



Building communities. Transforming lives.

A Celebration of Biffa Award's *Partnership Grants Scheme*



Introduction

Since its launch in spring 2018, the Partnership Grants Scheme has supported transformative capital projects that enhance either the built or natural environment, delivering impact at a regional or national scale.

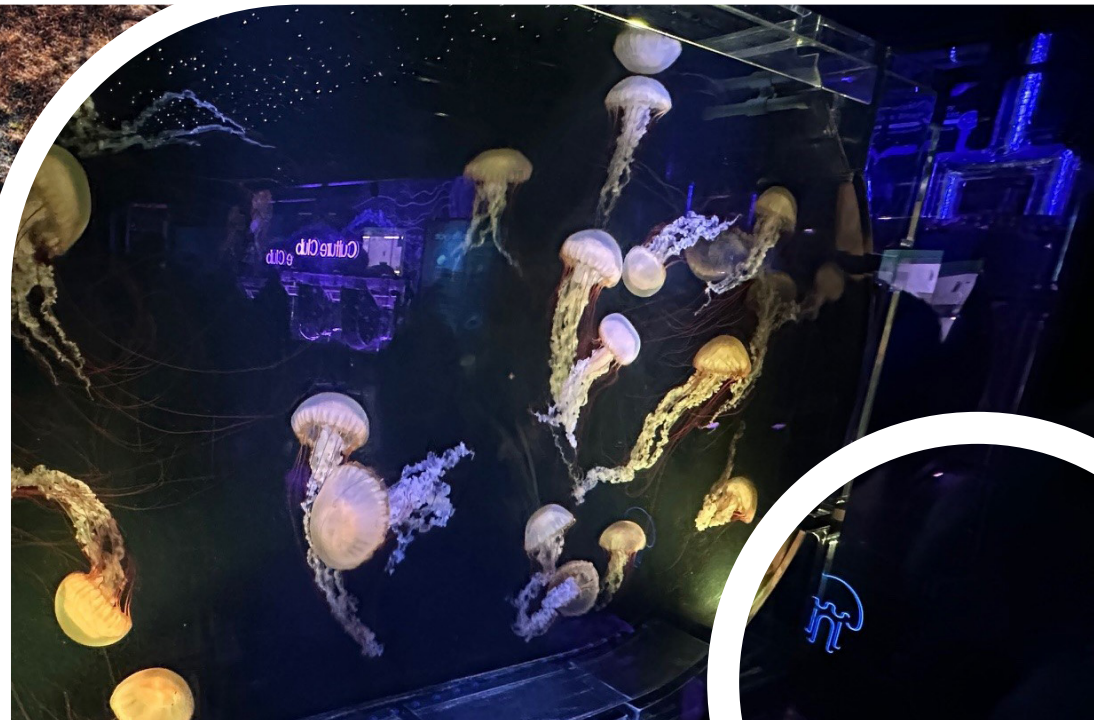
Under the Built Environment theme, funding helps to restore, modernise, and improve spaces such as cultural venues, heritage sites, and visitor centres - places that bring people together and celebrate local identity.

The Natural Environment theme supports efforts to protect and revitalise landscapes, habitats, and ecosystems. This includes land acquisition projects and those that align with national

Environmental Plans, legally binding targets under the Environmental Act 2021, and priorities set out in Local Biodiversity Action Plans.

We champion bold, creative, and forward-thinking ideas, projects that combine innovation with meaningful community engagement and long-term environmental sustainability.

Grants of £250,000 to £1 million (increased from £750,000 in 2022) are available for eligible projects located near a significant Biffa Group Limited operation or active landfill site in England or Northern Ireland.



Statistics

£17,039,371
to **33 projects**

16 areas of land
purchased covering
more than **800 hectares**

9 education and learning
spaces created or enhanced



Case Studies

With Biffa Award funding, grants of £250,000 to £1 million are available for eligible projects located near a significant Biffa Group Limited operation or active landfill site in England or Northern Ireland. The below case studies highlight the amazing work that has been achieved'.

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- 5 ***Bristol Aerospace - Past and Future***
 - 6 ***Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust - Securing Attenborough's Legacy***
 - 7 ***Woodland Trust - Yonder Oak***
 - 8 ***Woodland Trust Northern Ireland - Branching out at Cave Hill***
 - 9 ***The Deep - Cool Seas***
 - 10 ***Lichfield & Hatherton Canal Trust - Dartford Moor Ecology Park***
 - 11 ***Customs House - Enhancing Cultural Engagement***
 - 12 ***Norfolk Wildlife Trust - Tipping the Balance***
 - 13 ***Lancashire Wildlife Trust - Manchester Mossland Connect***
 - 14 ***Winchester Science Centre - Wonderseekers: Inspiring Science for All***

Bristol Aerospace Past and Future



In 2019-20, '16M' a previously inaccessible, First World War aircraft hangar underwent a remarkable transformation. Bristol Aerospace took the Grade II listed structure and repurposed it as a unique place for 'Conservation in Action', somewhere to meet the engineering marvels, a place to engage in hands-on learning opportunities and to hear those exciting stories from our British aviation past.

Five years on from the £547,277 grant, and the hangar is still a big draw. 100,000 visitors are admitted each year with some travelling from as far as New Zealand especially to see it.

The hangar is home to a regular pool of 20 highly-skilled restoration volunteers who work on exciting and evolving projects. The progress made in the hangar means the museum will soon be able to rotate the displays to showcase artefacts never-before-seen for the first time.

The dynamic nature of the project has been successful in motivating visitors to come back repeatedly, to become volunteers and to donate. This is a living, working celebration of innovation, craftsmanship, and heritage.

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

Securing Attenborough's Legacy

In 2019, a campaign led by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust – championed by none other than Sir David Attenborough, set out to protect the iconic and nationally important Attenborough Nature Reserve. Thanks to a healthy £750,000 grant, the Trust successfully became custodians of the reserve.

Since then, staff and volunteers have been hard at work looking after the habitat and its inhabitants. A major reedbed restoration project has created vital nesting grounds for elusive bitterns.

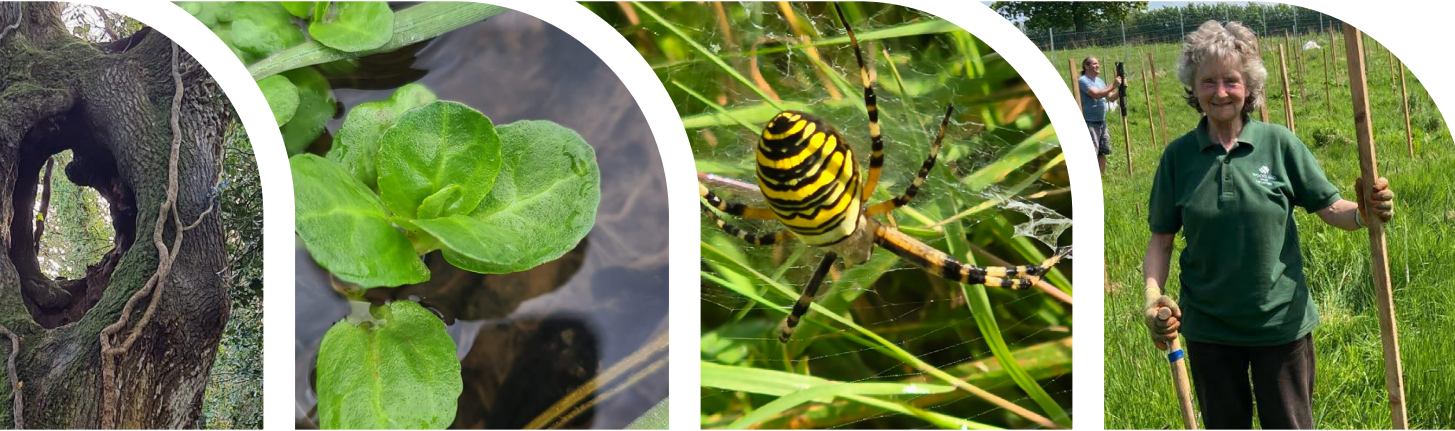
Along the riverside path, a targeted scrub management programme has enhanced conditions for breeding warblers.

The outpouring of support for the acquisition of the reserve far surpassed the Trust's expectations. The grant not only helped to raise the profile of the Trust (and the reserve) but also gave the Trust the confidence and ability to apply for additional funding for their 'Attenborough for All' project.



Woodland Trust

Creating Yonder Oak



In 2022, thanks to 750,000 in funding, the Woodland Trust secured Coombe Woods in Exmouth, 52.55 hectares of pastureland bordering existing Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). What was once a species-poor plot of limited ecological value is now evolving into a rich matrix of habitats bursting with life.

Since its purchase, the Woodland Trust has made remarkable progress. Over 5,000 additional native mixed broadleaf trees have been planted alongside an orchard grove to attract fruit and flower-loving insects. To create habitats for invertebrates and fungi, they have also introduced 10m² of deadwood.

As if that's not enough, the Woodland Trust are continuing to expand and improve the natural flood management potential by:

- Continuing to remove non-native invasive species such as laurel
- Establishing five raptor posts
- Carrying out cut and collect from the areas of most species-rich grassland
- Protecting the natural re-generation of local oak trees using reusable cactus guards.

Without having ownership of the woods, none of this work to aid nature's recovery would have been possible.



Woodland Trust Northern Ireland

Branching out at Cave Hill

In 2021, Woodland Trust Northern Ireland purchased land on the Eastern Belfast Hills, known locally as Cave Hill, with the help of £550,000 in grant funding. With woodland cover in Northern Ireland standing at around 8% - the lowest in Europe, the 98-hectare site was designated to become a new woodland, and a space for nature and people to thrive.

Fast forward to today and Cave Hill is now planted with just over 150,000 trees and shrubs thanks to the help of volunteers and members of the local community. The site is now being managed to allow the trees to naturally develop

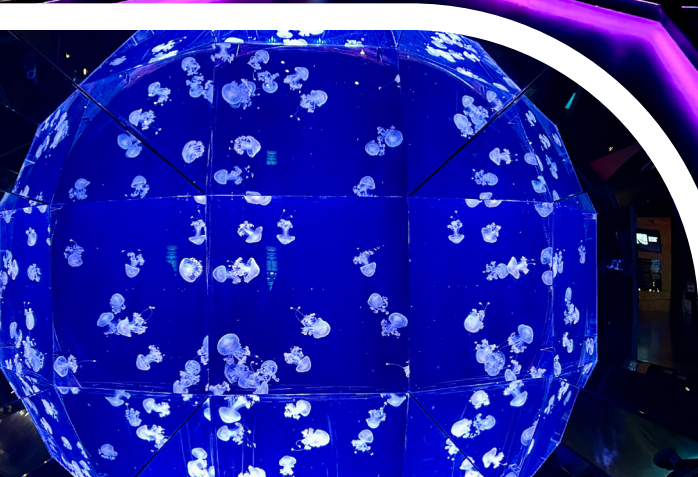
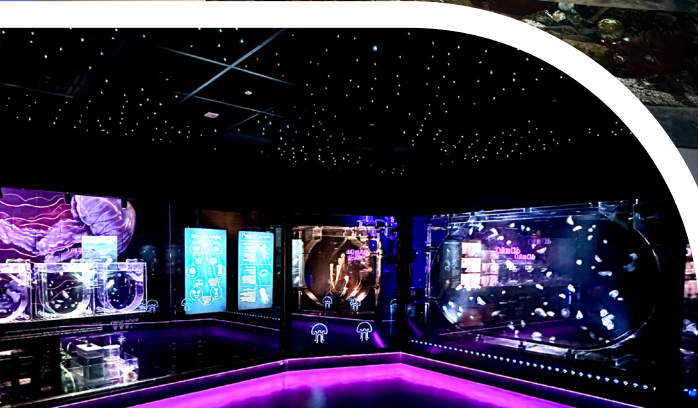
into a young, thriving woodland of natives such as alder, blackthorn, crab apple, downy birch, guelder rose, hawthorn, hazel, holly, pedunculated oak, rowan, Scots pine, sessile oak, silver birch, wild cherry, and willow.

Annual visitor figures are impressive with 48,000 recorded in 2023-24.

The Woodland Trust have harnessed the site's huge potential by creating habitats, boosting wildlife, increasing carbon capture and being accessible to the public for the first time.



The Deep Cool Seas



The Deep, on the banks of the Humber estuary in Hull, is an award-winning aquarium. In spring 2023, The Deep unveiled 'Cool Seas'. Designed to engage and inspire a diverse audience, they created three immersive spaces: Ocean Drifters, Jellyfish Theatre, and the Wave Wall and Rock Pool, modelled on the coastline around Flamborough Head in Yorkshire.

This welcoming, awe-inspiring space attracts an astonishing annual footfall of over 448,000 visitors - including more than 17,000 school children, 4,000 children attending sleepovers, and numerous corporate events.

Since completing the £418,550 project, The Deep partnered with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in their 'Wilder Humber' initiative, educating on local seagrass, oyster and saltmarsh restoration. They also collaborated with the Humber Nature Partnership, engaging on topics such as local cetacean strandings, and teamed up with The Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Project.

The Deep also partnered with the University of Hull's music department, who composed the audio for the Jellyfish Theatre. The Deep now hosts an annual student collaboration, where soundtracks are created to complement their other attractions.

The Jellyfish Theatre has resulted in the creation of a full-time position. The role will enhance The Deep's connections with global jellyfish working groups and national academic institutions.

The project showcases the vital importance of protecting wildlife within our local marine environment, as well as enhancing ocean literacy, and exemplifies best practice in creating extraordinary visitor spaces. As a result of 'Cool Seas', The Deep has raised the profile of native species conservation and education.



Lichfield and Hatherton Canal Restoration Trust

Darnford Moors Ecology Park



In 1995, the Lichfield and Hatherton Canal Restoration Trust embarked on an ambitious journey to transform a derelict, historic waterway into a vibrant, navigable, blue-green corridor. Darnford Moors, on the Lichfield Canal, was one of the first sites to be bought by the Trust in the 1990's and work to improve it has been underway ever since.

In 2023, a grant of £300,000 was used to immerse a 250-metre section of the canal permanently in water. The Trust also planted 80 pollen and fruit bearing trees, 100 hedging saplings, native bluebells, primroses and lesser celandine.

A year on from project completion, and nature is responding. The area is flourishing. Families of mallards, swallows, and a white egret are now happy in their new homes.

Volunteer opportunities have increased involving students taking part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, as well as Corporate Social Responsibility groups.

The partnership grant gave the Trust unequivocal public recognition for its longstanding efforts. This productive ecology park is enriching community wellbeing and acting as an ecological sanctuary. With further funding secured, we can't wait to see what exciting changes are still to come.



Customs House

Enhancing Cultural Engagement



The Customs House is a cornerstone arts and entertainment venue on the South Bank of the River Tyne in South Shields. A £390,784 grant was used to create a suite of cutting-edge spaces including: a new 'Learning and Participation Hub', an ultramodern, multipurpose studio complete with screen, projector and a sprung floor; a refurbished cinema space; 'Stage Space', an interactive theatre experience; and installation of retractable seating in the main auditorium.

The centre now hosts several additional weekly groups, including a drama group for neurodiverse adults. This group provides a supportive

environment where participants can explore and celebrate their creative talents and develop artwork that reflects their lived experience.

The flexibility that has come with retractable auditorium seating has been profound. The greater use of space has been transformative to the organisations output and outreach in the community. One member of the team communicated *"we don't know how we managed without it"*

Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Tipping the Balance



In 2018, Norfolk Wildlife Trust launched a major initiative to restore balance to local ecosystems and re-establish sustainably clear water at two of Norfolk's largest Broads - Ranworth and Barton. The £492,664 grant restored 800 metres of marginal habitat between the lake and open broad. It also reinstated three biomanipulation zones and established three more.

Biomanipulation is an ecological restoration technique that deliberately adds or removes species from an ecosystem, used particularly in aquatic habitats to reduce algal blooms. The project has been incredibly important in the Trust's continued learning around the technique. Work on this scale allowed the Trust to test and adapt these practices to achieve the best outcome for Broads wildlife.

The project has also sparked meaningful public engagement within the area and included wider discussions around the importance of clear water and healthy wetland habitats across the Broads.

Osprey and common tern have been spotted on site. In the 2024 Broads Authority's annual water plant monitoring report, yellow waterlily *Nuphar lutea*, white waterlily *Nymphaea alba*, rigid hornwort *Ceratophyllum demersum* and fennel-leaved pondweed *Potamogeton pectinatus* were recorded.

Building on this momentum, Norfolk Wildlife Trust have secured funding to improve visitor facilities. They plan to install an otter holt and kingfisher banks, and to purchase the fishing nets and pontoons for future biomanipulation of the exclosures.



Lancashire Wildlife Trust

Manchester Mosslands

Connect



Lancashire Wildlife Trust are thinking big! Through a landscape-scale project, they aim to reconnect the fragmented remnants of Chat Moss, a once vast expanse of lowland raised peat bogs. Rindle Moss was a missing part of the jigsaw but, when it came up for sale in 2020, Lancashire Wildlife Trust used some of Biffa Award's £671,113 grant to purchase it. The rest of the grant was used to fund habitat restoration and creation, bog pool creation, scrub clearance, planting and rewetting of the site.

These major groundworks have laid the foundation for a wonderful ecological comeback in subsequent years. Rare and beautiful species like the large heath butterfly, common lizard, bog bush-cricket, and several types of sphagnum mosses are already beginning to recolonise and thrive.

With 97% of the UK's lowland raised bogs lost, this project is a beacon of hope. Healthy peatlands are not just striking landscapes, they are essential for carbon storage, flood management and wildlife. And with Rindle Moss now protected in perpetuity, its future is secure.



Winchester Science Centre and Planetarium

Wonderseekers: Inspiring Science for All

In 2020, Winchester Science Centre and Planetarium received £292,400 to create 'Wonderseekers'. A fully accessible, hands-on space that includes a multisensory room and exhibition, a live science demo area and invention studio alongside a redesigned welcome area, café and shop.

Since its completion, the centre has adopted a 'no decisions about me, without me' approach to shaping future projects. Through initiatives like the Young Steering Group and Young Designs Panel, children's voices now actively inform and guide development. This inclusive model has helped the organisation become more accessible, relevant, and purposeful.

Leveraging their fundraising credibility, the centre has secured further funding for website improvements, resources for D/deaf visitors, audio interpretation and lift upgrades.

The grant has been revolutionary. The space welcomes more than 100,000 children and their families each year and long may it nurture curiosity, inquisitiveness and the development of scientific skills.

