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Priorities and eligibility

The Fund is for projects which deliver either or both of the priorities:

1. Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, landscape, wildlife or heritage of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape
2. Educational and awareness-raising activities relating to the Shropshire Hills and its conservation, especially involving young people

The Fund is focused on projects delivering practical conservation work in the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. Activities such as feasibility studies or research may also be considered if the case is strong enough. The Fund does not normally support activities which are eligible under government land management schemes such as agri-environment schemes.

The work carried out needs to be either within the National Landscape or directly benefiting it. For example, restoration of a heritage or landscape feature outside the National Landscape would not be eligible, while education work relating directly to the Shropshire Hills but taking place outside it would be eligible.

In 2027-28, the Shropshire Hills Conservation Fund includes funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, through the Shropshire Hills Landscape Connections project. This funding is to deliver nature recovery actions and engage people with nature in the Shropshire Hills, guided by the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Public, private, voluntary sector, town and parish councils and community groups can apply, along with individuals and businesses, but in all cases the project must show a clear public benefit. You don't have to live or work within the Shropshire Hills to apply, as long as your project delivers benefits to it. Priority may be given to applicants who have not previously had funding from the Trust. There is a consecutive 3-year limit on applying to the Fund.

The Fund cannot grant aid anything retrospectively. Preparation work may be done, but costs incurred before the date of the grant offer letter cannot be claimed or used as

match funding. However, if you have made significant expenditure on an earlier phase of the project, do mention this in your application because it may provide justification for a higher rate of grant.

Projects are more likely to be funded if they also demonstrate community support and fit with local and national strategies.

Size of grants, rates of grant and match funding

Grants will normally be in the range of £500 - £2,000. Grants can be of up to 75% and match funding can be made up of in-kind and volunteer time contributions as well as cash. These should be costed into your budget. Applications will be strengthened by showing other sources of funding.

Before making a full application

Please complete the Project Ideas Form, a short form to briefly describe your project idea. A link to the online Project Idea Form is on the [Conservation Fund webpage](#), or email stephanie.hayes@shropshire.gov.uk to request the form. When we have received and read your form we will be in touch to discuss your project in more detail. We will be able to recommend whether your project should progress to a full application and provide advice on developing the project and how it can best fit the aims of the Fund.

Deadline for expression of interest is Monday 15th February 2027.

Writing the full application

We will provide you with the full application form, which you can fill in electronically. Your email with the completed application form will be taken as an authorized signatory. Remember that your application will be read by people who may know nothing about your proposed project. Please make it clear what will actually be done in the project, and pictures or plans should be included for any proposed works on the ground.

Deadline to receive completed full application is Monday 8th March 2027.

Budget spreadsheet

- The budget must balance on the expenditure and income sides.
- Check the guidance on match funding above.
- Please ensure you state whether any match funding has been secured or not.
- If your organisation is VAT registered and you are able to reclaim VAT yourselves, the grant offer will be made to you ex-VAT. If you pay VAT then you may include this in the budget and claim grant against it. If you only pay a proportion of your VAT, please include in the budget only that proportion which you pay, i.e. that part you are not able to reclaim from the Inland Revenue.

- If the project runs for more than one year, please ensure income/expenditure are clearly indicated for the current year in which you are applying for a grant. Details for other years may be provided separately but will not form part of the application.
- Travel expenses should be costed at 45p/mile. Other in-kind contributions should be included at their actual cost.

In kind and volunteer time should generally be costed at a standard rate of £20 per hour to calculate volunteer time.

Checklist

- Have you answered all the questions?
- Does your budget balance and have you filled in VAT details correctly?
- Have you emailed your completed application form?
- Have you enclosed any plans, pictures or further information about the project if appropriate?
- Have you enclosed any background information about your organisation if appropriate?
- Have you enclosed evidence of permission where required?

Assessment of your application

Trustees from the Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust will meet to discuss the projects and award grants on Monday 15th March 2027. They represent a range of interests and knowledge but may seek external specialist advice if necessary. If your application is not approved, we will explain why and advise you whether it may be worth adapting the project to re-apply.

If your grant is approved

You will receive a formal offer letter by email, outlining the rate of grant and a maximum cash sum, the budget and the required outputs of the project. This grant offer is a contract between you or your organisation and the Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust. The grant will be paid into your bank account on acceptance of the grant letter.

Special conditions relating to your project may be set, and the general conditions of grant also apply. These set out the procedures for claiming your grant, and for monitoring and reporting. The offer letter is a legal contract, and you will only receive the grant if your project meets the agreed outputs and conditions.

If a project does not work out as intended, it may be possible to amend the grant offer. If you have to abandon or curtail your project, or don't expect to claim the full grant, you must let us know as soon as possible, as the money may be allocated elsewhere.

A short, written report with photographs is required at the end of the project showing how the work met the aim(s) and delivered public benefits. Please acknowledge the financial support you have received from the Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust in any publicity associated with your project.

You will be advised if your project is being supported by funding from the Shropshire Hills Landscape Connections project, in which case you will also need to acknowledge the project and the Heritage Fund's support (full guidance on this will be provided in your grant offer documents).

Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust (Charity No: 1168432).

Updated September 2026.