

GQLDF Update

Our landscape projects team have been working hard with applicants to develop interesting and innovative projects for consideration by the Landscape Projects Panel. The panel assesses applications to two grant schemes; Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) and the Greater Quantocks Landscape Development Fund (LDF) and is made up of local representatives from different sectors with specialities in land management, biodiversity, landscape character and communities to name just a few. It is this wide range of expertise that ensures approved projects are providing value for money, as well as delivering on important environmental and cultural outcomes.

We have had a great response to FiPL locally, and have now approved 18 projects, with 6 more up for consideration over the summer. FiPL and LDF complement each other perfectly, as LDF supports those who may not be farmers or landowners but are just as motivated to enhance natural beauty and landscape character. This programme is funded by EDF and supports community-based projects that mitigate the impact of the Hinkley Point C development. This means the eligible area is different to the Quantock Hills AONB boundary.

The LDF scheme launched in 2014, and we have since supported 50 projects. Although we only have 10% of our original budget left to allocate, we are still keen to develop new projects with community groups looking to deliver tree, orchard and hedge planting, restoration of ponds and wildflower meadows and small-scale woodland management. You could receive a grant of up to £5,000 towards your project, or 75% of your costs.



We have previously supported the restoration of Hector's pool by National Trust and AONB volunteers. This historic pond was severely silted, and the bank had eroded on one side, so that there was very little standing water. The volunteers removed silt and cleared some of the surrounding trees to allow water to flow freely into the pool and to reduce the excessive shading. Hector's pool is thought to have been one of three medieval stock ponds on the Quantock Hills and sits alongside a popular bridleway and walking route.

Other projects have included the creation of a new multi-purpose pond at Kilve Court, supporting woodland restoration work by the Stowey Green Spaces Group, and the restoration of the characteristic network of blue lias stone walls running through the village of Stockland Bristol. In total, LDF projects have planted 2.7km of hedge, and managed a further 3.9km. 254 orchard trees have been planted and nearly 12ha of woodland brought into management, in addition to planting nearly 2,000 woodland trees. Over 6 projects, 4,214m² of ponds have been created or restored.