

## Introducing the Biodiversity Credits Scheme Pilot - Call for Projects

*What is the Biodiversity Credits Scheme?*

The Environment Bill includes clauses which will make the achievement of a gain in biodiversity mandatory for development subject to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under proposed mandatory<sup>1</sup> biodiversity net gain, when a developer cannot achieve at least 10% biodiversity net gain on their development site following application of the mitigation hierarchy, they will have the option to purchase biodiversity units from an offsite habitat market. If units cannot be sourced from local habitat markets, developers will be able to purchase their required units (as credits) which will be invested in habitat creation.

*What is the Biodiversity Credits Scheme Pilot?*

Natural England is leading a pilot which will support the design of the credits scheme by developing a biodiversity credit investment pipeline and payment structures to fund habitat provision.

One aspect of the pilot will involve a 'call for projects'. We are seeking to establish what is required in terms of cost (both time and financial) and outputs to get a project ready to receive credit investment. The aim of this element of the pilot is to support the design of the credit system by working with potential investment projects. At this stage it will not fund habitat creation or enhancement works on the ground.

The scope of this work is likely to involve working with projects to undertake biodiversity net gain calculations, developing management plans and setting out the required agreement

<sup>1</sup> Mandatory Net Gain is being proposed in the forthcoming [Environment Bill](#).  
[www.gov.uk/natural-england](http://www.gov.uk/natural-england)

**structures for habitat provision under mandatory biodiversity net gain.**

**Projects if viable, could then be available for habitat provision in the future.**

*How will the Call for Projects be run?*

**Natural England will be running a call for projects in mid-July 2020 where we will be asking interested parties to submit proposals for habitat provision projects. The project proposals will be assessed against a set of criteria and if successful, a selection of projects will be invited to be part of the Biodiversity Credits Scheme Pilot.**

**We expect this part of the pilot will run from October 2020 – February 2021. Further details on how it will be run and how to apply will be provided in an information pack which will accompany the formal call for projects.**

*Further Information*

**If you have any questions relating to the call for projects process, please contact:**

**[Stephanie Matthews](#) – Biodiversity Credits Scheme Pilot Coordinator**

**[Ingrid Chudleigh](#) – Biodiversity Credits Scheme Project Manager**