

The Dry Stone Walling Association receives grant of £99,700 from the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund



- The Launch of the Rural Skills Hub by the Dry Stone Walling Association in partnership with the National Hedgelaying Society, is an exciting new initiative bringing together national expertise in dry stone walling and hedgelaying to highlight the importance of traditional boundaries to the natural environment and to promote essential traditional skills by providing a central hub offering information, advice and training opportunities.
- 90 projects awarded grants to accelerate the implementation of nature-based projects, from new 'insect pathways' in our countryside and towns, to tree planting projects in deprived urban areas
- Second funding round of Green Recovery Challenge Fund backed by £40 million, with over 1,000 jobs to be created or retained in England

The Dry Stone Walling Association & National Hedgelaying Society Rural Skills Hub Project has been awarded a grant from the Government's £40 million second round of the Green Recovery Challenge Fund, a multi-million pound boost for green jobs and nature recovery

Ninety nature projects across England have been awarded grants from £68,100 to £1,950,000 to create and retain over 1,000 green jobs, backed by the Government's £80 million Green Recovery Challenge Fund.

Work will be carried out on over 600 sites from North Northumberland to the tip of Cornwall, and combined with the first round, almost a million trees will be planted, contributing towards

Green Recovery Challenge Fund

the Government's commitment to treble tree planting rates across England by the end of this Parliament.

It has never been more important to connect people with the natural environment. Recent events have highlighted the need to provide opportunities for health and wellbeing and to value the contribution the natural environment can make. The launch of a Rural Skills Hub combining the experience, expertise and knowledge of the Dry Stone Walling Association and the National Hedgelaying Society will ensure that essential traditional boundary skills and knowledge are passed on to the next generation via the delivery of information, advice, work placements and funded training and qualifications, thereby creating rural employment opportunities for young people and providing the essential skills to maintain valuable landscape assets. The project will enhance people's connection with nature by delivering an educational programme to include experience days and the production of online resources. A full time Rural Skills Coordinator will be appointed to deliver the project.

Paul Clayton, Chairman of the Dry Stone Walling Association said:

“By combining the experience and expertise of the Dry Stone Walling Association with that of the National Hedgelaying Society to form a Traditional Boundaries Rural Skills Hub, we can work together to strengthen the contribution traditional boundaries make to the natural environment. The funding received from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund will make a real difference to the opportunities for people to train in traditional boundary skills “

The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is a key part of the Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan to kick-start nature recovery and tackle climate change. Connecting people with nature is another priority theme: by increasing access to nature and greenspaces, projects will support both physical and mental wellbeing. The Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund was developed by Defra and its Arm's-Length Bodies. The fund is being delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England, the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission.

Environment Minister, Rebecca Pow, said:

“The diverse and ambitious projects being awarded funding today will help environmental organisations employ more people to work on tree-planting, nature restoration and crucially, help more of the public to access and enjoy the outdoors.

“Through our £80 million Fund, we are on track to support over 2,500 jobs, plant almost a million trees and increase nature recovery at a huge scale across the country, which will help us deliver against our 25 Year Environment Plan.”

Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive, National Lottery Heritage Fund, said:

“From wetland restoration, to creating wildlife-rich habitat for bees, it is vital that we value, protect and rebuild our natural heritage. This new funding will not only allow projects to carry out direct conservation which is essential in protecting our

Green Recovery Challenge Fund

biodiversity, but it will increase awareness of how and why we need to change our behaviours in order to protect our future.”

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

“By supporting jobs from Northumberland to Somerset, the Green Recovery Challenge Fund will help deliver a nature positive future. The fund supports young people to develop skills needed to protect nature, build back greener and prepare for climate impacts, like floods and heatwaves.”

Natural England Chair Tony Juniper said:

“Our environmental and conservation charity sector does an incredible job in protecting, improving and restoring the natural environment for the benefit of communities and the economy.”

Forestry Commission Chair Sir William Worsley said:

“This funding will help deliver thousands more trees and help us achieve our target of trebling tree planting rates in England by the end of the Parliament. We need to work towards net zero emissions by 2050; to address biodiversity loss; to better connect people with nature; and to create more green jobs in doing so. Trees are central to this and the projects being awarded these grants will have a hugely important role in helping us realise these objectives.”

A full list of awards is available to view at:

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/publications/green-recovery-challenge-fund-second-round-decisions-july-2021>

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Notes to editors

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Using money raised by the National Lottery, we Inspire, lead and resource the UK's heritage to create positive and lasting change for people and communities, now and in the future.

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