

Urban Update

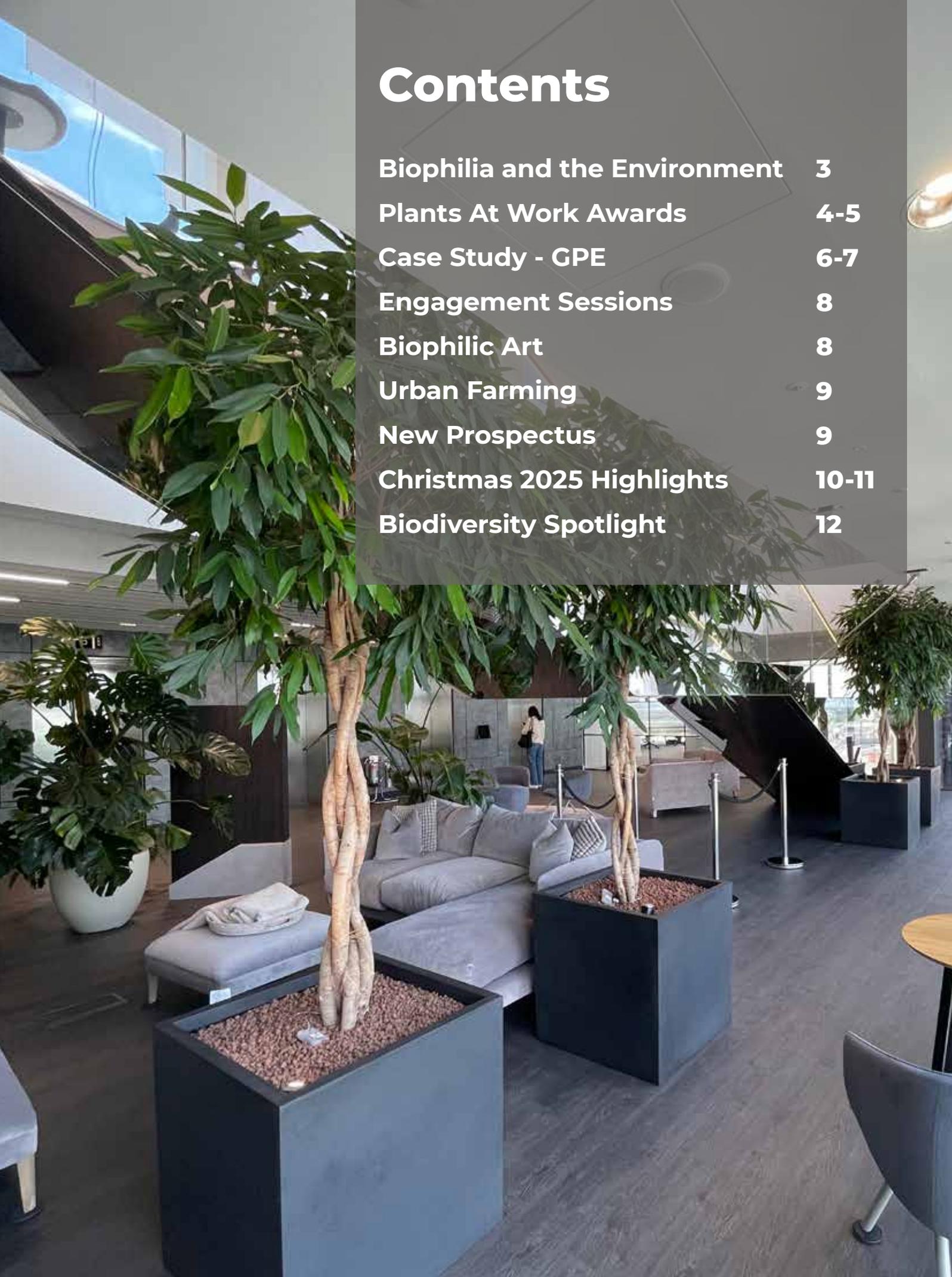
ISSUE 50

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Graham Flisher
Biophilia & Environment
Consultant

If you're working in design or architecture right now, you've likely noticed that "sustainability" has become a massive, sometimes overwhelming umbrella. It's no longer just about picking the right materials; it's about a concept called ESG, which is essentially a way for businesses to measure their impact on the world (Environmental), how they treat people (Social), and how they are managed (Governance). In my world, this translates to turning buildings into "life support systems" that are better for both the planet and the people using them.

A great example of this was a recent project with GPE. We looked at how to "uplift" an existing estate, moving beyond the usual rules for new builds. We ended up turning neglected areas and "dead" spaces, like those awkward gravel-filled brick beds, into thriving habitats with native canopy trees and trailing plants. It wasn't just about looking good; it was about using data to prove to investors that these green interventions actually add value to the property and the environment.

As we move through 2026, the trends are shifting from "doing less harm" to "doing more good."

I'm particularly excited about Climate-Adaptive Design. With the weather getting more extreme, I'm focused on creating "Sponge Cities", using rain gardens and smart water management to handle heavy rain while keeping plants thriving. I'm also seeing a huge move toward Human-Centric Greenery. It's not just a potted plant in the corner anymore; it's about "acoustic zoning" with moss walls to dampen noise and creating "breathing rooms" that lower stress. We're even moving away from traditional chemicals by trialing electric weeding, ensuring the soil stays healthy and biodiverse.

My goal for this year is to help our designers navigate these shifts. Whether it's conducting a Biophilic Review to find hidden spots for well-being or working with ecologists to get the data needed for building certifications like BREEAM, I'm here to bridge the gap between a creative vision and a functional, nature-positive reality.

I'm really looking forward to seeing how we can work together this year to weave more of these "living systems" into the built environment.



Winning Designs - Plants At Work Awards 2025

We are proud to celebrate a standout achievement at the Plants At Work Awards, winning recognition for design and installation across multiple sites.

This success reflects our commitment to delivering high-quality, thoughtfully designed planting schemes that enhance workplaces and improve everyday experiences.

Our very own Graham Flisher, Madeleine Evans and Paul Rogers scooped up a total of 5 awards on the night for design and installation, which were;

- Gold Leaf Award for GPE Six St Andrews
- Gold Leaf Award for Wynne Construction
- Silver Leaf Award for GPE Alfred Place
- Silver Leaf Award for British Land 201 Bishopsgate
- Silver Leaf Award for Aristocrat

Each award-winning project showcased a tailored approach, carefully responding to the architecture, function, and character of each space. And judges highlighted the consistency of design excellence, attention to detail, and seamless integration of planting throughout each site.

Winning across multiple locations is a testament to our talented team and our passion for creating greener, healthier, and more inspiring places to work.





Gold Award Winner

Case Study - GPE Six St Andrews

This project was a pleasure to deliver, bringing together creativity, collaboration, and sustainability to create a truly inspiring place to work. From the moment you step into the reception, where bespoke joinery beds overflow with lush foliage through to the roof terrace with its striking living wall, every level of the building reflects thoughtful design and environmental responsibility.

Working from detailed floor plans, we were tasked with designing a planting scheme that complemented the architecture while meeting the client's exacting standards. Large joinery beds, carefully selected pots, and planters were specified not only for their appearance but also for their sustainability credentials. The client's significant investment in the building meant the planting needed to enhance both the quality and the enjoyment of the indoor and outdoor spaces.

A key feature of the external works was the living wall, for which the client selected the MobiPanel system due to its strong sustainable credentials.

Made from reusable and fully recyclable materials, the system was also the 2024 BuGG Award winner for Green Façade of the Year.

The project presented several challenges, including close coordination with the main contractor and other trades, working across a nine-storey building, and meeting strict programme milestones. Careful planning ensured we were able to complete the project smoothly.

As well as vast number of plants, we also incorporated a number of preserved plants for hanging rafts, recycled and 3D-printed planters, textured pots made from natural and reclaimed elements, and a range of top air-purifying plants that transformed this building into a welcoming, uplifting space from reception to the terrace.

The result is not only a vibrant, green environment that has been enthusiastically received by the client, but also a project that was well received by our industry and earned us a Gold Award at the 2025 Plants at Work Awards.





Grow Your Own Fresh Air

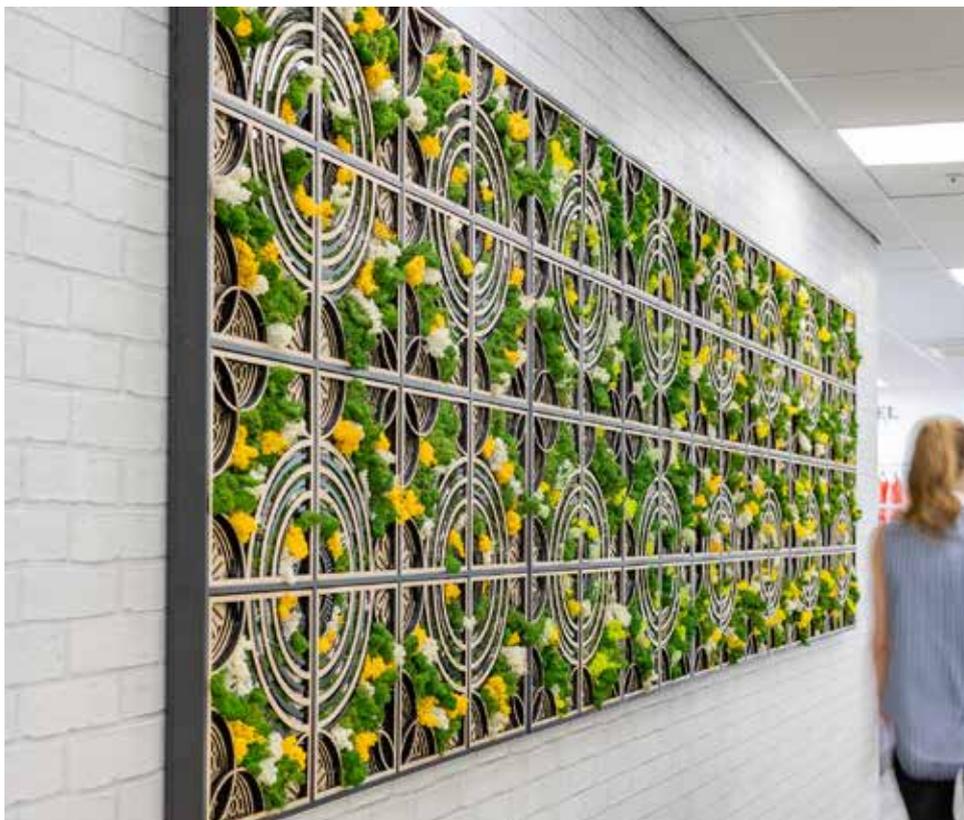
As part of our ongoing commitment to make green spaces and educate our partners on the benefits of plants, we are busy helping clients with workshops, engagement sessions and team building exercises, using the power of plants.

Get in touch if you want us to support you with any of our engagement sessions, such as; grow your own fresh air, make a terrarium or even wreath making.



Innovation Spotlight

Biophilic Art - coming soon



Get ready to redefine your space. Biophilic Art is arriving soon a revolutionary modular system that brings the beauty of the outdoors inside, with zero hassle.

These artisan tiles use preserved moss and plants to create stunning, 3D vertical sculptures that stay green year-round. Because it's 100% maintenance-free, it's the perfect nature-fix for low-light lobbies, boardrooms, and high-end homes.

Sustainable, flexible, and easy to install, it's nature... but as a masterpiece.

Innovation Spotlight

An exciting new Urban Farming System

A new innovation for February 2026 is our Urban Farming system.

A unique method to growing your own food at work, whether for onsite use, take-home cooking or engagement sessions to bring your colleagues closer to nature.

This new system is an innovative indoor garden solution which transforms spaces and brings any interior to life.

The system uses hydroponic cultivation, growing plants without soil while reducing water usage by up to 95% compared to traditional farming. The PlantPods filled with recycled substrate and nutrients make planting simple and sustainable. And with automated irrigation, lighting, and ventilation, the unit ensures optimal growth with minimal effort.

If you are interested in some Urban Farming or looking for new innovation for your workplace, give us a call.



New Prospectus



For 2026 we are excited to launch our new Prospectus

Our new Prospectus showcases what Urban Planters are really about and how we can connect our clients with nature.

If you want to know more about Urban Planters, how we can support your business grow and make it greener, get in touch or download a copy from urbanplanters.co.uk. Alternatively scan the QR code.

Christmas 2025 Highlights

Christmas in 2025 saw one of our biggest and best years of designs and installations, with hundreds of trees being decorated and installed up and down the UK.

Our Urban Elves were delighting customers during the festive season with Live trees, Artificial trees, traditional, contemporary, bespoke. You name it, we delivered it!

To top it off we even managed to deliver some engagement sessions and wreath making workshops for our clients who really want to get into the festive spirit.

Although Christmas 2025 for us is over, we're already planning for 2026. If you would like us to help you with your Christmas for 2026, please do get in touch.





Biodiversity Spotlight

Biodiversity loss is one of the most pressing environmental challenges of our time, and businesses have an important role to play in reversing this trend. Whether operating from an office, managing a commercial building, or developing new spaces, small and intentional actions can have a meaningful impact.

Here are five effective ways businesses can help support and enhance biodiversity.

Introduce native planting

Incorporating native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers into landscaping schemes is one of the simplest and most effective actions. Native species are better suited to local conditions and provide essential food and shelter for pollinators, birds, and insects, helping ecosystems thrive.

Create green infrastructure

Green roofs, living walls, rain gardens, and pocket habitats do more than enhance aesthetics. They create valuable habitats in urban environments, improve air quality, manage rainwater, and reduce the heat island effect, all while supporting a wider range of species.

Reduce chemical use

Minimising or eliminating pesticides and herbicides protects soil health and prevents harm to insects and wildlife. Businesses can adopt organic or integrated pest management approaches that work with nature rather than against it.

Support wildlife habitats

Simple additions such as bird boxes, bat boxes, insect hotels, and log piles can make a big difference. These features provide safe places for wildlife to nest, feed, and breed, particularly in built-up areas where natural habitats are limited.

Source responsibly and sustainably

Choosing materials and suppliers with strong environmental credentials reduces pressure on natural ecosystems. Look for recycled, FSC-certified, or low-impact products, and prioritise sustainability throughout procurement and design decisions.

By embedding biodiversity into everyday business practices and workplace design, organisations can contribute to healthier ecosystems while creating greener, more engaging environments for people.

If your business needs advice or support in encouraging biodiversity practices into your work please do get in touch, our design and landscaping team are here to help.

