwaves, and consider how your project will address these risks and enhance this location's climate resilience, for example installing sustainable urban drainage in areas of high flood risk or depaving and planting trees in areas of high heat risk.

Climate vulnerability relates to people's exposure to climate impacts like flooding and heatwaves, but also 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.

If you are applying to the **tree planting** theme, your answer should explain why the location of your project is a priority for tree planting.

You should use the GLA's [London Tree Canopy Cover Map](#) to identify the areas of the city that have low tree cover and could be targeted for tree planting.

You should also use the GLA's [London Climate Risk Mapping](#) to identify the levels of climate risk at your project location. We will prioritise projects in areas of high climate risk. You should explain how the location of your project is particularly exposed to the risk of heatwaves and/or flooding, and consider how your tree planting project will address these risks and enhance this location's climate resilience.

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 volunteering, apprenticeships and creating new job roles?

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 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
- apprenticeships
- creating new job roles
- projects being co-designed and led by local communities and residents.

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, LGBTQ+ Londoners, Deaf Londoners or those with a disability and those aged 65 and over.

In your answer you should make specific reference to how these Londoners will be actively involved in and/ or benefit from your project, the barriers that they face in accessing green space, and how your project will help overcome these barriers.

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 20 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. You must also have a clear plan for how the trees will be maintained in the long-term. A condition of grant funding for projects under the tree planting to cool the city theme will be that trees are maintained for a minimum of three years after planting. This includes weeding and watering. Replacement of losses is at the applicant's cost.

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.

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 December 2023, 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](#).

This should include health and safety risks and mitigations. While restrictions introduced to combat the spread of COVID-19 have been lifted, projects should always follow the latest guidance. The most recent COVID-19 updates and information can be found on [GOV.UK](#).

You should consider in your risk register measures that you could introduce to ensure that your project can continue to be delivered safely and in a timely manner, should social distancing and other public health measures be reintroduced in the future. The below resources provide advice on managing volunteers and supporting vulnerable Londoners. The resources listed below are accurate as of June 2022.

This may include:

Managing volunteers:

- NCVO [guidance and resources](#) to support charities, voluntary organisations and volunteers.
- TCV [guidance](#) on working safely during COVID-19.
- Government [guidance](#) on reducing the spread of respiratory infections, including COVID-19 in the workplace.

Supporting immunosuppressed Londoners:

There remains a small number of Londoners whose immune system means that they are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19, despite vaccination. You should consider how your project can be delivered in a way that enables these Londoners to take part safely.

- Government [guidance](#) for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk.
- NCVO [guidance](#) on supporting volunteers who are at high risk from 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.

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 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 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 November 2022. 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 greenercity@london.gov.uk, or call Kamrul Islam on 07540 126 706 or Lewis Fieldson on 07889 756247.

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:

- [London 10-Minute Walk Map](#): this map identifies priority areas where Londoners may live more than a 10-minute walk from green space. [Appendix C](#) includes more detail on how to use the London 10-Minute Walk 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.
- [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. [Appendix C](#) includes more detail on how to use the Tree Canopy Cover Map.
- [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.
- 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 to take place as proposed during the delivery period of December 2022 to December 2023 before submitting an application. Please attach this proof of permission with your application. If the landowner is a local authority, this permission must come from an Officer.

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 Tree Council has a [great guide to planting trees](#) of different sizes aimed at community groups
- 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.
- Your choice of trees should consider the expected impacts of climate change. [Find out more](#).
- 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](#).
- 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 a [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 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. Search your borough's website for flooding to find the contact.

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.

A simple way of reducing surface-water flood risk is by depaving – turning grey areas of impermeable surfacing, like concrete and tarmac, into green with a wider variety of suitable plants to intercept and slow down the flow of water. Our Grey to Green guide outlines how to include depaving in your community project, no matter how small the space.

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 and also sewers. 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](#)
- the SusDrain [library of SuDS resources](#).

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.

Case Studies

CASE STUDY: Old Lea River Restoration, Hackney

The Wildlife Gardeners of Haggerston, working with London Borough of Hackney, Lea Valley Regional Park Authority and Save Lea Marshes, is helping to restore the River Lea at Hackney Marshes.

The project is helping to bring the river back to life for nature and people with in-river restoration measures, improving water quality and supporting its future resilience.

Photo: Wildlife Gardeners of Haggerston



Figure -

Old Lea River Restoration, Hackney

CASE STUDY: Hilgrove Community Garden, Camden

London Borough of Camden, working with Hilgrove Estate Tenant and Resident Association and TCV is working to open up a currently inaccessible green space at the Hilgrove Estate in Swiss Cottage.

The project will create a new community orchard, improved access points and natural play areas

Photo: London Borough of Camden



Figure -

Hilgrove Community Garden, Camden

[Back to table of contents](#)

References

- [1](#) Natural capital accounts for public green space in London:
/sites/default/files/11015viv_natural_capital_account_for_london_v7_full_vis.pdf