

## **ReNature Application Form Guidance**

Currently 25% of the National Park is managed for nature. By 2030, working with a wide range of partners we will deliver 33% of land managed for nature and encourage the remaining 67% to be nature friendly. ReNature funding supports land owners, land managers and community organisations to create new nature sites and those that are managed better for biodiversity. We are looking for projects that will showcase positive management for nature in the community. Projects could create wildflower meadows, heathland, hedgerow, areas managed as chalk grassland, more natural rivers or dewponds.

Grants between £2,000 and £25,000 will be made by the South Downs National Park Trust (SDNPT) towards capital expenditure. Applications will be judged on their proposed outcomes for biodiversity, value for money and ongoing management of the site as well as community outcomes. A grant panel will decide on applications over £5,000.

Important information about this funding:

- It will not fund organisational costs, training, transport, work already undertaken, recoverable VAT or costs associated with fulfilling a statutory obligation or planning consent.
- If funded you will be asked to submit monitoring information, responsible for maintaining equipment and built items (gates, fences etc.) for a minimum of 5 years as well as carrying out the actions in your maintenance plan.
- SDNPT will share information with the SDNP and external partners to monitor the outcomes of your project and publicise the fund.

### **Who can apply?**

Local Authorities, Parish Councils, CICs, charities, and constituted voluntary groups can apply. Applications from commercial partners and private land owners are considered where projects are not-for-profit, however, the proposed benefits for biodiversity and cash/ management contributions will need to be considerable to be prioritised above other groups. Projects with community benefit are more likely to be successful. The applicant must be the land owner or have the land owner's permissions to carry out the project and actions in the management plan.

### **The site**

Sites must be within the National Park boundary and not managed for nature (e.g. a SSSI)

### **What it will fund?**

You can apply for a combination of natural landscape features (such as trees and ponds), built items (e.g. fencing), equipment and tools where this enables delivery of the outcomes in your application. For community organisations we will consider grant towards the first year of your management plan where essential to establish the site.

### **Match Funding**

Although there is currently no set limit for match funding, projects will be judged based on value for money. See Part 3 application form notes for more information. Wildlife trusts, private land owners or commercial partners are unlikely to be funded over 80% unless a considerable contribution is being made in cash and/or in-kind through labour, equipment and future land management.

## **Funding conditions**

If you are successful, we will issue you a formal offer setting out terms and conditions. Payment stages will be linked to the project plan in your application.

If investigations or specialist surveys are recommended you may be offered a contribution towards this preliminary work and an in-principle offer for the rest of the project. This will be confirmed when you have submitted the results with up-to-date prices.

Grant offers will include bespoke conditions but standard conditions are to include:

- Carrying out the work and maintaining the site as per your project plan
- Obtaining planning permission before commencement of the work
- Confirming receipt of all match funding before commencement of the work
- Maintaining equipment and built infrastructure for a minimum of 5 years
- Displaying South Downs National Park and South Downs National Park Trust logos in press and publicity about the project.
- Submitting monitoring information at intervals over a 10 year period (or less if otherwise agreed).

## **Application form notes:**

Contact your local planning office as soon as possible to find out if permission is needed. They will also consult with the County Archaeologist if necessary. Find out more here: [Do I need planning permission? - South Downs National Park Authority](#) A grant may be offered before planning permission where there is evidence of pre-application correspondence or application submission. Find out more about consent for nature projects here: [Advice on Consents, Permissions, and key considerations for ReNature projects \(southdowns.gov.uk\)](#)

## **What do you need?**

- A marked up site plan showing where the work will take place
- One or two photographs of the site.
- Three comparable quotes for expenses valued at £5,000 or more
- A copy of your organisation or business's governing document
- Where the applicant is not the land owner: land owner permission to undertake the work and their agreement for relevant parties to undertake the management plan.
- If you will generate income from the land area and/or the project outcomes: a basic projection of income. We are unable to fund profit-making projects unless you can demonstrate how profit will be invested in the site area to improve quality and scope.

## **Part I - Site and applicant details**

- **Site grid reference** – Please use <https://gridreferencefinder.com/> to identify the grid reference at the centre of the site. If this application is for a group please provide all grid references with other site details in an attachment.

Instructions for using Grid Reference finder:

1. Access the website; enter whichever location details you have into the search bar on the left of the screen and click "go".
2. Ensure that you have the correct location selected by checking the location using the map which is represented by a drawing pin.
3. If you would like to create a new drawing pin closer to the actual location Right Click on the desired location
4. Details of the location will appear when you hover over the drawing pin. The X and Y coordinates are the Easting and Northing coordinates.
5. Copy both sets of the 6 digit accurately and insert them into the Easting (X) and Northing (Y) fields in the form.

If you are not the land owner you will need to append their permission to carry out the work and the actions in your management plan.

In a few sentences please tell us what the site is used for and how it is currently managed. For example: recreational space, mown twice a year.

## **Part 2 – Project Plan**

Your SDNP advisor will be able to inform the questions in this section including inputting on briefs or specifications for contractors. This may be a South Downs Area Ranger or environmental Lead.

Please note that your project title and summary may be used for publicity purposes.

## **Part 3 – Cost**

Please list proposed expenditure including:

- Contractors and hired labour as well as specialist expertise such as ecologists
- Purchase of materials, tools and equipment necessary to establish and maintain the site
- Hired equipment (please specify length of hire)
- Natural capital items such as trees and plants. (Include species types in notes)
- Built capital items such as fences, gates and other structures. Please include an image or specification for these with your application form.
- Non-recoverable VAT
- Cost of baseline data surveys, soil testing if discussed and agreed with SDNP advisor
- Costs associated with establishing the habitat over the first year of your management plan E.g. cut and collect mowing. (If you are a Wildlife Trust, commercial or private land owner you are advised to include these costs in your contribution later on).
- Reasonable provisional sums or contingency for areas of risk

This list is not exhaustive – please contact the Grants Officer at [grants@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:grants@southdowns.gov.uk) if you have a question about your expenses.

In the notes section make us aware of quantities and/or no. of days labour. Refer to appended quotations.

**Quotes for the work:** For individual expenses over £5,000 you should submit three comparable quotes. By comparable, we mean that each contractor will have been approached

with the same pricing proposal. The proposal should be fully completed by the contractor and signed by someone in their company with the authority to provide the quote. It is advisable to ask them to price for the anticipated date and season of the work or alternatively to give a price that will remain valid for a few months. If you need help with preparing a pricing proposal please contact the Grants Officer.

This grant is unable to fund the items below however you may wish to note these as your organisation's contributions later in the form:

- Organisational costs such as staff and overheads
- Training
- Transport
- Equipment and activities already funded by a SDNPT grant.
- Personal Protective Equipment (unless advised to include by SDNP)
- Recoverable VAT
- Work already undertaken or purchases already made.
- Costs associated with obtaining planning consents and permissions.

### **Project income**

There is no set level of match funding but this will inform the value for money score of applications. We are unlikely to fund more than 80% expenditure for wildlife conservation trusts or private and commercial land owners unless there is exceptional commitment to providing cash and/or in-kind labour, equipment and estate management. In the table please tell us about income towards the expenses in your form including:

- Other grants
- Community Infrastructure Levy funding
- Local fundraising
- Cash from land owner, business or organisation
- In-kind contributions. This could be use of equipment like tools and mowers, days of paid for labour supplied by your business, volunteer days or donated plants. Be specific about how many days' time and quantities. Record this cost as zero in the table.

### **Additional information to support your costs:**

Use this section to justify value for money if you do not have three comparable quotes. Private land owners, business and wildlife conservation trusts may want to outline their additional costs and contribution towards these. For example, planning application fees, provision of equipment, estimated cost of labour per year for management (please state days per year).

If your organisation or business has more than 1 year's expenditure in unallocated reserves you will need to explain why grant is being sought.

### **Part 4 – Outcomes**

How will your project improve biodiversity? Note rare species or where the site area will connect to other wildlife sites.

Tell us about additional outcomes. For example: volunteering opportunities, published leaflets, educational visits, research studies. When would they take place, who would do them and how will the outcomes be measured?

**Declaration:** Ensure you have read and signed before returning to [grants@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:grants@southdowns.gov.uk)