



Small Grants for Sustainable Development: Guidance Notes (2021)

Before you start filling in the Application Form please read the Fund's priorities and assessment criteria below and consider whether your project will meet them: -

SDF Priorities

- Further the North Devon AONB's purposes and support an action in the 2019-2024 Management or Delivery Plan
- Have the support and involvement of communities within the North Devon AONB
- **and/or** Raise awareness of, understanding of and access to the AONB by residents, visitors or groups who have not engaged with the AONB area
- **and/or** respond to the Devon Climate Declaration by reducing carbon emissions or adapting to climate change (see principles and list of possible actions at: <https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/devon-climate-declaration/>)
- Share best practice, innovation or results
- **2021 Themes – 'Farming and Land Management' and 'Nature & Wildlife'** (projects that fit with either of these themes are being encouraged but are not obligatory)
- Be completed by the end of February 2022

Assessment Criteria

Your project will be assessed against the following criteria:

- supports a policy and/or action from the 2019 – 2024 AONB Management/Delivery Plan
- has community support, engagement or benefit to a community
- demonstrates value for money

(Projects requesting over £500 grant also need to demonstrate innovation, match funding and a longer-term benefit or legacy).

Project Delivery

You need to prove you are able to deliver the project so please make sure:

- You have planned your project carefully
- You have consulted with other local groups and organisations
- You have involved all potential partners
- You are sure that no other group is doing the same thing already
- That you have told us who will actually do all the work involved in carrying out your project
- That you have identified and addressed any requirements due to Coronavirus restrictions

Guidance on the Application Form Questions – ALL Questions Must Be Answered

- 1 This is a working title, so please select one that can be used in publicity and will tell others what your project is about.
- 2 We need the name of the Applicant and organisation or, if an individual, the Applicant's name and an alternative contact person and number. **All group applicants** (not individuals) must have a formal constitution to show who the responsible officers are and that there is a general agreement of purpose for the group. This may be requested before any grant is released. **For-profit businesses** must demonstrate a community benefit from the project.

- 3 a) This should be a brief description of your project. It needs to be a summary of the project's aims, what the money will be spent on and how you will deliver the project. We need to know where your project is within the AONB or how it benefits the AONB if it is not within the designated area. Please include a map if your project relates to a specific site. What will remain once the project is complete, what kinds of impact will it have and what makes it sustainable?
- b) We need to know about ownership and that all permissions have been obtained. Is there a lease? (How many years remain?) Have you obtained all the permissions you require to carry out the project? (e.g. planning permission, landowner's consent, Local Authority or Environment Agency consent)
- 4 a) Projects must be completed by the end of February 2022. Tell us about timescales or milestones and staff/volunteer responsibilities to meet these. We need to know what the measurable results of your project will be - what the project will be seen to have done, who will benefit from it or how many events you will hold etc. We want to know how many volunteers will be involved and how many volunteer days will be spent on the project to demonstrate your contribution or the involvement of local people.
- b) The Panel will assess whether a project is safe to proceed and you may be asked to produce a risk assessment as a condition of the grant offer. It is essential that you answer this question in relation to Government advice on Coronavirus at the time of your application.
- c) Please describe how you will promote the project, i.e. will you be putting up flyers locally, getting the press involved, social media, an event etc. **We would draw your attention to the Fund's publicity requirements which are available on our website** and must be followed or the grant may be withdrawn. Please explain how you will raise awareness of the AONB and acknowledge the SDF grant as part of your project.
- 5 Please explain, using the checklist, how your project will deliver against one or more of the priorities, objectives or actions from the [North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan](#) and annual Delivery Plan.
- 6 Please provide a detailed breakdown of the proposed expenditure for the project. Project management includes your/colleagues/volunteers' time to oversee and administer the project (usually in-kind). Paid for work should detail the contractor, fee and time/product for example, design, printing or practical work. 'In kind' means work carried out on the project in a voluntary capacity or donated goods/services. The value of 'in-kind' work is £10 per hour for general work, £20 per hour for skilled work and £50 per hour for professional work associated with the project. (If you are in any doubt, please contact the SDF co-ordinator).
- 7 Most organisations (including public bodies and parish councils) can request up to 75% of the total project cost from the AONB Fund, up to a maximum grant of £4000. Applications from businesses can be up to 40% of the total costs and must include some cash match funding.
- 8 a. We need to know if your project is stand-alone or linked to other projects that might be going on. This also tells us if you have researched your project, do you have the support of the community, and is there evidence of need/demand?
b. Please list sources and status of all other funding applications.
- 9 (& 10) State Aid Declaration - This section must be completed to meet European Union State Aid regulations and to provide information for our reporting to Defra. Please see the guidance notes below. If you need further clarification, there is a telephone help line on 020 7215 5000 or see the [Government website](#).

The DE MINIMIS STATE AID Regulations

It is a requirement of EU law that we ensure that we comply with the State Aid regulations. **This relates to using taxpayer-funded resources to provide assistance to one or more organisations in a way that gives an advantage over others.** You are being offered assistance through the AONB's SDF grant under the European Commission's *De Minimis* regulation (Regulation 1998/2006). This allows receipt of up to 200,000 Euros (approximately £170,000) of *De Minimis* state aid over any given three-year period.

To confirm that you are able to receive this assistance you must therefore declare the full amount of *De Minimis* aid you have already received over the last 36 months from any source.

The following is not a comprehensive list of the possible forms of aid, but the most common ones. Potentially any assistance from a public body might be an aid. Should you have any doubts on this matter, please contact the body from which the assistance was received to check which regulation it came under. If they are unable to say or there is any uncertainty, assume that it was *De Minimis* aid and declare it (N.B. if its value exceeded £170,000 it cannot have been *De Minimis* aid): -

- Grants from public bodies
- Loans from public bodies at favourable rates
- Loan guarantees from public bodies
- Differential tax benefits
- Grants from an investment trust (including charities) which may themselves have received the funds from a public body
- Grants from a part publicly funded venture capital fund
- Publicly administered funds, even if the funds were originally not public such as the national lottery
- Waiving or deferral of fees or interest normally due to a public body such as the waiving or deferral of rent or waiver of interest normally due on late payment of taxation or other costs to a public body
- Monopoly licences or guarantees of market share
- Advertising via a public channel such as a tourist board or state owned television
- Consultancy advice provided either free or at a reduced rate
- Training provided either free or at a reduced rate
- Aid for investment in environmental projects
- Free or reduced rate assistance with research and development
- Purchase of public land or property at a less than market rate
- Benefiting from the provision of infrastructure where your organisation was pre-identified as a beneficiary