Caring for the Cotswolds - Guidance

Caring for the Cotswolds is a grant scheme for the Cotswolds. It is managed by the Cotswolds National Landscape and supported by businesses and individuals who wish to keep the Cotswolds a special place to live, work and visit.

Eligibility

Charities, established community groups, parish councils and other non-profits are eligible to apply. All projects must be for the public benefit. Private businesses and individuals are not eligible.

Projects should be located within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Projects falling just outside of the AONB may also be considered but only when they can demonstrate a positive impact upon the AONB.

Themes

We welcome applications that fit in one or more of our four themes:

- Conservation of habitats and species
- Heritage and landscape
- Improving access
- Education

When determining grant decisions, several additional factors will be considered. Although project applications do not have to address these factors, for the sake of transparency, they are:

- A good spread of activity across the scheme's themes
- A good geographical spread across the AONB
- Delivery through a range of organisations

Grant size

Applicants may apply for a grant from £500 up to a maximum of £2,500. In exceptional circumstances, a higher grant may be offered, which is at our discretion.

Application submission and assessment

Caring for the Cotswolds is a competitive grant fund. Applications can only be submitted during the advertised period, which will have a stated deadline. We are looking for quality projects that deliver strong outcomes in our themes. All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application.

Section 1. Applicant's details

Name of organisation
Please give the name of the organisation that will be directly responsible for the project and financially accountable for how the grant is spent. The organisation will need:
- A constitution to ensure that everyone is in agreement about the aims and objectives of the group, and that procedures are in place for organising meetings and dealing with finances.
- A bank account in its name, so that you can receive grant payments.

Name of applicant
The person named should be the main point of contact in relation to this application. It needs to be someone who has been closely involved in developing the project. If they have no official job title, then please state briefly their role in the organisation.

Type of organisation
This could be a registered charity, an established community group, parish council or other (please state). If a registered charity, please provide your number.

Describe your organisation
Tell us briefly why your organisation was set up, how long it has been established and what its aims and objectives are – bullet points are fine.

Section 2: Project details

1. Location of project (or nearest postcode/what3words)
Please give a post code if your project is based in a town or village. If the project is located in a rural area or covers a larger area, please give a what3words reference to mark the centre of the project site or area.

2. Please give a brief description of your project for which you are applying for funding.
This is your opportunity to tell us about your project. What exactly are you planning to do? How will you do it? What do you hope to achieve? If your project is a partnership project mention your partners and their roles here.

If your project falls just outside the Cotswolds AONB, you will have to demonstrate that your project will have a positive impact upon the AONB. There is a 250 word limit for this answer.

3. Explain which of our themes your project will focus on.
This is your opportunity to tell us how your project matches one or more of our themes. Make sure you explain the proposed work/ activity that will take place (outputs) and what this will achieve (outcomes). There is a 500 word limit for this answer.

- Conservation of habitats and species – targeted habitat management work, to improve conditions for a range of species.
- Heritage and landscape – the restoration and preservation of our built heritage. The creation or conservation of important landscape features.
- Improving access – the creation of new footpaths, the restoration of existing footpaths and associated infrastructure and the creation of new walks/ trails.
- Education – projects that involve local people and visitors/ projects that showcase the regions heritage and environment (projects that have a strong online presence and aim to reach new audiences will be favoured).

Please find more information on previously funded projects within each theme on our website.
Funded Projects - Cotswolds National Landscape (cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)

4. How will your project be accessible to the public?
It is important that the visiting public who contribute to the scheme can see the benefits supported by their contributions. How can the public access your project?

5. Please list any permissions that are required before the project can start.
You must inform us if your project requires any sort of legal permission, e.g. planning permission or land owner's agreement. Please say what is needed and when it will be obtained.

Section 3. Project management

The milestone table is for recording the significant steps towards project completion. The project start date is when you expect to have all the finance and any necessary permissions in place to enable the project to proceed. The completion date is when you anticipate you will be in a position to submit a final grant claim. This might include the completion of key works or the delivery of a significant event. We have a strong preference for projects that are ready or almost ready to be delivered.

6. How will you measure the success of your project?
Describe how you will measure the success of your project. There is a 250 word limit for this answer.

7. Who will maintain the completed project and how will this be resourced in the future?
We need to understand how your project will continue beyond the period of grant. Please describe what resources or mechanism you will have in place to provide a lasting legacy.

8. How would you acknowledge and publicise a Caring for the Cotswolds grant?
Please say how you intend to promote your project and the Caring for the Cotswolds grant if you are successful, e.g. social media, press release, publications, events etc.

9. How did you find out about Caring for the Cotswolds?
Please tell us how you became aware of the scheme. This will help us to effectively promote future calls for projects.

Section 4. Applying

If you wish to informally discuss a project idea or have an enquiry concerning your application form, please contact Nina Stubbington. Hard copy applications are not accepted. Applications must be submitted electronically by email to nina.stubbington@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk.

Further information about the scheme including details of previously funded projects can be found on the Board's website: www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

You must include a **project budget**, see separate Excel form.
- Costs should be as precise as possible based on quotations
- VAT can only be included if you are unable to reclaim it
- Applications are expected to demonstrate good value for money
- We do not fund 100% of project costs and expect to see contributions from own funds and/ or other funders
- Funding is not available to meet statutory responsibilities or legal requirements
- Funding is not available for work already undertaken
- Funding is not available to subsidize work that is going to happen anyway

Please enclose any additional information that you feel will support you application. This may include;
- Project plans
- Any supporting images (before images are both a good idea and very welcome)
- Copies of quotes for items of expenditure
- Evidence of support for your project (e.g. letters/emails from local community groups)
- Copy of your organisations most recent year of accounts

Applicant's declaration
The signatory should be the individual applicant, Director, Chief Executive, financial manager, office holder or designated coordinator of the organisation, and not the contact named in Section A, unless he or she also occupies one of the positions named above. The form should be signed with an electronic signature.

If You Are Successful
Grants are paid in arrears/on completion. However, an interim grant payment can be requested if needed. You will need to provide evidence of expenditure (usually invoices/ receipts) to claim payment. The final instalment of the grant will normally be paid on completion of the project and will be dependent on the submission of relevant records (e.g. receipted invoices) as evidence of expenditure.

The Board will monitor the progress of projects and may, if required, carry out site inspections prior to the approval of grant, before making any payments and at project completion.

The provision of good news stories that participating businesses can use to secure further contributions is critically important to the further development of the scheme. Applicants must be prepared to have project descriptions placed in the public domain and to provide text and images for this purpose.