

The National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative – Information for Volunteers

The Ramblers has long campaigned to protect our special landscapes, including National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) from intrusive developments and damaging activities in order to preserve their beauty and tranquillity for public enjoyment. Above ground electricity cables, pylons and substations have been installed in some of these landscapes, which have detracted from their beauty.



National Grid is the company responsible for the national electricity transmission network across the UK, connecting electricity generating sites to electricity consumers. National Grid has been given funding by the energy regulator, Ofgem, to provide improvements which will benefit the landscape. Most of this money will be used in a large scale project, called Visual Impact Provision, to target a small number of sites with the highest visual impact, in National Parks and AONB.

However, some of the money has been earmarked for small scale enhancements, also in National Parks and AONBs, under scheme called the Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI). The key points of the LEI are outlined below.

Funding and timescale

- It started in May 2016 and will end in March 2021
- It has £24 million in funding to give to schemes (up to £4 million per year)
- We are expecting there to be two rounds of funding available in 2017, although there have been some delays

- Funding will be limited to 75% of total costs of each project up to maximum of £200,000 per application

Types of project which might be eligible

- It aims to reduce the visual impact of National Grid's existing infrastructure and improve the visual quality of the landscape
- It can fund works to screen or soften the views of electricity lines
- In many cases where it may not be possible to address the visual impacts of the electricity line directly so, to 'shift the balance' of the impacts, it may fund enhancements of the local environment in other ways
- It will only fund works within National Parks or AONBs

The application process

- Applications can only be submitted by AONBs or National Park Authorities (NPAs) but should demonstrate the active involvement or support of wider stakeholders and/or the local community. Ramblers volunteers can therefore take an active part in suggesting projects and helping with the application, but it needs to be submitted by the NPA or AONB authority.
- Each AONB or National Park can normally only submit a maximum of three applications in any one year (so they may wish to 'bundle' smaller schemes)
- Eligible projects could include, for example, localised tree planting to address impacts from particular views, gapping up of hedgerows, changes to trails, cycleways, footpaths, riding routes or other means of access (if all necessary consents are in place) and woodland or copse creation

[Full details of the scheme and the application process are available on National Grid's website...](#)

If you have any queries, please contact alison.hallas@ramblers.org.uk