

High Weald Nature and Community Fund 2026



High Weald
National
Landscape

Tips for developing your project and completing the application form

As you start developing your project and completing the application form, it's important to address key criteria.

Below, we've outlined common grant panel questions to guide your project development, highlighting the corresponding question in the application form where you can provide the detail.

We have also provided an example of a completed table of items, activities and costs to guide completion (pages 5 & 6 at the end of the document).

Following this guidance will help you submit a strong application

1. Benefits for nature, people and place

Application form Q 3, 4 and 5: Why is your project needed? What will your project do? What difference will your project make and how will you evaluate whether it has made this difference?

Ask yourself:

- Have you specified the area (metres, hectares etc) to be improved?
- Have you set out the number of participants you expect to be involved in your project?
- Have you distinguished your project from your health and safety responsibilities and routine maintenance work?

2. Financial need and value for money

Application form Q8: Please explain why you need financial support for this project and highlight any cash, volunteer, or in-kind support that you will contribute.

Ask yourself:

- Have you made it clear that your project is in addition to what you would normally be expected to do?
- Have you explained why savings or reserves can't be used to fund the project?
- Have you made your contributions (cash, in-kind support, and volunteer time) to the project clear? The grant panel will consider your contribution in their decision-making.

Application form Q9: How do you know your costs are value for money?

Ask yourself:

- Have you obtained multiple quotes or compared costs with similar projects so that you know the project is good value for money?
- Have you explained the frequency, duration, and maintenance plan for machinery or equipment usage (if applicable)? Have you set out whether you have explored other options to make it cheaper or more beneficial, such as hiring or sharing equipment?
- If planting have you considered the most economical planting options i.e. younger trees or whips?
- Have you justified your project officer costs and ensured they are a reasonable proportion of your overall costs?

3. Carrying out your project according to good practice

Application form Q10: What experience do you have of delivering projects like this? What advice have you sought?

The High Weald National Landscape team will provide advice but would encourage you to seek further advice to ensure your project is as well-considered as possible. Please list your sources of advice (whether from other advisors, contractors, websites, or books) in your application.

Please note that some land management projects may require permissions or consents. It is important that the consents and permissions have been secured before you apply for a grant.

Some useful sources of advice are listed below:

Land management practices

There is lots of guidance on undertaking land management projects on www.highweald.org.

We recommend the following sites for popular projects:

- Pond creation and management <https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/advice-resources/pond-creation-hub>
- Wildflower creation and management <https://meadows.plantlife.org.uk/making-meadows/>

Note that for projects involving wildflower grassland creation we will be looking for evidence of soil suitability and an understanding of the ongoing management activity needed for successful creation.

- Hedge management <https://ptes.org/hedgerow/managing-hedgerows-top-tips/>
- Hedge and tree planting <https://treecouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/National-Tree-Week-planting-guide.pdf>
- List of plant healthy suppliers <https://planthealthy.org.uk/directory>

- Trees and shrubs suitable to the High Weald <https://highweald.org/guidance/land-management/hedges/>

Please ensure that in your application you:

- Emphasise sustainable practices, including avoiding herbicides and pesticides, prioritising sustainable materials, and sourcing native species from reputable nurseries.
- Minimise your project's carbon footprint where possible.

People-focused practices

Please ensure you:

- Outline how you will promote your project to engage your target audience
- Set out how you will address barriers to involvement for marginalised groups or communities
- Detail plans for volunteer recruitment and training if applicable
- Detail where you will deliver activities and confirm that you have the landowner's agreement to run them.

Activity plan - good practice guidance

<https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/good-practice-guidance/activity-plan>

4. Long term benefits

Application form Q11: How will you look after or sustain your project when it is finished/complete?

Ask yourself:

- Have you set out what is needed to maintain your project and ensure long term benefits? Please indicate what time and money you have allocated to ongoing maintenance. Most projects need ongoing involvement.
- Is a management plan needed for your site/project to guide work? A plan will demonstrate that your project is well considered. It can be very simple. Find out more about producing a plan here <https://highweald.org/guidance/land-management/developing-a-site-plan/>
- Is it clear how the project will help people to connect with nature once your project has ended?

5. Inspiring wider change

Application form Q12: How will you share what your project has done to inspire others?

Ask yourself:

- Who will you talk to about your project and how will you inspire them to do something similar? Consider articles in parish magazines, press releases, social media, community events, or temporary informational boards.

Note that the Fund does not offer grants for permanent information boards but will support temporary signage. Temporary High Weald land management information boards (focused on woodland coppicing, hedge management and natural flood management) are available for free.

By addressing these considerations thoughtfully in your application, you'll strengthen your project's prospects for funding and successful implementation. Good Luck!



EXAMPLES of a completed table of items, activities, and costs

EXAMPLE 1 - Hedge-planting and hedge-laying project involving volunteers and contractors

<i>What will you do?</i>	<i>Who will do it?</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Item (please include quantities where appropriate)</i>	<i>Total cost (£)</i>	<i>Grant request (£)</i>
Remove 40m of old fence line	Volunteers	November 2024	Tools (see quote attached)	80	40
Train 5 volunteers	Volunteers	November 2024	Training for 5 volunteers. 1 day of trainer at £150 per day (in kind)	150	0
Lay 10 metres of hedge	Volunteers	November 2024	Tools (see screenshot of web page attached)	200	100
Lay 30 metres of hedge	Contractor	December 2024	30m at £16/m (see contractor quote attached)	480	480
Gap up 3 metres of hedge	Volunteers	January 2025	20 bare root Weald native hedge species from local nursery, including stakes and spiral guards (see supplier quote attached)	95	95
Removal of hedge laying arising's when ground is dry enough	Landowner	April 2025	Tractor and trailer used to remove all waste material left over: 1 day of landowner time	0	0
Install 40 metres of new fence line when ground is dry enough	Contractor	April 2025	1 day installing replacement stock-proof fence to protect laid hedge: 40 metres @ £6 per metre (see contractor quote attached)	240	240
Water new hedging plants	Landowner	April-Sep 2025	As required depending on weather: 1 day of landowner time	0	0
Total				1,245	955

EXAMPLE 2 - Building bird boxes on a nature reserve with a nearby community

<i>What will you do?</i>	<i>Who will do it?</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Item (please include quantities where appropriate)</i>	<i>Total cost (£)</i>	<i>Sussex Lund request (£)</i>
Organise event - arrange venue hire, site, activity providers and refreshments	Project officer	February 2025	1 event set up for 30 participants: 3 hours of project officer time @£15/hour	45	45
Promote event(s) to around 500 people within the community via PR material	Project officer	March 2025	Produce and distribute promotional posters and fliers: 500 fliers @ £0.20p per flier (see online quote attached)	100	100
Promote event(s) to around 500 people through face-to- face PR	Project officer	March 2025	Outreach through community groups to encourage participation: 1 day of project officer time @£200 per day	200	200
Organise and manage transport to the event(s) via minibus	Community group lead	June 2025	Minibus hire for the day – see quote attached (paid for by community group)	300	0
Facilitate event(s) activities: 2 half days events	Project officer	June 2025	7 hours of project officer time @£15/hour (provided in kind)	105	0
Deliver event(s) activities: 2 half day events	Activity provider	June 2025	1 x activity provider @ £200/day	200	200
Provide event materials: tools, gloves, timber for wildlife boxes	Project officer	June 2025	Gloves @ £2/pair for 30 people; 5 hammers @ £5 per hammer and 5 timber lengths @ £5/length to produce 30 wildlife boxes	110	110
Provide event refreshments	Project officer	June 2025	Tea, coffee, squash and biscuits: £2/per head for 30 people	60	60
Event evaluation	Project officer	June 2025	2 hours of project officer time @£15/hour	30	30
Total				1,150	745