

News Release

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Bristol projects boosted by grants

Two Bristol projects have received a funding boost from The Veolia Environmental Trust.

The third phase of a four-phase project to revive the River Frome in Bristol can go ahead thanks to our grant of £21,524. We have awarded the grant to Bristol Zoological Society to fund a community-led programme to remove invasive non-native plants and conduct river-health surveys. It will focus on a stretch of the Frome running near UWE Bristol and Blackberry Hill Hospital.

Phases 1 and 2 of the project provided an officer to control and maintain 80km of river bank by establishing community action groups trained in invasive weed pulling and survey techniques.

Also, the play area on Troopers Hill Field, St George, can now be revamped thanks to our grant of £23,750. We have awarded the Friends of Troopers Hill the grant to fund the installation of a great new wooden activity-trail. It will incorporate several play features and will be suitable for 5-11 year olds.

The play area currently consists of just an isolated free-standing slide on a 'cushioned tarmac' area, a pair of goal posts and some logs, some of which are rotting.

The grants are two of 27 our Board has awarded to community and environmental projects in England and Wales, with a grant total being over £834,000. We award grants through the Landfill Communities Fund and since 2003 we have awarded over £414,000 to 16 projects in Bristol and Somerset.

We will now start working with the two organisations to finalise the detail of their projects, including their start dates, so they can begin as soon as possible.

Bristol Zoo's UK Conservation Manager, Jen Nightingale, says, "We are delighted to have received this grant, which is pivotal to the zoo continuing our invasive species control programme. The grant will help fund the work of our community groups, removing invasive plant species from Bristol river banks. This will open up habitats and improve biodiversity along the rivers. We very much hope that this project will lead to local communities having greater access to native wildlife and habitats."

Chair of the friends group, Susan Acton-Campbell, says, "The project will benefit the whole community. The site is freely open to all, 24 hours a day, seven days a week and the new activity trail will be used and enjoyed by the children who cross Troopers Hill to get to the nature reserve and when they are coming home from school."

The Executive Director of The Veolia Environmental Trust, Paul Taylor, says, "The improvements along the river and the revamped play area on Troopers Hill Field will have many benefits for wildlife and people. With the increasing reduction in the amount of funds that we can award, these two organisations need to be congratulated on securing their grants in an extremely competitive environment."

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Editors' notes

Bristol Zoological Society operates Bristol Zoo Gardens, the oldest provincial zoo in the world and Bristol's largest visitor attraction. Bristol Zoological Society is a conservation and education charity, reinvesting all profit back into creating a sustainable future for wildlife and people. It relies on income from visitors and supporters to continue its important work.

The society is involved with more than 100 co-ordinated breeding programmes for threatened wildlife species. It employs over 150 full and part-time staff to care for the animals and run a successful visitor attraction to support its conservation and education work.

Bristol Zoological Society supports, through finance and skill sharing, 15 projects in the UK and abroad that conserve and protect some of the world's most endangered species.

Friends of Troopers Hill was formed by a group of local residents in 2003, we aim to • provide a friendly community focus for people who care about Troopers Hill • carry out practical conservation work to help look after Troopers Hill • organise public events such as walks and talks • work with Bristol City Council to make sure Troopers Hill is well looked after.

We do not charge membership fees and anyone listed on our mailing list is considered to be a member. Our meetings are open to everyone with an interest in Troopers Hill or its surroundings. We are not a registered charity but are an entirely volunteer-resourced community group whose activities are funded by donations and grants. To date we have raised over £100,000 for works and activities on Troopers Hill.

The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) is an innovative tax credit scheme enabling Landfill Operators (LOs) to contribute money to organisations enrolled with ENTRUST as Environmental Bodies (EBs). EBs use this funding for a wide range of community and environmental projects in the vicinity of landfill sites. LOs are able to claim a credit (currently 5.7%) against their landfill tax liability for 90% of the contributions they make.

Since its inception in 1996, over £1.3bn billion has been spent on more than 51,000 projects across the UK. For further information, please visit www.entrust.org.uk or see [HMRC's general guide to Landfill Tax](#).

The Veolia Environmental Trust has been supporting community and environmental projects through the Landfill Communities Fund for 18 years. Since we were established in 1997, Veolia has supported us by contributions of over £66 million to 2028 projects.

We have helped fund a diverse range of projects, including the repair of woodland footpaths, the renovation of community halls and the installation of playgrounds and play areas. For more information, or to find out how to apply for funding, visit our website www.veoliatrust.org.