

'WILD YOUR SPACE' MICROFUND

Supplemental Guidance for Applicants

The Bright Green Nature 'Wild Your Space' microfund is an important fund, which aims to help households and small school groups create small-scale "wild" spaces. We want to help as many people as possible, so we thought it would be useful to provide some supplemental guidance on what makes for a successful application.



CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES



To be eligible, projects must fulfil at least one of the following criteria:

- **Restore natural places to benefit native wildlife**
- **Connect habitats with other similar habitats (including gardens)**



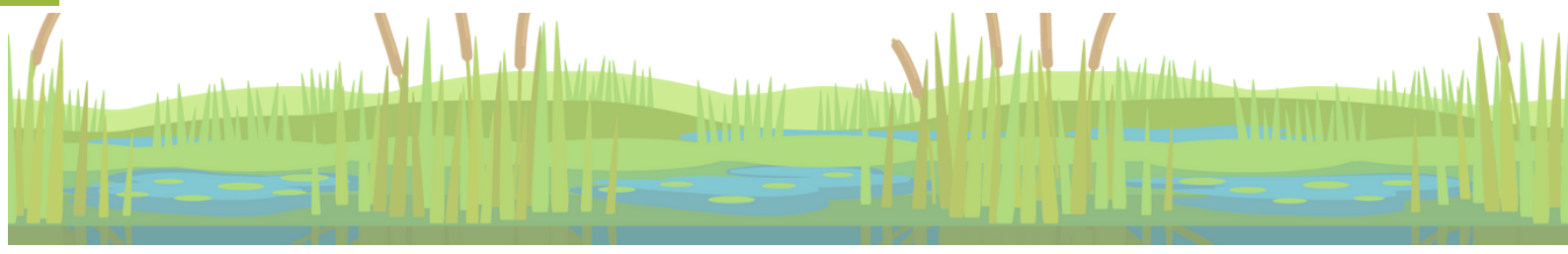


WRITING YOUR APPLICATION



We've aimed to keep the application form quite short and simple. At the same time, we receive many more applications than we are currently able to fund. Therefore, the more complete and clear your application can be, the easier it will be for us to see that your project should be given consideration. Here are a few key things that make an application stand out:

- It clearly demonstrates that the project will meet the charitable objectives
- It's clear that the project has been well thought through, in terms of all the criteria outlined in our guidance documents
- It is sensitive to the optimal use of our small fund, helping us to help as many people as possible. For example:
 - Use of recycled materials/found objects
 - Home propagation, swapping plants with neighbours, purchase of seeds and plug plants rather than larger plants
 - Borrowing tools and equipment rather than renting or buying
 - Consideration of additional sources of funding where available (e.g. schools can get free trees and hedging plants from the Woodland Trust [Free Trees for Schools and Communities - Woodland Trust](#))
- The budget is as precise as possible. For example:
 - Describes specific plants rather than generic plant packs or seed bombs
 - Uses accurate current pricing from verifiable sources





IMPACT



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Projects with the greatest impact always attract our attention. Impact can be achieved in many ways. For example, projects which:

- Encourage the maximum increase in biodiversity in the available space, providing multiple habitats and food sources for the widest variety of creatures
- Creatively use small spaces to maximum effect: e.g. using vertical spaces and plants which provide multiple benefits (nectar and seeds, food and habitat)
- Contribute to nature networks (wildlife corridors): for example, are close to existing “wild” areas, such as water sources, native woodland, wildlife-friendly gardens and community areas
- Include plans to engage and educate children on the importance of biodiversity
- Offer opportunities to influence and encourage broader community engagement (how will you use your project to inspire your neighbours to get involved?)



SUSTAINABILITY

We want our projects to be as sustainable as possible. This might include:



- Innovative recycling of materials
- Borrowing rather than purchasing equipment & tools
- Where new purchases can't be avoided, buying locally (e.g. timber from local forestry organisations)
- Growing plants which produce seeds for birds, rather than buying bird feeders and commercially grown and transported seed
- Using locally grown plants and seeds, to reduce air miles and increase the likelihood of compatibility with the local environment
- Consider alternatives to plastic weed barrier



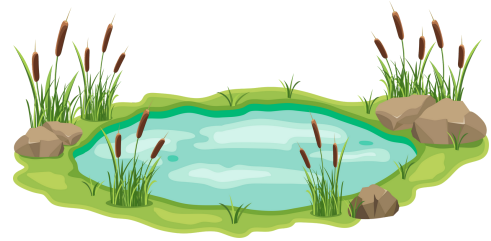
NATIVE PLANTS



There are lots of non-native plants which are visually lovely and great for wildlife, but we really prefer native plants, as they have evolved together with our native wildlife so, since our microgrant is about wilding, we only fund native plants. There are lots of on-line sources of information on native plants and we've come up with a list of some of the most beneficial and widely available (www.brightgreennature/funding)



PONDS & BOG GARDENS




Bringing water into the garden is one of the most effective things we can do to increase biodiversity in our gardens. Unfortunately, ponds can be expensive and often require pond liners, which are not sustainable. The good news is that even small areas of water can have a great impact, be it an old sink, a half barrel or even a hoverfly lagoon in an old ice cream tub. As such, Bright Green Nature will prioritise funding for these “mini ponds”, particularly those which make innovative use of recycled materials. There are some great ideas online, so get your creative hats on and you’ll be amazed by the creatures you can attract!

Bog gardens are another great addition to a wildlife friendly space and are often overlooked. They require less digging than a pond and can use recycled compost/feed sacks to help retain moisture. They’re also a great alternative if you have small children and are concerned about the safety of a pond. While bog gardens attract some of the same species as ponds, they will attract some different wildlife too, so if you have space for a mini-pond *and* a bog garden, even better.



ANIMAL HOMES

Animal homes (bird nest boxes, bug hotels, hedgehog houses, toad holes etc.) are encouraged and provide essential shelter and nest sites, when much native housing has been lost. Here are a few things to keep in mind: 

- For bird nest boxes, be clear about the species you want to attract and select the right boxes for the job.
- Ensure you’re able to site homes in appropriate locations for success (consider height, shelter, orientation, protection from predators etc.)
- Ensure the homes are designed to protect animals from predators, remain free of disease and can be cleaned at the end of the season.
- Opt for the most sustainable homes you can: there are excellent resources on-line about making animal homes from recycled/scrap materials.
- Make sure that your wood isn’t treated with chemicals which may harm wildlife.
- Ensure your project also provides food sources nearby for the creatures your homes will attract.

WILDFLOWER MEADOWS



Wildflower meadows are undoubtedly amazing habitats for wildlife and something we are keen to fund. But it's important to know if your space is suitable for a wildflower meadow and to understand the time and work it might take. If you have a piece of ground that has been undisturbed for a long time and not treated with chemicals, a wildflower meadow might be just the thing (in fact, if you just leave it to its own devices, you may find it has a seed bank just waiting to burst into life). However, sowing wildflower seeds on previously cultivated land is more challenging, requiring a few seasons of cutting and removal of dead materials to reduce the fertility of the soil to a level wildflowers prefer (and their competition does not). Think about the following:

- Consider how the land has been used previously
- Test your soil's pH and nutrient levels
- For a grass area, stop mowing and see which wildflowers are already growing – this will tell you where your land sits on the spectrum of meadow health and help you determine the scale of the task
- Research how meadows can be created. There are many resources on line.

Alternatives to Meadows

If you conclude that your space is not really cut out for a meadow, or it will take longer to establish than you would like, don't worry: there are other options for creating biodiverse habitats in your garden.

- Buy native perennial plug plants, which are suited to your soil conditions. These can be grown as a wildflower border or planted within a lawn to speed up its conversion to a meadow. Including yellow rattle will further speed up the process, suppressing grass and increasing space for wildflowers to take hold.
- Native shrubs (e.g. hawthorn, blackthorn, guelder rose) provide great food sources for wildlife, with the added bonus of using vertical space and creating nesting sites for birds.



We hope you've found this guidance helpful and feel inspired to complete your application. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us:

justine@brightgreennature.org

THANK YOU FOR HELPING NATURE!