

Shropshire Hills AONB Conservation Fund 2021-22 Application Form

Please ensure you have read the guidelines for the Fund before filling in this form.

We hold personal information in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Office use: Reference	
Date received	Date acknowledged
Comments	
Approved?	Date
Applicant advised of outcome	Date

1. Contact details
Name of project: Hopton Castle Village Enhancement – Verge-side Flowers and Tree Planting
Name of Organisation: Hopton Castle Parish Meeting and Hopton Castle Preservation Trust in collaboration
Name of contact: Ted Laidlar
Daytime telephone number: 01547 530924
E-mail address: ted.laidlar123@btinternet.com
Website (if applicable): https://hoptoncastleparish.org and www.hoptoncastle.org.uk

2. What type of applicant are you?(mark all boxes that apply)			
Voluntary organisation		Private individual	
Public Sector	HCPM	Private company	
Registered charity	HCPT	Other (please state)	
	Yes	No	
Does your organisation have a formal constitution?	HCPM & HCPT		
Does your organisation have a bank account?	HCPM & HCPT		
Are you registered for VAT?		HCPM & HCPT	

3. What are the aims of your project? What do you want to achieve i.e. what are the project outcomes (end results)? Who will benefit from the project and how?

To enhance the village, approach roads and Castle grounds by planting wild flowers along the verges and on the Castle motte. To replace indigenous hard wood trees lost in the micro-burst of 12 August 2020 in the Castle grounds and to replace other trees lost in recent years to improve the attractiveness and bio-diversity value of the Castle grounds.

Local residents and visitors will benefit from these developments.

4. What is the need for the project and how have you identified it? (If possible show evidence of community support and links to broader strategies or policies, e.g. AONB Management Plan, Parish Plans).

At the Hopton Castle Parish Meeting (HCPM) in the autumn of 2020 the question was asked, "How can we collaborate with the Hopton Castle Preservation Trust (HCPT) to make our village more attractive for both residents and visitors?" A small collaboration committee was appointed and ideas were shared. Both groups have very limited funds but benefit from a number of fit and willing volunteers to undertake manual work. It has been resolved to enhance the village and the Castle grounds in such a way as to improve the bio-diversity, attract more birds, wild life and insects and make Hopton Castle a place of educational, historic and natural interest for visitors and the villagers alike.

5. What would the funding support?

What will the project actually do? What are its outputs? (at least some should be measurable)

How will the work be carried out, who will do it, when will it be done?

Does the project draw on best practice from elsewhere and/or trial new approaches?

Plans or drawings should be attached for any physical works, and other additional information as appropriate.

The fund would allow the purchase of a selection of native wild flowers and young indigenous hard wood saplings plus protective sleeves and materials to form fencing shields (as the castle grounds are grazed). The project will draw advice and species recommendations from Shropshire County Council AONB and Outdoors Pursuits sections, local farmers, Historic England and from the members of the Edgton group who have been successful in planting wild flowers along their roadside verges.

There are currently few if any wild flowers in the verges of the lanes leading into and through Hopton Castle apart from patches of snow drops and planted daffodil clumps so we would plan to take photographs "before" and "after" to demonstrate the success of wild flower planting.

We would like to plant a number of trees in and around the Castle grounds, subject to scheduled monument approval.

Both work projects would be carried out by local volunteers with the guidance and advice from Shropshire Hills AONB. The work would ideally be done in the spring/summer of 2021.

6. What expertise do you have and what partners will you be working with to undertake this work?

Please outline relevant experience and skills of key people involved in delivering the project (including volunteers and contractors if known), and your organisation's track record. Attach any background information about your organisation if appropriate.

Hopton Castle has a number of successful gardeners, some having won prizes for their exhibits in local shows. We would utilise this pool of expertise with the planting of both wild flowers and trees. One member of the HCPM and two trustees of the HCPT have planted fruiting orchards in their gardens over the last 10 years with appropriate supports and protective sleeves. Both groups have sustained records of arranging volunteer delivery of local works including litter picking, maintenance of the Castle grounds and clearance of the over-growth on the banks of the stream that runs through the village.

7. Where will the project be located? (site with Ordnance Survey Grid Reference, or extent of area)

Please see the sketch map attached indicating where the wild flowers and the trees would be planted.

8. Is any permission required before the scheme can be implemented?

(E.g. planning permission, land owner's permission). Please say what is needed, and whether it is already agreed or when it is expected to be agreed. Please attach a copy of any permissions already granted.

Both the HCPM and the HCPT have welcomed the collaborative plans to enhance the village and its environs. This application has, in principle, been approved by both the members of the HCPM and the trustees of the HCPT. The Trust has been advised that as the Castle grounds are a Scheduled Ancient Monument the tree planting will require Scheduled Monument Consent. Initial advice is that this will be gained and an application is being developed through consultation with Historic England. Final financial involvement, if any, would require the approval of the members of the HCPM and the trustees of the HCPT.

9. Timetable for project:

Likely start date (Month/Year) **May 2021**

Likely end date (Month/Year) **November 2021**

Which elements of the project are at risk of over-running the planned timescale?

The tree planting could over-run depending upon when the SMC is achieved but, should this cause a delay, it is not expected to run beyond the end of 2021.

Grants will normally only be made for activity within a particular Financial Year (April to the end of March). This may mean breaking down longer projects and making an application for the part of the work which can be completed within the Financial Year. If the Financial Year timing is really not suitable for your project, it is possible that alternative dates may be considered.

10. Project budget

Please fill this in on the separate spreadsheet

11. How will your project benefit the Shropshire Hills AONB and how does it link to the conservation priorities for the AONB?(see guidance for details)

The wild flower roadside verge and Castle motte planting will undoubtedly conserve and enhance the natural beauty, landscape and heritage of the Shropshire Hills AONB.

The tree planting will likewise improve immeasurably the natural attractiveness of the landscape in the valley and attract wildlife, birds and insects thereby adding to the bio-diversity of the area.

We have a number of school and college visits each year to the Castle and its grounds and the projects proposed would definitely make such visits of greater impact, educational value and general interest.

12. How will you evaluate the success of your project and what plans do you have to share the results with others? Evaluation and dissemination are important, and you may want to build some capacity in your project and its budget for this.

HCPT monitor the number of visitors to the Castle and both groups would anticipate an increase in numbers visiting the village and the Castle and its grounds as a result of completing these projects. The "before" and "after" photographs would be shared with other villages and action groups planning to carry out similar projects.

13. Who will maintain the completed project and how will this be funded in the future?

The members of the HCPM and the trustees of the HCPT will monitor the maintenance of the individual projects in the village and Castle grounds respectively and agree an annual joint programme of work to sustain the completed projects. This would include the collection and disposal of verge waste following hedge and verge trimming by the local farmers. Both groups have limited budgets but have expressed a desire to provide ongoing maintenance support for their respective areas.

Please read and sign the following statement:

"I certify that that all the information provided in this application is true to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any misleading statements whether deliberate or accidental could make the application invalid and therefore liable for the return of any money."

Signature

(Please note that emailing this completed form will be taken as an authorised signatory)

Name printed in block capitals:

EDWARD ROY LAIDLAR

Date:

Please return this completed application form by email to stephanie.hayes@shropshire.gov.uk

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Please tick the box if you would like your email address to be added to our newsletter mailing list.