



**DARENT
VALLEY**
LANDSCAPE
PARTNERSHIP



LANDSCAPE & HERITAGE GRANTS



INTRODUCTION AND GUIDANCE - DARENT VALLEY LANDSCAPE & HERITAGE GRANTS

We think that the Darent Valley is a special place and that is what you have told us too. The Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme is delivering a Landscape & Heritage Grants programme and we are inviting you to make applications for the funding of interesting and exciting projects that help people care for, explore, enjoy, learn about and celebrate the wonderful landscape and heritage of the Darent Valley.

BACKGROUND

In 2017, the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty secured a grant of £2.1 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the landscape and heritage of the Darent Valley. With further funding from several other sources £3.6 million will be invested in the valley for five years. The scheme has the following vision:

“Using the inspiration of Samuel Palmer, our unique partnership of organisations has worked with and empowered local communities to ensure the survival and flourishing of an exceptional landscape and its heritage.

Through them, the Darent Valley’s natural and cultural heritage is being sustainably conserved, current threats are mitigated, and the landscape is more resilient to future threats. The communities that live within and around the valley feel emotionally and physically reconnected with their landscape, and there is a sense of pride and strong will to protect it for future generations.

A clear plan exists for the landscape’s ongoing conservation and enjoyment; and organisations, communities and individuals have the skills, knowledge and ability to deliver it over the coming years.”

If you have an idea that can help us achieve that vision, then we may be able to help you.

OUR AIMS

The Landscape & Heritage Grants programme has two key aims:

- conserving and enhancing the historic and natural landscape of the DVLP scheme area;
- helping more people, and a wider range of people, to learn about and enjoy the heritage of the Darent Valley.

The Landscape & Heritage Grants programme is seeking to improve landscape features and access to them. It is not intended to improve agricultural production.

WHO CAN APPLY

Use these application materials to apply for a grant under this programme if:

- your project meets the aims of the Landscape Heritage Grants programme;
- you need a grant of between £1,000 and £15,000.

We fund projects which promote benefits for the public rather than those which are mainly for private gain:

- we welcome applications from individuals and organisations, including public bodies, community groups, private landowners and farmers;
- we will accept applications from single organisations and partnerships - for example, a partnership between a heritage organisation and a community group;
- bids from commercial organisations, including farmers and landowners will be accepted only where the applicant is a Small/Medium Enterprise (SME).

SMEs are defined as being enterprises which:

- have fewer than 250 employees; and/or
- have either an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euros or an annual balance sheet not exceeding 43 million euros; and
- conform to specified criteria of independence in general, not more than 25% of an SME can be owned by other companies.

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO YOUR PROJECT

We will offer grants of up to 90% of eligible project costs up to a maximum of £15,000. The level of funding available will vary depending on the type of applicant and where EU State Aid regulations need to be considered. Each project will be expected to have an element of partnership funding provided by the applicant, we will need to see evidence of this should your project go ahead.

We can provide the following levels of funding:

- up to 50% for local authorities, private individuals and profit-making organisations;
- up to 70% for registered charities and companies limited by guarantee;
- up to 90% for non-registered charities, voluntary and community groups, parish and town councils.

A minimum of 50% of the Partnership funding must be cash. Volunteer time delivering projects can be used for the remaining amount of Partnership funding but this will be determined during the application process and will depend on the nature and scope of the proposals. If you wish to use volunteer time as Partnership funding the equivalent amount will need to be included as a cost to the project. A form to record volunteer time will be provided. Volunteer time can be claimed at the following rates:

- Unskilled - £50 per day
- Skilled - £ 150 per day
- Professional - £350 per day

The above is subject to State Aid regulations if the organisation is involved in economic activities.

WHAT WE CAN FUND

We can only fund projects that:

- take place within the DVLPS area; and
- adhere to the Landscape Character Area recommendations and deliver the objectives of the Landscape Conservation Action Plan (this document can be found on our website)

By a project, we mean work or an activity that:

- is not part of the everyday work of your organisation;
- has a schedule for completion; and
- has specific aims.

We can support:

- capital work (including conservation, repair and related activities); or
- activity-only projects.

Works we can fund include:

1. Restoration and/or sustainable management of landscape character and habitats
2. Hedge-laying, hedge planting and other habitat connectivity work, including screening unsympathetic development
3. Improvement to biodiversity through habitat creation
4. Protection, preservation, restoration, enhancement and appropriate use of historic built features
5. Preservation, restoration and enhancement of archaeological remains
6. Conservation of historic features such as round barrows and ancient parish boundaries
7. Educational and recreational initiatives on historic or ecological themes
8. Increased public access where this can be balanced with conservation of landscape fabric, including bridleways, cycling and walking tracks
9. Interpretation of landscape features, plants, animals, and their habitats, built and cultural heritage and geology
10. Surveying, recording and monitoring of the archaeological resource
11. Investigation and recording the human history of the area, especially oral histories of the rural hinterland
12. Initiatives to train and develop people's heritage skills.

WHAT WE CAN'T FUND

We will not give grants for the following works:

- feasibility studies;
- schemes in which a significant proportion of costs could be met by other grant schemes;
- costs relating to the conversion of buildings for use as dwellings or tourist accommodation;
- projects with little or no public benefit (for example conserving buildings in active use for domestic, agricultural or commercial purposes; vehicles, machinery or transport for private use or benefit);
- projects solely involving the purchase of land or buildings;
- acquisition of assets in excess of £5,000 value per item, including legal or other transfer costs;
- the main organisational staffing and running costs of an organisation;
- projects of little clear heritage value (for example sports or leisure facilities, civil engineering work, new roads, bridges or traffic systems, new buildings where existing heritage areas could be adapted);

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- academic research;
 - statutory obligations;
 - costs relating to the preparation of grant applications for this or other schemes; or
 - schemes where the match funding is state aid based (such as Environmental Stewardship monies) and would exceed the levels allowable under EU regulations.

OTHER RESTRICTIONS ON FUNDING

We will not fund projects or types of work that are not good practice for the heritage or landscape of the Darent Valley area. We only fund certain types of work if they form part of a wider project that meets our aims. We cannot fund them as standalone projects. These include:

- visitor facilities such as cafes, car parks or toilets;
- putting together or publishing research findings;
- creating digital materials (for example, websites or DVDs);
- creating replicas (models or exact copies) of historic structures or objects.

For collections-based projects:

- we will only consider supporting a new museum or other new heritage attraction if it is based on an existing collection recognised as important by the appropriate heritage organisation (for example, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council in England);
- we will only consider buying heritage items if the item (or most of a collection) is more than 10 years old.

Contact us if you are not sure whether we can fund your project using the pre-application enquiry form.

OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

If you are successful with a Landscape & Heritage Grant application, we expect you to own and be the only organisation entitled to use any property (land, buildings and heritage items) on which you spend the grant. We will need to see proof of your ownership, as referred to in the list of supporting documents you must send with your application form. If you do not own the property, you must tell us who does.

LAND AND BUILDINGS

For projects which involve carrying out capital work to land or buildings, we normally expect you to own the freehold or have a lease with at least 10 years left to run at the date we award any grant. Otherwise, you will need to provide a letter from the owner, saying that you have the owner's permission to carry out the work. The owner will also need to sign a letter that we will prepare, agreeing to keep to our standard terms of grant.

We would not expect a Landscape & Heritage Grant to involve buying land or buildings. However, if it does, you must buy them either freehold or with a lease with a term of at least 80 years left to run at the date we award any grant.

We do not accept leases with break clauses (these give one or more of the people or organisations involved the right to end the lease in certain circumstances).

You must be able to sell on, sublet or mortgage your lease, but if we award you a grant you must first have our permission to do any of these.

HERITAGE ITEMS

For projects involving buying or carrying out work to a heritage item we expect you to buy or own the item outright.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

For projects involving creating or using intellectual property (for example, creating a database, digital images or audio or other multimedia applications) we expect you to get all permissions, waivers and licences from any other person or organisation who may be entitled to any intellectual property rights which either exist or will be created to allow you to carry out and complete the project in line with your application, and we reserve the right to request copies of any such permissions, waivers or licences.

YOUR APPLICATION

WHAT TO READ

As well as this document and the help notes on the application form, we would advise that you read the relevant sections of the Landscape Conservation Action Plan, including the actions proposed for the Landscape Sub-Character Area relevant to your project.

PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY

Contact us for advice before you apply by using the Expression of Interest form. We will discuss your project with you in more detail and let you know whether your project is likely to meet our priorities for funding. We will give you advice on what you should do next.

YOUR APPLICATION

Once you have filled in your application and sent it to our office, we will acknowledge receipt. We have three deadline dates for applications each year. They fall at the end of April, August and December. We aim to give you a decision on your application within six weeks of the closing date.

WHAT WE WILL ASSESS

When we assess your application, we will take account of the value for money your project offers, the overall benefits of the project in relation to the costs, and the amount of grant you want from us. We will also assess how far your application shows that:

- your project supports relevant landscape guidelines for the DVLPS area;
- your project is an appropriate response to a need or opportunity;
- your project will meet our aims for either conservation or learning (or both)
- your project is well planned and your proposals for managing it are sound;

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- your organisation can carry out the project;
 - your project is financially realistic and there is a clear need for funding; and
 - your project promotes far greater levels of public benefit than private gain.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

You will be required to submit supporting documents as part of your application. These will include:

- a copy of your organisation's constitution or set of rules, etc.;
- copies of deeds, leases, mortgages or other proof of ownership if your project involves work to land or buildings;
- signed copy of most recent annual accounts or bank statements;
- letters of support;
- evidence for cost calculations; and
- job descriptions for any new staff.

All guidance and other documents referred to in the application materials can be found on our website.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

MANAGING YOUR GRANT

If your application is successful we will send you a formal grant offer letter, together with a contract for you to sign and return to us. By signing the contract you will be agreeing to manage and maintain the project for a period of 10 years after the projects completion. You will be able to start your project as soon as you have our written permission and all other funding is in place.

We will send you documents on Managing your Grant which will contain information on drawing down your grant money and how you should keep us informed of the progress of your project in achieving its aims.

PAYING GRANTS

We will normally pay your grant in three instalments:

1. When you have our written permission to start the project, we will pay 50% of your grant upfront.
2. When you apply for the next 40% of your grant, you will need to send us proof that you have spent the first 50%. We will only accept proof that relates to work and activities you have described in your application and that we have agreed to fund.
3. We will pay the final 10% of your grant when your project is complete.

You must send us a completion report at the end of your project. We require this to enable us to release the final grant instalment.

MONITORING

In your application you will be asked to identify project aims and outputs. Monitoring of your project will be based on these aims and outcomes, so it is very important that they are realistic and achievable. Failure to achieve them may result in grant monies being withheld.

COMPLETING AND EVALUATING YOUR PROJECT

You must send us a completion report at the end of your project. It is within this report that you will tell us whether the project has been a success and all the outputs have been achieved. We will provide a report template to successful grant applicants

BUYING GOODS, WORK AND SERVICES

If you receive a grant you will be expected to adhere to the following procurement thresholds:

Value Band For the total value of any individual contract or purchase	Action required
£200 - £1,000	To seek at least one written quote
£1001 - £5000	To seek at least two written quotes
£5,001 and over	To seek at least three written quotes

If you do not accept the lowest quote you will need to tell us why.

PROJECT PUBLICITY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Public support, understanding and appreciation are vital to the success of the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme and the Landscape & Heritage Grants programme.

If we give you a grant you must publicise and acknowledge it. We can contribute to the costs involved if you have included them in your project budget. We will expect you to publicise and promote your project as widely as possible to:

- make sure that the public understand the project;
- make sure that people have opportunities to take part;
- contribute to the sustainability of the project; and
- make sure that the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme and Heritage Lottery Fund contribution is recognised.

Acknowledgement of your grant must be clear to all visitors using your site, on publications or displays, or to people taking part in activities.

OTHER INFORMATION

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

We have a duty to adhere to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. When you sign the declaration at the end of the application form, you are confirming that you have no objection to us releasing details from the application form to anyone who asks to see them. If there is any information in the form that you do not want made publicly available, please say in the space provided and explain your reasons. We will take these into account when we respond to any request for information. However, we will always consult you first and will take account of your rights and expectations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 2018.

DATA PROTECTION ACT

Under the Data Protection Act 2018, we will process personal information relating to your organisation, its officers and staff or any other people you refer to in your application, for:

- assessing your grant application and how we handle it;
- handling the terms of our grant;
- sharing information with our specialists and monitors;
- keeping you informed of our work;
- publicising information about your application;
- research related to your application;
- other legal or regulatory purposes, or other purposes reasonably related to making grants.

COMPLAINTS

If you are not happy with the service you have received, please contact the Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme Manager.

HOW TO CONTACT US:

Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme
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