



PRESS RELEASE

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Get ready to “Do One Thing” for Biodiversity

CIRIA is pleased to announce that the **BIG Biodiversity Challenge 2018** was officially launched at an event hosted at City Hall on 28 February, in London. Led by the BIG Biodiversity Interest Group, since 2013 the Challenge has invited the construction industry to add biodiversity enhancements to construction sites, developments or existing buildings, regardless of size, and whether permanent or temporary.

The packed launch event, brought together clients, consultants, contractors, house builders, ecologists, landscape architects as well past awards winners who outlined their 2017 award winning projects, highlighting how any biodiversity enhancement, big or small, does make a BIG difference.

Getting involved in the Challenge and Awards is easy. Simply [sign up](#) to take the Challenge, [enter the Awards](#), [sponsor](#) an award category or join us on social media @bigbiodiversity #BIGAwards. This year we have introduced an Innovation award that encourages submission of enhancement projects that demonstrate innovative habitat creation, application of bespoke interventions, data collection and collation as well as projects that demonstrate unusual and alternative approaches to the normal. Interventions projects that provide a lasting legacy and support continual learning and improvement will be viewed most favourably.

Details of all awards categories can be found at www.bigchallenge.info.

Andy Haigh, Head of Sustainability (interim), Sir Robert McAlpine says “*I was delighted to Chair yesterday’s launch event for the 2018 BIG Biodiversity Challenge which celebrated last year’s award winners as they rose to the challenge, embedding it’s ethos of **doing one thing** for biodiversity across a range of wonderfully diverse and interesting projects. Sir Robert McAlpine is pleased to continue to support the awards as a sponsor as we see the value in improving the biodiversity on the projects and wider communities in which we work. At a time when we have seen monitored species decline by 56% across the UK between 1970 and 2013, and a 47% decline in urban species over the same period, as an industry we need to champion biodiversity on our projects and look to find a space for it across all of our projects to help reverse this trend. The BIG Awards are a great opportunity to celebrate the best biodiversity initiatives across the UK, and share the lessons learned. We are proud to support such a great endeavour*”.

The awards would not be possible without industry support and we are delighted to gain continuing support from **British Land, Kier, Landsec** and **Sir Robert McAlpine**.

The Challenge and Awards are free to enter and we have a number of sponsorship opportunities for organisations wanting to be involved in the year’s Awards. For further information on how to enter, and to be inspired by last year’s entries, please visit www.bigchallenge.info. The BIG Biodiversity Challenge 2018 Awards ceremony will take place on 12 September, in London.

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Notes to Editors

For more information about CIRIA and/or the **BIG Biodiversity Challenge 2018** and to request interviews with our 2017 awards winners please contact:

Nipa Patel

tel: +44 (0) 20 7549 3300

email: nipa.patel@ciria.org

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. The Challenge has gained huge momentum with over 155 entries received last year, from sites all over the country. Enhancements included installing bug hotels and bat boxes, restoring riverbanks and wildflower meadows and delivering detailed biodiversity action plans. Doing just one thing really can make a BIG difference in helping to reverse the decline of Biodiversity in the UK.

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 enhancement. The BIG Biodiversity Challenge Awards are divided into nine 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
- Monitoring, maintenance and management award – sponsored by **Sir Robert McAlpine**
- Pollinator project of the year award
- Temporary project of year award

There will be one overall winner for the enhancement that demonstrates an outstanding commitment to biodiversity. The 2017 Overall winner and the individual category winners can be viewed at <http://www.bigchallenge.info/2017-winners>

To find out more visit www.bigchallenge.info or email suzanne.simmons@ciria.org

About the BIG Biodiversity Interest Group

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 suzanne.simmons@ciria.org