

# BIG Biodiversity Challenge and Awards 2024

## Project entry form – Instructions

### Key dates

- The deadline for entries is **Friday 21 June 2024 at 17:00**. Please complete and return the entry form in PowerPoint (PDFs will not be accepted) and supporting materials (high resolution images) to [bigawards@ciria.org](mailto:bigawards@ciria.org).
- The shortlist will be announced in **July 2024**; we will inform the primary contact for each successful entry.
- The shortlist will be invited to provide a short video of the biodiversity enhancement that formed your Award entry to be shared at the awards ceremony and more widely as part of our post-awards marketing campaign including via social media and on [www.bigchallenge.info](http://www.bigchallenge.info). The shortlist will not be judged on the video.
- The winners will be revealed at the awards ceremony on **Wednesday 25 September 2024** (provisional date).

### Entry guidelines

- Entry is **free**.
- Personal data is gathered in accordance with [CIRIA's privacy policy](#).
- You may enter the same project/scheme in **two categories maximum**, but you must complete a different submission for each one. We recommend tailoring each submission to the specific award category and judging criteria. If you are unsure which category to choose, please contact [bigawards@ciria.org](mailto:bigawards@ciria.org) to discuss the best option.
- Please do **not** submit a project that has **previously been shortlisted** for a BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award unless there has been significant and measurable progress since the previous entry.
- The Overall Winner Award will be presented to the enhancement that demonstrates an outstanding commitment to biodiversity.
- Entries should not be used to:
  - promote goods and services ([CIRIA](#) can encourage generic technology/processes but cannot accept registered trademarks in any submitted case study or illustrations) or
  - promote any political agenda
- In submitting your nomination, you understand that we will publish all submissions (including images) on [www.bigchallenge.info](http://www.bigchallenge.info) and content may be shared elsewhere by [CIRIA](#). If you (or your nominee and their project partners) do not agree to this, please clearly state the restrictions that apply to your submission.

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### Eligibility

- For all project related submissions, biodiversity interventions will have been completed in the last **24 months up to and including 21 June 2024**. This may be the culmination of several years' work or a small scale action carried out during a construction project.
- For maintenance and management projects, the programme should have been in place for at least **12 months up to and including 21 June 2024**.

### Awards categories 1-9 | Biodiversity projects

1. Client Award
2. Community Engagement Award
3. Habitat Creation: Project of Year Award (Large scale biodiversity enhancement 5ha and above)
4. Habitat Creation: Project of Year Award (Medium scale from 0.5 to 5ha)
5. Habitat Creation: Project of Year Award (Small scale up to 0.5ha)
6. Innovation Award
7. Multi Benefits Award
8. Biodiversity Legacy Award
9. International Biodiversity Project Award

Please submit your nomination for the BIG Biodiversity **Champion** Awards. [Download the guidelines and entry form here.](#)

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The form includes guidance for each question. Please delete the guidance leaving only your responses when submitting the form.

### Judging criteria

Please refer to the [judging guidelines](#) and [hints and tips](#) before completing your entry.

The judges will be looking for evidence that:

- The project has gone **beyond normal business practice**
- **Specific biodiversity values** were considered and carried through
- The habitat created is or will potentially become **ecologically valuable**
- The extent to which the project/enhancement is **replicable**

### Queries

- Please ensure that you understand the submission requirements early in the process and **seek clarification promptly**.
- CIRIA may not be able to respond to any queries received after 1 May 2024.
- If you have any queries about [BIG Biodiversity Challenge](#) or the entry process, please email [bigawards@ciria.org](mailto:bigawards@ciria.org). Please allow five working days for responses.

### Images

- Please provide captions explaining what is shown in each image. These images will be used in your case study so please choose wisely.
- You may need to resize images to fit the template.
- All images must be high resolution JPG files (at least 300dpi) suitable to be printed A4.
- Please ensure all images are credited correctly for use in any publicity.

### Fonts

- Please use **Arial font size 11**.

### Supporting materials

- Please endeavour to keep the total file size below 8mb when submitting to [bigawards@ciria.org](mailto:bigawards@ciria.org).
- Please use [www.wetransfer.com](http://www.wetransfer.com) or [www.dropbox.com](http://www.dropbox.com) for large files.

### Finally

Please ensure that your submission addresses the judging criteria for the category(s) you are entering.

Thank you for your interest in the [BIG Biodiversity Challenge Awards 2024](#).

**Best of luck!**

Insert Project Name: LivingPillars

Insert Project Location – Town/City, Country: Ebury Street, London, SW1

Insert names of Client(s)/Organisation(s): Grosvenor Great Britain & Ireland & Westminster City Council

## BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: **Innovation Award**

### Project overview (50 words max)

The LivingPillar project was conceived as a solution to planting in our cities where there is limited space. Using solar power and re-circulating irrigation our they provide an innovative solution by supporting long term biodiversity on lamp posts.

The project commenced May 2018 completed May 2024

### What were the biodiversity conditions on site prior to the enhancement? (100 words max)

There were hanging baskets on the lamp posts prior to starting our project. We wished to demonstrate that planting on lamp posts can encourage greater biodiversity than hanging baskets and help clean the air. Additional challenges included pre installation meetings to understand the reservations from numerous stakeholders including lighting engineers and asset owners and to re-assure them that the lamp post can be a valuable and strategic asset with regards biodiversity net gain.

The driver was from a cabinet member who wished to demonstrate green local authority green credentials.

### What were the reasons behind this project? (100 words max)

To provide a simple solution to the challenges faced with lack of space to satisfy the increased demand for Biodiversity in our cities which is being driven by consumer demand and the BNG requirement in new developments that has become law. (aided by the Urban Greening Factor directive becoming a prominent measuring tool for biodiversity gain in cities). The LivingPillar is also a solution to cleaning our air by trapping particulate matter (PM2.-10) and absorbing other pollutants such as NO2 and CO, thus making our cities healthier and more sustainable places to live and work.



*Ebury Street LivingPillar installation May 2018*



*Same lamp post different outcome*

### What were the biodiversity measures taken? (300 words max)

The project is scalable with over 7million lamp posts in the UK. The technology that we use keeps the plants healthy by adjusting additional irrigation cycles and is transferable along with a mobile App. This notifies maintenance teams when to replenish water in the reservoir and can provide a wide range of additional data from pollution levels to climatic conditions.

Local jobs will be created with regular watering schedules and access to the App.

With a European patent pending, the Living pillar is innovative, novel and inventive. It has been nominated for the Earthshot Prize 2024.

We monitored this project over 6 years and have determined that water replenishment weekly in the summer and twice per month in the winter along with twice yearly maintenance is required to keep the planting healthy.

We investigated a number of planting palettes and have settled on a combination of hardy perennials and shrubs. With this selection and a 50:50 ratio, we are able provide year round food for a wide variety of pollinators and shrub cover for nesting birds. As the plants grow they are more efficient in trapping and absorbing pollutants

Insect and bird boxes are used to encourage biodiversity.

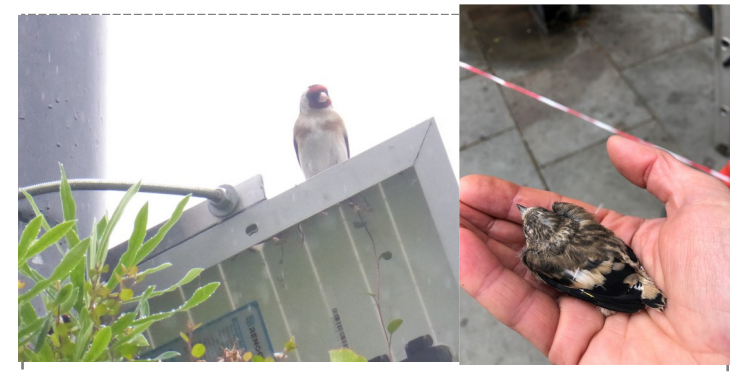
With two biodiversity sweeps by the University of East London in 2021 & 2022 a greater diversity and abundance of pollinators were recorded visiting the LivingPillars compared to the hanging baskets during all surveys.

The living pillars provide sustainable long-term habitat for invertebrate life cycles and as such have greater value than hanging baskets whose planting is replaced twice per annum and are therefore not suitable for lifecycles and offer less biodiversity potential

The LivingPillar can increase the biodiversity levels of a lamp post by 100% and help form biodiversity corridors for our insects and birds.



*Ebury Street LivingPillars*



*Goldfinch nesting on our LivingPillar Ebury Street SW1*

### Further information (250 words max)

Before installation, we structurally test the lamp post and advise the amount of planting that is possible.

The LivingPillars are installed from a scaffold tower or cherry picker. They are powered by solar and do not damage the lighting column.

The irrigation is re-circulating so no water loss.

The plants are supported in our patented fytotextile system that we have been using since 2008 in our Living Walls. It is a semi hydroponic system, flexible and lightweight.

They LivingPillar can be removed quickly and easily if required.

The University of East London carried out two biodiversity sweeps in 2021 & 2022 on this project. Results here; [2022 biodiversity net gain \(BNG\) of LivingPillars™](#)

3 Goldfinch nests were discovered during the Spring horticultural visit in 2023 thus proving the concept that providing cover and food will attract nesting birds high up out of danger from our urban predators.

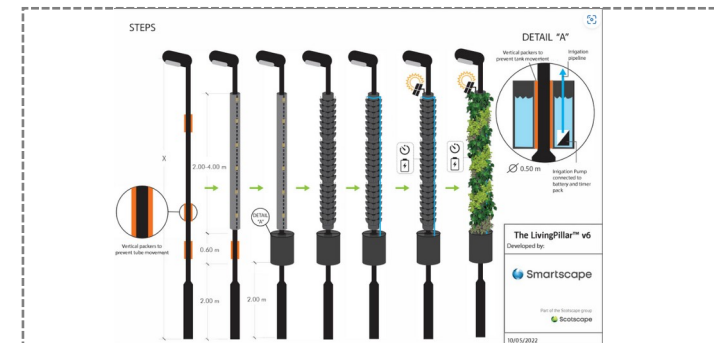
A Knowledge Partnership Agreement with Greenwich University was entered into on the plants ability to absorb pollution demonstrated a reduction in CO and NO2 levels at the Living pillar vs the reference location. [2019 Greenwich University – Plants ability to absorb Pollution](#)

Our legacy is to provide wayfinding and placemaking for us, our invertebrates and birds as we seek to form biodiversity corridors, high up out of harm's way to join up our green spaces.

This project was self-funded

### What was the motivation for carrying out the enhancement? (100 words max)

We had been consulting with Grosvenor who wished to be seen as the greenest landlord by installing Living walls throughout their portfolio. Unfortunately, there were very few walls on which to hang Living Walls. The lamp post became a target for us. The more we thought about it, the more it became possible! It was the passion and commitment to make a difference as we tackle lack of biodiversity and seek to make our cities more sustainable and healthy places to live and work that drove us to develop the initiative.



*LivingPillar doesn't damage the lamp post*



*Clapham Junction LivingPillars*