



enhancing... improving... cleaning... restoring...
changing... tackling... protecting... reducing...
create a better place... influencing... inspiring...
advising... managing... adapting...

Wild Fishing Wales

Handbook for Delivery Agents

30th November 2010



Contents

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
2	INTRODUCTION	2
	2.1 Objectives of the Handbook.....	2
	2.2 The funding for the WFW Project	2
	2.3 WEFO Guidance Notes.....	2
	2.4 Eligibility of Applicants	3
3	ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE	3
	3.1 Definition of Eligible Expenditure.....	3
	3.2 Match Funding and Eligible Expenditure.....	3
	3.3 Key items of <u>Eligible</u> Expenditure for Improvement Projects.....	4
	3.4 Key items of <u>Ineligible</u> Expenditure for Improvement Projects	5
	3.5 In-Kind Contributions	5
	3.6 Timesheets	7
	3.7 Durability of Projects	7
4	PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR SUBCONTRACTING WORKS	7
	4.1 Guidance Notes	7
	4.2 Procurement Thresholds and Buy4Wales.....	7
	4.3 Sub-Contractor Checks	8
5	ACCOUNTING ARRANGEMENTS	8
	5.1 Advance Payments	8
	5.2 Retention.....	9
6	CLAIMS PROCESS	9
	6.1 Claiming Period.....	9
	6.2 The Delivery Profile.....	9
	6.3 Submitting an Invoice	9
	6.4 Evidence Requirements.....	10
	6.5 Rejection of Claimed Expenditure.....	10
	6.6 Payment of Claims	10
7	PROJECT DELIVERY	11
	7.1 Programme of Works	11
	7.2 Monthly Progress Reporting	11
8	AUDIT REQUIREMENTS AND RECORDS RETENTION	11
	8.1 Project Inspections	11
	8.2 Audits.....	12
	8.3 Retention of documents.....	12
9	MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SCHEMES	12
10	EQUIPMENT PURCHASING AND ASSET INVENTORIES	13
11	PUBLICITY	14
	11.1 Signage	14
12	CHANGE PROCESS	14
	12.1 Departure Request	15
13	TERMINOLOGY AND ACRONYMS	15

Document issue details:

Written by: Ben Wilson

Checked by: Ben Wilson

Reviewed by: Ben Wilson & Richard Hancox

Notice:

This report was prepared by the Environment Agency solely for use by the Environment Agency. This report is not addressed to and may not be relied upon by any person or entity other than the Environment Agency for any purpose without the prior written permission of EAW. EAW, its directors, employees and affiliated companies accept no responsibility or liability for reliance upon or use of this report (whether or not permitted) other than by the Environment Agency for the purposes for which it was originally commissioned and prepared.

In producing this report, EAW has relied upon information provided by others. The completeness or accuracy of this information is not guaranteed by EAW.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Environment Agency Wales (EAW) is working in partnership with the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) to deliver Wild Fishing Wales. This £2.6 million project will achieve sustained and measurable benefits for Wales by enhancing environmental quality and improving access to a network of river and still water fisheries throughout the Convergence Area of Wales.

The main outcome of the Wild Fishing Wales Project is to develop and make more accessible a network of river fishing beats and still waters by helping fisheries, angling clubs, landowners and rivers trusts to deliver access and habitat *improvement projects*.

This project is part of a wider strategic project called Communities and Nature (CAN), which is a £16m European Funded Project, managed by Countryside Council for Wales <http://www.ccw.gov.uk/enjoying-the-country/communities-and-nature.aspx>. The CAN Project aims to generate increased economic growth and sustainable jobs by capitalising on Wales' environmental qualities, particularly its landscape and wildlife. It is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), provided through the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

This Handbook has been created to provide guidance to Delivery Agents for the delivery of their proposed fishery habitat and access improvement projects and to communicate the requirements for this funding both by the Agency and the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO).

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Objectives of the Handbook

The handbook has been compiled to provide the delivery agents with the appropriate guidance and templates to undertake the Improvement Projects. It will also aide the Delivery Agent in understanding the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in the wider project and the requirements of participating in a project funded by European money.

2.2 The funding for the WFW Project

The Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) is part of the Welsh Assembly Government and manages the delivery of the European Union Structural Funds Programmes in Wales. Wild Fishing Wales is part of a wider strategic project called Communities and Nature (CAN), which is a £16m European Funded Project, managed by Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). CAN is part funded by the structural fund 'the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2007 – 2013 provided through the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

The Environment Agency Wales (EAW) is working in partnership with the Countryside Council for Wales to deliver Wild Fishing Wales. This £2.6 million project will achieve sustained and measurable benefits for Wales by enhancing environmental quality and improving access to a network of river and still water fisheries throughout the Convergence Area of Wales.

2.3 WEFO Guidance Notes

Reference is made to a number of guidance notes produced by WEFO in relation to the EU funding. It is imperative that the Delivery Agents read these documents and understand what is required of them for the delivery, auditing and ongoing maintenance of their proposed scheme.

These guidelines are available on WEFO's website:

<http://wefo.wales.gov.uk>

The WEFO guidelines refer to terms like Project Sponsor, which may not be the correct term in regards to your project. For simplicity, assume that the requirements noted for Project Sponsors to undertake are also responsibilities that Delivery Agents will also need to take on. If you require further interpretation of these documents and the use of terminology, please contact the Wild Fishing Wales Project Manager for clarification.

Where information in addition to the guidance notes or clarification of the notes in the context of your Agreement with the Agency is required, this has been included in the Handbook text.

We note that the WEFO guidelines may change from time to time. We will advise you of any of these changes as soon as we become aware of them but also recommend that you monitor the information on the WEFO website from time to time.

2.4 Eligibility of Applicants

Delivery Agent organisations may come from either the public, private or third sector. For the purposes of seeking funds, the third sector is defined as non-governmental organisations which are value-driven and which principally reinvest their surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives. It includes voluntary and community organisations, charities and trusts, social enterprises, co-operatives and mutuals.

All Delivery Agents must be able to evidence their legal constitution.

If a delivery agent is an individual, they must comply with section 2.4 of the Welsh National Rules on the Eligibility of Expenditure for the 2007-2013 Structural Funds Programme.

3 ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENDITURE

For full details on eligibility of expenditure, refer to the following guidance note available on WEFO's website:

[Welsh National Rules on the Eligibility of Expenditure for the 2007 – 2013 Structural Funds Programmes](#)

The following excerpts and additions are included below for Delivery Agents to make particular note of.

3.1 Definition of Eligible Expenditure

Expenditure is eligible if it has actually been incurred and paid out prior to making a claim. Expenditure is considered eligible if it has been paid between the period when the Agreement between the Agency and the delivery agent is signed and at the end of the defects period which shall be no later than September 2013. As a general rule, all expenditure incurred before the signing of the Agreement is considered ineligible.

For the purposes of evidencing your expenditure, "paid" is defined as when a cheque has been cashed or a payment transaction has been cleared from the organisations bank account. There must be a clear audit trail from the claim form, through to source documents (supporting invoices, records), bank statements, organisational ledgers/accounting system.

Expenditure will normally be in the form of 'cash' supported by receipted invoices or accounting documents of equivalent probative value e.g. salaries must be supported by payroll records, BACS lists and bank statements. There must be an electronic record of the expenditure being paid out of the Organisation's bank account as well as evidence in the form of a receipt or invoice of who received the payment.

3.2 Match Funding and Eligible Expenditure

The WEFO requirements for Contracts involving match funding are more complex than traditional contracts because full evidence must be provided showing that the match funding component has been defrayed. Therefore it is critical that all expenditure that a Delivery Agent will claim is

- Eligible under the Welsh Eligibility Rules described above; and
- Fully supported by auditable documents to support the value claimed

It is the Delivery Agent's responsibility to provide:

- Transaction lists to support the overall costs incurred in the delivery of the contract

- Documentation to support the value of the match funding has been delivered
- The services or goods in line with the contract.

The Agency will be performing due diligence on all claims provided which may include checks of accounts, invoices and bank statements. The following is an indicative list of evidence required to support expenditure.

Costs Claimed	Award Procedure
Staff costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary details via payslips or payroll systems reports • Timesheets • Bank statements to prove defrayment
Capital Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent independent valuation • Invoices • Bank statements to prove defrayment
Materials/Revenue Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invoices • Bank statements to prove defrayment

For full details on requirements for evidence of expenditure in the case of Delivery agents contributing match funding, refer to the following guidance note available on WEFO's website:

[Guidance Note on Procurement with Match Funding \(version 1 – September 2009\)](#)

3.3 Key items of Eligible Expenditure for Improvement Projects

Eligible expenditure can include costs related to the execution of a construction contract, environmental works, specialist treatments, security provision and signage including acknowledgement of the Structural Funds contribution to the project. The inclusion of contingency sums in building contracts will be subject to a detailed appraisal.

The purchase of equipment is eligible providing that there is a clear link with the delivery of the project. In the case of moveable equipment there must be an assurance that the equipment is for the sole use of the project and the benefit is maintained in the Programme area. **All equipment must be properly procured.**

In cases where items of equipment have been purchased, an inventory must be retained for audit purposes. Equipment with an asset life of less than one year can be regarded as a revenue cost. Discounts given on the purchase of items of equipment cannot be included as match funding.

Professional/Consultancy Fees and Sub-Contractors Charges

Expenditure for work carried out by a consultant or sub-contractor is eligible if the work is essential to the project and the costs are in WEFO's opinion reasonable. All consultancy fees and sub-contractors costs must be properly procured in accordance with good practice and relevant procurement rules and regulations.

Where consultancy fees and contractors charges have been subject to an approved tender process, the market rate resulting from that exercise may be included for support, provided the original tender is no more than 3 years old. Consultancy fees can include legal, technical, accountancy and audit services which are required for the delivery of the

project. Expenditure associated with the payment of consultants who provide support in completion of application / claim forms and with management fees are not eligible.

Any fees in relation to the above that are defrayed prior to MOA signing are deemed as ineligible under Wild Fishing Wales. If a project wishes to use any of the above eligible professional/consultancy and or sub contractor fees during the life of the project then this must be indicated within the PQQ and Tender documents and approval must be sought for this. Where this has not been indicated and not approved during tendering any costs associated with the above will not be eligible for claim.

3.4 Key items of **Ineligible Expenditure for Improvement Projects**

In addition to ineligible items listed in the Welsh National Rules on the Eligibility of Expenditure, the following activities will not be eligible for funding under Wild Fishing Wales:

- Repair and Maintenance of existing schemes/work
- Project feasibility work
- Dredging including gravel extraction
- Purchase or lease of land
- Purchase or lease of fishing rights
- Fish stocking
- Stock bridges over rivers/water courses larger than 8 metres so as to minimise environmental impact and costly engineering design.
- Bid preparation costs
- The construction of in river stone structures, e.g. groins, with the sole purpose of creating fishing pools
- Landowner compensation
- Water quality improvement projects including liming

This list is not exhaustive and may be refined from time to time by WEFO. EAW will endeavour to advise applicants of any changes to WEFO conditions as we are made aware of them. However, we recommend you also review WEFO's website for updates.

The WEFO guidance note provides a number of cases where expenditure may be considered eligible. However, not all of these costs will be eligible for the Delivery Agent to claim as it has not been included in the overall Wild Fishing Wales Delivery Profile. To make the claims process faster and to avoid the risk of having expenditure deemed ineligible, we recommend that all expenditure in your financial schedule to consist mainly of

- Direct construction costs (materials, equipment, sub-contracts)
- Voluntary work as in-kind contributions

3.5 In-Kind Contributions

As noted above, eligible expenditure will be largely in the form of cash payments. The one exception is in-kind contributions which will be considered as eligible expenditure provided that their value can be **independently assessed and audited**.

Delivery Agents may include in-kind contributions as part of their financial contribution to the project costs in the form of **unpaid volunteer work**. In the case of unpaid voluntary work, the value of the work is determined taking into account the amount of time spent and the normal hourly and daily rate for the work carried out. In-kind contributions must always be supported by a complete audit trail.

Please refer to the following Guidance note available on WEFO's website for further details:

[Guidance Note on Match Funding in-kind \(version 1.0 May 2009\)](#)

In-kind contributions can be made where members of the Applicant organisation contribute their own time and skills on a voluntary basis to deliver part of the project e.g. planning, attending meetings, putting up stiles or laying paths. Signed and authorised time sheets will be required as evidence for time spent. Where in-kind contributions are used, the contributors must be suitably qualified to undertake the task. The standard rates for voluntary in kind contributions, as confirmed by the Welsh Assembly Government's Stats Office are:

£20.25 per hour Project Manager
£15.48 per hour Project Researcher
£13.48 per hour Project Coordinator
£12.61 per hour Trainer
£9.37 per hour Project Administrator
£10.67 per hour Self employed (sole traders/partnerships)
£5.73 per hour Unskilled Labour (22 years of age plus)
£4.77 per hour Unskilled Labour (18 to 21 inclusive)
£3.53 per hour Unskilled Labour (under the age of 18*)

Please note: The above rates are subject to change. Any changes to the above provided from Government will be passed on to delivery agents and thus affect future claims.

*under the age of 18 and no longer of compulsory school age i.e. a person is no longer of compulsory school age after the last Friday of June of the school year in which their 16th birthday occurs

These are the agreed notional costs to be used as acceptable rates for voluntary work. The rates have been confirmed by the Welsh Assembly Government's Stats Office and are based on the 2008 'New Earnings Survey' (published November 2008).

Where in-kind contributions are used (by volunteers) the individual(s) must be qualified/certified to the standard relevant to the task in order to ensure that the minimum standard is met for works and that organisational liabilities for insurance purposes are satisfied.

The inclusion of costs of more specialist and technical roles as in-kind match-funding would need to be agreed with WEFO before the activity commenced. The project would be expected to keep clearly documented justification for the specialist and for the agreed salary rate used for the purposes of in-kind match-funding.

Time sheets should be maintained to support the hours claimed towards the project and should be signed by the volunteer and employer. Only persons acting in a wholly voluntary capacity will be eligible. Where an employee of the project performs additional 'voluntary' duties these will not be eligible as in-kind match-funding.

Please note that landowner time is not considered as volunteer time for in-kind contribution as the land owner is a beneficiary.

3.6 Timesheets

Signed timesheets must be completed for both paid staff time and volunteer in-kind contribution time. The costs that will be paid for staff time will comprise of the staff salary component plus National Insurance and Pension where applicable. In addition to timesheets, these costs must be evidenced through payslips and bank statements. The rates for in-kind contribution to be used are shown above. Detail must be given on the timesheets regarding the specific project activity undertaken by individuals for the time being claimed. A copy of the timesheet template will be made available on request to successful tenderers.

3.7 Durability of Projects

In order to ensure the durability of projects co-financed by the Structural Funds there is an obligation to maintain the investment. Delivery agents are required to inform EAW of any substantial modification to their project within **5 years of its completion** which:-

- affects its nature or its implementation conditions or gives to a firm or public body an undue advantage: and
- results either from a change in the nature of ownership of an item of infrastructure or the cessation of a productive activity

The failure to maintain the investment will result in recovery of the structural funds and Agency contribution. This means that the Delivery Agent will be required to pay back 80% of the total eligible project costs.

4 PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR SUBCONTRACTING WORKS

4.1 Guidance Notes

Details on procurement requirements for the project are shown in the following guidance note available on WEFO's website:

[Guidance on Sponsorship, Partnership, Procurement and Grants \(version 2.1\)](#)

The Welsh Assembly Government follows a 'procurement procedure' to ensure value for money and fairness, and Delivery Agents must follow the procedures and recommendations outlined in this document listed above. Works must be bid for in a competitive environment through Buy4Wales. Quotes or tenders must be evaluated and the most economically advantageous tender accepted, rejecting those that do not offer value for money.

4.2 Procurement Thresholds and Buy4Wales

The Assembly Government operates a graduated set of procedures which recognises the need to lighten administrative requirements for contracts involving smaller amounts. The procedures followed by the Assembly Government, according to the size of contract, are those that we would expect delivery agents to adhere to and are as follows:

Contract value (excl VAT)	Quotes/Tenders required	Award Procedure
£4,999.00 or below	1 written Quote	Purchase Order
£5,000 to £24,999.99	3 written Quotes	Purchase Order

£25,000 to £ 156,442	Formal Tender Process. Minimum of 3 Bids	Contract Award Letter
£156,442 plus	EU Procurement Process for goods and services	Contract Award Letter
£ 3,927,260 plus	EU Procurement Process for Works Contracts	Contract Award Letter

These figures are correct as of 1st Jan 2010 **

www.buy4wales.co.uk is the portal through which competition should be sourced. Delivery Agents will be required source suppliers through this facility when undertaking activity against the thresholds noted. Further information on using Buy4Wales and interpretation of the procurement thresholds is available in the abovementioned WEFO guidance note.

For reference, the requirements for Contracts or orders up to £4,999 excluding VAT are listed below:

- No competition is required provided the delivery agent is content they're obtaining value for money
- A quotation, in writing, must however, be obtained from a single supplier, this supplier being sourced from www.buy4wales.co.uk.
- The written details must specify the nature of the service or works, the company name and address, the price quoted and the date of quote.
- The quotation should be placed and kept on a file.
- The order should be placed using a Purchase Order.

4.3 Sub-Contractor Checks

Where you are subcontracting works for your improvement project and need to seek quotations from potential suppliers, we recommend that these quotations are provided to the Agency for review and advice. The Agency will be able to run checks for these organisations against Health and Safety and financial performance which will provide both you and the Agency with greater confidence that the works will be completed as required.

5 ACCOUNTING ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Advance Payments

Delivery Agents from the 3rd sector (Voluntary and private non-profit making organisations) may be entitled to claim payment of 35% of the total project cost in advance. If this applies, it will be agreed during the tender stage and reflected in the Delivery Profile. Once your project has started, and you have signed an Agreement with EAW, you can apply for your initial payment by completing an initial claim.

When completing subsequent claims you will be required to report defrayed expenditure against payment received for the previous claim period. Before any further claims are paid out, you will need to evidence that you have spent at least the value of the upfront payment. Payments from then on will be on the basis of incurred and suitably evidenced expenditure.

5.2 Retention

The Agency will retain 5% against all claims which shall be released at a time at least 12 months after the completion date once the defects inspection has occurred and any defects found have been rectified. The retention will be withheld until the Project has been completed to the Agency's satisfaction and a satisfactory final claim form and audit certificate have been provided to EAW. Where a project underspends, the match funds will be reduced accordingly and retention will apply to 5% of the re-calculated funds due.

6 CLAIMS PROCESS

6.1 Claiming Period

Claims are to be submitted monthly. A claim timetable will be provided to the Delivery Agent following contract award and this timetable must be strictly adhered to by the Delivery Agent.

Claim forms will be issued by EAW and must be submitted to EAW by the date specified on the claim form. Claims must reflect expenditure defrayed for the relevant claim period.

The DA must fully complete and submit claims at the specified intervals even if no new expenditure has been defrayed and no payment is being claimed. This is to ensure that both EAW and WEFO receive regular information on progress and to monitor the Project's activities.

You will also be required to submit a Transaction List to support expenditure claimed and a Progress Report with a short description of progress on the project during the relevant claim period. Further guidance and templates for claims will be provided following contract award.

6.2 The Delivery Profile

The Project is expected to defray expenditure and receive income in line with the approved Delivery Profile. The Delivery Profile will be compiled from the data submitted in the financial schedule with the tender. This will be closely monitored by EAW as part of the claims process and full explanations must be provided where progress (expenditure, income or outputs) is not in line with the Delivery Profile and/or where categories of expenditure fall outside acceptable tolerances (typically 10%).

You must inform EAW of the actual date on which expenditure was first incurred when submitting the first claim for payment and subsequently of any proposed change to either the Project Completion Date or the Financial Completion Date. Any change that impacts upon the delivery of the Project as reflected in the Delivery Profile will involve a re-evaluation of the Project by EAW.

6.3 Submitting an Invoice

Once your claim has been received and reviewed, you will receive advice from the Agency of the approved amount for the claim and the amount that you should raise your invoice for. There may be some discrepancies between what you claim for and what you are asked to invoice for due to:

- You will only be paid for 80% of the total cost as the remaining 20% is your contribution. Please note however that we do require evidence of expenditure of the full amount and not just the amount you will be paid.

- A 5% retention will be withheld in line with WEFO's guidance until the end of the defects period and the Agency is satisfied that works have been completed and any defects corrected.
- The Agency may view that you have tried to claim for an expenditure which is ineligible according to WEFO's requirements, or you may have not provided sufficient evidence to support the expense. This item will be removed from the amount to be invoiced.
- WEFO may have advised that an item you claimed on a previous claim is actually ineligible and therefore the Agency will reduce the amount paid in a subsequent invoice by this amount. In the instance where WEFO has held back payment on an item as it is waiting for detail, the Agency will then only reimburse you for this cost when the item has been approved by WEFO and the Agency has been paid by WEFO the ERDF contribution for the item.

6.4 Evidence Requirements

All payments should be supported by receipted invoices, or where this cannot be done, by accounting documents of equivalent probative value.

Evidence will be required that the money has left your organisation's bank account for the payment. Invoices alone may not be sufficient. It is recommended that cash payments are avoided as there will not be a clear record of money leaving your organisation's bank account for the payment.

Bank statements will be required with each claim in addition to all invoices and receipts as evidence of costs defrayed for the project. For data protection purposes, we request you black out the bank account number and sort code on the bank statements you provide.

If you are claiming staff costs for your project, you will need to provide payslips and bank statements showing where the pay has left the organisation's bank account. Please make sure to black out staff member's National Insurance Numbers when submitting payslips.

6.5 Rejection of Claimed Expenditure

EAW reserves the right to withhold payment on certain items in the claim if in its opinion it does not believe that the item satisfies WEFO's conditions for eligible expenditure. For these items, if WEFO chooses to accept the expenditure as eligible, EAW will pay on receipt of funds from WEFO.

We note that if one claim is subsequently rejected by EAW although this has already been paid to the DA by EAW, the EAW can reduce the following claim due to the DA by the amount rejected by WEFO in the previous claim. The money will only be reimbursed to the DA if and when WEFO has accepted the expenditure as eligible and sufficiently evidenced.

6.6 Payment of Claims

Approved invoices will be paid directly into the Delivery Agent's nominated bank account by BACS payment. On project award, please contact EAW so that necessary banking instructions can be put in place.

The Agency complies with Central Government Policy which requires payment of invoices 10 working days. We will endeavour to meet this timeframe for the Wild Fishing Wales project, where payment will occur within 10 working days of receipt of your invoice, following an approved claim with all required evidence supporting the claim.

7 PROJECT DELIVERY

7.1 Programme of Works

Improvement Projects may be either of 12 months or 24 months duration depending on the scope of works. You will be required to indicate your outline programme of works in the activity schedule included in tender return. All works must be finished by the completion date shown in the tender document unless approval is sought from EAW, which will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

During the project inception phase (following project award), the Agency will be working with Delivery Agents to develop a more detailed programme of works. It is intended that a toolkit be provided so that all delivery agents have the ability to follow a generic method for delivery making it easier to control progress and project issues where applicable. This means reviewing the various milestones and detailing what work elements need to feature in the programme. The activity schedule or project plan as it is normally known should be populated indicating realistic dates for delivery, and also identifying where works are being undertaken on a concurrent basis.

The plan will provide a roadmap for the project and assist you in identifying where activities are delayed and allow you to make decisive counter actions to reduce the project slipping or failing to deliver at the earliest convenience. The plan also provides a series of end points that will inevitably provide a driver towards completion.

7.2 Monthly Progress Reporting

A progress report must be supplied with every claim form submitted. Failure to submit this information will result in claim payments being withheld.

The purpose of the report is to be able to monitor project progress and obtain information on any risks to the delivery of the programme. The Progress Report template can be found on the WEFO website and will need to be submitted with the claim via the 'Submit Claim Document' (see section 12 of this guidance).

8 AUDIT REQUIREMENTS AND RECORDS RETENTION

8.1 Project Inspections

Project inspection visits and audits are critical to ensuring that your project is being delivered in line with WEFO regulations and is achieving what it set out to do for the benefit of Wales.

As well as an inception meeting, project quarterly reviews, and checks on payment claims during your project's lifecycle, EAW will undertake project inspections to help minimise any operational and management problems arising in projects.

In line with European Regulations, financial monitoring and control checks (i.e. audits) of a sample of projects are also undertaken by the European Funds Branch of the Assembly Government's Finance department, which acts as the Audit Authority for the Structural Funds in Wales.

Overall, the main reason for these project inspection visits and checks/audits is to share best practice and ensure that projects:

- comply with European Regulations and the conditions of the funding;
- apply effective management and control systems; and
- have in place a full transparent audit trail, including retention of supporting documentation.

EAW will aim to prepare you for the chance of audit by WEFO, however it is the Delivery Agent's responsibility to ensure that its accounts are in order on a day to day basis and that the works being undertaken are in compliance with the European Regulations and EC Guidelines.

8.2 Audits

The Delivery Agent will be required to submit annual and final Audits/Accountant's Reports to EAW to certify expenditure claimed in respect of the Project. Audits must be undertaken by a suitably qualified external Reporting Accountant and it is the Delivery Agent's responsibility to commission and pay for this work (although audit costs are eligible for funding from the Structural Funds if approved as part of the Project).

However, WEFO reserves the right to commission quality assurance work in respect of Reporting Accountants who undertake Structural Funds audits. The Delivery Agent must seek advice from WEFO through EAW before appointing/commissioning a Reporting Accountant.

The audit timetable will be based on the anniversary of the start of the project and at financial completion. Annual audit reports must be submitted within 6 weeks of the period that is subject to audit. A Final Audit/Accountant's Report must be submitted within 3 months of the Financial Completion Date. It is therefore essential that the Delivery Agent makes early arrangements for Reporting Accountants to visit / inspect the Project in order to comply with these requirements. Annual claims will not be paid without a corresponding Audit/Accountant's Report and failure to submit a final Audit/Accountant's Report within 3 months of the Financial Completion date will result in the retention of the final 5% of your payment and may lead to recovery of the WEFO component of the payment.

8.3 Retention of documents

It is a requirement of the project to retain original documents in a suitable format until at least the year 2021. For delivery agents, this documentation could include items like contracts, subcontracts, invoices, claims and monitoring and evaluation plans and data.

The Agency will be retaining these documents on behalf of the Delivery Agents, therefore we request you provide the original copies of these documents when they become available.

9 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SCHEMES

EAW must submit a monitoring and evaluation plan to WEFO for the whole of the Wild Fishing Wales project. You will be expected to submit data regarding your scheme for monitoring and evaluation purposes throughout the course of the Wild Fishing Wales project for incorporation into this document. The frequency of these submissions is likely to be quarterly.

The monitoring indicators identified for WFW and the CAN project are:

1. Number of visits
2. Number of jobs created (as defined by WEFO)
3. Income generated
4. Enterprises created
5. Initiatives created to develop the natural environment
6. Length of access created.

The Agency also requires other data to be provided from you to be able to measure improvements against project objectives and the cross cutting themes.

The data to be collected includes:

- Historic rod ticket sales data (2005-2010 for your fishery to provide a baseline for the improvement works. This should include the numbers sold each year and the income from these sales.
- Rod ticket sales after the completion of the works for a minimum of 5 years so that we can monitor increased visits and income. This should include the numbers sold each year and the income from these sales.
- Kilometres of access improved and upgraded through your project.
- Kilometres of **new** access created through your project.
- Number of jobs created by your scheme (if applicable).
- Site fuel use, vehicle fuel use and electricity use on your site on a quarterly basis during operation. Templates will be provided to assist the measurement of this data.
- Data relating to level of community engagement in your project for example the number of staff, volunteers or disadvantaged people who have been involved or trained as part of your project and any promotional events you may have held.
- The number of enterprises and initiatives you have created through your project. (We anticipate that this will typically be either one or zero for most improvement projects).

The Agency may also from time to time until the year 2021 visit your scheme to collect data for monitoring and evaluation purposes. CCW and external evaluators employed by CCW may also from time to time visit your scheme to collect monitoring and evaluation data.

For further information, please refer to the following guidance note available on WEFO's website:

[Project and Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance](#)

10 EQUIPMENT PURCHASING AND ASSET INVENTORIES

The purchase of equipment is eligible providing that there is a clear link with the delivery of the project. In the case of moveable equipment there must be an assurance that the equipment is for the sole use of the project and the benefit is maintained in the programme area. All equipment must be properly procured.

In cases where items of equipment have been purchased, an inventory must be retained for audit purposes. You will be required to hold and maintain an asset inventory for all assets purchased with project funds. You shall provide copies of this inventory and updates on a quarterly basis to the Agency for incorporation into a whole WFW Inventory.

11 PUBLICITY

In line with the EU information and publicity requirements, it is essential to promote the achievements that the European Structural Funds programmes are making in Wales. Key publicity activities for the whole WFW project may include press releases, Ministerial visits, official launches, as well as the use of commemorative plaques, billboards, brochures and other publicity materials.

The majority of the publicity for the Wild Fishing Wales project will be coordinated centrally by the WFW Marketing Officer. If you wish to publicise your completed project in addition to the promotion undertaken by EAW, please communicate with EAW in the first instance to ensure that your intentions do not contravene WEFO's requirements or duplicate EAW's work.

For further information, please refer to the following guidance note available on WEFO's website:

[Information and Publicity Guidelines 2007 – 2013 \(version 3, February 2009\)](#)

Further to project award, EAW will advise on the use of logos to acknowledge the funding partners, as well as the requirements to install billboards and commemorative plaques. In brief, all projects will be required to display (via publicity material, plaques, billboards, stationery etc), the ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) logo, depending on the delivery of operations. All infrastructure or construction projects, must erect a billboard at the site during the construction phase and following completion of the works, the Delivery Agent will be required to display a permanent commemorative plaque. Bi-lingual commemorative plaques, will be distributed, free of charge, by WEFO to all Delivery Agents.

In line with the Assembly Government's Welsh Language Scheme and *Iaith Pawb*, the National Action Plan for a bilingual Wales, where possible, all publicity activity relating to your project should be bilingual. In addition, greater awareness of the environment and sustainable development should be carefully considered in the production of printed literature and use of recyclable materials.

11.1 Signage

Signage will be an important part of both the promotion of the project and improving access to the fishing. Detailed guidance on the specification for signage will be provided after project award. As a minimum, you must consider the requirement for bilingual signs and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance where appropriate.

12 CHANGE PROCESS

The tender price is deemed to be inclusive of all project risks, for example weather, unknown ground conditions or unchartered services. No additional costs will be considered eligible unless raised and approved by EAW

Any change to the works, financial schedule, and programme outlined in the tender documentation as well as changes to the Delivery Profile are subject to a change process. The change will be accepted by either CCW or WEFO depending on the magnitude of the change. Templates will be provided on request by EAW for change requests. The risk of non-acceptance of the change lies with the Delivery Agent.

12.1 Departure Request

A Departure Request is required in instances where the Delivery Agent wishes to use a pre-existing contract they have with a supplier. A Departure Form must be completed and submitted to EAW who will pass it onto CCW/WEFO for approval. The purpose of the form is to prove that an appropriate procurement method was used to form the contract and that it offers good value for money to not retender for the service. A copy of this form may be provided on request by EAW.

We note that this process may take a couple of months to gain approval, so if the contract you have in place is of low value or there are other suppliers able to tender for the works, we recommend that you undertake a new procurement process in line with WEFO's Procurement Guidance note named below. A copy of the guidance note is available on WEFO's website.

[Guidance on Sponsorship, Partnership, Procurement and Grants \(version 2.1\)](#)

13 TERMINOLOGY AND ACRONYMS

Project Applicant – The person or company tendering for improvement works funding.

Delivery Agent – The company or person leading the delivery of the improvement works.

Improvement Projects – projects undertaken as a part of the Wild Fishing Wales project which will provide improvements to both access and habitat for fishing beats.

The Agency – The Environment Agency Wales

ERDF - European Regional Development Fund

ESF – European Social Fund

DA – Delivery Agent

EAW – Environment Agency Wales

EU – European Union

CCW – Countryside Council for Wales

WEFO – Welsh European Funding Office

CAN - Communities and Nature Project

SFP – Sustainable Fisheries Programme

WAG – Welsh Assembly Government