

Committee: FINANCE & RESOURCES

Date: 30 May 2023

Report: GRANT APPLICATIONS TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND

Purpose of the report

1. To determine a Sustainable Development Fund application made by from the Northern Viaduct Trust (ref SD0288). The application seeks a grant towards the total cost of restoring the Smardale Gill Viaduct.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Authority offers a grant of £15,000 from the Sustainable Development Fund.

Strategic Planning Framework

3. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework:

National Park Management Plan objectives

F6: Use the Sustainable Development Fund and other funding sources to support at least 15 new projects each year that bring economic, social and environmental benefits to the National Park.

Background to the grant applications

4. The amount of grant requested exceeds £10,000 and, therefore, needs to be determined by the Finance and Resources Committee. The application should be considered against the current Sustainable Development Fund priorities and criteria, as set out in **Annex A**.
5. The Officer recommendation report can be found in **Annex B**.

Conclusion

6. The project is eligible for Sustainable Development Fund grant assistance and will deliver a range of conservation and public access benefits that will see it contribute strongly to delivering National Park purposes. It is therefore worthy of grant assistance.

Andrea Burden
Sustainable Development Officer

9 May 2023

Sustainable Development Fund GUIDANCE NOTES



We are here to help you put together your application. Please talk to us from the very early stages of your project or idea so that we can help you to develop it and secure the funding. Further information can also be found on our website at www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/living-and-working/sdf

What is the Sustainable Development Fund?

The Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) aims to support projects that result in positive benefits for the Yorkshire Dales National Park - its environment, its economy, and its communities. It provides a simple and accessible source of money for local projects. It is open to community groups, individuals, businesses and voluntary-sector bodies.

The type of project we can fund

We want to keep the SDF as flexible as possible. A project will be eligible for consideration if it:

- contributes in some way to looking after the National Park's natural beauty, wildlife or cultural heritage or promotes opportunities for the public to understand and enjoy those things and;
- provides some local economic benefit or some benefit to a local community in the National Park.

We'd encourage all applicants to think about how their project can provide:

- **multiple benefits** – although a project may have a particular economic, social or environmental focus, it is always worth thinking about how it can be designed to secure additional benefits across all the three elements of sustainability or, at the very least, to ensure it does not harm any other interests.
- **value for money** – think carefully about how and where the money is being spent and whether it maximises positive outcomes, in particular, making sure direct benefits are felt on the ground.
- **clear outcomes** – so that we know what it will deliver and so that its success can be measured and learnt from/built upon.
- **a legacy** – we want the benefits to be long term, so think about what happens when the SDF money runs out and the project ends.

Applicants should refer to the National Park Management Plan, which sets out shared ambitions to secure a prosperous future for the National Park and its communities.

Applicants need to show how their project will contribute to the achievement of one or more of the objectives in the Management Plan. The Management Plan can be found at <http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/ydnpa/how-we-work/national-park-management-plan>

What we won't fund

We won't normally fund:

- applications by, or on behalf of, public sector bodies
- applications relating to areas outside the National Park boundary, unless a clear benefit for the National Park itself can be demonstrated
- fixed-term project officers
- the cost of preparing or submitting applications for statutory consents
- repeat applications where a project is substantially the same as one previously funded.

How much grant can you apply for?

There is no set minimum or maximum grant. However, the total fund available this year is £155,000. We normally aim to support at least 15 projects with this amount. Grants can be for capital or revenue costs.

Registered charities and voluntary/community groups can apply for up to 75% of a project's costs. All other types of applicant can apply for up to 50% of project costs. It will therefore be important to consider match funding, which may be sourced from other grant programmes, private finance or 'in kind' contributions. SDF could itself be used as a form of match funding for a larger project where the principal source of finance comes from elsewhere.

Application reference	Project Name	Project Description		
SD0288	Smardale Gill Viaduct Restoration (Phase 2)	Smardale Gill Viaduct crosses over the dramatic valley of Scandal Beck. The Viaduct is a Grade II* listed building and is 170 metres in length, incorporating 14 stone arches that are 27 metres in height. It was originally constructed in 1861 as part of the South Durham and Lancashire Union Railway which carried coke to the iron and steel industry in Barrow and West Cumberland. It has a low parapet wall on both sides with a small metal railing to the top. The deck is surfaced with a concrete slab covered by tarmac. In recent years the viaduct has become a permissive path and forms part of the Nature Trail through the Smardale Nature Reserve, which is managed by Cumbria Wildlife Trust who own the surrounding land and manage the nature trail. The Trail provides an important accessible walking route for visitors to the area.		
Location	Crosby Garrett (Waitby)	Two inspections of the viaduct in 2019 and 2020 identified a series of defects that have been caused by water seeping through the viaduct's deck. This is due to poor drainage and is linked to works in the early 1990s that saw a concrete slab and tarmac surface installed on the deck. Water ingress is now a significant threat to this important heritage asset's fabric. The latest Report recommends a number of actions to prevent further water damage to the viaduct, including reinstating drainage channels and resurfacing the deck. The applicant is seeking a contribution towards the total costs of the work.		
In/Out YDNP	In	The proposed works represent the second phase of improvements to the viaduct. The first phase involved the installation of 214 metal safety panels along each parapet, with the applicant receiving a Sustainable Development Fund grant of £10,000 towards the costs of these works in November 2020. The panels were required for health and safety reasons as the existing railings failed to meet the necessary safety standards. This work has been carried out successfully.		
		The main objectives of this project are to help preserve the listed structure allowing the viaduct to be conserved as a structure of special historical and architectural interest. This will, in turn, ensure that visitors can continue to gain safe access over the viaduct, providing opportunities the explore this special landscape, including its rich heritage and wildlife.		
Applicant's name Northern Viaduct Trust	Project Cost: £360,000	Score: 11/15	SDF Amount Requested: £15,000	SDF Amount Recommended: £15,000
Sustainable Development Officer's Comments:				
<p>The project has obtained a very good score against the SDF's social and environmental criteria. It therefore contributes to 2 of the 3 elements of sustainable development. The project contributes to the first purpose of the National Park as it links back to retaining the cultural heritage of the area and it will also contribute to the second purpose as it will provide opportunities for the public to access the permissive path and improve connectivity from the rights of way network.</p> <p>Consultation responses:</p> <p><i>Area Manager (Western Dales)</i> - supports the application. To their credit the applicants have already secured significant funding. They will need to discuss the suspension of the permissive public access on the viaduct with Cumbria Wildlife Trust when the works actually take place.</p> <p><i>Senior Historic Environment Officer</i> - supports the application. In advance of this submission the applicant commissioned a range of assessments is being advised</p>				

on the scheme by Ramboll UK, an engineering company. The approach to this restoration project has been entirely professional and informed. We have also had preliminary discussions with them about a project that is being developed, focusing on the Smardale Gill area, which would include cultural heritage elements. The planned restoration of the viaduct, over and above the deck resurfacing, will be a large element of this.

Planning Assistant (North) - Listed Building consent for the installation of new in line drainage channels and combined waterproofing and surfacing to the deck was approved on 2 November 2021, YDNPA ref E/16/11A/LB. The consent is valid for 3 years.

Planning Policy Officer - supports the application. It is a well put together application. They are using suitably qualified and experienced specialists. Given the scale of the undertaking and the conservation, landscape, and recreation benefits of retaining this strategic link I think a grant of this size is justified. The applicant has been through a tender process to provide accurate costs.

What the grant will be used for:

The grant will be used as a contribution towards the total cost of – installation of drainage channels, waterproof membrane and surfacing of the viaduct deck.

Value for money:

A tender process has taken place and three bids were submitted. The applicant has stated that their preferred contractor provided the lowest bid and are suitably qualified/experienced in this type of specialised work. This is considered to be an acceptable justification.

Match funding:

The following is a summary of match funding for the project –

£145,000 Architectural Trust (secure)

£140,000 Railway Heritage Trust (secure)

£30,000 Garfield Weston (secure)

£30,000 Northern Viaduct Trust (secure)

Management Plan Objectives:

The project should contribute towards achieving the following objectives –

A6 which aims to support local people to restore/repair – where possible – and bring back into use national important sites such as buildings and structures and

B3 which supports work that improves access on rights of way and established permissive routes that are suitable for all ages and abilities.

Recommendation:

That the grant be approved subject to the standard SDF conditions.

Officer: Andrea Burden, Sustainable Development Officer

Date: 9 May 2023

Final Decision – This application will be determined by the Authority’s Finance & Resources Committee on 31 May 2023.