



**Cotswolds
National
Landscape**

The Caring for the Cotswolds Grant Scheme is made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Thanks to National Lottery players, we are able to offer community grants to support the Cotswolds National Landscape.



Caring for the Cotswolds – Guidance

Caring for the Cotswolds is a grant scheme designed to keep the Cotswolds a special place to live, work and visit. It is managed by the Cotswolds National Landscape and supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

We seek to support projects which deliver value for money, and for which we are the main funder.

This Guidance document covers the following

Eligibility	page 1
Themes	page 2
Grant size	page 2
Application, submission and assessment	page 3
Application instructions	page 3
If you are successful	page 7
Reporting	page 7
General exclusions	page 8

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 National Landscape.

Projects falling just outside of this area may be considered but only if they demonstrate a positive impact on the Cotswolds National Landscape.

We prefer projects with a fast turn-around time and will only fund those that have guaranteed completion date before 31-March-2028.

GENERAL EXCLUSIONS

Can be found at the end of this document.

THEMES

We welcome applications that fit with one of our three themes:

Theme 1: NATURE

Projects focused on protecting and/or enhancing biodiversity and/or landscape features in the Cotswolds.

Previously-funded projects include: Pond restoration, orchard creation, veteran tree preservation, wildflower establishment, the facilitation of conservation grazing, invasive species management, and single species projects to increase populations e.g. Black Poplar tree and Pearl Bordered Fritillary butterfly.

Theme 2: COMMUNITIES

- Projects that improve access to the countryside in and around the Cotswolds, particularly for underserved communities.
- Projects that help people learn about the special qualities of the Cotswolds and/or skills that help preserve the area's natural history and cultural heritage.
- Projects that showcase the regions natural and cultural heritage for the benefit of the community.

Previously-funded projects include: Footpath creation and restoration and associated infrastructure such as steps, benches and bridges, the creation of new walks/ trails (online & hard copy), outdoor learning for young people, teaching groups about food growing, and community/ education shelters, the restoration and interpretation of heritage features.

Theme 3: CLIMATE

Our new Climate theme can include climate mitigation and adaptation projects, and improvements to local green spaces.

Project examples:

- Projects to reduce energy, waste and water use such as community allotments/ local food production, community pantries, repair cafes, library of things, and initiatives to increase walking and cycling.
- Projects to minimise the impacts of climate change such as natural flood management, rain gardens, water butts, living roofs, more shaded areas, and local tree planting.
- Climate projects could be in playgrounds, village greens, and urban green spaces.

Your project may overlap with multiple themes, but please focus your application on just **one** of these three.

GRANT SIZE

Applicants may apply for a grant from £500 up to a maximum of £5,000. In exceptional circumstances, a higher grant may be offered at our discretion.

We do not fund 100% of project costs. You will need to demonstrate contributions from own funds and/or other funders.

APPLICATION, SUBMISSION AND ASSESSMENT

Caring for the Cotswolds is a competitive grant fund. We welcome applications year-round and review them four times per year on a first-come-first-serve basis (see website for deadlines). If we reach our capacity for review before the deadline, subsequent applications may be carried over to the next review round. We therefore encourage you to submit applications as early as possible before your preferred deadline.

When determining grant decisions, we are looking for quality projects that deliver strong outcomes in any of our three themes. Additionally, we endeavour to choose projects such that, ultimately, we have coverage across the scheme's three themes, geographical spread across the Cotswolds National Landscape, and project delivery through a variety of organisations.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application; usually within 8 weeks of the deadline. During this time, we look at your idea; carry out checks and research; then convene a Grants Panel to consider all applications. We may contact you for more information during this process. After this, you can expect an email from us with our decision, and, if successful, an Awards Letter detailing the conditions of the grant.

If you wish to informally discuss a project idea or have an enquiry concerning your application, please contact Rebecca Foster, rebecca.foster@cotswolds-nl.org.uk.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applications must be submitted via our online application form. Hard copy applications are not accepted. **Instructions for completing the form are detailed below; numbered bullet points relate directly to the numbered questions on the form:**

1. APPLICANT DETAILS

1.1 The person named should be the main point of contact in relation to this application. They should be someone who has been closely involved in developing the project.

1.2 If you have no official job title, then please state briefly your role in the organisation.

1.3- 1.5 Please give your contact address, phone number and email address

2. ORGANISATION DETAILS

2.1 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 governing document to ensure that everyone agrees 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.

2.2 Please state the type of non-profit organisation you represent. If your organisation is a registered charity, please provide your charity number.

2.3 If your organisation has a website, please provide the URL.

2.4 Please provide a brief description of what your organisation does.

2.5 Please indicate whether your organisation is VAT registered and therefore can claim VAT.

2.6 Mandatory documents

Excepting public sector organisations, please upload an electronic copy of your organisation's **governing document**.

Please upload an electronic copy of **recent accounts** (if recent accounts are unavailable, please contact us directly regarding the process for submitting the last three months of the organisation's bank statements; do **not** upload them with the application form).

2.7 If your project is a partnership project, please list your partners and their roles in the project and upload **letters of support** from your partner organisations.

3. PROJECT DETAILS

3.1 Please give the name of your project, this should reflect the overall goal and location of the project.

3.2 Please give a post code if your project is based in a town or village. If the project is in a rural area or covers a larger area, please give a what3words reference to mark the centre of the project site or area.

3.3 Please indicate the amount of funding that you are requesting from us for this project. Note that we do not fund 100% of the project costs.

3.4 Please indicate which one of our three themes your project will focus on to enhance the Cotswolds. Your project may overlap with multiple themes, but please focus your application on just one of these three: Nature, Communities, or Climate.

3.5 Please give a brief description of the project for which you are applying for funding – what are you planning to do and how will it enhance the Cotswolds?

If your project falls just outside the Cotswolds National Landscape, please explain how your project will have a positive impact upon the Cotswolds National Landscape.

3.6 Please explain how your project will be accessible to the public. Your project is supported indirectly by the public through their contributions to the National Lottery. Therefore, it is important that the public can experience the benefits of your project. How can the public access your project, physically and/or online?

3.7 Please download our **Project** workbook. This workbook contains an Activity Table, a Budget Table, and an Evidence Table, along with instructions explaining how to fill them out. Note that

not all sections need to be completed for the Application stage, some are for the Reporting stage at the end of your project.

Please use the **Activity Table** to list the key activities (or milestones) of your project and expected dates, and for each activity describe the expected **outputs** and **outcomes**.

Outputs are the direct, tangible results of your activities e.g. length of path restored, number of trees planted, hectares of wildlife flowers planted, number children attending an educational activity.

Outcomes are the improvements and impact of your activities e.g. improved public access to enjoy the Cotswolds, improved environmental and human well-being, increased wildflower species diversity, improved understanding and appreciation of wildlife among school children.

Please include any **promotional activities** in your Activity Table indicating how you will promote your project, the Caring for the Cotswolds Grant Scheme, and The National Lottery Heritage Fund, e.g. social media posts, press release, publications, public events etc. As part of the grant conditions, you will be required to acknowledge the Cotswolds National Landscape and The National Lottery Heritage Fund in your project publicity. We will provide guidance and templates for producing any such promotional material.

We expect applications to demonstrate good value for money.

Please use the **Budget Table** to detail your expected project costs, and funds that have been requested and/or received from other sources. Costs should be as precise as possible based on quotations. Note that VAT can only be included if you are unable to reclaim it.

When you have completed the Activity Table and Budget Table, please upload your Project workbook.

Please keep a copy of your Project workbook. If you are awarded a grant from us, you will use the Project workbook to report to us on your activities, expenditures, and to provide evidence of your project having been completed. This will help you and us to monitor progress and measure the success of your project.

3.8 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. We prefer projects that are ready, or almost ready, to be delivered.

3.9 The completion date is when you anticipate you will be able to submit a final grant claim. This might be following the completion of key works or the delivery of a significant event. Note that we are actively seeking projects that can complete quickly, and we will not fund projects that do not have a guaranteed completion date before 31-March 2028.

3.10 Your project may involve **activity-based events** (e.g. workshops, exhibitions, training days); **nature-based works/restoration** (e.g. planting trees/wildflowers, improving or resurfacing paths, installing a wooden sculpture, pond restoration); **capital-based works/restoration** (e.g. building works, restoration works to buildings or heritage items, capital alterations to buildings,

acquisition of equipment/machinery); or the **creation of digital outputs** (e.g. creating online maps for self-guided walks). Please tell us which category best describes the core activities of your project.

3.11a-c If your project involves **nature-based and/or capital-based works or restoration**, then you need to tell us about the ownership of the asset involved. This may be a land holding (e.g. where you are planting wildflowers or constructing a shelter) or a building or heritage item which you are altering or restoring. Please tell us whether you own, co-own, lease, or manage the asset. If your organisation does **not** own the asset, please tell us the name of the owner (this may be another organisation or a private individual) and upload **proof of their ownership** (e.g. electronic copy of deeds, leases, or mortgage information).

3.12 You must inform us if your project requires any sort of legal permission, e.g. planning permission or landowner's agreement. Please say what is needed and when it will be obtained. If we award you a grant, you will need to provide an electronic copy of these legal permissions before we can release funds.

3.13 If your project involves **nature-based** and/or **capital-based works/restoration** and/or the **creation of digital outputs**, we need to understand how your project will continue beyond the period of grant. Please describe what resources and/or mechanism(s) you will have in place to maintain any asset(s) that are created, restored or acquired during the project, and how will this be resourced in the future.

If your project is solely activity-based, please answer 'not applicable'.

4. CHECKLIST

4.1 Please ensure that you have completed the relevant sections of the Activity Table and Budget Table in your Project workbook and uploaded it.

4.2. Please ensure that you have uploaded the following documents: your recent accounts; your governing document (unless you are a public sector body); proof of ownership if your project involves works to land, buildings or heritage items; letters of support from any organisations with whom you are partnering on this project; any legal permissions that you have already obtained.

4.3 You may also upload any additional information that you feel will support your application, for example -

- Supporting images (before images are a good idea!)
- Copies of quotes for items of expenditure
- Evidence of support for your project (e.g. letters/emails from local community groups)

4.4 Please indicate how you became aware of the Caring for the Cotswolds Grants Scheme. This will help us to effectively promote future calls for projects.

5. DECLARATION

By submitting your application, you agree that the Senior Management of your organisation have approved the submission of the application; that all the information provided in the application is true to the best of your knowledge; that you are the applicant, or that you have the

applicant's authority to submit the application on their behalf; that any misleading statements could make the application invalid and therefore liable for the return of any money; that any information submitted will be made publicly available and may be used by Cotswolds National Landscape and The National Lottery Heritage Fund to promote the scheme; and that you are prepared to have project descriptions placed in the public domain and to provide text and images for this purpose.

IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL

If your grant is approved, you will receive an Awards Letter detailing the value of the award and any conditions specific to your project. You will also need to agree to the general terms and conditions of our Caring for the Cotswold Grants Scheme.

Note that the period for which the terms and conditions apply is specified by the core activities of your project (activity-based projects, nature-based works/restoration projects, capital-based works/restoration projects, or projects creating digital outputs).

Grants are normally paid 50% upfront, and 50% in arrears on completion of the project subject to satisfactory financial and activity reporting (for reporting guidance see below). In exceptional circumstances, and at our discretion, we will consider requests for paying 100% upfront. In this event, you must still follow the reporting requirements.

We may, if required, carry out site inspections prior to the approval of the grant, before making any payments, and at project completion.

Payment of final grant instalments are subject to satisfactory reporting.

REPORTING

Prior to the release of the final grant instalment, you will be required to submit the following documents:

Evidence – All grant recipients are required to submit electronic evidence demonstrating the delivery of the project outputs, e.g. before and after photos are particularly useful in showcasing the success of the project; and, if relevant, any project-specific digital outputs that they have produced e.g. guidebooks, maps, brochures/fliers, webpages, news reports. A list and description of the files submitted should be recorded in the Evidence Table found in your Project Workbook.

Final Report – All grant recipients are required to update and submit the Activity Table and Evidence Table at the end of the project (Final Report). Depending on the scope and timeline of your project, we may ask you to update and submit the Activity Table and/or Evidence Table halfway through the project (Interim Report) to allow us to monitor the progress of your project.

Final Grant Claim – All grant recipients are required to report actual costs against their predicted costs in the Budget Table and submit evidence of these expenditures (e.g. electronic copies of receipted invoices).

Reports (Project workbook), invoices, and any electronic evidence or digital project outputs should be shared via email to rebecca.foster@cotswolds-nl.org.uk

The provision of good news stories is 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 if requested.

GENERAL EXCLUSIONS

Who We Don't Fund

- For profit organisations: businesses, sole traders etc
- Individuals for any purpose
- Charities registered outside England or Wales
- Groups that don't have a governing document or bank account in their name
- New organisations that don't have a track record of service delivery and/or have not yet submitted an annual return to the Charity Commission or produced audited or independently examined accounts

What We Don't Fund

- Political parties, political lobbying or campaigning
- Promotion of religion generally, a specific faith, or places of worship
- Activity to meet or subsidise statutory responsibilities or legal requirements, including replacing cuts in funding by statutory bodies
- Projects that do not offer good value for money
- Work already undertaken or to subsidise work that is going to happen anyway
- Sponsorship, including student grants or bursaries
- Generic or mass mailing fundraising appeals
- Activity that takes place overseas including trips and overseas emergency appeals
- Endowment appeals
- Onward distribution of our funds as grants to other organisations
- The acquisition of land, buildings, or heritage items
- Large-scale restoration works
- Fees including those for building surveys, planning applications or feasibility studies
- The building or restoration of public toilets, car parks, or drystone walls
- The purchase or installation of solar panels or air source heat pumps
- Second hand vehicles
- Fittings such as electrical appliances and furniture