

Youth Board launched by Backyard Nature Green Housing Association Consortium gives young people the power to protect nature

Last week [2 December] saw the launch of the Backyard Nature Green Youth Board, made up of 20 young people living in communities across the UK, with more to join in 2022. Supported by a consortium of seven housing associations led by Clarion Housing Group, these young environmentalists aged 5-25 will operate as a steering group to challenge the social housing sector to improve its approach to green spaces. In an industry first, the Green Youth Board will also be distributing micro-grants to local environmental community projects.

With nearly 60% of young people globally reporting that they feel very worried or extremely worried about climate change¹, many are looking for ways to manage eco-anxiety. Experts recommend improving connections with nature, connecting with environmental action groups, and being empowered to make green choices. It is in this context that the Backyard Nature Green Youth Board launches, offering young people these impactful opportunities to engage and take action in their local area.

The Youth Board is one element of the Backyard Nature Green Housing Association Consortium, which will see housing associations working together to help improve the quality of and access to green spaces for children and their families. This will promote individual and collective wellbeing alongside the benefits to the environment. The Backyard Nature Green Housing Association Consortium includes *Catalyst Housing, Clarion Housing Group, Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, Hyde Housing, LiveWest, Phoenix Community Housing, Places for People, Sovereign Housing Association and Swan Housing Association* and is match funded by the #iwill Fund.

The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department for Culture, Media & Sport are each investing £25 million seed funding to create the #iwill Fund. Clarion Futures is acting as a match funder and awarding grants on behalf of the #iwill Fund. The #iwill Fund supports young people to access high quality social action opportunities.

Clare Miller, Chief Executive of Clarion Housing Group, said:

“Young people living in housing association homes and communities nationwide are passionate about the environment both globally and locally and we’re proud to be supporting them through this Consortium. We are looking forward to working with the Youth Board in ways that enable them to harness their power, become leaders in their own communities and challenge us all to do more to protect our planet.”

Cain, 21, from North London, said:

“I wanted to join the Green Youth Board because I care about climate change but know I could do so much more and learn so much. It is a great opportunity to influence the whole sector to think differently.”

This programme is part of Backyard Nature, a national campaign run by Semble and inspired by the Eco Emeralds, a group of environmental activist school children from Anfield in Liverpool. Backyard Nature is powered by the ethos that all children, no matter their background or experience, can protect nature. This is achieved by offering accessible resources and opportunities to children to foster positive and meaningful engagement with conservation.

¹ https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3918955

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Notes to Editors

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About Backyard Nature

Backyard Nature is inspiring families to tackle the nature crisis and make a real difference to the planet. How? By providing them with the tools they need to help plants and animals thrive on their patch of nature – whether they live in the heart of a city or the middle of the countryside. To date, more than 15,000 people have signed up the patches they want to protect.

Web: www.backyardnature.org

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BackyardNatUK>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/backyardnatuk/>

About Clarion Housing Group

Clarion Housing Group is the UK's largest provider of affordable housing. We are committed to playing our part in tackling the housing crisis, both as a social landlord and developer of new housing.

More than 350,000 people call a Clarion home their home. Our mission is to provide and maintain good quality housing for our residents and to build communities through high quality design and placemaking.

We are a social business, reinvesting our profits into building new homes and providing support and opportunities to our residents through Clarion Futures, our charitable foundation.

Web: www.clarionhg.com

Twitter: [@Clarion_Group](https://twitter.com/Clarion_Group)