



PRESS RELEASE

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BIG Biodiversity Challenge – reconnecting with nature

The winners of the 2018 CIRIA BIG Biodiversity Challenge and Awards including the 2018 BIG Biodiversity Champion will be announced at a ceremony on the evening of 12 September, at the Royal College of Physicians, central London. This year's awards evening venue is a Grade I listed building designed by renowned architect Sir Denys Lasdun (1914–2001). Opened in 1964 next to Regent's Park, it is widely considered a modernist masterpiece and one of London's most important post-war buildings.

Now in its fifth year, the BIG Biodiversity Challenge has continued to demonstrate the construction industry's appetite to engage and support biodiversity enhancement. Our recently announced shortlist for 2018 shows how enhancements large or small can help the industry to reconnect with nature.

We are delighted to announce **Dusty Gedge, President of European Green Roof and Walls Association** and **Peter Head, Founder and CEO, Ecological Sequestration Trust** will be joining us this year to share their vision for the future of biodiversity in construction.

Dusty Gedge said *"The shortlist demonstrates the range and diversity of exciting projects being delivered across the country. Embedding biodiversity in urban design is vitally important and the BIG Biodiversity Challenge competition and all the entries are helping to achieve this."*

Peter Head commented, *"Our future health and well-being depends on a healthy natural ecology and construction industry clients, designers, builders and management teams have a huge responsibility to support natural systems health. The great opportunity is creating value from investing in biodiversity from healthier users, occupants and regional stakeholders of the built environment. Cooler, calmer, cleaner, shady, colourful, buzzing, fluttering places. New approaches under development can realise this value in practice."*

The BIG Biodiversity Challenge and Awards would not be possible without unwavering support from **Berkeley Group, British Land, Kier, Landsec, Sir Robert McAlpine**, and overall prize sponsor **Wildflower Turf Ltd.**

We have a limited number of tickets for the awards evening available for sale, [so book early](#) to avoid disappointment.

For organisations wishing to raise their profile as champions of biodiversity, the BIG Biodiversity Challenge and Awards provides fantastic sponsorship opportunities. To find out more please visit www.bigchallenge.info.

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Notes to Editors

For more information about CIRIA, the BIG Biodiversity Challenge 2018, details of case studies entered in this year's Challenge (and photos) as well as a press pass to attend the Awards evening please contact:

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About CIRIA

CIRIA is the construction industry research and information association. It is an independent, not-for-profit, member-based research organisation that exists to champion performance improvement in construction.

Since 1960 CIRIA has delivered support and guidance to the construction, built environment and infrastructure sectors. CIRIA works with members from all parts of the supply chain to co-ordinate collaborative projects, industry networks and events. Its high quality guidance is delivered to industry through publications, training and other performance improvement activities.

For more information on CIRIA's products and services please visit www.ciria.org.

About the BIG Biodiversity Challenge

CIRIA's BIG Biodiversity Challenge offers advice and learning to show how biodiversity enhancements can be simple, affordable and achievable. Signing up couldn't be easier; it's free to enter and all you need to do is sign up on the website www.bigchallenge.info and submit your case study. This year the BIG Biodiversity Challenge Awards are divided into eight categories:

- BIG Biodiversity Champion award
- Client award – sponsored by **Kier**
- Community engagement award – sponsored by **Landsec**
- Project of year award – small scale (below 5ha)
- Project of year award –medium-large scale (5ha or over) – sponsored by **British Land**
- Innovation award – new award for 2018 – sponsored by **Berkeley Group**
- Monitoring, maintenance and management award – sponsored by **Sir Robert McAlpine**
- Pollinator project of the year award
- Temporary project of year award

As in previous years' there will be one overall winner (prize sponsored by **Wildflower Turf Ltd**) for the enhancement that demonstrates an outstanding commitment to biodiversity. [Entries for 2018 can be viewed here](#).

To find out more visit www.bigchallenge.info

About the BIG Biodiversity Interest Group

Led by CIRIA's Biodiversity Interest Group, the BIG Biodiversity Challenge invites the industry to add one new biodiversity enhancement to a construction site, development or existing building, however big or small, permanent or temporary, and be creative about enhancing biodiversity.

CIRIA's Biodiversity Interest Group acts as a working group to focus on delivering tangible outputs. We see biodiversity as a key emerging issue that needs a clearer understanding within the industry; otherwise it can become a second thought or add on rather than an integrated part of a project. Currently, unless it is a protected species or habitat, biodiversity enhancements are voluntary but we want to see it going further than this. For further details email: <mailto:owen.jenkins@ciria.org>