

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
Her Majesty's Treasury
1, Horse Guards Road,
London SW1A 2HQ

5 November 2020

Green Recovery Challenge Fund

Dear Mr Sunak

We recently wrote to your Department to spell out the grievous financial losses for environmental charities as a result of coronavirus. We proposed over £300m in shovel-ready green infrastructure projects to help fund a green recovery.

We were grateful for the £40million Green Recovery Challenge Fund, but it falls far short of the investment needed to halt thousands of job losses in our sector and to prevent important projects from being cancelled. It is even further from the amount needed to begin to restore our natural environment.

We now know that the Fund has been oversubscribed by £330million. This demonstrates that our sector stands ready with projects that will create green jobs, help meet net zero climate change targets, and ensure that every community has access to a healthy environment, helping to resolve social and ethnic inequality in access to nature. There is clear economic evidence that green investments represent excellent value for money and will create a more resilient and prosperous economy for the future.

Without substantial new investment dedicated to enhancing biodiversity, this will not be a green recovery. £1bn annual investment is needed in green capital projects to set nature on a path to recovery on land and at sea. Today, Natural England has launched its new partnership to deliver the Government's promise of a Nature Recovery Network. This is a very welcome initiative, but the partnership simply cannot succeed without additional public funding dedicated to biodiversity.

Increasing the sum available through the Green Recovery Challenge Fund in the forthcoming Spending Review with new funds to cover the shortfall would see green projects underway in the next financial year the length and breadth of the country, from inner cities to our shores. We urge you to invest now in a greener future for our economy.

Yours

Hilary McGrady, Director General, National Trust

Beccy Speight, CEO, RSPB

Craig Bennett, CEO, The Wildlife Trusts

Dr Darren Moorcroft, CEO,

James Robinson, Director of Conservation, WWT

Christopher Price, CEO, Rare Breeds Survival Trust
Ian Dunn, CEO, Plantlife
Andy Knott MBE, CEO, League Against Cruel Sports
Dr Tony Gent, CEO, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation
Prof Alastair Driver, Director, Rewilding Britain
Brian da Cal, Director, Four Paws UK
Sandy Luk, CEO, Marine Conservation Society
Julie Williams, CEO, Butterfly Conservation
Paul Coulson, Director of Operations, Institute of Fisheries Management
Mary Rice, Executive Director, Environmental Investigation Agency
Chris Butler-Stroud, CEO, Whale and Dolphin Conservation
Hugo Tagholm, CEO, Surfers Against Sewage
Dr Steve Head, Coordinator, Wildlife Gardening Forum
Sally Hamilton, Director, ORCA
Kate Ashbrook, General Secretary, The Open Spaces Society
Mike Childs, Head of Science, Policy and Research, Friends of the Earth
Jill Nelson, CEO, People's Trust for Endangered Species
Caroline Ruane, CEO, Naturewatch Foundation
Tanya Curry, Interim CEO, The Ramblers
James Thornton, CEO, ClientEarth
Kit Stoner, CEO, Bat Conservation Trust
Mark Lloyd, CEO, The Rivers Trust
John Sauven, CEO, Greenpeace UK
Dr Richard Benwell, CEO, Wildlife and Countryside Link