

**FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES (FIPL) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND (SDF)
AND HEREFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION (HCF) WYE VALLEY AONB FUND**

Purpose

To update members on the progress of the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme, the AONB Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) and the Wye Valley AONB Fund with Herefordshire Community Foundation (HCF).

Recommendation

That the JAC endorse the allocations of grants under the FiPL programme, SDF and HCF AONB Fund to date for 2023/24.

Key Issues

- The DEFRA funded Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme in England has an allocation of £339,063 for 2023/24 and £362,384 for 2024/25.
- The FiPL Assessment Panel has approved grants totalling £303,675 in 2023/24 with £35,387 remaining. For 2024/5, £157,270 has already been allocated, leaving £205,113 remaining in what is understood to be the last year of the programme.
- Guidance and assistance to farmers and land managers applying to the FiPL programme is provided by Anna Stankiewicz, AONB Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer, along with Farm Advisors from the Wye & Usk Foundation and Herefordshire Meadows.
- The Welsh Government Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) currently has £82,961 allocated from the £100,000 available for 2023/24, plus £15,000 from a returned grant leaving £32,038 available. There is also £53,227 already allocated from the £100,000 available for 2024/25, leaving £46,773 available.
- Community groups, local organisations and individuals wishing to apply for the SDF can get assistance from Lucinda James, AONB Community Links Officer.
- The Wye Valley AONB Fund hosted by the Herefordshire Community Foundation (HCF) is currently closed for applications and opportunities to grow the Fund need to be sought.

Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)

The Secretary of State reconfirmed, in her announcement in September, that the Government have extended the Farming in Protected Landscape (FiPL) programme until March 2025. Wye Valley AONB allocations of FiPL for 23/24 and 24/25 are £339,063 in 23/24 and £362,384 in 24/25. This includes an allowance for the employment of the FiPL Officer,

further Advice & Guidance and overhead & administration costs. If these Advice & Admin allocations are not fully required they can be transferred to the FiPL grant budget.

The FiPL Assessment Panel is delegated with deciding on each application over £5,000. Application under £5,000 are determined by the AONB Manager. FiPL applications approved to date in 2023/4 are as follows:

Code	Applicant	Project	year	Grant £
WV003	Wye & Usk Foundation	Farm Natural Capital Assessments	3 of 3	19,125.00
WV012	Wye & Usk Foundation	INNS control	2 of 2	11,569.60
WV013	Brampton Orchard	Restoration planting	2 of 2	2,843.40
WV014	AONB Unit	Noble chafer project	2 of 2	2,655.00
WV016	The Dingle, Checkley	Hedge planting	2 of 2	4,069.21
WV018	Tump Farm	Access and Species rich grassland restoration	2 of 2	5,271.21
WV020	Bicknor Court Farm	Hedge & Tree planting, pond restoration	2 of 2	14,384.70
WV021	LEAF education	Farm education training	2 of 2	13,500.00
WV022	Ballingham Court Farm	Pond restoration	2 of 2	659.24
WV024	Grazing Management Ltd	Conservation grazing animal handling	2 of 2	804.20
WV027	Benhall Farm	Meadow restoration	2 of 2	3,223.26
WV029	Dryslade Farm	Grassland & Access enhancements	2 of 2	4,221.22
WV031	Haynes Farm	Meadow restoration	1 of 1	1,516.52
WV032	Dryslade Farm	Grassland enhancement	1 of 1	975.19
WV033	Caradoc Estate	Hedges. Rotational grazing. Enhancing soils	1 of 1	5,695.08
WV034	Lower Witherstone	Hedges, parkland trees, wood pasture	1 of 1	24,706.78
WV035	Townsend Farm	BOKASHI composting. Aerobic compost-teas	1 of 1	9,279.22
WV036	Fownhope PC	Access enhancement	1 of 1	4,502.82
WV037	Kilforge Farm	Maize undersowing	1 of 1	395.20
WV038	Lower Penalt Farm	Maize undersowing	1 of 1	490.00
WV039	Bearse Farm	Access improvements	1 of 1	1,584.00
WV041	Townsend Farm	Heritage grain milling/pasta making	1 of 1	10,430.79
WV042	Lower Penalt Farm	Orchard planting	1 of 1	14,447.50
WV043	Shepherd's Rough	meadow restoration	1 of 1	2,787.00
WV044	Pasture for Profit in Protected Landscapes	farmer led mentoring, also in Malvern Hills and Shropshire Hills AONBs	1 of 2	16,843.20
WV045	Plantlife Joan's Hill Reserve	Orchard access, planting & management	1 of 1	5,656.48
WV046	Townsend Farm Windmill Restoration	water pump windmill repair	1 of 1	8,833.34
WV047	Bearse Farm Educational Visits	Education facilities & meadow restoration	1 of 1	4,989.84

WV048	Caradoc Estate Whole Farm Water Plan	system design	1 of 1	668.00
WV049	Overbury Farm	Flower-rich margins	1 of 1	2,200.71
WV050	Flanesford	Riverside Winter cover crops	1 of 1	4,847.82
WV051	Wye Organic	Enhanced livestock handling facilities	1 of 1	6,564.75
WV052	WV AONB LEI Facilitation	advice and support for National Grid LEI bid	1 of 1	7,700.00
WV054	HWT Nature Reserves	meadow gateway & ditch repairs	1 of 1	3,778.20
WV055	Severn Treescapes Orchards	Training events & workshops through the seasons	1 of 2	2,801.28
		Grant sub-total		224,019.76
		Advice/Guidance /Admin budget		79,656
		Total eligible expenditure		303,675.76
		<i>Total FiPL allocation</i>		<i>339,063.00</i>
		Currently remaining		35,387.24

DEFRA have confirmed that the FiPL programme will not be extended beyond March 2025, when the full Environmental Land Management (ELM) agri-environment scheme becomes active. However, the Government does recognise the positive feedback and outcomes delivered by the FiPL programme.

For further advice or to discuss any project ideas, please contact Anna Stankiewicz, FiPL Officer on farming@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk.

Sustainable Development Fund (SDF)

Welsh Government have allocated £100,000 of SDF each year for 2023/24 and 2024/25. This enables the SDF to continue to provide an exceptional opportunity for organisations, individuals and community groups to apply for grant aid for innovative, sustainable, environmental projects, which benefit the Welsh part of the AONB.

The SDF Assessment Panel is delegated with deciding on each application over £3,000. Application under £3,000 are determined by the AONB Manager. The list of approved grants during 202/24, totalling £82,961 is in the table below.

Code	Applicant	Project Title	years		Total Project value	SDF Grant
			This	Total		
WV00 YR23W	Wye Valley AONB Unit	Admin 10%	1	1	NA	10,000.00
WV01 YR23W	ACE Monmouth	Climate Festival	1	2	£7,605	£2,885.00
WV02 YR23W	Coed Lleol-Small Woods	Nature-based Wellbeing in the Wye Valley	1	1	£20,000	£14,665.00
WV03 YR23W	Diverse Artists Network	Walk out West	1	2	£6,130	£3,000.00

WV04 YR23W	Wye Coppice CIC	Coppice Training & Community Outreach Programme	1	2	£37,397	£16,860.90	
WV05 YR23W	Gwent Wildlife Trust	Restoring The Wern	1	1	£11,961	£8,172.50	
WV07 YR23W	Wye Valley Community Council	Tintern Village Hall Retaining Wall	1	1	£12,800	£6,400.00	
WV08 YR23W	Wye Valley Community Council	The Pound Wall	1	1	£2,150	£1,125.00	
WV09 YR23W	ACE Monmouth	Regen Farming Monitoring project	1	2	£20,000	£4,853.10	
WV10 YR23W	Wye Valley River Festival CIC	Ground Beneath Our Feet 2024 Festival	1	2	£230,360	£15,000.00	
		TOTALS (to date)			£334,403	£82,961.50	
		<i>Remaining from £100,000</i>					<i>£17,038.50</i>
		<i>Returned grant</i>					<i>£15,000</i>
						<i>Remaining grant</i>	<i>£32,038.50</i>

Lucinda James, AONB Community Links Officer, assists applicants with projects and application development for presented to the Assessment Panel. If you are interested in applying please contact Lucinda on community@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk.

Wye Valley AONB Fund with Herefordshire Community Foundation (HCF)

The Wye Valley AONB Fund with Herefordshire Community Foundation (HCF) was established with a £50,000 Endowment Fund. Project grants are awarded from the interest and any growth or donations above that base Fund. There is currently £10,000 also donated specifically for the Youth Rangers.

The HCF Wye Valley AONB Fund had a balance of £60,972.27 as of the last statement dated 30th September 2023. There are currently insufficient funds to award grants. Consequently opportunities need to be sought to grow the AONB Fund further. When funds allow, the AONB Unit &/or SDF Assessment Panel, as appropriate, reviews and comments on applications to the AONB Fund to advise HCF on grant funding.

Background

For more details on grants and the application process see <https://www.wyevalleyaonb.org.uk/caring-for-wye-valley-aonb/grants/>.