



Report of the Gower AONB Officer

Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group – 6 December 2021

Proposed Landscape & Biodiversity Grant Scheme

For Information

1. Aim of Scheme

This grant scheme, run as a subsidiary of the Sustainable Development Fund and managed locally on behalf of Welsh Government, aims to support a range of landscape and biodiversity enhancement initiatives within Gower AONB.

The grant is aimed at landowners, Community Councils and community spaces, where biodiversity gains can engage and benefit those who live within the local community. Farmers can apply for funding, however, they must not be in receipt of an agri-environment grant for the same scheme. Priority will be given to schemes where there is greatest biodiversity gain and community benefit can be demonstrated.

2. Range of Activity

The scheme will provide grant support for the following activities:

- a) Drystone Walls
- b) Hedge Laying and Planting
- c) Small Woodland Creation
- d) Coppicing
- e) Fencing of Riparian Habitats
- f) Orchard Creation and Restoration
- g) Natural Flood Management
- h) Pond Creation
- i) Wildflower Meadow Restoration
- j) Community Wildflower Corridor Creation
- k) Small Historical Features

A series of guidance notes set out what standards apply, and where you can find additional information and advice.

3. Eligibility

Applications will be welcomed from (or on behalf of) landowners, and community groups working in partnership with landowners.

However, grants cannot be given where the work or site:

- a) is already under another funded management scheme (e.g. Glastir, Section 39 or Section 106 Agreements, SSSI agreement)
- b) forms part of a managed garden or curtilage of a residential dwelling or business
- c) does not have the correct consents in place
- d) has already started on the project
- e) is receiving support or grant from any other Welsh Government or Exchequer fund.

4. Funding

Grants are available of up to £3,000, at up to 50% funding. Match funding can include in-kind staff/volunteer time of up to 25%.

5. Application Process

A simple application form will be used to apply for funding describe your scheme, and be sure to include a detailed location plan, which must include a full six-figure Ordnance Survey grid reference. Please ensure the plan shows the location of any public highways, bridleways or footpaths as public visibility will help support an application.

Copies of old maps showing woods, orchards, hedgerows, walls, etc. and information on the history of a farm, wood, or orchard will help support an application. 'Before' photographs are also appreciated (electronic copies preferred).

You should already know about any designations on the land (Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Listed Building, Scheduled Ancient Monument, bat roost etc.), but the AONB Team may be able to help you check. You should also check for any outstanding charges against the land from planning conditions, other grant schemes etc. Any designations/charges must be stated in the application. Failure to reveal such details may render your application invalid.

The application can be developed with advice and support from the AONB Team. A site visit is likely to be needed, so that the initial project can be discussed in detail, and that future management can be planned. A maintenance period of 10 years will be expected, and a simple management plan will be required as part of the application.

Applications can be submitted at any time, although please be aware that funds may become increasingly committed.

Mike Scott,
30 November 2021