

Application Form Guidance notes

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. This funding will support land owners, land managers and community organisations to create and manage ponds better for biodiversity.

Grants up to £25,000 will be made towards capital expenditure. Applications will be judged on their proposed outcomes for biodiversity, value for money, ongoing management of the site as well as community outcomes.

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 and be responsible for maintaining equipment and built items (fences etc.) for a minimum of 5 years as well as carrying out the actions in your maintenance plan.
- The South Downs National Park Trust (SDNPT) will share information with the South Downs National Park Authority and external partners for the purpose of monitoring the outcomes of your project and publicising 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 will be considered where projects are not-for-profit and show demonstrable commitment through cash or labour/management contributions. Projects with community benefit are more likely to be successful. The applicant must be the land owner or someone with the land owner's permissions to carry out the project and actions in the management plan.

The site

Sites within the South Downs National Park boundary will be prioritised.

What it will fund?

You can apply for capital costs to create, restore and improve a pond for wildlife. This may include materials, labour and natural capital items like native plants. Where specific tools and equipment are needed to maintain the pond after the project these costs can be considered, but will not be funded in isolation.

Match Funding

There is currently no set limit for match funding but 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 towards, labour, equipment and future land management.

Funding conditions

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

Grant offers will include bespoke conditions but standard conditions will 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, South Downs National Park Trust and Partner logos in press and publicity about the project.
- Submitting monitoring information at intervals over an agreed period not normally less than 5 years.

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.
- Comparable quotes for expenses valued at £5,000 or more
- A baseline data survey, site assessment or an ecological survey to tell us about the site. Your South Downs National Park Area Ranger will be able to offer advice if you do not have one of these. Please contact grants@southdowns.gov.uk for information. If funded this data will be used to measure the impact your project is having on biodiversity and nature recovery.
- A copy of your organisation or business's governing document and latest approved annual accounts. If you have been running for less than 15 months and you can't supply, send a 12-month projection for the year when you will spend the grant.
- 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 the applicant will generate an income from the project: 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, grass cut once a year.

Part 2 – Project Plan

Your Area Ranger team may inform your project including inputting on briefs or specifications for contractors.

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 where essential to establish and maintain the site although you may put these forward as your contribution to the project.
- Hired equipment (please specify length of hire)
- Natural capital items such as plants. (Include species types in notes)
- Built capital items such as pond linings and fencing. Please include images or a specification for these with your application form.
- Non-recoverable VAT
- Costs associated with establishing the habitat over the first year of your management plan E.g. mowing. If you are a Wildlife Trust, commercial or private land owner you are advised to include these costs as part of your contribution.
- Reasonable provisional sums or contingency for areas of risk

This list is not exhaustive – please contact the Grants Officer at grants@southdowns.gov.uk if you have a question.

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 3 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 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 minimum of 4 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 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
- 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 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, 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 the required comparable quotes.

Private land owners, business and wildlife conservation trusts may want to further explain 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 or as profit you will need to explain why grant is being sought.

Part 4 – Outcomes

Why and how will your project impact on biodiversity? Note particular species or levels you will be monitoring. Note where the site area connects to other wildlife sites.

Tell us about additional, for example: volunteering opportunities, publications, educational visits, studies. When will they take place, by whom and how will the outcomes be measured?

Declaration Ensure you have read and signed before returning to grants@southdowns.gov.uk by 30th April 2024