



BranchOut
Landscape Connectivity

LANDSCAPE CONNECTIVITY

Application guidance
and eligibility

WHAT IS THE BRANCH OUT LANDSCAPE CONNECTIVITY FUND?

Landscape connectivity and priority habitats are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity in England (see the list drawn in accordance with Section 41 of the NERC Act and BAP habitats for more detail).

Landscape connectivity and priority habitats cover a wide range of semi-natural habitat types and are identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action.

A healthy and well-connected landscape is essential for supplying top quality drinking water. Essex & Suffolk Water set up the Branch Out fund in response to the need to build resilience in the region's natural environment through improving landscape connectivity.

The purpose of the fund is to enable local communities, land managers, other organisations and individuals to contribute to the restoration and/or creation of priority habitat or support priority species within Essex & Suffolk Water's operating area.

ELIGIBILITY

The fund is open to organisations, community groups or individuals from the public, private, voluntary and education sectors within the catchments where Northumbrian Water/Essex & Suffolk Water operates.

For a project to be deemed eligible, the following criteria must be met.

- Projects must enhance, create or restore priority habitat or enhance habitats to support priority species.
- Projects must involve actions to provide climate change resilience.
- Priority will be given to projects that have a clear link to the following:
 - Demonstration of improved habitat connectivity at a landscape scale.
 - Progression towards habitat and/or species targets identified in the relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- The benefits must include some aspects that are quantifiable and measurable, including how the kilometres of watercourse or hectares of habitat created/enhanced will be measured.
- Match funding is required.

PROJECT SELECTION

Submission of an application does not mean automatic entitlement to funding. All applications will be carefully considered by the Branch Out team. Applications will be acknowledged within ten working days. Applicants will be informed in writing or via email within five working days of the decision meeting on whether their application has been successful, and if so, the amount of grant they have been awarded.

Applicants may in some instances be asked to provide further assistance to allow a final decision to be made.

STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For all projects granted any level of funding, the following must be delivered:

- 1.** All external communications relating to the project to be agreed with Essex & Suffolk Water's communications team before use.
- 2.** Essex & Suffolk Water's contribution must be acknowledged in all press releases.
- 3.** Essex & Suffolk Water's logo must be used on project material and interpretation.
- 4.** A report on the progress of the project must be submitted to Essex & Suffolk Water annually and/or on project completion (whichever occurs first).
- 5.** Project reports must provide evidence of where the project money provided by Essex & Suffolk Water has been spent.
- 6.** Project reports must provide information on specific measurable project outputs as agreed with Essex & Suffolk Water before the project starts.
- 7.** All successful project applicants will sign a partnership agreement agreeing to the above terms. Where a medium or large fund is granted, additional requirements will be agreed specific to each project.

Please see 'Partner Communication Guidelines' for further information.

RETUNING AND COMPLETING APPLICATION FORMS.

Sign, scan and email to: branchout@nwl.co.uk

www.branchout-nw.co.uk