

NATURAL
ENGLAND

BIG
LOTTERY
FUND

CHANGING SPACES ACCESS TO NATURE

GENERAL GUIDANCE NOTES



ACCESS TO NATURE

GENERAL GUIDANCE NOTES

Thank you for your interest in the Access to Nature programme

This guide is for organisations that want to apply for a grant. It will help you understand the application process and provides key information about Access to Nature.

Please read this guide carefully. Make sure your proposals meet the requirements of Access to Nature before you fill out the application form.

If you have any queries about the application form or the grant process, or if you have any particular communication needs, please contact the Changing Spaces Advice Line on: 0845 3671 671



www.naturalengland.org.uk/accesstonature

Contents

- 1 Access to Nature**
- 2 Managing Access to Nature**
- 2 Programme outcomes and targets**
- 3 Eligibility**
- 3 Our target beneficiaries**
- 3 Regional Targeting Plans**
- 4 Types of grant available**
- 4 Regional projects**
- 4 National projects**
- 5 Flagship projects**
- 5 Match funding**
- 6 In-kind match funding**
- 7 The application process**
- 8 Stage One application assessment**
- 8 Stage Two application assessment**
- 9 Assessment criteria**
- 9 Project start dates**
- 9 Grants for land purchase and building construction**
- 10 Eligible expenditure**
- 11 Overheads**
- 11 Letting you know our decision**
- 12 Grant payments**
- 12 Grant monitoring and evaluation**

Annexes

- 13** Annex 1 – Examples of activities we could fund
- 15** Annex 2 – Project case studies
- 17** Annex 3 – England's regions

Access to Nature

Access to Nature is an open grants programme run by Natural England with £25 million funding from the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme.

Access to Nature will support projects from voluntary and community organisations and statutory bodies across England, that encourage more people to understand, appreciate and enjoy the outdoors.

People are firmly at the core of Access to Nature. We all have a right to enjoy the environment but for some people this is easier than it is for others, whether through lack of opportunities, confidence, understanding or physical access.

We want to work with a wide range of organisations and to encourage partnership working. In particular, we want to encourage young people, older people, black and minority ethnic groups, and people with disabilities to become more involved with their natural environment.

Access to Nature will also work with those experiencing social, economic and geographical disadvantage to develop opportunities and change people's perceptions about the natural environment.



Managing Access to Nature

Access to Nature is managed by Natural England on behalf of a consortium of twelve national environmental organisations comprising: British Waterways, BTCV, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, GreenSpace, Groundwork UK, Land Restoration Trust, the National Trust, Natural England, RSPB, the Wildlife Trusts and the Woodland Trust.

Access to Nature builds on the consortium's experience and Natural England will be using their skills and knowledge throughout the programme's duration to ensure it reaches out to a broad spectrum of people.

Programme outcomes and targets

By 2014 we want 1.7 million people to have benefited from this grant programme, through improved opportunities to experience and enjoy the natural environment.

Below is a list of our programme outcomes, along with the targets that the programme is aiming to deliver. By outcomes we mean the changes that happen because of our funding. All projects must meet outcome 5, and at least one other outcome.

Outcome 1

A greater diversity and number of people having improved opportunities to experience the natural environment.

- Target 1a. At least 1 million people to have improved opportunities to actively experience and enjoy the natural environment.

Outcome 2

More people having opportunities for learning about the natural environment and gaining new skills.

- Target 2a. 75,000 people will have a new learning opportunity related to the natural environment by 2014.
- Target 2b. 50,000 volunteers will have a new opportunity to actively participate in training and development programmes, gaining new skills by 2014.

Outcome 3

More people able to enjoy the natural environment through investment in access to natural places and networks between sites.

- Target 3a. Investment in access links and associated networks to 130 natural places by 2014.
- Target 3b. 325,000 people experiencing better links with the natural environment by 2014.

Outcome 4

Richer, more sustainably managed, natural places meeting the needs of communities.

- Target 4a. Investment in the quality of 100 natural places to better meet the needs of local people and wildlife.
- Target 4b. 250,000 people benefiting from physical improvements to their local natural environment.
- Target 4c. 5,000 people regularly participating in the care of these natural places over the lifetime of the programme.

Outcome 5

An increase in communities' sense of ownership of local natural places, by establishing strong partnerships between communities, voluntary organisations, local authorities and others.

- Target 5a. 100% of projects actively and positively engaging with local communities.

Please refer to [Annex 1](#) for a list of activities that we could fund under each outcome.

Eligibility

Access to Nature will only award grants to:

- **community groups governed by a written constitution;**
- **registered charities and trusts;**
- **statutory bodies, including schools, colleges, local authorities, town and parish councils, health organisations;**
- **companies that are not registered charities but have a charitable purpose and a community focus (for example, a company limited by guarantee and some community interest companies or social enterprises, where any surpluses are mainly reinvested for community benefit);**
- **mutual societies;**
- **charitable or not-for-profit companies; and**
- **church based and other faith groups.**

We will **not** award a grant to:

- **individuals and sole traders;**
- **profit-making organisations, except social enterprises; and**
- **companies limited by guarantee whose main purpose is not community-focused.**

We will **not normally** award grants to organisations that:

- **are in poor financial health;**
- **have demonstrated poor management of previous Big Lottery Fund grants; and**
- **are not established in England.**

If you are not a statutory body (i.e. appointed by government), you must have a governing document (for example, a constitution, set of rules, trust deed, or for companies, memorandum and articles of association).



Our target beneficiaries

We want to fund projects that bring lasting change for our target beneficiaries in terms of their opportunity to access, enjoy and engage with the natural environment. Your project must primarily benefit one or more of our target beneficiaries, described below.

- **People currently under-represented in terms of contact with the natural environment. By this we include disabled people, the young, black and minority ethnic communities and older people.**
- **Communities and individuals experiencing social exclusion through disability, unemployment, age or economic and social disadvantage.**
- **People disadvantaged by where they live through a lack of accessible natural environments.**

Regional Targeting Plans

Access to Nature grants are available throughout England. However, people in different regions experience different problems in accessing and enjoying the natural environment. For this reason we have prepared Regional Targeting Plans which explain what we think are the priorities for each region.

Our **Regional Targeting Plans** are available on our website. These plans will be reviewed and updated in April every year.

Please read the Regional Targeting Plan(s) relevant to your project area before you complete your Stage One and Stage Two Application Forms. You will be asked to consider how your project addresses these regional priorities.

Your project doesn't need to address all (or any) of the regional priorities for your area. However, if Access to Nature is over-subscribed, the applications that best address our regional priorities will stand a greater chance of getting a grant.

Types of grant available

We will award grants of £50,000 and over for capital and revenue projects lasting up to five years.

Grants are available for regional, national or flagship projects, however all applications must meet the Access to Nature outcomes and benefit our target beneficiaries.

The closing date for Stage 1 applications is 1st February 2010, with Stage 2 applications to be received by 4th May 2010. Funding decisions will be spread out over three years, so that grants can be awarded all the way through to September 2010. This gives you time to develop your project ideas and complete the application forms.

All projects must finish by September 2013. This means that some projects could run from 2008 to 2013.

Competition for funding is expected to be high, and your project will be judged against other projects, so you should take every care in providing the information we ask for on the application forms.

The Project Board will meet every two months to make decisions on grant awards under £100,000. The Independent Grants Panel will meet three times a year to make decisions on grant awards over £100,000.

Regional projects

We will award grants of between £50,000 and £500,000 for projects which aim to deliver benefits at a local, regional or multi-regional level.

Your project may focus on a few local sites and communities within a region, or could involve an awareness raising campaign covering a number of communities over many regions. Both of these projects fall under the Regional project category. We expect the majority of grant applications will fall under this category.

Please refer to the **Regional Targeting Plan** section in this document (page 3) which explains Access to Nature priorities in each region.

National projects

We will award grants of up to £500,000 for projects which aim to address national scale issues. These projects must:

- **cover the whole of England in a thematic sense i.e. propose solutions to national scale issues;**
- and/or
- **cover the whole of England geographically;**
- and must all
- **demonstrate greater added value than a scaled up regional or multi-regional project.**

Ideally the application should come from the national office of the organisation and be managed from that national office. If, however, an application comes from a region or branch of a national organisation it must be approved with a letter from the chief executive of the national organisation.

National project example: a project, asking for a grant of £325,000, run by a national youth organisation. They will work with national environmental organisations to develop and promote volunteering opportunities for young people in the natural environment. The project will use new media, for example website, social networking sites, mobile phone texts, to increase longer term volunteer recruitment in this sector.



Flagship projects

Within Access to Nature there is potential for organisations to apply for grant awards of over £500,000. These projects must have a national impact and significance.

Flagship awards will support projects that have an England-wide focus and make a significant and lasting impact on community awareness and participation. These larger grant awards aim to enhance the capacity of the voluntary sector so that it is in a stronger position to meet the needs of communities and to encourage more active involvement in the natural environment. Grant awards will include projects that aim to complement and harness community engagement through awareness raising campaigns.

For grant applications seeking a flagship award the project must fulfil the following criteria:

- **be asking for a grant of more than £500,000;**
- **cover the whole of England in a thematic sense, i.e. provide solutions to national scale issues *and/or* cover the whole of England geographically;**
- **be able to demonstrate greater added value than a regional or multiregional project;**
- **enhance the capacity of the voluntary sector; *and***
- **come from the national office of the organisation and be managed from that national office.**

Flagship project example: a project asking for a grant award of £545,000, that brings together all the NHS trusts in England with the environmental sector to develop a national campaign to take patients out into the natural environment to speed up their recovery period. The project will put in place processes so that engagement continues in the longer term through existing outdoor volunteering/exercising opportunities.

We may fund up to five Flagship projects through Access to Nature. Flagship grant awards are likely to be made in October 2008 and February 2009. If you are thinking of applying for a Flagship grant award please contact us to discuss your project before you submit your Stage One Application Form.

Match funding

Access to Nature will only pay for part of the total cost of your project. You will have to fund the remainder yourself - this is known as match funding.

Depending on how much you ask for, your contribution will be as cash or 'in-kind' (see In-kind match funding, page 6). The table sets out how much your contribution will be.

Examples

'Up to 90% or maximum grant of £100,000'

If the total cost of the project is £70,000, you can ask for a maximum grant of £63,000 (90% of £70,000). You must provide £7,000 (10% of £70,000) as an in-kind contribution, or as cash if you prefer.

If the total cost of the project is £125,000, you can ask for a maximum grant of £100,000 (the lesser of £112,500 which is 90% of the total project cost and £100,000 which is the maximum grant). You must provide the balance (£25,000) as an in-kind contribution, or as cash if you prefer.

'Up to 80% or maximum grant of £500,000'

If the total cost of the project is £200,000, you can ask for a maximum grant of £160,000 (80%). You must provide a total of £40,000 of which a minimum of £20,000 (10%) must be in cash. The rest can be an in-kind contribution or cash.

If the total cost of the project is £650,000, you can ask for a maximum grant of £500,000 (the lesser of £520,000 which is 80% of the total project cost and £500,000 which is the maximum grant). You must provide the balance (£150,000) of which at least £65,000 (10% of total project cost) must be in cash and the balance (£85,000) can be an in-kind contribution or cash.

'Up to 70%'

If the total cost of the project is £800,000, you can ask for a maximum grant of £560,000 (70%). You must provide a total of £240,000, of which a minimum of £80,000 (10%) must be in cash. The rest can be an in-kind contribution.

We have developed a match funding wizard, which calculates the amount of cash and in-kind match funding you will require. The **match funding wizard** can be found on our website.

Match funding can come from a wide variety of sources and include both cash and in-kind contributions from your organisation and/or other sources. Match funding includes items

such as non-Exchequer grant funding, donations and in-kind work (see below).

Match funding from different sources, other than your own, shows that other people also support your project. If your project has a wide range of support it is more likely to succeed in the long term.

Total project cost £	Maximum grant from us (either the percentage or the maximum grant – whichever is the lesser)		Minimum contribution from you
	Percentage	Maximum grant	
£55,556 to £125,000	Up to 90%	£100,000	At least 10% of total project cost in cash or in-kind (with no mandatory cash requirement)
Over £125,000 up to £715,000	Up to 80%	£500,000	At least 10% of total project cost in cash. The balance can be in cash or in-kind
Over £715,000	Up to 70%		At least 10% of total cost in cash. The balance can be in cash or in-kind

In-kind match funding

In-kind contributions are those where items and services are given freely, with no money changing hands. Contributions may take various forms, such as volunteer days, or gifts of land, materials, equipment and facilities.

When you calculate the match funding you will provide, give a monetary value to all in-kind contributions. Remember that you may have to provide evidence to justify these values.

In some cases, calculating the value of in-kind contributions can be relatively simple. For example, the value of volunteer time should be calculated using the following standard rates:

Type of voluntary/in-kind contribution	Per hour	Per day
General, unskilled labour (for example, supervised scrub clearance, ditch-digging, planting, basic administrative support)	£6.25	£50
Specialist, skilled, trained labour (for example, operations for which certificated training is a requirement, such as operating dangerous equipment, driving off-road vehicles, using chemicals)	£18.75	£150
Specialist services, (for example, supervising, training labour teams, surveys, counts, trapping, ringing, diving, printing, designing, photography)	£31.25	£250
Professional services (for example, consultants, lawyers, planners, engineers, accountants, auditors)	£50	£350

The application process

The application process has two stages.

Make contact with an Access to Nature Adviser to discuss your project proposal.

Send us a completed **Stage One Application Form**, which asks for initial details about your project and organisation.

We will assess your organisation's eligibility to apply and whether we might fund your project.

One of our Regional Advisers will contact you within 20 days of receiving your Stage One form to discuss your project in more detail.

If your organisation is eligible to apply and your project is something we might support, the Regional Adviser will tell you how to submit a **Stage Two Application Form**.

When we receive your completed Stage Two Application, a Grants Officer will assess it.

Your application will then be considered by the Project Board (for grant applications up to £100k), or by our Independent Grants Panel (for grant applications over £100k) who will decide whether to award you a grant.



Stage One application assessment

We will only assess your application once you have completed your Stage One Form. You can complete your application electronically by using our online system. To register on this system and start your **Stage One Application Form** please go to our website.

Before you start your application, please read the **Stage One Guidance Notes** which can also be found on our website.

A paper version of the Form and Guidance Notes are available on request.

If you are completing your application electronically you **must** print a paper copy of the Declaration Form, have it signed by the relevant people, and then send it to us by post. The rest of the application can be sent electronically. We will only start to assess your application when we receive the completed Declaration Form.

When we receive your Stage One Application Form we will assess your organisation's eligibility to apply, and whether your project is one we might fund. We will also complete a routine fraud check.

If your organisation is eligible to apply and your project is something we might support, our Regional Adviser will tell you how to submit a Stage Two Application Form.

If we think we are unlikely to fund your project, we will explain why. We do not want you to spend time completing a Stage Two Application Form if it is unlikely we will award you a grant. Your time will be better spent looking for money elsewhere.

If we ask you to submit a Stage Two Application Form this is **not a guarantee** that your project will be funded. We expect Access to Nature to be a popular programme. If competition for funds is high, we will have to make difficult decisions that might mean good projects are not funded.

Stage Two application assessment

We will only assess your Stage Two Application when you have completed your Stage Two Form and supplied all the necessary supporting information. You can complete your application electronically by using our online system.

Before you start your application, please read the **Stage Two Guidance Notes** which can be found on our website.

A paper version of the Form and Guidance Notes are available on request.

When we receive your application, we will check it to make sure you have sent everything we asked for. If you have not, we will write to you and ask you to send the missing information. We will not start our assessment until we receive all the information we have requested.

As part of the assessment process a Regional Adviser or Grants Officer may request additional information, conduct telephone interviews or arrange to visit you. They may also consult Natural England national and local specialists who have experience of the type and scope of work you propose.

The Grants Officer, with input from the Regional Adviser, Access to Nature Finance Manager and/or National Specialists, will then carry out a formal and detailed assessment to make sure your project meets the outcomes and targets of Access to Nature. We will also assess the quality of your project.

If you are asking for a grant award of up to £100,000 your project will be presented to the Project Board. If you are asking for a grant award of more than £100,000 it will be presented to the Independent Grants Panel. They will consider your application and decide whether to award you a grant.

Assessment criteria

To ensure that Access to Nature makes a fair and reasonable spread of funding across England, a panel will consider the following criteria when looking at your application:

Meeting the programme outcomes

- Will your project help achieve the outcomes listed under '**Programme outcomes and targets**'? (page 2)

Partnerships

- Does your project strengthen and develop the relationship between the project partners and its target beneficiaries?

Need for the project

- Will your project meet the needs of the target beneficiaries?
- What evidence is there that these needs exist?
- Will the target beneficiaries be consulted about the project and involved in what it does?

Sustainability

- Will your project offer long lasting benefits?

Finance

- Is your project financially feasible?
- Does it offer value for money?

Regional targets

- Does your project meet the Regional Targeting Plan (page 3) for your project area?
- Does your project benefit a priority area and/or target beneficiary group? (page 3)
- Does your project fit with other local, regional or national strategies and plans?

Risk assessment

- Do the people in your organisation have the relevant experience, resources and expertise to manage the project?
- Has the match funding (page 5) for your project been secured?
- Can you finish your project within the timescale?
- Have you considered the necessary permissions needed to complete your project? (e.g. planning permission).



Project start dates

You can only start your project once you have signed and completed all the documents in the grant offer pack.

When completing your application form, you should allow enough time for us to assess your project and provide you with a decision. We will process your application as soon as we can. However, we estimate that it could take up to 120 working days for us to reach a decision after you submit the Stage Two Application. This assumes that you have provided all the information we need to assess your project (that is all the information asked for on the application form, and any supporting information).

Grants for land purchase and building construction

We can fund projects which involve land and buildings purchase as long as they meet the outcomes of Access to Nature **and** are an essential part of your project. For more information please refer to the **Land and Buildings Guidance**, which can be found on our website.

Please note that applications for land acquisitions, in particular, will take time to complete and to process and may involve a considerable amount of administration.

Eligible expenditure

Please refer to [Annex 1](#) for a list of activities that we would fund under each of Access to Nature's outcomes.

Eligible project costs

- Those which directly contribute to the project.
- A percentage of organisational overheads (within the guidelines provided).
- In-kind/volunteer contributions (calculated using our [standard volunteer rates](#)).

We will consider the following examples of expenditure as eligible funding for grant awards. This is not an exhaustive list and is for indicative purposes only.

Revenue

- Salaries of project workers*, including all on-costs (pensions, National Insurance).
- Salaries of management staff who only supervise project staff (including all on-costs).
- Recruitment of staff who will work on the project.
- Expenses of project staff and volunteers, including travel, accommodation, telephone bills.
- Rent, heating, lighting, maintenance and insurance for office space and buildings used only for the project.
- Training of staff and volunteers working on the project.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the project.
- Marketing and publicity.
- Professional and legal fees incurred specifically for the project.
- Travel costs for beneficiaries.
- Refreshments for beneficiaries.
- Incentives (certificates, t-shirts, branded materials).
- Computer software.
- Insurance premium for approved project assets.



Capital (Land and Buildings)

- Constructing a new building.
- Altering, refurbishing or extending an existing building that you own or lease.
- Buying land and buildings.
- Improving land (landscaping works, new pathways, scrub or tree clearance).
- Any other capital cost directly connected with the project.
- Fees directly related to the capital project (architect, surveyor or legal fees).

Capital (not Land and Buildings)

- Computer hardware (PCs).
- Vehicles.
- Tools and equipment (chainsaws, digital cameras).

* You should note that if we award you a grant, all new staff posts included in your project must be openly recruited. We will need to see copies of job descriptions and adverts before the post is recruited.

Overheads

We will provide funding for some elements of core costs, however you will need to prove that these costs are reasonable, represent value for money and directly contribute to the aims of the project.

Overheads include:

- **Salaries of the staff who are supporting the project (for example, running the payroll or servicing computers used on the project).**
- **Salaries of staff, including managers, who are working on this project.**
- **Meetings of the trustees or management committee.**
- **A share of the rent, heating, lighting, maintenance and insurance for office space your project shares with other projects.**
- **Networking, attending conferences and working with others that benefits the project in some way.**

Access to Nature cannot fund:

- **Existing staff posts.**
- **Work that has already started.**
- **Work not directly associated with the delivery of the project.**
- **On-going routine site maintenance where this is not part of a community/volunteer initiative.**
- **Work which you (the applicant) or your partners has a duty to carry out.**
- **Reclaimable VAT costs.**
- **Depreciation costs for equipment.**
- **Projects that will result in your financial or commercial profit.**
- **Works or services that would normally be provided by a statutory authority, such as a local council.**
- **Projects more reasonably funded by another Changing Spaces grant programme.**



Letting you know our decision

Successful applications

If you are successful, we will send you a grant offer pack. This will include a formal offer letter, our terms and conditions, further guidance on how to set up the grant, how it will be paid and how we will monitor your project.

Unsuccessful applications and complaints

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing. The letter will explain why your application was not successful, and advise you on your best course of action. It will also contain a contact name and number if you would like to speak to someone about this decision.

If you feel you need to make a complaint about the process, this can be done through the **Natural England complaints procedure**, details of which can be found on our website. Please note there is no appeals process on the grant decisions made by Natural England.

Other funding for unsuccessful applications

Details of other lottery programmes can be found at www.lotteryfunding.org.uk or you can contact the Lottery Funding Helpline: 0845 275 0000

Grant payments

We normally expect your grant claims to be submitted every quarter, but we may agree to more frequent interim claims if you have spent particularly large sums or are having cash flow problems.

Grant claims will normally be paid in arrears. However, we can make advance payments if you can demonstrate a need for them. No further payments will be made until work paid for in advance has been completed. For land purchase, we will pay when we have proof of 'exchange of contracts'.

For all items and services you buy, we need to see the original invoices showing **proof of payment**, or copies of invoices that have been **certified** as having been paid by someone in your organisation with the necessary financial authority. Tendering and procurement requirements are set out in the **standard terms and conditions** of the grant, which can be found on our website.

For payments where there might not be an invoice (staff costs, some forms of overheads, travel expenses, etc.) we will require formal statements of expenditure signed by a financial manager, or equivalent, together with details and other proofs of payment, such as payroll information or internal claim forms.

Bank account requirements

All organisations that receive a grant from us must have a bank or building society account. This account must be in the name of the organisation as shown on the organisation's governing document. Cheques must be signed by at least two committee members who are not related.

If your grant application is successful, we may also ask you to set up a new bank account solely for the purpose of your Access to Nature project.



Grant monitoring and evaluation

If we award you a grant we will expect you to follow our monitoring and review process so we can measure your project's performance.

You will normally be asked to submit a progress report every six months. When you complete the project we will ask you for an End of Grant Report. These forms are designed to gather information about who has benefited from the project, information on other agreed project outcomes and milestones, and whether or not the project has met the conditions of the grant.

Natural England staff will also carry out telephone monitoring calls and monitoring visits to offer guidance on the project.

This monitoring will:

- **check on the progress and quality of the work being done;**
- **make sure the project is complying with the conditions of the grant; and**
- **ensure the project's aims are being achieved to budget and on time.**

Annex 1

Examples of activities we could fund

The list below gives examples of activities that could be funded by Access to Nature. This list is not exhaustive, and is only intended to give you an idea of the types of work that we could fund.

Outcome 1

A greater diversity and number of people having improved opportunities to experience the natural environment.

Activities this could cover:

- awareness-raising events (such as talks on a suitable theme);
- encouraging people to have greater engagement with the natural environment;
- themed open days;
- interpretation panels/boards;
- leaflets, trail guides and guided walks for new audiences;
- awareness raising of the potential of green space for the promotion of health, wellbeing and enjoyment;
- natural play programmes; or
- helping people understand the need to look after the natural environment.

Outcome 2

More people having opportunities for learning about the natural environment and gaining new skills.

Activities this could cover:

- identification workshops/events, such as species identification;
- educational packs and/or equipment;
- support for educational visits to sites (as part of a wider programme of work);
- websites;
- participation in educational videos, DVDs and CDs;
- volunteer recruitment programmes;
- volunteer training events;
- volunteer 'taster' sessions;
- training leaders; or
- learning skills programmes.



Outcome 3

More people able to enjoy the natural environment through investment in access to natural places and networks between sites.

Activities this could cover:

- providing green infrastructure (multi-use paths, cycle routes, trails, boardwalks, etc);
- creating, managing or promoting greenways, green corridors and access links between sites;
- land purchase (where there is no other method of securing a site for public use/access);
- green transport links;
- providing new access;
- community surveys;
- people engagement and promotional activities; or
- public consultation.

Outcome 4

Richer, more sustainably managed, natural places meeting the needs of communities.

Activities this could cover:

- site or landscape management;
- practical works on habitat and species management (habitat creation, restoration);
- site and geological work;
- landscape improvements;
- land purchase where there is no other way of securing management;
- promotion and adoption of Green Flag and Green Pennants;
- restoration/improvement of important landscape features;
- sustainable plans for future management and improvement;
- preparation of audits/surveys of the nature, extent and distribution of geological/landscape features, habitats, species and places;
- improved safety provision; or
- reduction in visual impact of a site (reducing graffiti, litter, vandalism etc).

Outcome 5

An increase in communities' sense of ownership of local natural places, by establishing strong partnerships between communities, voluntary organisations, local authorities and others.

Activities this could cover:

- work to bring together the community and other organisations;
- support for community involvement, such as 'friends of' groups;
- employment of dedicated project staff;
- volunteer involvement;
- support for school or community visits to sites (as part of wider programme of work);
- purchase of tools, equipment and materials;
- engagement of local and wider communities;
- plans for ongoing site management/improvement;
- empowerment/capacity building within communities;
- use of green space for the purpose of improving health, wellbeing and enjoyment;
- partnership development work; or
- planning to secure long-term engagement with the natural environment.



Project case studies

The following case studies describe projects which have been effective in raising awareness of, and bringing people closer to, the natural environment. They are examples of the types of project that might be funded through Access to Nature.

Example One

Imayla eXFactor Project, Bristol

This project was established in partnership with Exmoor National Park Authority to encourage a wide range of young people, primarily from disadvantaged areas or suffering exclusion, and who had little experience of the countryside, to develop long term, sustainable relationships with Exmoor. It aimed to find out what would attract teenagers, particularly black and minority ethnic groups of young people from Bristol, to spend time in Exmoor National Park, and how this could be facilitated.

The project combined arts and the environment, enabling young people from disadvantaged inner city areas to take part in arts and cultural activities in the countryside at Exmoor National Park Authority's remote Eco-centre for Outdoor Education.

Project outcomes:

- **181 young people and support staff had the opportunity to experience the countryside over a week long residential, including 95 from black and minority ethnic groups.**
- **35 young people were able to experience the countryside for the first time.**
- **181 people gained a greater awareness of local food and sustainability issues.**
- **133 people with improved emotional well-being and raised awareness of how visiting the countryside can benefit health.**
- **181 people with greater understanding of National Parks, including conservation, culture and heritage.**
- **181 people with greater understanding of how to visit and access the countryside.**
- **133 young people from disadvantaged areas learnt new skills – team working, arts and technology based projects.**



Example Two

Greenstart in the North East

Greenstart is a programme of environmental outdoor education working with children aged 0-5 years and their parents in local communities across the North East region.

The programme works in partnership with local SureStart/Children's Centres and other childcare providers throughout the North East and focuses on the health and wellbeing of children through the delivery of a range of educational and physical activities. These range from healthy walks and planting activities to other nature based activities such as pond dipping, tree planting and artwork.

Over the programme period, Greenstart has delivered the following:

- **Around 40 different types of projects across the 17 participating organisations involved to date including healthy walks and planting projects.**
- **Small scale environmental improvements to SureStart sites.**
- **Over 2,000 young people activity days and over 1,000 adult activity days.**
- **Development of a bespoke set of resources designed to assist delivery of the project.**
- **Development of training sessions to assist in GreenStart delivery and contribute to the sustainability of the programme.**

Example Three

Phoenix Futures Conservation Therapy Programme

The Conservation Therapy Programme, which has been running successfully since 2001, is a very important part of the therapeutic rehabilitation process for people recovering from drug and alcohol dependency. Participants are involved in conservation projects on National Nature Reserves. The success of the project, which began as a local initiative in the Derbyshire Dales, means that it has been extended to three localities in England; the North East, the Peak District and the South Downs.

The programme consists of weekly practical conservation groups with participants working alongside volunteers in wildlife-rich environments to improve access to sites. Participants undertake challenging tasks from, building dry-stone walls to maintaining wildlife habitats.

The project has delivered the following outcomes:

- **Health benefits to clients.**
- **Training in practical conservation skills.**
- **Environmental benefits such as: meadow restoration; creation of sensory gardens; and habitat restoration work.**
- **Improved public access to sites, along with improved visitor safety and comfort.**
- **A strong uptake of 135 people beginning the programme in 2006/07.**
- **Evidence and analysis from the Conservation Therapy Programme for Phoenix Futures and Natural England.**

Analysis of data collected indicates that the programme has positive benefits for the clients involved. In particular, the 2006/07 data demonstrated that 28% more clients stayed in the therapeutic rehabilitation programme for the first critical 12 weeks (a key indicator of successful outcome) if they participated in the Conservation Therapy Programme compared with Phoenix Future's overall early retention rate.

Example Four

By All Means Project, Kent

This three year action research project based in Kent aimed to help 220,000 people with a range of differing abilities to get better access to and enjoyment of their local Kent countryside. Activities ranged from life skills/outdoor pursuits for people with learning disabilities to awareness raising programmes to promote better understanding and build sustainable relationships between people with mobility limitations and countryside service providers. Over 3,500 people participated in the project.

Project outcomes:

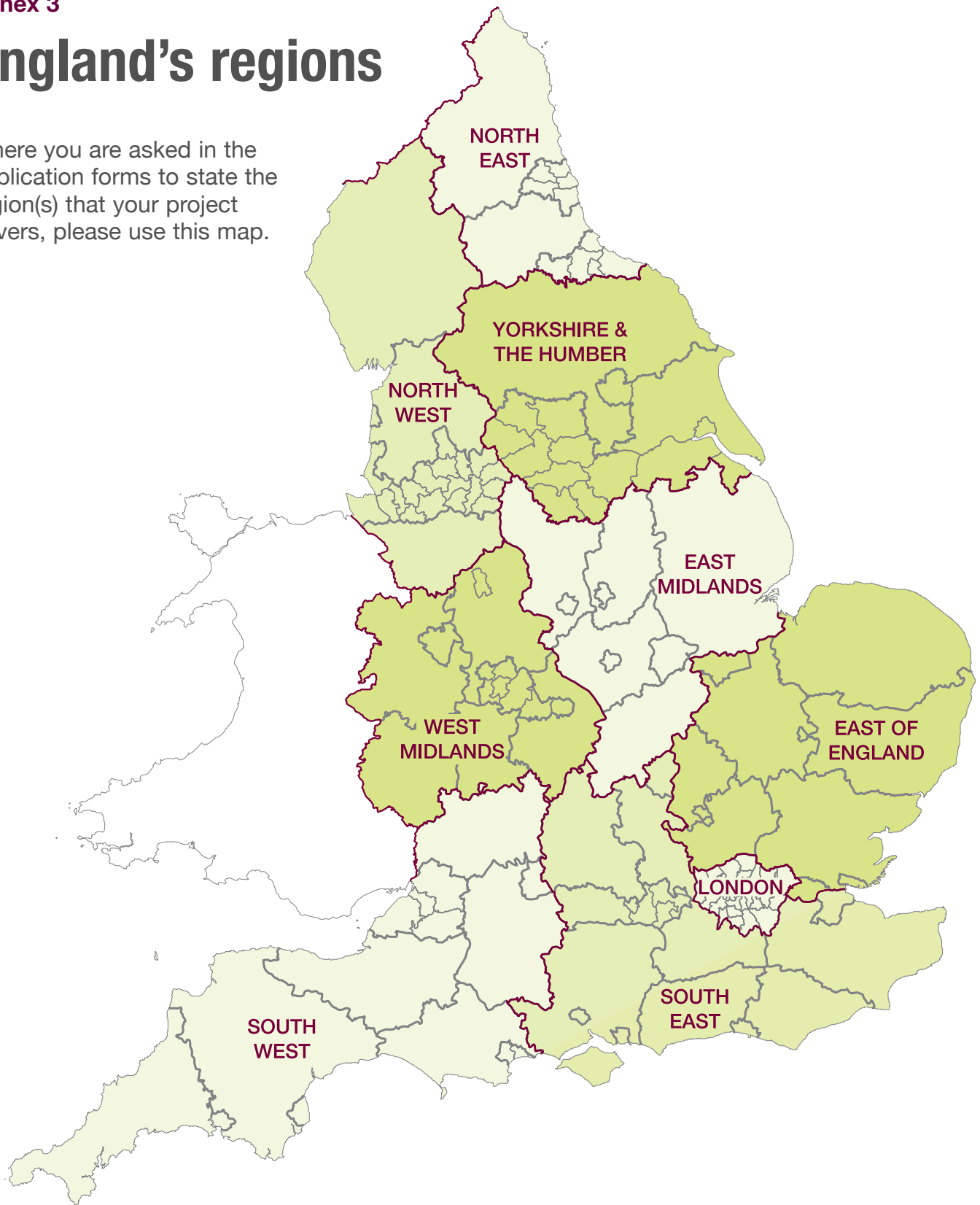
- **A measured and demonstrable increase in the awareness, confidence and demand of disabled people to visit the countryside.**
- **Greater awareness on the part of disabled people, care providers and enablers of the variety of countryside activities available.**
- **Increased awareness of opportunities to access the countryside and the associated benefits for disabled people.**
- **Increased confidence in staff working at rural recreation sites to engage with and cater for the specific needs of people with physical and learning disabilities.**
- **Increase in the quality of life of those participating in the project.**



Annex 3

England's regions

Where you are asked in the application forms to state the region(s) that your project covers, please use this map.



For more information about Access to Nature, or should you require this publication in an alternative format, please contact

The Changing Spaces Advice Line: 0845 3671 671
www.naturalengland.org.uk/accesstonature

Awarding funds from
The National Lottery[®]

