Nature Networks Fund: £7.2million to protect Wales’



29 projects across Wales that help preserve some of our most loved species of animals and plants are receiving a share of a £7.2million grant fund.

We launched the Nature Networks Fund in March 2021 with the Welsh Government, to give a helping hand to Wales’ protected natural sites and wildlife habitats.

Grants ranging from £53,000 to £500,000 have been awarded to 29 projects tackling climate change and helping nature to thrive.

From grassland to woodland, from rivers to the coast, the projects receiving funding provide protection to more than 50 types of habitat. The sites offer crucial sanctuary to nearly 70 threatened species including butterflies, sand martins, ospreys and newts.



Credit: Back from the Brink

Protecting sharks

Project SIARC (Sharks Inspiring Action and Research with Communities), operating in Carmarthen Bay and Tremadog Bay, has received a £390,000 grant. They will use it to carry out conservation research on Wales' marine environment with a focus on sharks, skates and rays.

The collaborative project led by ZSL (Zoological Society of London) and Natural Resources Wales will catalyse links between fishers, researchers, communities and government to help safeguard these species and support a green recovery in Wales.

Reconnecting rivers

Swansea University has received £497,457 to help reconnect five iconic Atlantic salmon rivers in Wales (Western Cleddau, Eastern Cleddau, Usk, Tywi, Teifi). The project aims to reverse the impacts caused by habitat fragmentation, a leading loss of river biodiversity and responsible for the decline of salmon and other migratory fish.

Supporting the economy and communities

The funded projects also contribute significantly to the Welsh economy through tourism recreation, farming, fishing and forestry. The conservation work will support communities and provide important life-support services for everyone – including purifying drinking water and storing carbon.

> From restoring wetlands, to creating rich habitat for wildlife to flourish, it is vital that we preserve and rebuild our natural heritage.

Andrew White, Director of The National Lottery Heritage Fund in Wales



Preserving our natural heritage

Andrew White, Director of The National Lottery Heritage Fund in Wales, said: “From restoring wetlands to creating rich habitat for wildlife to flourish, it is vital that we preserve and rebuild our natural heritage. The Nature Networks scheme, in partnership with Welsh Government, will allow projects to carry out direct conservation which is essential in protecting our biodiversity, and will also increase public awareness of how and why we need to protect our future. ”

A stronger, greener, fairer Wales

Announcing the funding, Welsh Government Climate Change Minister Julie James said: “Places such as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Sites of Special Scientific Interest are hugely important to Wales’ wildlife and natural heritage and supporting them is vital if we are to achieve a stronger, greener fairer Wales.

“The funding Welsh Government has provided to the protected site network is a vital step in protecting and restoring these areas, and helping us to strengthen resilient ecological networks", she said.

“This means we have a better chance to enjoy our wildlife and beautiful national parks today and into the future, which we know pays dividends for our mental wellbeing.”

Find out more

See the full list of projects awarded funding.

We want all the projects we fund to reduce the effects of climate change, assist places and people to adapt to our changing planet, and to support nature's recovery across the UK. Find out how to consider environmental sustainability in your project.





Local Places for Nature Capital Fund



Green Valley Conservation and Heritage Project