



# Traditional Boundary Scheme

## Guidelines for Applicants

### 1. Introduction

Traditional field boundaries are a major part of the landscape character of the North York Moors National Park. They are also often of considerable wildlife value and important historic features. The North York Moors National Park Authority has developed the Traditional Boundary Scheme (TBS) to provide grant assistance towards the cost of rebuilding dry stone walls and planting or restoring hedges that are unlikely to be restored under existing agri-environment schemes.

The TBS is based on an agreement between the Applicant and the North York Moors National Park Authority ('the Authority'). In signing the Agreement the Applicant agrees to undertake the agreed environmental improvement works ('the Work(s)') in accordance with the guidelines given below. In return for the undertaking of this work, the Authority agrees to pay a grant to the Applicant.

### 2. Works eligible for grant aid under the Scheme

- The restoration of hedges using traditional methods such as laying, coppicing and associated new planting
- Planting new hedges
- The restoration of dry stone walls
- Fencing, top-netting or top-wiring where this is necessary to protect the boundary that has been created/restored as part of the Traditional Boundary Scheme

### 3. Maintenance Requirements

The Applicant must agree to maintain the work in a sound and reasonable condition for five years after completion of the work.

For hedges planted under the scheme, the Applicant must agree to control weeds during the first three years after planting as this is essential to ensure good growth and survival of hedge plants.

#### **4. Grant Payment**

Grant will be paid on the works agreed with the Applicant once the work is completed to the satisfaction of the National Park Officer. This may require a site visit by a representative of the Authority. The Applicant must complete the work and submit a claim form within the timescale set out in the agreement. The Authority will endeavour to make the grant payment within 6 – 8 weeks of the claim deadline given in the agreement. No grant can be paid for any work carried out prior to a signed offer of grant.

The costs used to calculate grant for the works will be based on standard costs set by the Authority and detailed in Section 10.

Claims for grant payment must be accompanied by a fully completed claim form that will be supplied by the Authority once it has received notification that the work is complete.

All works should be completed to the standards contained or referred to in the specifications issued by the Authority. Such specifications are provided with the Agreement and are also available on request.

#### **5. Eligibility**

To be eligible for the TBS the proposed work must meet the following criteria:

- The proposed work must be visible from a public road, right of way or access area.
- The applicant must not be in receipt of any other funding for the proposed work.
- The applicant must not have a statutory requirement or responsibility for carrying out the work (for example work must not form a condition of a planning consent).
- The proposed work must not relate to a feature that is included within an Environmental Stewardship Scheme or Countryside Stewardship Scheme (or other agri-environment scheme) for maintenance payments.

- The applicant must not have been in receipt of grant assistance from TBS for which the accumulated amount would exceed the maximum grant contribution of £2,000 per financial year.

Applications for work that involves only partial boundary restoration (i.e. 100m of wall repair on a derelict wall that is 150m in length) are not eligible. Applications must therefore seek to ensure the entire length of a boundary, from node to node, will be in good condition after restoration/planting. A node can be a gateway, an intersection with another boundary or some other acceptable break in the length of the boundary.

To be eligible the Applicant's land must be within the North York Moors National Park and the Applicant must demonstrate that they have secure tenure on the land for the duration of the Agreement (five years from agreement date).

Tenants applying in their own right must certify that they have notified their landlords of their intention of applying for grant aid and gained all necessary consents.

The TBS will not grant aid work that is re-claimable through an insurance policy.

## **6. Breach of the Agreement**

If the Applicant fails to carry out or maintain the work as set out in the Agreement, then all or part of the grant payment may be withheld or reclaimed at the Authority's discretion.

## **7. Statutory Requirements**

The TBS does not affect the requirement for any statutory consultations or notifications. These include, although not exhaustively, planning permission requirements, Environment Agency consultations, Environmental Impact Assessment requirements, felling licence requirements, Tree Preservation Orders, notification to Natural England of any operations affecting or adjacent to SSSIs and statutory obligations with regard to public rights of way.

## **8. Eligibility for Other Schemes**

The TBS does not automatically affect an Applicant's eligibility for other grants and subsidies. However, funding for the work covered by the agreement must not be claimed from any other source unless agreed in writing, in advance with the Authority.

Any land or features entered into an Agri Environment Scheme for which an annual payment is received will not be eligible for payments under the Traditional Boundary Scheme as this would constitute double funding.

## **9. Data Protection, Disclosure of Information & Freedom of Information**

The Authority is subject to the provisions of prevailing Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation and regulations. The information contained in and relating to your Agreement will be used by the Authority for administration, evaluation and monitoring purposes. The Authority reserves the right to disclose all information (including financial information) contained in and relating to your Agreement to the Owner and to other Public Authorities and Statutory Bodies. The Authority reserves the right to publish information about the Work and Grant covered by the Agreement. Such information may be in the form of a map.

## **10. Grant Rates**

Grant will only be payable on works included when the Agreement is drawn up and will be subject to any financial ceiling set at that time.

The level of grant aid to be offered for the conservation of traditional boundaries will not exceed the levels set out in the TBS Standard Payment Rates for that year.

## **11. Photographs**

Grant applications must be supported by a minimum of three photographs which appropriately show the entirety of restoration work needed. It is acceptable for the photographs to be close-ups of small sections of repair, but at least one photograph must attempt to show as much of the entire boundary as possible.

Upon completion of the Work, photographs must be submitted alongside the Grant Claim Form using the same criteria as above. Where possible photographs should be taken from the same location/angle to allow adequate comparison of completed work.