



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
6 July 2017

BIG Biodiversity Challenge – supporting nature’s recovery

The winners of the 2017 CIRIA BIG Biodiversity Challenge Awards will be announced at a ceremony on the evening of 14 September, at the Blu Fin Building, central London. This year’s awards evening venue is an elegant and energy-efficient building designed by award-winning architects Allies & Morrison. The edifice is covered in 2,000 blue aluminium fins, specifically provided to reflect the sun at different parts of the day, providing shade as well as keeping the building cool.

Since 2013, the BIG Biodiversity Challenge has gained momentum demonstrating an increase in the construction industry’s engagement and support for biodiversity. Following a rigorous judging process, this year’s awards shortlist will be announced at the end of July 2017.

Attendees at this year’s awards evening are in for a special treat as **Stephanie Hilborne OBE, Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trusts** and **Keith Clarke, Chair of Future Cities Catapult, Non-Executive Chair, Forum for the Future** and visiting **Professor at Aston University** will be sharing their vision for the future of biodiversity in construction.

Stephanie Hilborne OBE, Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trusts said *“These awards are a great way to fuel ambition in the construction sector to work with the grain of nature. The natural world is in our DNA and makes us happier, more positive and more productive. Building wildlife into developments can therefore help the bottom line, as well as supporting nature’s recovery.”*

Keith Clarke, Chair of Future Cities Catapult, Non-Executive Chair, Forum for the Future and visiting Professor at Aston University said *“We talk about the interconnected world in terms of data and the internet of everything. What we forget at our peril is that nature is the most interconnected system of all and that rich biodiversity across the planet is fundamental, something that an iPhone app cannot replace. Celebrating successful leadership in this area is fantastic.”*

The BIG Biodiversity Challenge and Awards would not be possible without sponsorship support from: The **Berkeley Group, British Land, Kier, Land Securities, 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 2017 and for a press pass 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:

- Client award – sponsored by **Kier**
- Community engagement award – sponsored by **Land Securities**
- Large scale permanent award
- Medium scale permanent award – sponsored by **British Land**
- Small scale permanent award
- Maintenance and management award
- Pollinator award – sponsored by **Berkeley Group**
- Temporary award
- BIG Biodiversity Champion award - sponsored by **Sir Robert McAlpine**

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 2017 can be viewed here.](#)

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

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:suzanne.simmons@ciria.org>