



1. What is the National Park Grant Scheme?

Our annual grant scheme supports projects within the National Park that deliver against the outcomes in our National Park Partnership Plan and provide additional benefits for communities, businesses and residents across the National Park.

Helping to deliver a Green Recovery

We want to support a Green recovery where people are taking and inspiring action to address the global climate emergency and nature crisis. This also presents an opportunity to support our communities, land managers and businesses to emerge from the COVID19 pandemic, as there are many things we all will be doing differently. The connection that many of us have with our local environment and community is now even stronger.

Our top priority for the National Park Grant Scheme in 2020/21 is assisting our communities and land managers to deliver local actions that help address the global climate emergency and nature crisis. Helping to create a healthier and more resilient natural environment is mutually beneficial for nature and people. Whilst the scheme is open to a wide range of applications that deliver the 13 National Park Partnership Plan Outcomes, applications that deliver against Outcome 1 Natural Capital and Outcome 3 Climate Change will be particularly welcome and more likely to be successful.

Individuals, businesses, public bodies and constituted voluntary/community groups or charities can all apply. Applicants do not need to be based within the National Park, provided that the project is delivered within the National Park.

<https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/park-authority/what-we-do/national-park-partnership-plan-2018-2023/>

2. Who can apply?

- The National Park Grant Scheme is open to individuals, businesses, public bodies and constituted community groups, voluntary groups or charities, providing that they have the right to, or approval to, undertake the proposals.
- Applications from schools and other publicly-funded bodies will be considered; however grants will only be considered where the funding request is for items that are out-with normal operational matters.
- Project proposals from property owners and commercial businesses will be considered only where public benefits can be clearly demonstrated.
- Subsidiaries of larger organisations are not eligible to apply, unless a financial guarantee is provided by the parent organisation.
- Applicants do not need to be based within the National Park, provided that the project is delivered within the National Park.
- Board members and staff of the National Park Authority are not eligible to apply.



- Applicants must disclose whether they have any family members working for the National Park Authority, together with the relationship and proximity of the employee to the grant being sought.

3. Community Action Plans

If you are applying for a grant on the basis that it will deliver an outcome supported by your local Community, you should demonstrate how your application contributes to delivering the Community Action Plan for your area. If your area does not have a Community Action Plan, please demonstrate how your project has community support, e.g. have you consulted the local community, have you undertaken a survey, have you consulted your Community Council or Community Development Trust?

All Community Action Plans can be found on the Community Partnership website.
[Hyperlink]

<https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/park-authority/how-we-can-help/communities/the-community-partnership/>

4. How much money is available?

The total budget for the 2020/21 National Park Grant Scheme is **£107,000** of which:

- **£100,000** is for capital projects. This includes projects that produce a physical asset, such as repairs to a building, building a bridge, or contribute towards producing a physical asset, such as training relating to the capital project or a technical/feasibility study or design for a capital project.
- **£1,000** of the total budget is for revenue projects, such as non-project-specific volunteer/staff training or staff costs relating to the project.
- **£6,000** is for revenue expenditure to support the organisational capacity and resilience of Community Anchor Bodies, like development trusts, to plan, grow, research and collaborate in order to stimulate community-led action and deliver long-term sustainability in a post-pandemic world. The criteria and administration of this fund will change slightly this year, and will be administered independently by the National Park Authority's Community Team, who will be in touch with community trusts directly.

The National Park Authority reserves the right to change the overall budget.

Awards will be given of at least £600 and up to a maximum of £20,000. The overall project can be of any size and there is no maximum project cost.



Please note, this is a highly competitive grant scheme with a limited budget and you may not receive 100% of your requested funding.

5. What kind of projects will be supported?

The scheme will support projects that

- Help address the global climate emergency and nature crisis.
- Deliver multiple outcomes in the National Park Partnership Plan 2018-23.
- Deliver priorities in your local Community Action Plan.
- Demonstrate deliverability and funding capabilities.

Examples of the types of project that could be supported include:

- Wildlife habitat creation or improvement measures
- Primary school education materials teaching about conservation of native species.
- Improvements to school grounds to enhance opportunities for outdoor learning.
- The strategic control of invasive non-native species, such as the purchase of equipment and training costs towards controlling invasive species like invasive rhododendron, giant hogweed, Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and American skunk cabbage
- Fencing off water courses from livestock to protect and enhance water quality and bank side habitats.
- Planting of individual trees, such as specimen parkland trees, field boundary or hedgerow trees or small-scale woodlands (less than 0.25ha only) in appropriate locations as part of larger projects or for schemes costing in excess of £1,500.00. (For smaller tree planting proposals of £1,500.00 or less, please see the National Park Tree Planting Grant Scheme).
- Improve the quality of green spaces in towns or villages, such as play spaces, community growing spaces, allotments, street trees, woodlands, road verges, hedges etc.
- Small-scale peat bog restoration works to help secure sequestered carbon.
- Carbon saving measures such as energy efficiency in public or community-owned buildings like energy-efficient lighting or insulation.
- Assessing the viability of a bike-hire social enterprise
- Infrastructure or other measures to encourage active or sustainable low carbon travel such as community paths, walking 'trains', cycle/walking maps, bike shelters, car clubs, bike lending, events/promotions.
- Carbon-reduction measures to encourage recycling, reuse or repair.
- Measures to reduce waste or to encourage local food growing, such as composting, redistributing food-waste, creating a community garden or allotment, planting fruit trees, installing a community polytunnel.



- Repairs to, and/or restoration of listed buildings, traditional buildings (pre-1919) and other examples of the National Park's built heritage, in particular public/community buildings or buildings/heritage located in a prominent place or at the heart of communities.
- Restoring features of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes
- Consulting and assessing viability of creating a heritage trail to support local tourism
- Commissioning and involving the community in designing a play park and event space
- Commissioning technical and design elements of a community-run pontoon or self-catering facility.
- Visitor signage and interpretation

6. Eligibility

The scheme will fund:

- Projects or works that are wholly or largely capital in nature. Our budget for revenue costs is extremely limited.
- Surveys or design works required to develop such projects. Please note that the planning fees for planning applications are **not** eligible.

7. Ineligibility

The scheme will not fund:

- Actions that the applicant is already obliged to undertake that arise outside the grant scheme such as the discharge of planning consent, woodland restocking notices or any other statutory obligations.
- Planning fees for planning applications.

8. Conditions

If the applicant is not the land owner they must show they have consent of the land owner to undertake the proposed project.

If a scheme requires EIA screening by Scottish Forestry or affects a designated site, the NPA will discuss this with the applicant and the appropriate competent authority. All works must be undertaken in line with UK Forestry Standard and all other legislation.

9. Value of Grant and VAT

Each grant award can be for a minimum of £600 and a maximum of £20,000, inclusive of any VAT the applicant is unable to recover.



10. Claims

Claims will be paid with 1 month of submission of the claim form. In certain limited circumstances, up-front payments are available to organisations which meet the criteria detailed in section 9 of the application form.

11. Questions & Answers

What are the Time Scales?

- Applications must be received by 24 August 2020
- Projects must normally be complete by 15 March 2021 (unless otherwise agreed)
- In pre-funded cases, a grant offer would be made and if accepted, awarded by 31 March 2021 at the latest, however the project could be delivered no later than 31 March 2022.

What is State Aid and How Does it Affect my Project?

To comply with the European Commission's (EC) state aid regulations public assistance payments that are on a discretionary basis should be avoided where the payment could give an undertaking the potential to distort competition in the market place. This is defined as the undertaking offering goods and/or services on a given market and which could, at least in principle, be carried out by a private operator for remuneration in order to make profits.

The NPA has received exemption from state aid rules for elements of our grant scheme.

Applicants should consider when applying for a grant if the purpose of the grant could be construed as helping compete in the market place. Applicants should seek guidance from the NPA if they have any doubt as to whether their application, if successful, could be considered as State Aid.

What are the National Park Authority's Procurement Requirements?

At application stage you must provide evidence that your costs provide good value for money; so for purchases, works or services that cost (incl. VAT):

- £5,000 or less, where value for money can otherwise be demonstrated, at least two quotes is recommended but one quote may be acceptable, at the discretion of the National Park Authority.
- £5,000 to £10,000 at least three quotes are expected.
- Greater than £10,000 at least three quotes should be provided and submitted on the basis of a written specification.



What Sort of Evidence and Information will I have to provide?

At application stage you must be able to provide evidence (including photos/designs/survey results, if applicable) of:

- costs of all elements of delivering your project
- audited accounts (for constituted community/voluntary groups/charities)
- match funding (if applicable)
- value for money
- quotations for costs of work/services (see procurement guidelines above)
- any relevant planning permissions or consents, for example surveys for roosting bats or bird nesting sites
- the need for your project
- how you will manage, monitor and report on project delivery within a specified timescale
- considering equality issues for example that the project promotes involvement of young people, older people, black/minority ethnic people or other vulnerable people.

Do Any Restrictions Apply to the Grant Awards?

Yes. If your application is successful, your grant award will be subject to various grant conditions. You will therefore be required to sign a Grant Agreement, which is a contract. Some of the key grant conditions to be aware of are highlighted below:

- You will be required to have the agreement of the landowner and also any statutory consents such as planning permission or building warrants, where required.
- You will be required to ensure that wildlife e.g. bat roosts and nesting birds, are not disturbed. This may involve obtaining a bat survey and/or delaying commencement of works.
- You will be obliged to maintain any works funded by the grant award for a minimum period.
- You will be required to allow the Park Authority to monitor how the grant award is being used, by providing regular update reports and/or permitting site inspections.
- You may be required to repay a grant award (in part or in full) if:
 - you receive a grant award to purchase or develop an asset, equipment or property and:
 - your interest in the asset or property is transferred to a third party within a minimum period;
 - the asset or property value increases within a minimum period; or
 - you fail to maintain the works funded by the grant to an adequate standard.



- the project is not completed to a satisfactory standard, in line with your project plans and specifications;
 - you fail to disclose any financial contributions received or expected for the project from any other public funds;
 - the eligible costs are less than those indicated in original quotations; or
 - any information in your application is fraudulent, false, misleading or inaccurate.
- The Park Authority will publish details of any financial support given to the applicant via the National Park Grant Fund. You will be required to acknowledge the grant in any publicity material relating to the project.

When will the grant be paid?

- The National Park Grant will not normally be awarded to a recipient in advance of need, and will not normally be made available until the recipient has spent the funds and claimed reimbursement. In this case, the monies will be transferred to your bank account by end of March 2021, once all claims have been processed.
- Pre-funding may be appropriate in the case of voluntary sector bodies as long as they have demonstrated need (i.e. they can demonstrate to us that they do not have their own funds to deliver the project). In this case, monies will be transferred to your bank account prior to the start of the project and is subject to all grant conditions laid out in the Grant Agreement.