

# Claims and payments

**This is an old version of the page**

**Date published: 22 February, 2022**

**Date superseded: 8 January, 2024**

For recent changes to this guidance, please see the [bottom of the page](#) .

## Table of Contents

[Claim years available](#)

[Making a claim](#)

[Capital items](#)

[Annual management claims](#)

[Payments](#)

[Inspections](#)

[Previous versions](#)

[Download guidance](#)

## Claim years available

Our approach to claim years depends on the grant type, which are detailed below.

This approach has been structured to ensure applications go through the competitive clearing process and, at the same time, manage the grant budget without a long forward booking of projects.

<b>Woodland Creation</b>	Capital such as fencing and initial planting – up to three claim years (i.e. within N+2, where N = the current calendar year at time of application submission) with work having to start in the first two years, e.g. apply in 2016, start work in 2016 with further work in claim years 2017 and 2018. Alternatively, apply in 2016, start work in year 2017 and complete in 2018.
<b>Agroforestry</b>	As for Woodland Creation – up to three claim years (within N +2, where N = the current calendar year at time of application submission) with work having to start in the first two years.
<b>Woodland Improvement Grant</b>	Up to three claim years (within N+2, where N = the current calendar year at time of application submission) with work having to start in the first two years, except for Woodland Improvement Grant – Restructuring Regeneration where a delay until year three is acceptable to meet species diversity rules.
<b>Sustainable Management of Forests</b>	The next claim year (N+1 year) is available as the first annual management claim year.
<b>Tree Health</b>	The current and next year claim year (within N+1 where N = the current calendar year at time of application submission).
<b>Harvesting &amp; Processing</b>	One claim year available (within N, where N = the calendar year of the application round).
<b>Forest Infrastructure</b>	One claim year available (within N, where N = the calendar year of the application round).
<b>Forestry Co-operation</b>	One claim year available (within N, where N = the calendar year of the application round).

## Making a claim

Claims for payment can be made either by you as the scheme beneficiary or an accountable person acting on your behalf.

An accountable person must be registered and mandated on the [PF05 - Business mandate form](#) before we can accept a claim from them on your behalf.

Although an accountable person can claim on your behalf, any errors on the claim that may result in us seeking to recover payments or impose a financial penalty will be applied against you as the holder of the contract. You should therefore make sure that your claim details are correct before a claim is submitted.

You can only claim for the items set out in your contract once your work has been completed.

There are two types of claims:

- capital claims
- annual management claims

## Capital items

Capital items can be supported on either a standard cost or actual cost basis.

For more information on actual costs, refer to our more [detailed guidance](#).

Capital items are available in:

- all the Woodland Improvement Grant options
- all the Woodland Creation options
- Tree Health
- Harvesting and Processing
- Forest Infrastructure
- Forestry Co-operation

For capital items, you can only claim for the area / length / quantity actually completed and you cannot exceed the amounts indicated in your contract or exceed what is on the ground. If you, or your accountable person, claim for work that has not been completed we will consider this as an overclaim and breaches and penalties may apply.

Any capital expenditure incurred before your contract has been agreed will not be eligible for payment.

### **Timing of claims**

Your claim year is the year you apply to carry out your capital works. We fund these activities from our financial year's budget of 1 April in the claim year to the 31 March in the year following your claim year.

Claims for capital items must be submitted by the end of March of the following calendar year, of the year stipulated in your contract.

So, if you have a claim year of 2021 in your contract, your works must be initiated in 2021 and your claim must be submitted when the works have been completed and before 31 March 2022. If you finish your works before your claim year begins (i.e. in January through March 2022 for works you have a 2022 claim year for), then you should contact your local Conservancy to see if you can get the claim year varied forward to 2021. If this cannot be done (e.g. there is no budget headroom in the previous year) then you may submit your claim (provided you have a signed Forestry Grant Scheme contract) but please be aware that we will be unable to authorise your payment until April 2022.

Currently, we are running a manual capital claims process. You must submit a manual claim form to a Scottish Forestry conservancy office. There is a Standard Costs Capital Items Claim Form with guidance and an Actual Costs Capital Items Claim Form with guidance available below.



[Standard Costs Capital Items Claim Form \(PDF, Size: 286.2 kB\)](#)

doc\_external\_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/FGS-Standard-Costs-Capital-Items-Claim-form-SF-v2-0.pdf>



[Standard Costs Capital Items Claim Form - guidance notes \(PDF, Size: 217.4 kB\)](#)

doc\_external\_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/0040---FGS-Standard-Costs-Capital-Items-Claim-form-Guidance-notes---SF.pdf>



[Actual Costs Capital Items Claim Form \(PDF, Size: 357.4 kB\)](#)

doc\_external\_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/FGS-Actual-Costs-Capital-Items-Claim-form---SF-v2-0.pdf>



[Actual Costs Capital Items Claim Form – guidance notes \(PDF, Size: 360.2 kB\)](#)

doc\_external\_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/0041---FGS-Actual-Costs-Capital-Items-Claim-form-Guidance-notes---SF.pdf>

It is your responsibility to ensure that you submit your claim by the deadline set out in this guidance. We will not write to you in advance of the closing date to remind you.

If you submit a claim after that period it will not be accepted unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevented your claim being submitted.

If you are unable to undertake the work in the year designated in your contract then you must write to us requesting a variation. Please be aware of dependencies within the eligibility rules of the capital items in your contract before you make a claim and/or variation request. In some situations you may not be able to claim for work until interdependent works have been completed.

Examples:

- **Gorse Removal**  
This is for the removal of gorse to clear land ahead of initial planting, or initial planting with ploughing, to create new woodland. The Gorse removal work must be claimed in the same claim year as the initial planting capital item and they must be claimed together on the same claim form.
- **Bracken Control**  
This is for the control of bracken to clear land no more than 1 year ahead of tree planting to create new woodland; or exceptionally during the year of planting. The bracken control work cannot be claimed after the initial planting of the area(s) being cleared.

### Supporting documents

For the options and items approved in your FGS contract, please refer to those individual option guidance web pages or capital item specification web pages for information on the supporting documents you will have to submit with your capital claim.

If you fail to submit your supporting documents we will not process your claim for payment.

### Number of FGS claims you can submit and our Charter Times for capital claims processing

You can only claim for the items set out in your contract once your work has been completed.

Claims processing can take up to 10 weeks (as detailed in our [Customer Charter](#)).

The claim year-end period (from January to March) is when the majority of capital claims are submitted - please ensure, during this period, that you only submit one capital claim per FGS contract, and only once all your claim year activities have been undertaken and completed on site. This approach is in-line with good financial and audit key control principles; we cannot accept a new claim whilst a previous claim, or associated variation, is being processed as the processing may impact upon future payments or modifications to your FGS contract schedule of works.

The Small Woodlands Loan Scheme can help with cash flow management for FGS woodland creation applications.

### Small Woodlands Loan Scheme

If you are in receipt of a loan from the Small Woodlands Loan Scheme your FGS woodland creation capital claim must include all approved capital items in a single claim to allow recovery of the loan debt.

If you do not include all capital items as described above, and described in the terms of the loan agreement and your FGS contract, your FGS woodland creation capital claim will not be accepted by us. The claim will be refused and you will be reminded to submit the FGS capital claim once all your approved works have been completed.

## Annual management claims

Sustainable Management of Forests options all have annual management grants and Woodland Creation options have an annual maintenance grant. You must claim all of these grants on your Single Application Form. To make a claim for the annual management approved in your contract you must declare the land on which you carry out these options on the Single Application Form using the Permanent Land Data Sheets (IACS 3).

The Single Application Form can be submitted online by [registering and logging in to Rural Payments and Services](#).

The deadline for the receipt of a Single Application Form is 15 May each calendar year.

We will still accept your form up to 25 calendar days after the closing date but will reduce your payments for all schemes covered by the Single Application Form, including this scheme, by one per cent for each working day your form is late during the 25 calendar day period.

We cannot accept your form if we receive it more than 25 calendar days after 15 May.

If you fail to declare your management options on your Single Application Form you will not receive payment for your management options for the year in question.

It is your responsibility to complete the Single Application Form correctly with your management options declared, even if you employ an accountable person to act on your behalf.

Please refer to the How to Claim section of individual option guidance web pages for additional option specific guidance on completing your Single Application Form.

If you declare your management/maintenance option(s) on your Single Application Form but subsequently do not deliver the works on the ground, within the timescale detailed in the 'How to Claim' guidance for the option, then you will not receive payment for your annual management/maintenance option(s) for the year in question and may incur an additional penalty.

**Please note** that any request to amend the submitted SAF beyond the dates detailed within the 'key dates' section of the 'IACS (1) Notes for Guidance' document, located on the [RP&S Single Application Form](#) page, will not be approved, and, therefore, no variation request to change the annual management/maintenance year can be approved either.

### **Supporting documents**

Refer to the individual option guidance web pages for the Sustainable Management of Forests and / or Woodland Creation options you have approved for information on:

- the supporting documents you will have to submit with your Single Application Form
- what supporting documents you must retain
- what supporting documents you must submit to us at the end of the calendar year

If you fail to submit your supporting documents within the required timescale you will not receive payment for your management options for the year in question.

## Payments

Payments will be made as follows:

### **Capital items**

These will be paid upon receipt of a valid claim with any relevant supporting documentation. A valid claim is a claim that is wholly completed and signed, and encloses all supporting documentation as required.

## Small Woodlands Loan Scheme

If you are in receipt of a loan from the Small Woodlands Loan Scheme and upon receipt of your valid FGS capital claim and the relevant supporting documentation, the loan debt will be deducted from your FGS capital grant payment and the remaining balance paid to you. At this point you will be notified that the loan has been discharged and the loan conditions have been satisfied.

## Management grants

These are paid annually in the spring of the year following submission of your Single Application Form. For example, if you submit a claim in 2021, your management payment will be paid in the spring of 2022 once all the inspections for annual management measures have been completed.

## Inspections

Payments will only be made once all administrative checks have been carried out on the claim to ensure that the work claimed is suitable, matches what is in your approved contract and that the claim has been completed correctly.

If your claim has been selected for inspection, your claim will only be paid once the inspection has been carried out and the inspection result is satisfactory.

It is a condition of the scheme that you must allow us to inspect your holding to check that the scheme rules are being met.

When we inspect your capital claim, here are some of the things that we look for:

- that the claimed work has been completed
- that all found works and quantities agree with the contract and the claim
- that the work / item are fit for the purpose for which they were funded
- that, where required, the explanatory EU funding posters or plaques are in a position readily available to the public (A3 posters for funding over €10,000 and plaques for funding over €50,000)
- that all work has been carried out to the required standard in accordance with the agreed minimum specification

[More detail on the EU publicity requirements](#)

[More information on inspections](#)

You will receive payment by BACS into your nominated bank account. All payments will be made in sterling.

If you change your bank account you must inform us as soon as possible by completing [PF03 - Register your bank details - Sterling form](#) to avoid payments being issued to your closed account

## Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)

## Download guidance

Click 'Download this page' to create a printer-friendly version of this guidance that you can save or print out.