

## **ReNature Application Guidance**

ReNature funding supports land owners, land managers and community organisations to create new sites for nature or manage existing nature sites to better increase their biodiversity and connection with adjoining habitats. We are looking for projects that 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 and necessary feasibility work to inform the project. Applications are judged on their proposed outcomes for biodiversity, value for money and ongoing management of the site as well as their community outcomes. A grant panel decides on applications over £5,000.

Important information about this funding:

- Projects that create new nature sites and offer landscape connectivity with existing nature sites are prioritised
- Contact [grants@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:grants@southdowns.gov.uk) if you will need advice in putting together your project.
- If funded you will be asked to submit environmental monitoring information, be responsible for maintaining equipment and built items (gates, fences etc) as well as carry out the actions in a maintenance plan.
- SDNPT will share information with the SDNP and external partners to monitor the outcomes of your project and publicise the fund.
- It will not fund typical organisational expenditure on salaries and overheads.
- It will not fund work already undertaken, recoverable VAT, fulfilling a statutory obligation or planning consent
- You should make us aware of other grants or funding you are in receipt of for the project

### **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. 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. If the site is already designated for nature, e.g. a SSSI, we will be looking at whether you propose bigger, better and more joined up habitat areas that offer connection to the wider landscape.

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

You can apply for a combination of natural landscape features (such as trees and pond creation), built items (e.g. fencing), equipment and tools (where essential to successful ongoing land - management)

Where a project facilitator or training is essential to deliver a project, these costs will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

For community organisations we can offer grant towards the first year of your management plan, where essential to establish the site.

### **Match Funding**

Applicants are expected to provide a contribution through cash and/or labour and services in-kind.

Wildlife trusts, private land owners or commercial partners are unlikely to have their project funded over 80%. There should be a considerable contribution through labour, equipment and land management.

Your Parish or District Council may have access to a neighbourhood portion of Community Infrastructure Levy Funding, or other grants that can be used for nature recovery and green Infrastructure: [Spending CIL - South Downs National Park Authority](#)

### **Funding conditions**

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

If an initial design or feasibility work is required, you may be offered grant towards this preliminary phase 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 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 help sheet:**

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 you will 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 benefit nature.

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

- 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.

- Land owner name- 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.
- Current site use - 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

- A member of staff at the South Downs National Park maybe able to inform the questions in this section. Contact [grants@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:grants@southdowns.gov.uk) if you need support. Please note that in some circumstances you may be asked to seek external advice. Where your project needs detailed development, you may be asked to submit to a future funding round.
- Your project title and summary may be used for publicity purposes.

## Part 3 – Cost

- Expenditure- 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
  - 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 expected to provide for this).
  - Provisional sums or contingency for areas of risk. These should be justified.
  - The costs of a project facilitator where directly linked to project delivery.
  - Training where essential to deliver the outcomes, for example, using species monitoring equipment
  - Other costs to you such as labour or equipment that you are putting forward in-kind

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 your appended quotations.

**Quotes for the work:** For individual expenses over £5,000 you should seek three comparable quotes. By comparable, we mean that each contractor is approached with the same pricing proposal. The proposal should be fully completed by the contractor, 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.

This grant is unable to fund the items below. You may want to tell us more about additional costs you would incur later in the form:

- It will not fund typical organisational expenditure on salaries and overheads.
  - Equipment and activities fully funded by other grants.
  - Personal Protective Equipment (unless advised to include)
  - Recoverable VAT
  - Work already undertaken or purchases already made.
  - Statutory obligations and planning costs

➤ **Project income**

This is the contribution you will make and/or receive from other sources. There is no set level of match funding required, but this will inform the value for money score of applications.

We are unlikely to fund more than 80% of expenditure for wildlife conservation trusts or private and commercial land owners. There should be a considerable commitment to providing in-kind labour, equipment and estate management.

In the table please tell us about:

- 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. Where there is an associated cost please make sure this appears as an expenditure and an income so that it is balanced out in your total project costs.

➤ **Will you generate an income?**

If your project will generate income you should append a basic projection showing how it will be used. We are unable to fund profit-making projects unless you can demonstrate how profit will be invested in the site area to benefit nature.

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

Use this section to justify value for money if you do not have three comparable quotes or decided not to use the cheapest quote.

If you have included costs for a project facilitator, please provide any information you have about who you will be using, how they will be recruited, if there are any other associated costs and what their time will be on the project.

➤ **Additional information about your contribution:**

Include any other information you would like us to consider about your contribution. Please quantify where you can. If you will lose income as a result of managing the land differently for nature please explain and give a rough estimate of loss 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.

- **Grant funding request:** Your grant request plus your project income should equal your total expenditure.

#### **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)