

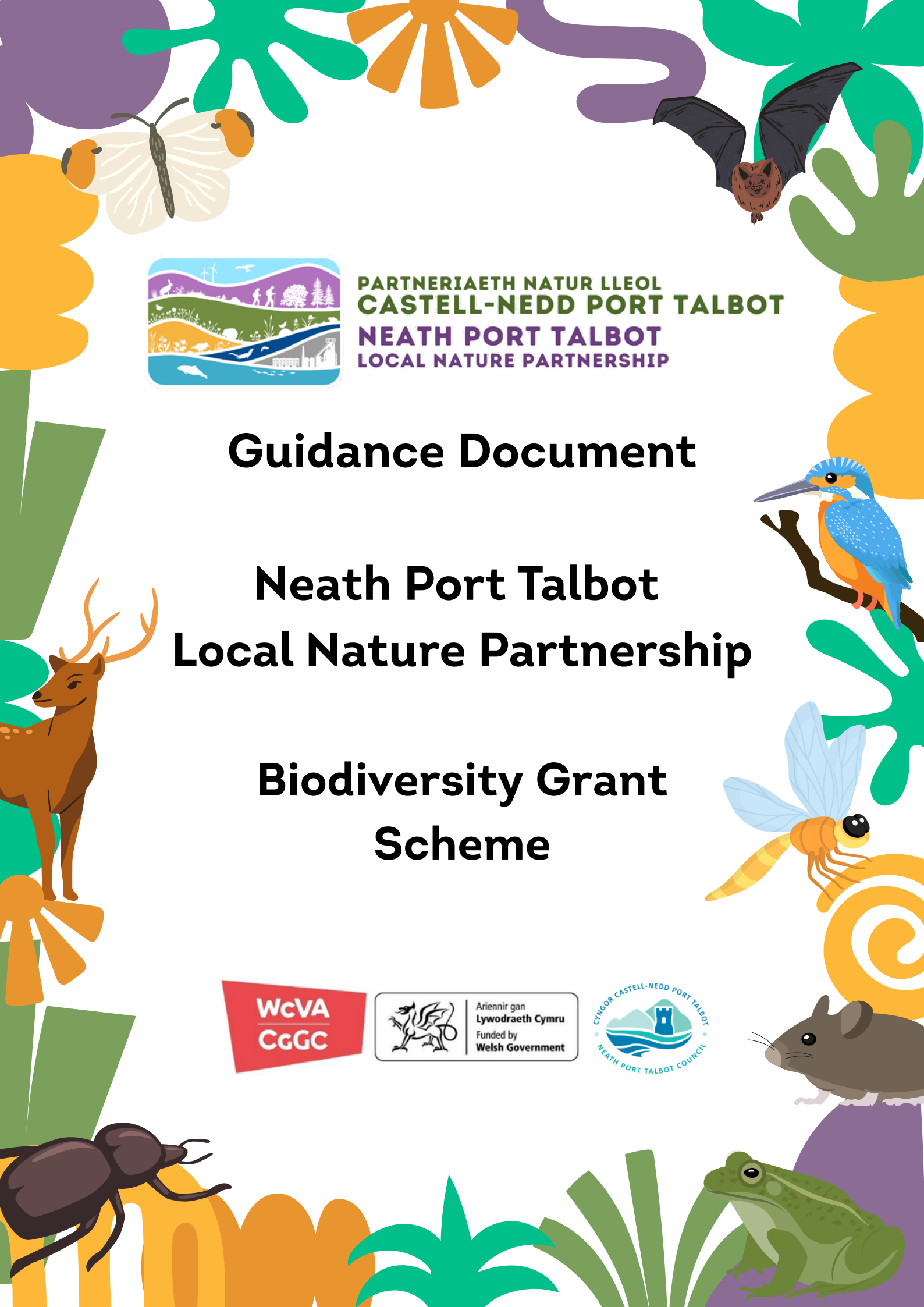


**PARTNERIAETH NATUR LLEOL  
CASTELL-NEDD PORT TALBOT  
NEATH PORT TALBOT  
LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP**

# Guidance Document

## Neath Port Talbot Local Nature Partnership

### Biodiversity Grant Scheme



# KEY POINTS

- Please read this entire document before applying.
- The rules and restrictions to the Grant Fund are determined by Welsh Government, the source of the funding.
- The Grant Fund is a competitive process - if the number of suitable applications exceeds the available budget, not all projects will be funded.
- Please carefully read through what we cannot fund and what restrictions there are on the funding.
- When costing your project please do not provide estimates or links to online shopping baskets - only fully costed quotes and links to specific items,
- Please be aware that the Grant Fund is administrated by one Biodiversity Officer with additional responsibilities - please be courteous and aware that responses to emails and applications can take time.
- Take photos during your project - these will be essential when you come to fill out the Case Study form at the end!
- Please get approval before making any changes to your agreed project, otherwise you may not be able to claim for the changes you've made.
- Please make sure to keep all invoices and receipts for your project so that you can claim the money back - any purchases not evidenced cannot be claimed.



# CONTENTS

• Introduction .....	4
• Tiers of funding .....	5
• Environmental responsibility and legal compliance .....	6
◦ Nature considerations for your project .....	7
• Grant criteria .....	8
◦ Budget .....	8
◦ Eligibility .....	9
◦ Insurance and evaluation .....	9
◦ What we cannot fund .....	10
◦ Items with restrictions .....	10
• Information and tips for first time applicants .....	11
◦ Process for first time applicants .....	11
• Application process Tier One .....	12
• Application process Tier Two .....	13
• Process after approval .....	14
• Filling out your application .....	15
◦ Project details .....	15
◦ Project engagement and evaluation .....	17
◦ Project costs .....	18
◦ Quality of items to ask for .....	19
• What is a native plant? .....	20
• Code of conduct .....	22
• During your project .....	24
• Claiming for your grant .....	25
◦ How to lay out an invoice .....	26
• How to talk about your project .....	27
• Welsh language requirements .....	28
• Data collected during your project .....	29
• Completing your case study .....	30
• Post-project site visit .....	31



# INTRODUCTION

Neath Port Talbot Local Nature Partnership (NPT LNP) is made up of representatives from a wide range of organisations, plus individuals with expertise in nature conservation.



Our evidence-based analysis of the state of nature in Neath Port Talbot (NPT) concludes that, currently, of the 11 major habitat types found in NPT, only two are in good condition in terms of their overall biodiversity and resilience. Click here for the [State of Nature Report](#). Urgent action is therefore needed to improve the state of nature in NPT, and to guide these actions, the LNP has produced a [Nature Recovery Action Plan](#).

To help nature recover, we are looking to fund biodiversity projects in the NPT area. Project proposals should deliver on the recommended actions in these reports. Therefore please use the [State of Nature Report](#) and subsequent [Nature Recovery Action Plan](#) to help inform your ideas.

The funding for the LNP Grant Fund is provided by Welsh Government's Local Places for Nature Scheme. Government funding which is given specifically for nature recovery based projects.

# TIERS OF FUNDING

Projects will be considered Tier One or Tier Two depending on the amount and items applied for.

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## **TIER ONE - UP TO £500**

For the provision of tools, materials and resources which are aimed at habitat creation and/or management. Wildlife surveys, monitoring and/or recording, and public engagement.

Tier One projects will be decided on a case by case basis by NPTC staff, delegated powers to do so by NPT LNP.

## **TIER TWO - £501 - £10,000**

For the provision of larger scale works, aimed at habitat creation, restoration and/or management using contractors. Can also include wildlife surveys, monitoring and/or recording, habitat management planning, interpretation materials and public engagement.

Tier Two projects will be assessed by the NPT LNP Steering Group. It is ultimately the panel's decision whether to fund these projects or not. If there are any queries that stem from the panel, these must be addressed before the approval of the project. We will work with you to get applicable projects approved.



# ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE

All applicants and grant recipients are responsible for ensuring that their proposed activities comply with relevant environmental legislation and good practise. Funding awarded through this scheme does **not** remove or reduce the need for applicants to:

- Take reasonable steps to avoid harm to wildlife, habitats and protected features
- Carry out appropriate species and habitat checks where these may be required - for example if you are applying to thin an area of woodland for regeneration, some trees might need bat checks and work will need to take place outside of bird nesting season.
- Undertake their own risk assessments and secure any permissions, licences or consents needed for the work
- Follow recognised guidance on minimising disturbance and safeguarding biodiversity e.g. Biosecurity around Invasive Non-Native Species

Unless you are starting from a concrete pad, please bear in mind that there are likely to already be species and habitats present on your site which need to be safeguarded. The best way to determine this and find out what steps you must take to avoid harm, is to secure a habitat survey and a management plan as a first phase of works.



# NATURE CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR PROJECT

Does your project involve...	What you might need
Building renovations e.g. a green wall or roof	Changes to buildings may require bat surveys
Changes to currently unused buildings	Changes to buildings may require bat surveys
Vegetation removal / tree planting	May require bat / nesting bird / badger checks
Changes to watercourses	May require checks for species that have legal protection e.g. otters
Changes to woodlands / hedgerows / shrubs	May require checks for species that have legal protection e.g. bats, badgers
Changes to grasslands	May require checks for special plant species. It is worth letting your grassland grow for a season or two in order to determine what might be there before making changes.
Changes to brownfield	May require checks for species that have legal protection i.e. invertebrates

- Work such as scrub clearance, hedge laying and tree removal should not be conducted during the nesting bird season which runs March - August.
- When installing bird / bat boxes on buildings, care should be taken that you are not covering any existing gaps that birds / bats could already be using.



# GRANT CRITERIA

## BUDGET

- **The grant scheme funds capital costs only - no revenue costs can be included, such as staff time and venue hire**
- The applicant is responsible for sourcing, purchasing and recording all materials and equipment (unless otherwise agreed under certain circumstances) and claiming it back from the LNP **at the end of the project, after goods have been received.**
- Projects must show justification and value for money, using the best options with regards to local suppliers and materials, expertise and native-only species where applicable.
- Items applied for must also have longevity - **value for money doesn't always mean the cheapest item.** We would rather fund higher quality items which will last longer.
- **Budgets must have links to items / written quotes and suppliers (no estimated costs or links to baskets please), your application will not be taken forward if this is the case.**



# GRANT CRITERIA

## ELIGIBILITY

- **The project must be completed and all invoices submitted by 12<sup>th</sup> March 2027.**
- In order to qualify for grant funding, **the project location must be accessible to members of the public.** This can be for part of the year, or all year round e.g. open access or via Rights of Way- including open only for events.
- Applicants which have not received grant funding before will be given priority consideration over those that have.
- Applicants can apply to a future funding round, as long as it is not to fund a previously funded project or maintenance of items funded previously.
- **The overall outcome of the project must benefit biodiversity** and improve local people's access to nature, especially if ongoing management will be required after the grant funding is spent.
- Planting should only include native species, be of local provenance where possible and be necessary. We will consider non-native, wildlife friendly plants in some circumstances but this should be discussed with us. Don't be afraid to let nature take its course - e.g. don't propose tree planting if natural regeneration is an option.

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## INSURANCE AND EVALUATION

- Recipients must have suitable public liability insurance for any work carried out under the scheme.
- **Recipients must agree to maintain works undertaken for a minimum period of 5 years, at their own cost** - this is a criteria of the funding from Welsh Government,
- **All successful recipients of the funding must complete a Case Study form by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027.** A form for this will be supplied in advance.

# GRANT CRITERIA

## WHAT WE CANNOT FUND

- Items / works which are a statutory duty - i.e. maintaining public rights of way
- Items / works which are part of planning conditions for a development
- Non-native species which are not wildlife-friendly and in inappropriate settings
- Signage such as waymarking signs - interpretation panels to explain projects can be funded, but only if they're part of a wider project
- Decorative landscaping, including gravel, patio slabs, garden fencing
- Benches and seating
- Revenue costs including staff and venue hire

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## ITEMS WHICH HAVE RESTRICTIONS

- Awareness raising / public engagement items - if applying for these (e.g. a nature mural) as part of a project, they should not cost more than the rest of the biodiversity enhancements being applied for. This is to keep the focus of the project on biodiversity
- Planters are considered on a case by case basis - for example sites which are primarily concrete would be more likely to be granted funding for planters



# INFORMATION AND TIPS FOR FIRST TIME APPLICANTS

- We might forward your initial expression of interest to our LNP Grant Advisor who can come out to visit your site and create an application assistance document with you. This will help you fill out the full application form for submission.
- If your site is large or complex, we may ask you to first do a habitat survey and / or a habitat management plan (if you don't already have one) - this helps to properly assess how best to help nature on the site, and ensures your project doesn't harm any habitats or wildlife found there.
- You can apply to the LNP Grant Fund to cover the cost of this habitat survey / management plan. You can then re-apply for the main recommendations of the habitat management plan at a later date.

## PROCESS FOR FIRST TIME APPLICANTS

Read through the guidance and fill out the form on the LNP website.



We will assess your proposal and may forward your details to our LNP Grant Advisor.



They may arrange a site visit with you to discuss your proposed project, and fill out an application assistance form for you. This will help you populate the application form for your project.



Move onto the step in the Tier 1 or Tier 2 flowchart with a



# APPLICATION PROCESS TIER ONE

Read through the guidance and fill out the form on the LNP website.



We will read through this, and if we think your project is suitable to apply for the funding, we will send you a grant fund application form.



\* Fill out your application form and send it in to [biodiversity@npt.gov.uk](mailto:biodiversity@npt.gov.uk)



Tier one applications will be considered by NPTC Council staff and approved / rejected



Outcome 1:  
Application approved

Outcome 2:  
Changes need to be made for approval

Outcome 3:  
Application is rejected and reasons given



Move on to the process after approval

Changes are made, application reviewed and approved



# APPLICATION PROCESS TIER TWO

If you think your project is eligible for funding, read through the guidance and fill out the form on the LNP website



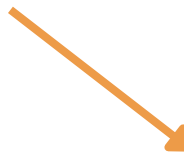
We will read through this, and if we think your project is suitable to apply for the funding, we will send you a grant fund application form.



\* Fill out your application form and send it in to [biodiversity@npt.gov.uk](mailto:biodiversity@npt.gov.uk)



The application form will be reviewed by a Steering Group made up of representatives from the Local Nature Partnership



Outcome 1:  
Application approved

Outcome 2:  
Changes need to be made for approval

Outcome 3:  
Application is rejected and reasons given



Changes are made and application resubmitted



Steering group reviews changes and approves / rejects application



# PROCESS AFTER APPROVAL

You will receive an approval letter by email. This will detail what has been approved, any conditions of the funding to be in the contract and the amount of funding approved.



Your application will then be sent to the Legal Team in NPT Council to create a contract. This may take a few weeks so please be patient.



Legal will send you the contract for your project. Please read, sign and return it to the Legal Team. Make sure your point of contact in the Biodiversity Team is copied into this return email.



Legal will execute the grant fund and send a dated copy to you.



We will then be in contact to confirm that all the formalities have gone through and you can start spending money



# FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION

## PROJECT DETAILS

### Project Title

Think of a suitable title for your project - it can be simple and explanatory, or something more snappy!

### Project Location

Put the address of the site location here.

### OS Grid Reference and What 3 Words:

This information helps us place exactly where the site is, the easiest way to find this is to use the website [www.gridreferencefinder.com](http://www.gridreferencefinder.com). Right clicking on your location brings up both the grid reference and W3W.

### Site Map

Here you can insert a screenshot from Google Maps (satellite layer please) or a GIS screenshot. If possible use an editing software like paint if needed, to outline your site boundary.

### Landowner Permission

- If you are not the owner of the land, you will need to provide written evidence that you have secured landowner permission, or that permission is given in your lease agreement - this can be submitted in the same email as the application form.
- Additionally if you are leasing the land, please tell us the lease length in this section of the application form,

### Project Start and End Date

These can be estimated, but the end date cannot be later than the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2027.



# FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION

## PROJECT DETAILS CONTINUED...

### Number of Volunteers Involved

One of the aims of the grant fund is to get more people involved in nature recovery - so estimate here how many volunteers will be engaged with in the project.

### Existing Wildlife and Habitats

- In this section tell us what habitats and wildlife you have noticed on your site already.
- You can also do a search on [Aderyn](#) to see what species other people in the area around the site have recorded and note this in this section too,
- Let us know if your proposed area is covered by any designations (such as Local Nature Reserves, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Scheduled Monuments etc). If you are not sure, please contact [biodiversity@npt.gov.uk](mailto:biodiversity@npt.gov.uk) or your existing point of contact for confirmation.

### Outline of Your Project

Here please provide the detail on your project.

- What its aims are
- Detail on each of the aims and what activities you will undertake to achieve those aims

### Species and Habitats that will Benefit

- You must indicate which species and habitats will benefit from your project
- You must indicate which elements of the [State of Nature Report](#) / [Nature Recovery Action Plan](#) you are focussing on for your project
- Let us know if you proposed project will achieve any of the actions within the Nature Recovery Action Plan. These are listed under each habitat [on the website](#).



# FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION

## PROJECT ENGAGEMENT AND EVALUATION

### Public Engagement

Public engagement and raising awareness of biodiversity to the public is a key aim for the grant fund:

- Explain how you will increase the public's understanding of the natural environment and biodiversity
- The methods you will use to increase their understanding

### Project Outcomes

Explain here how you will measure the outcomes of the project

- This could be through getting feedback from volunteers
- Taking before and after photos - this is key for the case study form!
- Noting any new wildlife you see on the site as a result of your project

### Ensuring Project Longevity

It is important to ensure that your project is maintained for the 5 year period required by Welsh Government. Please include:

- How you've calculated the maintenance cost of your project and how you can cover this
- The maintenance steps you will take
- If volunteers have been involved with the outcomes will they continue to be engaged with?



# FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION

## PROJECT COSTS

In this section please fill out the table with the details of things you will buy for your project.

- NO ESTIMATED COSTS IN THIS SECTION - if you do, your application will not be taken forward for consideration.
- NO LINKS TO SHOPPING BASKETS - we cannot view these when we click on them.
- Get quotes from suppliers where needed, fill out the amount in the table and attach the quote to the email when you send in the application.
  - Get them to give a breakdown of costs in the quote if they are doing multiple pieces of work for you - not just a summary quote.
- Remember to include the delivery cost!
- If you are applying for items such as interpretation panels or planning to make educational booklets, you will need to include budget for the translation of this into Welsh.

Example cost matrix:

Item name	Description	URL Link	Quantity	Quote Attached	Subtotal
Bird boxes	Woodstone bird boxes	www.nhbs.com	4	N/A	£120
Wildflower planting	From Celtic Wildflowers	NA	N/A	Y	£600
Education guides	Bird identification guides	www.nhbs.com	10	N/A	£100
				<b>Total</b>	£820

# FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION

## QUALITY OF ITEMS TO ASK FOR

As the grant fund has a maintenance requirement of 5 years after the project has been completed, we would like to see things on the application form which can be guaranteed for 5 years where possible.

For example:

- If applying for bird houses or swift boxes look for ones which have a guarantee of this length of time - boxes made from materials like Woodcrete and Woodstone tend to have long guarantees
- This also applies to other wildlife shelters, like hedgehog houses
- Bug hotels should have similar length guarantees and if possible be the type that the material in the hotel can be replaced
- If applying for planters please choose ones which are Forestry Stewardship approved and rated to last at least 5 years
- If you are applying for raw materials to make wildlife boxes or planters, please make sure these are Forestry Stewardship approved or sourced locally. They should be rated to last at least 5 years. Please also include the cost for weatherproofing with a non-toxic varnish or stain if needed.



# WHAT IS A NATIVE PLANT?

- In the UK a native plant is defined as either a plant that arrived naturally since the end of the last glaciation (without the assistance of humans), or one that was already present (i.e. it persisted during the last Ice Age). Some examples of these are foxglove, primrose and bluebells.
- However most garden plants are not native plants, or are genetically modified varieties of the native species. See the reference photos on the next page for examples.
- When costing planting, most gardening websites do not provide native plants, you may need to seek out specialist plant nurseries. The most local example of this is Celtic Wildflowers Ltd.
- Local is better - native plants which have been grown locally usually have better survival rates.
- To help biodiversity in NPT, the grant fund will generally only fund native planting.
- Certain plants will also only survive in certain habitats - so we may ask you to change your planting scheme if it is not suitable for the habitats that you have on your site.
- Please consult us if you are uncertain about whether you are asking for native plants or what plants you could source for your site.



# WHAT IS A NATIVE PLANT?

Below are some examples of native vs. cultivated or non-native varieties of plants to help you understand the difference.

## NATIVE



Native primrose - *Primula vulgaris*

## NON-NATIVE



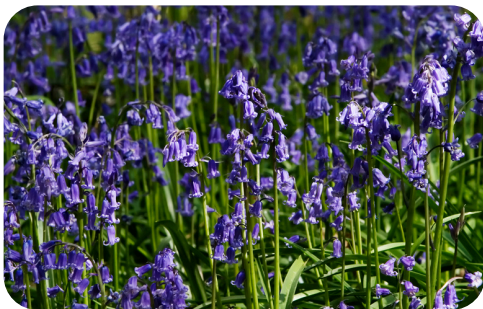
Cultivated primrose varieties



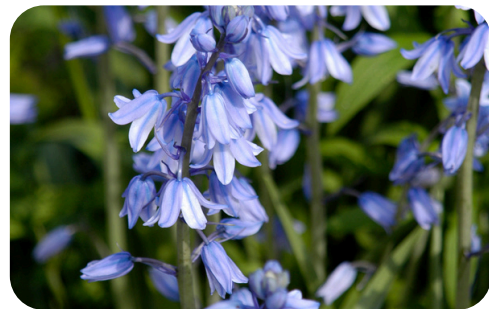
Native foxglove - *Digitalis purpurea*



Cultivated foxglove varieties



Native bluebell - *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*



Spanish bluebell - *Hyacinthoides hispanica*

It can be hard to tell the difference between a native and non-native species / variety, so it's always best to ask

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## **Communication expectations:**

- The fund is managed by one officer who is also responsible for other projects
- Responses to emails may take a little time, but every enquiry is important and will be dealt with as soon as possible
- Please only send a chaser email if it has been a week since your last one, things do sometimes get missed!
- Tier Two applications which require Steering Group approval will also take longer to process.
- Complex queries may take longer to answer if clarification from Welsh Government is required.

## **Decision making:**

- The rules and eligibility criteria of the LNP Grant Fund are set by Welsh Government, not by the administrating officer or the team
- Decisions are made following the guidance criteria
- For Tier Two applications, the decision on whether to fund an application or not is made by a Steering Group of representatives of the LNP

## **Professional Conduct:**

- Please be polite and respectful in all communications
- We welcome questions and are happy to help, but ask applicants to engage in a constructive and courteous manner
- Aggressive, rude or demanding behaviour will not be tolerated and will delay or limit support. Ultimately, it could result in your application being rejected and future applications not being considered.



**INFORMATION  
FOR  
APPROVED  
PROJECTS**



# DURING YOUR PROJECT



Do not spend any money until you have had approval to do so by the administrating officer. Any money you do spend before this you risk not being able to claim.



Remember to keep all evidence of expenses from invoices for big purchases to receipts for smaller amounts. All of this is needed as evidence when you submit your claims for the money.



If the cost of items / services have increased since the application was submitted and will increase your total spend above the approved amount, please let us know so that we can check if this is ok.



If you find you have underspent on your total amount, please check with us before using the remainder of the approved amount to buy any additional items which had not previously been approved.



Please check with us if you are wanting to make any changes to plant species previously approved. We need to check that they are native / aren't going to be a problem for the local environment.



Remember to take photos before, during and after your project. These are important for the case study form. It's also a good idea to count participation numbers and collect feedback from volunteers or event participants for this form.



If you are unsure about anything, or have any other questions for us during the project that are not answered by the guidance document, please get in touch with us.

# CLAIMING FOR YOUR GRANT

- **Do not spend any money until you have had approval to do so by the administrating officer!**
- Generally we do not order items for your projects - you must purchase them and then claim the amount back from us.
- For this reason it is important to keep all invoices and receipts for your purchases - please make sure that they are fully itemised
- Please do not claim for your items / costs until you have received the goods or the work has been completed.
- Please collate your receipts / invoices and claim them back in 1-2 rounds. This saves the administrating officer admin time.
- In order to claim for items, you will need to create an overall invoice. The example layout for this is on the next page.
- Your claim email to us each time should include:
  - Subject line stating your project title, year (26/27) and claim number (e.g. the first claim will be Claim 1)
  - An overall itemised invoice for the amount you are claiming
  - Images of individual receipts or PDFs of individual invoices
- Please be patient waiting for payment as the invoice has to be sent to NPTC finance team for payment. The administrating officer does not release the payments.



# HOW TO LAY OUT AN INVOICE

As well as sending us your original invoices and receipts each time you claim, they need to be combined into an invoice. This document will guide you through how your invoice should look so we can process your claim quickly!

Date: 23/01/2025

Invoice 1

To: NPTC  
Port Talbot Civic Centre  
Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot  
SA13 1PJ

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Swift boxes	10	£35.00	£350.00
Swift callers	5	£16.95	£84.75
Box of 100 screws	1	£4.25	£4.25
Total			£439.00

Payment details:  
Reference: 'Selwyn's Swift Boxes'  
Account name: Selwyn Swift  
Bank Name: Nest Egg Bank  
Account number: XXXXXXXX  
Sort Code: XX-XX-XX  
Address: Selwyn Swift, 24 Roof Terrace, Pontardawe, SA54 PPP

Selwyn Swift  
24 Roof Terrace  
Pontardawe  
SA54 PPP  
selwyn@swiftmail.com  
01799999999

Date here

Invoice number here

NPTC address here

Payment reference needs to be less than 32 characters

Your name and contact details here

Itemise your costs here like this and include a total

Where applicable include a before and after of VAT

Please include account name, bank name, details and address

**Remember to attach original invoices / receipts to your email too!**



# HOW TO TALK ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

Because your project has been funded by the Welsh Government through Neath Port Talbot Local Nature Partnership, there are some things you should make sure of when advertising your project or talking about it on social media. This document will guide you through what you need to include!

## What to include on materials you produce:

Funding needs to be mentioned anywhere you advertise your project, any material you produce and also include the logos for both the Local Nature Partnership and Welsh Government.



## Examples of materials you might produce:

- Posters/flyers for events
- Interpretation panels
- Education packs
- Social media posts and stories

## This is how the funding should be worded:

'Funded by Neath Port Talbot Local Nature Partnership through the Welsh Government Local Places for Nature Fund'

'Ariannwyd gan Bartneriaeth Natur Leol Castell-nedd Port Talbot trwy Gynllun Lleoedd Lleol ar gyfer Natur Llywodraeth Cymru'

## Who should be tagged on social media?

The Neath Port Talbot Local Nature Partnership should be tagged on Facebook and NPT Wildlife should be tagged on Instagram.

Facebook: [NPT LNP Facebook](#)

Instagram: [NPT Wildlife Instagram](#)

# WELSH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

As your project is funded by Welsh Government, you need to ensure you comply with Welsh Language Standards.



This means that the following need to be produced in both English and Welsh:

- Social media posts about your project
- Any communications and marketing material for events
- Interpretation panels for your project if applicable

It also means that the Welsh language should not be treated any less favourably than English, so you should make sure that:

- The font type, font size, colour and format are the same
- The position and prominence of Welsh and English are the same
- They should both be published or displayed at the same time, with equal prominence

If you need any help or guidance with this, please just get in touch!



# DATA COLLECTED DURING YOUR PROJECT

- Your project may include the collection of biological (species or habitat) data during surveys either for a Habitat Management Plan or as one of the aims of the project.
- If it does, **on completion of the survey or project, please send us a copy of the data.**
- This will allow us to send on the data to the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc), who will then be able to add the records to their dataset.
- This means that the species you have found will be added to the [Aderyn](#) map and allow other people to view what has been found in their area!



SEWBRc

SOUTH EAST WALES BIODIVERSITY RECORDS CENTRE  
CANOLFAN GOFNODION BIOAMRYWIAETH DE DDWYRAIN CYMRU



Aderyn

LERC Wales' Biodiversity Information &  
Reporting Database

# COMPLETING YOUR CASE STUDY

After you have completed your project and submitted your invoices for payment, you will then need to complete your case study form. The template for this will have been sent to you along with your contract. The case study form is a condition of the grant, so it is important that you complete this for us.

The key information you need to collect for this form during your project is:



Have a think during your project of any challenges you face, the impact of the project and the results you achieve.



The number of people who engaged with your project. For example the number of people who visited an event you ran or the number of volunteers that took part,



A quote of no more than 50 words from a participant or volunteer summarising the positive impact that the project has had on themselves or the wider community.



Photographs - you will need to supply at least four photographs of your project - it is important to get before, during and after photos. These need to be attached to the email when you send the case study form to us.

# POST-PROJECT SITE VISIT

The Steering Group may also ask for a site visit once the project has concluded. This usually involves us meeting on site with you to look at what your project has achieved, discuss with you how it went and what you're planning to do to maintain the outcomes of the project.

It's a chance for you to show off what you've done and take pride in the hard work you've put in to make a difference for biodiversity and the local community!



It's also a chance for the steering group to touch-base with the projects that they have been advising and see the difference the Grant Fund has made to local people!

