The City of London Growing Localities Awards 2014/15

A. About the Awards

Lemos&Crane working with The City of London Corporation’s Charity, The City Bridge Trust presents The Growing Localities Awards. Total prize money of £2,500 is offered for projects based in London that demonstrate excellence in using nature to enhance and improve local communities and in particular the lives of vulnerable or socially excluded people, generating positive outcomes such as health and well-being, new skills and knowledge, new relationships, and a sense of purpose and belonging.

To apply for the award you will need to describe what your project already does and to explain how the prize money would be spent to further your work.

This year entries are invited for projects and initiatives in any London borough that involve any one or combination of:

- **Gardening and growing food**: for communal eating and small-scale enterprise
- **Introducing young people to nature**: encouraging young people to develop an interest in nature through bird-watching and similar activities
- **Keeping animals**: bees, chickens, pigs, etc for the experience of care but also to farm
- **Nature-themed arts and crafts**: woodcraft, photography, film-making, writing, etc
- **Reclaiming and developing wasteland**: especially led by residents and tenants
- **‘Green’ exercise**: groups for walking, cycling, running, etc with a nature theme
Entries are invited from non-profit organisations such as:

- Homeless agencies
- Supported housing (providing mental health services, substance misuse, etc)
- Social housing providers
- Residential care providers
- Health organisations
- Hospices
- Prisons
- Churches and faith groups
- Other community-based and voluntary organisations.

Entries will be judged based on criteria including:

- **Originality** – the distinctiveness and memorability of the project idea
- **Replicability** – how others could be inspired by and run similar projects themselves
- **Reach** – the numbers of people involved in the project, particularly in engaging the wider community
- **Diversity** – of people engaged, particularly those who are ‘hard to reach’ or have challenging needs and who are brought together with the local community
- **Impact** – of the project (demonstrated qualitatively or quantitatively) on people’s health, well-being, relationships, skills, knowledge, sense of purpose and belonging.

**B. Timetable**

- Deadline for entries – **Wednesday 17 December, 2014**
- Shortlist announced – **End of March 2015**
- Winners announced – **June 2015**

**C. Rules and procedures**
1. Entries must be completed using this entry form and submitted electronically here.

2. Receipt of all entries submitted online will be automatically acknowledged.

3. Entrants may be asked to provide further information.

4. The judges' decision is final. Awards will be made at the judges' discretion and no correspondence will be entered into concerning any decision. Not all the awards advertised may be awarded if the judges consider the criteria have not been met. Additional commendations may be made at the judges' discretion.

5. The content of any entry may be used for informing other practitioners and also for publicity purposes unless the entrant withholds their consent to this in writing.

6. Entrants are deemed to have accepted these rules and procedures and to have agreed to be bound by them when entering this competition.
D. Your Entry

Please do not exceed 1500 words in total.

1. Name of project you are entering for The Growing Localities Awards

   Bede Centre Nature Group

2. Describe your project in one sentence

   A project to support adults with learning disabilities to develop more awareness, knowledge and understanding of their environment, through workshops, art, crafts, poetry, discussions, practical activities and excursions.

3. Specify the setting(s) where your project is delivered (e.g. homeless agency, social housing, prison, community, etc)?

   Day Centre for Adults with Learning Disabilities

4. What are the project’s objectives?

   To enable adults with learning disabilities to become more aware of their environment and to be able to question and discover things for themselves. To enable them to learn to appreciate the natural and ecological aspects of their local area and further afield. To enable them to made a physical and practical impact to enhance and protect the natural environment by learning to make habitats and feeders. To enable them to find ways to communicate what they have learnt and discovered. To use nature and the environment as a starting point for creative activities.

5. What are the project’s activities?

   Practical conservation work in Aspinden Road – Bede Nature Reserve: clearing invasive species,
keeping the pond clear, keeping the path clear and filling bird feeders.

Making and putting up displays for the centre about a specific topic that has been researched or discussed, so that others in the centre can share the information and ideas.

Practical workshops: making insect habitats, animal shelters and habitats, making feeding stations for animals, insects and birds, making bird boxes.

Looking at the weather - discussing the effects on plants and animals and depicting through art work.

Research projects: joining in online research projects.

Nature observation: spotting and logging local birds, animals, insects and plants; seeing which are more common and which are difficult to see or spot. Identifying through research which species need help to survive.

Visiting other local nature reserves, parks and woods to investigate different habitats.

Discussing animals, insects and birds that people are afraid of, or wary of (pigeons, wasps, grubs, foxes, worms and snakes especially) and increasing awareness and knowledge about these creature to dispel fears and myths.

Art projects: using natural found materials or with a natural theme.

Listening to nature in silence. Discussing afterwards what we have heard.

Writing, listening to and discussing poetry on a natural topic.

Discussions and workshops around different topics around animals and plants and how we, as another species relate to them and use them for material sources, clothing food work and entertainment.

6. What has been the impact / achievement of the project?

So far, the project has made our service users much more aware of their environment; both of their local area and further afield.
The project members have learnt how they can play a practical part in protecting animals, birds, insects and plants by producing habitats and feeders. This has led to feeling closer to the wildlife around them and has increased self-esteem and feelings of usefulness.

They have shared their new knowledge and experience with their peers and staff at the centre through visual displays, this has encouraged others to become interested and to adjust their ideas.

Discussions and workshops have led to a greater understanding of animals, birds and insects which they have previously been scared of or misinformed about. It has dispelled misinformation, fears and myths which has led to a greater feeling of being a comfortable part of the local environment.

7. How would you spend any prize money to further your project/initiative?

While the nature project has been a great success, to further the work already done we need to provide someone or some persons, with more knowledge to lead the group; so we would use the money to fund this. A more in-depth knowledge would extend the variety and quality of the work and provide a more comprehensive leadership. Bede staff would learn alongside the service users so we could extend the work beyond the time we have with the experienced workers.

This could consist of one person leading the project for a time or a series of different people leading workshops. We have identified experienced and qualified people who could do this, through our links with environmental and wildlife agencies.

The Aspinden Nature Reserve (an empty bombsite in a nearby residential street) is managed and maintained by Bede House Association; but there is no one with the knowledge here to lead more than very basic tasks. More experienced leaders could help the group to look after the site in accordance with the area and in a way which would help to conserve the more important or threatened species. We are also keen to involve local people with this project.

We would hope to provide people who could lead practical workshops; but also who could deliver information and lead discussions. We would also hope to provide people to lead art and craft and poetry/writing workshops round natural themes depending on funding.

We are keen to extend the open nature and variety of the project, in order to respond to user led requests, questions and interests so would choose a person or persons in accordance with this.
E. Submitting your entry

Please return this entry form by 5pm, Wednesday 17, Dec 2014 by uploading it on this page.

Please add any documents, photos, videos or other media that are relevant to your entry and email them to awards@lemosandcrane.co.uk quoting ‘Growing Localities award entry’ and your organisation name in the subject heading.

If you have any problems uploading your entry please also email awards@lemosandcrane.co.uk.

Thank you for your time and effort which is much appreciated. Good luck!