

## HELPING BIODIVERSITY TAKE OFF IN WEST LONDON, HEATHROW AIRPORT



### BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OVERVIEW

#### The commitment

Achieving Heathrow's vision to be 'Europe's hub of choice' relies on managing the airport responsibly.

That's why we are working hard to maximise the economic benefits that Heathrow brings, whilst carefully managing our environmental responsibilities and being a good neighbour to our local communities.

We have set ourselves clear commitments to work collaboratively with local stakeholders to monitor and manage our impacts on the surrounding local environment.

Several of these commitments are delivered through our established biodiversity strategy which aims to protect and enhance biodiversity in and around Heathrow in a way that does not increase the risk to aircraft safety.

The strategy covers 13 conservation sites around the airport, covering an area of about 170 Hectares, which are actively managed to increase their biodiversity value. It also promotes the incorporation of biodiversity features within the public facing landscaped areas of Heathrow where that is practicable.

Heathrow has achieved the Wildlife Trusts Biodiversity Benchmark Award for the last 6 years in recognition of the biodiversity management of 9 of the airport's conservation sites.

Partnership working is an important aspect of Heathrow's Biodiversity Strategy and the airport has established relationships with local authorities and biodiversity organisations to coordinate and support the biodiversity management projects of each group.

#### Fact box

**Company name:**  
Heathrow Airport

**Project name:**  
Helping biodiversity take off in West London'

**Location:**  
Heathrow Airport

**Biodiversity enhancement:**

- Nursery for native species
- Conservation and horticulture centre
- Horticultural training

**Size:**  
N/A

**Cost:**  
N/A

**Tips:**

- Building strong relationships with local groups and working together to maximise value by coordinating efforts and sharing expertise has been essential to our approach. Their local knowledge and passion for local conservation has been integral to understanding how the project can have real and lasting impact.
- Good communication and awareness of biodiversity in the local area and identifying opportunities for continuous improvement.

**Year completed:**  
2014

#### Categories:

- Community engagement
- Most innovative

---

## BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OVERVIEW (cont.)

---

### The project

Heathrow is working in a unique partnership with charity Green Corridor to enable and promote biodiversity more widely in areas surrounding the airport.

More information on Green Corridor is available by visiting their website: <http://www.greencorridor.org.uk/>  
The project is focused on revitalising a recently vacated grounds maintenance yard owned by Heathrow; transforming it into a base for Green Corridor activities including a training facility, a nursery for native species and a conservation and horticulture centre.

Green Corridor's close partnerships with local organisations such as the Crane Valley Partnership and the Colne and Crane All London Green Grid, allow them to work effectively across borough boundaries and use the river corridors of the Colne and the Crane to engage people in the landscape surrounding them, generating a positive movement towards improving biodiversity.

The old maintenance yard, opposite T5, includes buildings as well as land to support Green Corridor's work. Another smaller site on the Eastern side of the airport will be used to train people in the cultivation and growing of various plants. Heathrow prepared the site for use by removing unwanted items and fly tipped waste and installed new sections of perimeter fencing so it could be taken on and enhanced further by Green Corridor volunteers. Heathrow has also supplied compost from its onsite composting facility to provide a source of nutrient for plant growing.

The project will offer local young people, not in education or employment, horticultural training and nationally accredited qualifications, as well as work placements and apprenticeship opportunities. They will explore the catchment area, harvesting native seed stock which will be used at community volunteer events to plant/replant areas of the Crane and Colne river catchments around the airport and further afield. Longer term the nursery will operate as a social enterprise offering native seed stock to pan-London boroughs and more importantly, leaving a legacy of training and employment opportunities.

---

## SUMMARY

---

- Approximately 160 adult volunteers and 350 young volunteers, 90 Special Educational Needs young people and 120 young trainees are anticipated to make use of the facilities.
- The Nursery will grow seeds/cuttings of native flora for Conservation projects around the airport and farther afield.
- The buildings at the yard include a polytunnel, barn and bungalow, which will enable the native species to become 'operational' effectively and efficiently whilst providing accommodation to staff and volunteers for events, training days and meetings.
- A section of an innovative water filtration bed at Mayfield Farm, owned and operated by Heathrow, will be used to plant and propagate emergent aquatic native plant species for the native species nursery.
- The future of local flora species, including some regionally rare species such as Water Avens, Water Violet and native Black Poplar will be safeguarded.
- Provision of local provenance species for future conservation projects.
- Creating unique and meaningful ecology and biodiversity training skills and opportunities.
- Delivering urban based biodiversity enhancements through large and small scale community driven volunteering events.
- Enhancing and joining together two key river corridors through a biodiversity and best practice perspective.



If you would like to sign up for the BIG Challenge, please contact CIRIA by email at [customer.services@ciria.org](mailto:customer.services@ciria.org)



**the BIG Challenge**  
do one thing

