



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Natural Flood Management: guidance to undertake natural flood management works

Guidance for local authorities on funding works under the Natural Flood Management Grant.

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This new scheme has been created in conjunction with flood and rural affairs departments in supporting the rural economy and the transition to the Sustainable Farming Scheme.

The Programme for Government sets out our commitments to continue supporting farmers to produce food in a sustainable way, whilst taking action to respond to the climate emergency and to help reverse the decline in biodiversity.

Funding support for farmers, land managers and associated rural sectors over the next 2 years is being delivered through a flexible framework of support, with schemes delivering towards the following themes:

- Farm scale land management
- On farm environmental improvements
- On farm efficiency and diversification
- Landscape scale land management
- Woodland and forestry
- Food and farming supply chains

This framework includes the Natural Flood Management Accelerator Programme which is open to risk management authorities and supports many of these themes.

The framework is designed to both support action in response to the challenges and opportunities available over the next 2 years and to inform the continuing development of the Sustainable Farming Scheme, which will reward farmers for the work they do now to lower their carbon footprint, improve the environment and produce food in a sustainable way.

Further information on the themes and schemes being developed are available at: <https://businesswales.gov.wales/walesruralnetwork/>

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Introduction: The Natural Flood Management Accelerator Programme

The Welsh Government encourages Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) to pursue Natural Flood Management (NFM) interventions and to support this, the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Business Case Guidance mandates the consideration of NFM for all schemes.

In setting their Programme for Government for this term, Ministers have committed to:

- Deliver nature-based flood management in all major river catchments to expand wetland and woodland habitats.

To support this commitment and following the successful NFM Programme (2020-2023), we want to continue to learn about NFM and have been provided an opportunity, working with the Rural Investment Schemes (RIS) to continue to support this work for a further 2 years. This new programme aims to accelerate our delivery of natural flood management interventions to reduce risks associated with flooding or coastal erosion. Outputs from this new programme will also support in the development of the Sustainable Farming Scheme.

Whilst the evaluation of the earlier NFM programme continues and we await the outcome of NFM research being carried out by JBA consulting which many of the local authorities and Natural Resources Wales have been involved with, we want to continue to support further schemes.

We aim to further accelerate the delivery of NFM by continuing to offer 100% funding for the delivery of NFM schemes within this programme, this will include appraisal, design, construction and monitoring equipment. This funding does not include for ongoing maintenance or monitoring costs. RMAs will not be required to provide a contribution towards the costs of delivering NFM schemes, or NFM

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elements of “hybrid” schemes. However, they may wish to supplement funding to provide additional benefits or seek additional support from third parties who wish to contribute.

These Guidance Notes explain this Natural Flood Management Accelerator Programme and the type of projects that may qualify for grant aid. Please read it carefully. The programme will run for 2 years from April 2023 to March 2025.

Eligibility criteria

As with the Welsh Government’s Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) core grant, the NFM Accelerator Programme is only available to Risk Management Authorities operating in Wales. However, we would encourage RMAs to work with any prospective partners and cross policy funding areas to access additional monies to support larger catchment approach and benefits. This could also include Local Authorities or NRW funding third parties to carry out work on their behalf with the RMA applying for and claiming grant funding from Welsh Government.

In line with our funding policy set out in the National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management, all proposed NFM interventions must reduce risk to people and properties or maintain their current levels of protection. This aligns with the FCERM core grant. Works need to be economically worthwhile and satisfy all necessary statutory requirements.

To support with ongoing evaluation of NFM schemes, all projects must include post construction monitoring which should be funded through existing revenue grants.

We acknowledge quantifying the benefits associated with the delivery of NFM schemes is problematic and are actively seeking innovative ways of monitoring

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and recording outputs and benefits. We accept how some monitoring may be accompanied by anecdotal evidence, possibly with the support of communities or academia, and this should be set out in your application. Welsh Government reserve the right to refuse schemes which they do not feel represent value for money. Expected wider benefits should be included in the application for consideration and to support the application. As this programme is being run in tandem with the RIS, RMAs will be expected to report progress against wider benefits as the schemes progress.

RMAs are invited to submit applications up to a **maximum value of £300,000** per scheme using the new NFM applications on RPW Online. Larger value schemes remain eligible but should first be discussed with the FCERM team to consider if a separate Business Justification or Full Business Case route is more appropriate.

The programme will be run in a similar way to the Small Scale Works Grant with local authorities able to submit multiple applications for schemes, **each scheme must be completed and final claim submitted by March 2025.**

Work not eligible for funding

Welsh Government's FCERM priority remains risk to life and all schemes should reduce risk to property; however the reduced risk to other services or utilities, for example, roads, rail or agriculture may be an additional benefit. Schemes specifically reducing risk to agricultural land, roads or other infrastructure alone would not be eligible.

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Application process

Applications for the NFM accelerator programme should be submitted using the new form via RPW online for schemes up to the value of £300,000. Schemes over £300,000 may still be eligible where they expected to bring greater benefits but please contact Welsh Government FCERM branch first to discuss further whether these could be classed as exceptions.

We encourage partnership and cross-RMA working. A catchment scheme may consist of multiple projects which benefit more than one RMA and/or multiple third parties. In this case the application should be made by just one of the RMA's who will act as the grant recipient.

This funding through the RIS is only agreed for 2 financial years, therefore schemes should be progressed quickly and completed by March 2025. This should be considered when completing applications, especially for any proposals involving work within watercourses. If a scheme is delayed and is unable to be completed in time, funding may be lost, and there is no guarantee funding will be made available for the scheme in future years.

RIS funding is annualised and there may not be the ability to transfer funding between years. RMAs will be asked to forecast annual expenditure as part of the application and endeavour to keep to this. Changes in forecast resulting in movement of money between years should be discussed with the Welsh Government Flood Branch as soon as possible so budgets can be managed.

Contract variations will not be allowed as part of this programme due to strict budget restrictions.

Wider benefits beyond flood risk management can be achieved through grant funded works, and these should be considered as part of the application process. While the wider ecological benefits associated with NFM interventions

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are well established, applications should include a brief summary of the specific benefits associated with the scheme in question. Wider benefits may include:

- Water Quality
- Engaging with local community groups and the third sector;
- Education/awareness raising through partnering with residents and schools;
- Supporting local businesses;
- Biodiversity improvements;
- Amenity improvements connected with the NFM project;
- Using local contractors to carry out these works and develop skills.

Project teams will be asked to specifically report against Welsh Government's Sustainable Land Management Objectives, where they apply. These should be included in the applications and are set out in the draft agriculture bill and listed below:

- Production of food and other goods in a sustainable manner;
- Mitigation and adaptation to climate change;
- Maintenance and enhancement the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide;
- Conservation and enhancement the countryside and cultural resources and promotion of public access to and engagement with them, and sustaining the Welsh language and promoting and facilitating its use.

All public bodies have to comply with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It is therefore essential that LAs consider how the proposed works contribute to the well-being goals and the sustainable development principles and evidence this within the applications. Please provide on the application form specific examples of how the proposed work will contribute to the well-being goals rather than just listing the goals.

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Scheme selection and prioritisation

Prioritisation of projects for funding will be based on the benefits they deliver, with as many schemes funded as budget availability allows. There is an indicative budget of £5 million available over the 2 year programme.

In the event that the programme is over subscribed projects will be selected primarily on the basis of cost per property with consideration of the following factors:

- Evidence of actual flood events or near-misses,
- Total number of properties benefiting
- The estimated cost per property
- Wider benefits
- Learning and monitoring opportunities
- Partnership working
- Ability to deliver within the 2 year window.

Schemes must demonstrate good value for public money, therefore schemes where the

cost per home is over £50,000, or where less than two properties benefit, are not likely to be prioritised.

Timetable

- Application available through RPW online from 11 April 2023 and must be submitted by 05 May 2023.
- Contracts will be issued via RPW online as quickly as possible after applications closing date

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Evidence to support application

Providing evidence with the application will assist the efficiency of the assessment process.

Evidence to be submitted with application forms **must** include (where appropriate):

- Maps showing location of proposed works
- Flood maps showing risk
- Reference to Local Flood Risk Management Strategies where appropriate

Claims

Claim windows will be every 6 months, in line with Quarter 2 and Quarter 4 of the standard FCERM Programme. Claims need to be submitted via RPW online using the existing Natural Flood Management Grant by the following deadli

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Deadlines

	Activity from	Activity to	CAPIT Claim window
Interim claim 1 (Y1) and progress report	1 April 2023	31 August 2023	1-16 September 2023
Interim claim 2 (Y1) and progress report	1 September 2023	31 March 2024	1-16 March 2024
Interim claim 3 (Y2) and progress report	1 April 2024	31 August 2023	1-16 September 2024
Final claim, report and supporting invoices.	1 September 2024	16 March 2025	1-16 March 2025

RIS funding in annualised and there may not be the ability to transfer funding between year. RMAs will be asked to forecast annual expenditure as part of the application and endeavour to keep to this. Changes in forecast resulting in movement of money between years should be discussed with the Welsh Government Flood Branch as soon as possible so budgets can be managed.

Contract variations will not be allowed as part of this programme due to strict budget restrictions.

Branding

Where appropriate, any work funded through Welsh Government grants should be branded and show the Welsh Government logo. Costs associated with

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branding are eligible for grant funding. Interpretation boards and community outreach alongside projects is actively encouraged and will be considered in the prioritisation process.

Further information can be obtained from the Welsh Government Branding Team: BrandingQueries@gov.wales

Guidance

Advice on Working with Natural Processes and NFM Opportunity Maps is available on [Natural Resources Wales website](#).

Further helpful guidance on Natural Flood Management has also been developed by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency in its [Natural Flood Management Booklet](#).

Questions

For queries related to any of the Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grants, please contact the Welsh Government Flood Branch at FloodCoastalRisk@gov.wales

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Privacy notice: Welsh Government Flood, Coastal Erosion, Risk Management grants

Introduction/Background

The Welsh Government provides grant funding to flood risk management authorities for the purpose of reducing the risks from flooding and/or coastal erosion. In order for us to manage the grants we will need to process some personal data about you and your organisation in order to administer and issue the grant. Before we provide grant funding to you and during the term of the grant award, we may undertake checks for the purposes of preventing fraud and money laundering, and to verify your identity.

What is the Lawful Basis for processing?

The Welsh Government will be the data controller for any personal data you provide in relation to your grant application or request for grant funding. We will process it in line with our public task and the official authority vested in us to provide financial assistance through grant funding to support ministerial objectives, to prevent fraud and money laundering, and to verify identities. Such processing is also a requirement of the grant funding you have requested and will help us assess your eligibility to receive the grant funding.

What personal information do we need to process?

In order to process your grant we will need the following personal information:

- name
- office address and office address history

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- organisational contact details such as email address and telephone numbers
- third party organisation details

Why do we need to process your personal data?

The Welsh Government use your information to keep you as a point of contact to administer your application for grant funding. Additionally we, and fraud prevention agencies, may use this information, including any personal data, to prevent fraud and money laundering, and to verify your identity. We and fraud prevention agencies may also enable law enforcement agencies to access and use your personal data to detect, investigate and prevent crime.

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How long will we keep your personal information?

The Welsh Government will keep your personal information for a period of between seven and ten years depending on the nature of the grant award after the completion of your grant in line with our Data Retention Policy. Fraud prevention agencies can hold your personal data for different periods of time, depending on how that data is being used. Please contact us for more information. If you are considered to pose a fraud or money laundering risk, your data can be held by fraud prevention agencies for up to 6 years from its receipt.

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Will your personal information be shared?

The Welsh Government may share your information with fraud prevention agencies if we suspect or detect fraud. We may share only relevant information for publicity and post scheme completion evaluations. Administrators of RPW online may have access to your personal information as a part of their routine monitoring and management of the platform.

Your rights:

Under the UK GDPR you have the following rights:

- To access a copy of your own data;
- For us to rectify inaccuracies in that data;
- To object to or restrict processing (in certain circumstances);
- For your data to be 'erased' (in certain circumstances); and
- To lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

Contact Information

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

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Telephone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

If you have any questions relating to this privacy notice or about how Welsh Government handle your personal information, please contact our Data Protection Officer:

Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ

Email: dataprotectionofficer@gov.wales

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For more information refer to our [accessibility statement](#).

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