



Coedwig
Genedlaethol i Gymru
National Forest
for Wales



Status Scheme Guidance



Introduction

These guidance notes explain the new National Forest for Wales Status scheme which enables woodland sites to join the National Forest for Wales.

To support applications to the National Forest Status Scheme we have also produced a 'how to complete your application' guidance which can be found at the following link:

[National Forest for Wales - Status Scheme: how to complete your application form](#)

Key messages

- Applications are open to anyone who owns or has management control of woodland in Wales.
- There will be no limit on the number of woodlands which can be awarded National Forest for Wales Status.
- Applications can be made at any time of year but will be considered at set times.
- Projects must demonstrate how they meet the relevant National Forest for Wales Outcomes to gain Status.
- The Status Scheme is not a funding opportunity, it is for woodland sites ready to join the National Forest for Wales.
- There is funding available through the Woodland Investment Grant (TWIG) for sites who don't yet meet the National Forest for Wales Outcomes and for further improvements to sites which have National Forest for Wales Status.
- National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers located throughout Wales are available to discuss prospective sites, and support applications to both TWIG, Coetiroedd Bach (Tiny Forests) and the Status Scheme.
- Status is voluntary and sites will have the option to leave the National Forest for Wales at any point.



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What is the National Forest for Wales?

The National Forest for Wales is a unique venture led by Welsh Government to establish a nationwide network of woodlands and forests throughout Wales, under high quality management.

It is an inclusive approach which covers all woodland types and settings. Parts of the network will eventually form a trail running the length and breadth of Wales, so anyone can access it wherever they live. It will follow a place-based approach where involvement is voluntary and will include both urban

and rural areas. The network will form a lasting legacy for future generations. More information on the National Forest for Wales can be found at the following link:

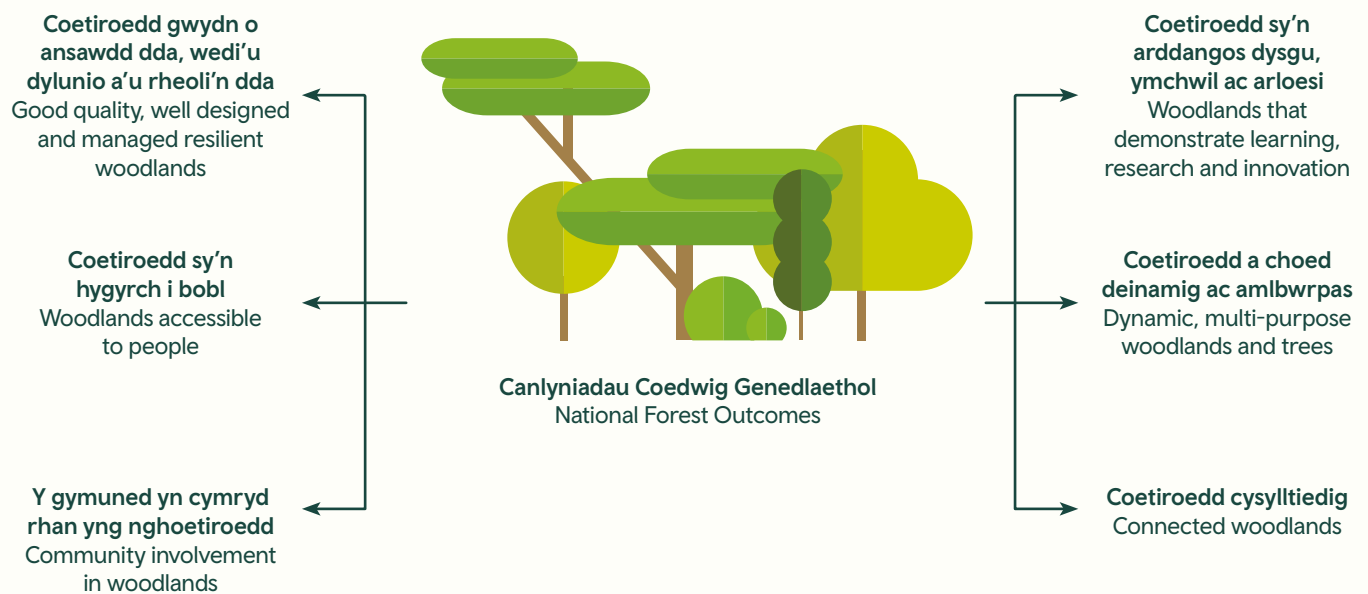
[National Forest for Wales | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales/national-forest-for-wales)



What are the National Forest for Wales Outcomes?

The National Forest for Wales is made up of woodlands which demonstrate the following Outcomes:

- Good quality, well designed and managed resilient woodlands.
- Woodlands accessible to people.
- Community involvement in woodlands.
- Connected woodlands.
- Dynamic, multi-purpose woodlands and trees.
- Woodlands that demonstrate learning, research and innovation.



Sites interested in gaining National Forest for Wales Status should familiarise themselves with the Outcomes before completing an application form to gain an understanding of the requirements.

The table on the next page gives an outline of the Outcomes. National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers are available to discuss the Outcomes in more depth and in relation to specific woodland sites.

What are the National Forest for Wales Outcomes? (Cont.)

<p>Good quality, well designed and managed resilient woodlands</p>	<p>The National Forest for Wales comprises of exemplar woodlands that demonstrate what can be achieved through protecting, enhancing and planting trees and woodland areas. At the same time helping to address the climate change emergency, reversing the decline in biodiversity and providing places for recreation and employment.</p> <p>Woodland management plans are an ideal way to help sites plan how woodlands can thrive and endure, delivering the widest possible range of benefits to people and nature.</p>	<p>The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) is the guiding set of standards for the National Forest for Wales. Through careful planning and design, following the 'right tree in the right place', National Forest woodlands meet these objectives and others to ensure they are resilient and adaptable to climate change, creating a long term asset which will be around for future generations to enjoy.</p> <p>The UKFS offers guidance on the best approach to sustainable forest management in the UK.</p> <p><i>This is a required Outcome for National Forest for Wales sites.</i></p>
<p>Woodlands accessible to people</p>	<p>Public use of National Forest for Wales sites will vary from site to site, entrances will be clear and welcoming with bilingual signage and maintained paths. Sites will be accessible to the public, with appropriate infrastructure in place to enable and encourage diverse people with different accessibility needs to use the woodlands. With information provided to enable</p>	<p>people to research and understand what facilities are available to plan their visit.</p> <p>National Forest for Wales sites with access for the public will eventually be linked as part of trails stretching the length and breadth of Wales. The trails will enable everyone across Wales to access woodlands wherever they live.</p>
<p>Community involvement in woodlands</p>	<p>National Forest for Wales sites help communities to re-engage with nature, including in urban areas which may lack green spaces.</p> <p>There are a range of ways communities may be involved in woodlands, it may consist of direct active involvement such as tree planting activities, design and planning of the woodlands or activities such as providing an outdoor space.</p>	<p>Ways in which National Forest for Wales sites demonstrate this Outcome includes, involving the public and local communities in opportunities. For example, the enhancement, creation and management of woodlands through setting up community groups, school groups and activity days, or providing facilities for skills training and accreditation hobby activities and/or recreational learning.</p>

What are the National Forest for Wales Outcomes? (Cont.)

<p>Connected Woodlands</p>	<p>National Forest for Wales sites will in time be connected to create a network across Wales to enable nature to recover and flourish.</p> <p>Appreciating the early years of the National Forest for Wales it may not always be feasible to physically connect woodland areas via trees and plants, particularly in urban areas. But it will become more important as the area of woodland in Wales increases.</p> <p>Connectivity in National Forest for Wales sites is currently demonstrated through the enhancement of existing woodlands areas and the creation of new woodland areas, whilst showing consideration for</p>	<p>connectivity to other woodlands and the importance of connectivity to ecosystem resilience.</p> <p>Whilst this Outcome is primarily concerned with connecting woodlands to support nature, it could also include work to connect woodlands to people. For example this could be in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional connectivity to woodlands, helping people to take a real interest in their natural environment; and/or • Physical connectivity such as connecting woodlands to other woodlands or to where people live via footpaths, cycle paths, public transport etc.
<p>Dynamic, multi-purpose woodlands and trees</p>	<p>National Forest for Wales sites aim to maximise their benefits to people, nature and the wider environment through the creation of multi-purpose sites.</p> <p>National Forest for Wales sites may be used in many different ways. For example for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation. • Tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational / learning opportunities. • Local enterprises. • Producing and supplying products. • Supplying more home grown timber. • Supporting biodiversity.
<p>Woodlands that demonstrate learning, research and innovation</p>	<p>National Forest for Wales sites demonstrate what can be achieved with multi-purpose woodlands. This involves sites learning and building on the work of others, testing new ways of working, and sharing innovation, research and learning with others.</p> <p>Examples could include demonstrating new and different ways of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering woodlands in innovative ways. • Engaging local communities. • Working collaboratively with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting biodiversity. • Delivering community benefits through woodland activities. • Providing environmental ecosystem services (e.g. air and water quality, flood and drought protection). • Ensuring resilience to future climate change (e.g. tree selection and right tree in the right place). • Providing educational opportunities (e.g. forest schools).

What is National Forest for Wales Status and why apply?

Being a part of the National Forest for Wales is all about being part of something unique for the people of Wales. Building the National Forest for Wales network will help improve the environment in Wales and help communities to connect with and appreciate the woodlands that surround them.

Having National Forest for Wales Status allows exemplary woodlands to be recognised and to become part of a long-lasting legacy for future generations. It is a way of demonstrating the benefits of your woodland to its community.

Sites awarded National Forest for Wales Status will have access to the brand and receive signage to recognise their site as exemplary to the public. The site will be promoted as part of the wider National Forest for Wales network and woodland managers will become part of a National Forest for Wales community

to share knowledge and ideas with other National Forest for Wales sites.

To gain National Forest for Wales Status a site must demonstrate how they meet the National Forest for Wales Outcomes. This includes the required Outcome of 'good quality, well designed and managed resilient woodlands' plus any or all of the other Outcomes. National Forest for Wales sites which are accessible to people will eventually form part of a trail running the length and breadth of Wales, so anyone can access the trail wherever they live.



Eligibility – who can apply for National Forest for Wales Status?

Anyone who owns or has management control of woodland in Wales can apply, including not-for-profit organisations and private owners. Evidence such as a copy of the land registry or a management agreement with the site owner will be required to be submitted as part of the application process.

Woodland sites must meet the National Forest for Wales Outcomes, as outlined in the 'how to complete your application' guidance.

A woodland management plan will be required, details on the requirements for this can be found in the 'how to complete your application' guidance.

The Status Scheme is not a funding opportunity, it is for woodland sites ready to join the National Forest for Wales. These are sites where work to meet the Outcomes has been evidenced, all necessary consents are in place, and trees to form the woodland have been planted in the ground.

The 'how to complete your application' guidance can be found at the following link:

[National Forest for Wales - Status Scheme: how to complete your application form](#)



Who are the National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers?

There are six National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers located across Wales and based with Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

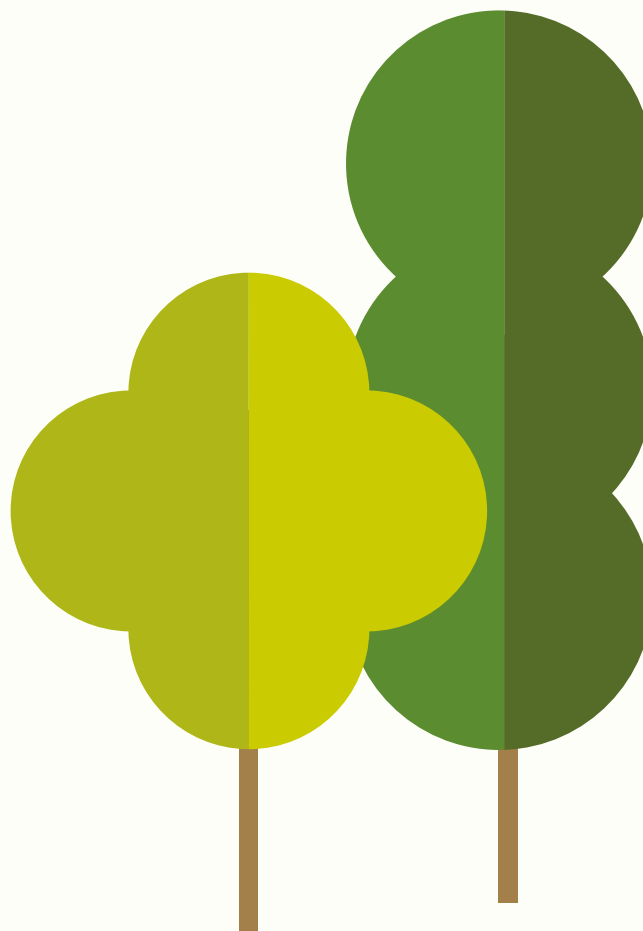
The role of the Liaison Officer is to facilitate and enable woodland owners with their ambitions to create and enhance woodlands in accordance with the National Forest for Wales Outcomes. The Liaison Officer can also signpost woodland sites to relevant schemes and offer support with applications such as for the Woodland Investment Grant (TWIG) and Coetiroedd Bach (Tiny Forests) helping to bring woodlands into the National Forest for Wales network.

The National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers play a central role in the National Forest for Wales Status Scheme. They will support sites to meet and evidence the National Forest for Wales Outcomes, provide advice on a sites suitability and readiness to apply for Status and advise on completing and evidencing applications. The Liaison Officers will also be central to facilitating the ongoing National Forest for Wales community to share best practice and enable connections. Therefore it is imperative that applicants contact the Liaison Officers before submitting an application to the National Forest for Wales Status Scheme.

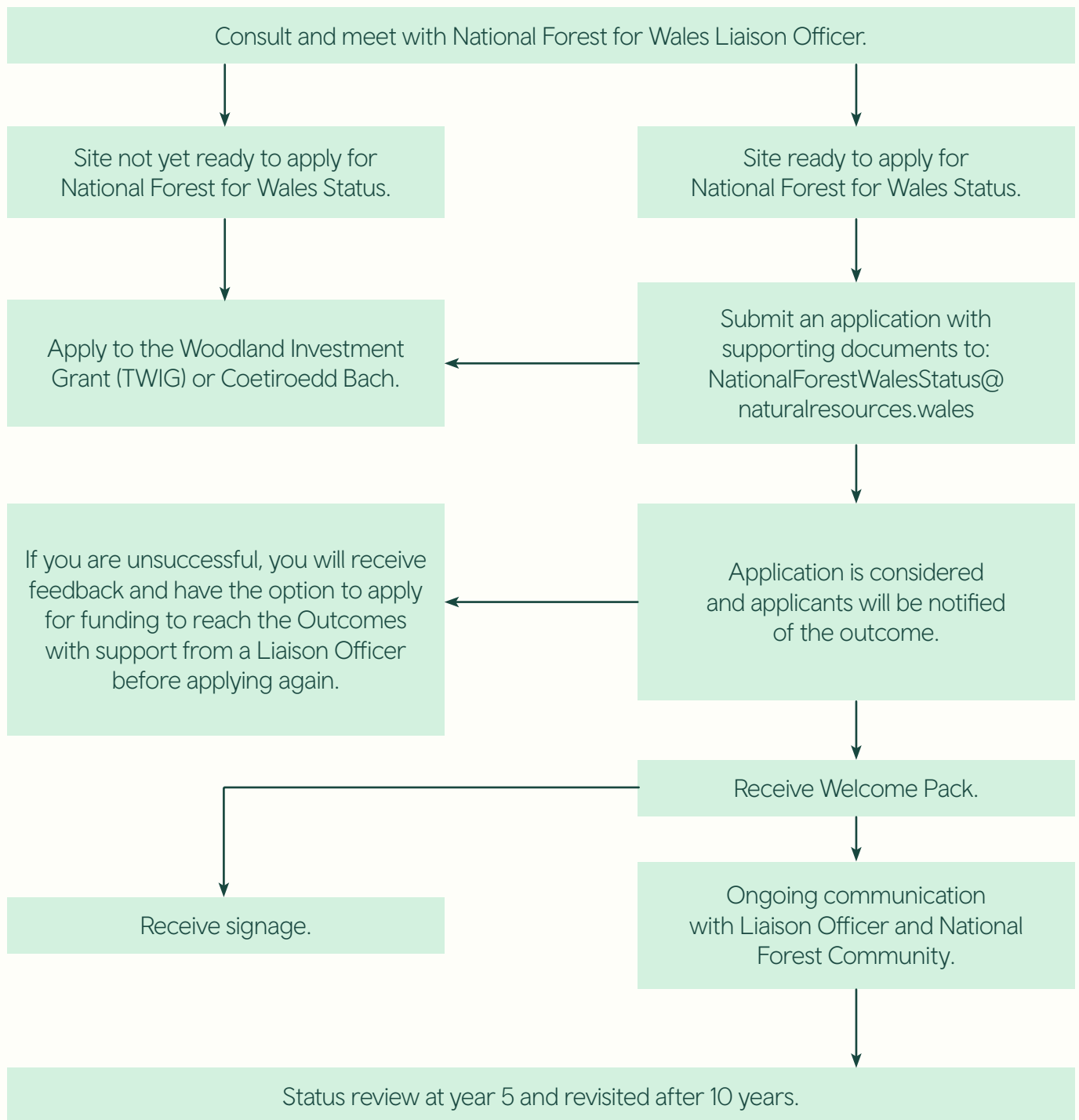
The National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers contact details are:

Phone: **0300 065 3000**
(Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm).

Email: **NationalForestWalesStatus@naturalresources.wales**



The Application Process



The Application Process (Cont.)

Before applying:

Sites must have contacted their local National Forest for Wales Liaison Officer who will arrange a time to visit the site.

They will provide advice on a sites suitability and readiness to apply for National Forest for Wales Status and answer any questions about the process.

The Application stage:

Applications can be submitted at any time of year but will be considered at set times quarterly. Timings are set out below.

Details on how to complete the application form and evidence which needs to be provided can be found in the 'how to complete your application' guidance at the following link:

[National Forest for Wales - Status Scheme: how to complete your application form](#)

National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers will be able to support applicants with completing application forms and the evidence required.

Supporting evidence which must be submitted with an application will include at a minimum:

- Proof of ownership or management control of the woodland site.
- A map of the site.
- A woodland management plan.

- Governing documents (where applicable– please see the 'how to complete your application' guidance for more information)

A non-exhaustive list of other documentary evidence which may need to be submitted with your application is provided in the 'How to Complete Your Application Guidance'. Please check this list before submitting your application.

Applications must be submitted to **NationalForestWalesStatus@naturalresources.wales** mailbox, or via post to:

**National Forest for Wales
Status Team Customer Hub**
Maes y Ffynnon
Penrhosgarnedd
Bangor
Gwynedd
LL57 2DW

The Application Process (Cont.)

The application stage (cont.)

Applications will be considered by the National Forest for Wales team and recommendations for Status submitted to Ministers for approval on a quarterly basis.

For any questions on the application process, forms and submitting an

application, or to request a different format of the form or any of the guidance documents please contact **NationalForestWalesStatus@naturalresources.wales**, or by telephone on **0300 065 3000** (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm).

After applications have been considered:

Sites will receive notification of the outcome via the method they applied.

If unsuccessful in receiving National Forest for Wales Status the site will receive, feedback on steps they can take to reach Status, support from their local National Forest for Wales Liaison Officer to achieve this, and the opportunity to resubmit their application when ready.

If successful in receiving National Forest for Wales Status the site will receive a Welcome Pack which will include:

- A welcome letter.
- A copy of their application form with the agreement.
- The National Forest for Wales Branding Guidelines.
- Information on how to obtain National Forest for Wales signage.
- Information about joining the National Forest for Wales community.
- Information on registering for or updating a Visit Wales account with the National Forest for Wales filter.
- Information on recording a sites National Forest for Wales story with the People's Collection Wales.
- The National Forest for Wales Stakeholder Toolkit.



The Agreement and Information Sharing

By signing and submitting an application for the National Forest for Wales Status Scheme sites will be agreeing to become part of the National Forest for Wales network.

This means agreeing to maintain the standards required to meet the relevant National Forest for Wales Outcomes as outlined in the scheme guidance. This includes in respect of woodlands accessible to people, that any paths and/or access indicated as open and accessible for public use will remain so for the duration of the agreement.

The agreement will initially run for a ten-year period, with a five-year check-in carried out to ensure standards are maintained and the National Forest for Wales Outcomes still met. However sites will have the option to leave the National Forest for Wales at any point, and the Welsh Government reserves the right to remove National Forest for Wales Status from woodlands if there is evidence they no longer meet the Outcomes.

By submitting an application, sites will be agreeing to their details being shared for the purpose of ongoing promotion and development of the National Forest for Wales. Applicants will also be agreeing, if successful in gaining Status, to their site's details being published on Welsh Government websites such as gov.wales, Visit Wales and Wales.com, as well as social media platforms.

As well as agreeing to details being shared with parties external to Welsh Government where relevant, for the purpose of promotion and development of the National Forest for Wales network. Sites will also be agreeing to maintain ongoing contact with their National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers.

Information on related privacy notices can be found at the following links:

Forestry Resource Policy privacy notice:

[Forestry branch: privacy notice | GOV.WALES](#)

Welsh Government privacy notice:

[Welsh Government privacy notice | GOV.WALES](#)

Natural Resources Wales privacy notice:

[Natural Resources Wales | Privacy notice](#)

Timelines and Deadlines

Stage	Date
Scheme opening	23 June 2023
Deadline for first window of applications	Mid-September
Decision announced	End of October
Deadline for second window of applications	Mid-December
Decision announced	End of January
Deadline for third window of applications	Mid-March
Decision announced	End of April
Deadline for fourth window of applications	Mid-June
Decision announced	End of July

This is a rolling window with applications welcome all year round.

The Woodland Investment Grant (TWIG)

The Woodland Investment Grant (TWIG) is part of the National Forest for Wales programme. It provides funding to woodlands whose aim is become part of the National Forest for Wales network.

The funding helps sites to meet the National Forest for Wales Outcomes, enabling them to apply for National Forest for Wales Status. TWIG will also provide funding for improvements to sites which have received National Forest for Wales Status.

The National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers can provide support and guidance for submitting applications to TWIG.

Information on TWIG can be found at the following link:

[National Forest for Wales - The Woodland Investment Grant \(National Lottery Heritage Fund – Round 1\) | GOV.WALES](#)

Further information and applications can be made through the National Lottery Heritage Fund at the following link:

[The Woodland Investment Grant | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)



Coetiroedd Bach (Tiny Forests)

Coetiroedd Bach is linked to the Earthwatch Tiny Forest network and is part of the National Forest for Wales programme.

It provides funding to create Tiny Forests which have the potential to be part of the National Forest network. The funding helps sites to meet the National Forest for Wales Outcomes, enabling them to gain National Forest for Wales Status. It also provides comprehensive training from Earthwatch to create a Coetir Bach/ Tiny Forest and membership of the Tiny Forest network led by Earthwatch.

The National Forest for Wales Liaison Officers can provide support

and guidance for submitting applications to Coetiroedd Bach.

Information on Coetiroedd Bach can be found at the following link:

[Coetiroedd Bach \(Tiny Forests\) | GOV.WALES](#)

Further information and applications can be made through the National Lottery Heritage Fund at the following link:

[Coetiroedd Bach: Tiny Forests in Wales | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

Indicators

The Welsh Government is producing a set of indicators to help measure how the National Forest for Wales is developing and whether it is meeting its objectives. Once updated sites may be asked for information on how their woodlands contribute to these indicators.

More information on the indicators can be found at the following link:

[Woodlands Wales Indicators | GOV.WALES](#)





Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government