



Jules Howard

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FUNDING IDEAS FOR OUTDOOR LEARNING AREAS

This document contains some funding ideas for primary and secondary schools, seeking to create fantastic grounds for wildlife and learning.

1. NATIONAL SCHEMES:

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND (5k – 50k).

If your project involves large-scale works to your school's (or community) site (such as putting in an allotment or an auditorium). The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF - [Your Heritage grantscheme, 5k to 50k](#)) is a popular grant-giver for projects like these. They can fund projects that demonstrate that you will improve a local heritage item (e.g. ponds, wildlife, birds etc.), and improve local lives (not just in the school but also in the local community). In fact, it is likely that the project wouldn't get funded unless the community were involved...The application process is intense (lots of questions, and likely a couple of face-to-face chats with HLF), a process that can be difficult for some schools to realistically invest in. Expect intense competition.

LANDFILL TAX CREDIT SCHEMES (5k +).

Another big grant giver are the landfill tax credit schemes such as [Biffaward](#) and [Veolia](#) (though I haven't much experience personally with this one). These players invest in local projects (normally within 5-10km from a landfill site) that benefit communities and schools. Again, you have to invest time in the application process, but the rewards (in terms of money generated) might be worth it. These type of funders will expect community gain, and the competition for funding is incredibly intense in the current age of austerity!

PEOPLE'S POSTCODE TRUST:

This isn't one that I have used, but it is open to schools and community groups (offering grants of up to £10,000). Expect competition. More [here](#).

2. SCHEMES LOCAL TO YOU

Please make contact with me if you'd like to discuss local funding pots that may be near to you. I can compile a list, free of charge, should your project be one that I may choose to work with.

Find out more at: www.wildlife-man.co.uk

3. CORPORATE GRANT-GIVERS

Some multi-nationals have a charitable grant-giving arm – I would suggest that these are the ones to which schools are best suited. These are good funding pots, and relatively easy to apply for (in fact, they are sometimes perfect for schools). The two best I know of are: O2's ['It's your community'](#), and the [Santander Foundation](#) - both offer grants of over £1k-2k. These are worth your while, and the application process is quite simple.

There is also [Tesco Community Grants](#) (£500 - £5k one-off payment) which I have not used, though they do fund outdoor classroom development. Also Co-op runs their [The Co-operative Membership Community Fund](#) which offer up to £5k.

4. LOCAL AUTHORITY FUNDING

Sadly environmental activities have been first to be chopped back in the current recession for many Local Authorities. They are deemed (WRONGLY!) to be a non-essential service. However, all local authorities will have someone (or even a team of people) called 'Biodiversity Officers' or suchlike. Search your local authority's website. These people are excellent contacts to email for information on small local funding pots (not necessarily council-run), and many of which are not even searchable online. These could be just the job for your wildlife project. Sometimes these funding pots are undersubscribed - they're waiting for environmental educators like you to make contact!

5. WILDLIFE CHARITIES

Many wildlife charities may be open to working with schools or community groups to help create (and sometimes fund the creation of) special habitats for the species they represent. For ponds (which is where most of my experience lies), there are small funding pots available to create or restore ponds for great crested newts (see [Amphibian and Reptile Conservation](#)), or to create new high-quality ponds for other aquatic wildlife (see Pond Conservation's [Million Ponds project](#)) - [Plantlife](#) too may also be able to help if you're a plant buff.

Another great charity is Learning Through Landscapes. Though they can't offer much in the way of grants, they can offer a [free advisory service](#) to enhance your plans for your outdoor learning project, possibly making it even more attractive to funders.

6. GOOD PEOPLE

Money isn't always the only option, so you could have a think about what you could get for free from a local volunteer workforce. If you have a project that requires some hard graft (not necessarily money) why not enquire about roping in existing conservation volunteer workforces from local branches of [BTCV](#), the [Wildlife Trust](#) or [Groundwork](#). Or rope in a few parents, of course.

More about The Wildlife-man

Since launching in spring 2010, *The Wildlife-man* has worked with almost two hundred schools, engaged and inspired thousands of pupils, and reached over ten thousand members of the public through events.

Founded by wildlife conservationist Jules Howard, services are aimed at charities, schools and community groups; helping these audiences develop and enhance their teaching of environmental education.



For more information, visit: www.wildlife-man.co.uk