Chough Mown Grassland

Date published: 19 October, 2023

For recent changes to this guidance, please see the bottom of the page .

Aim

The aim of this option is to benefit chough by providing suitable areas for the birds to forage.

Chough require areas of short grazed grassland to access the insects they feed upon. Delaying shutting off silage or hay fields and cutting them later maximises the amount of spring-grazed pasture for feeding chicks and then provides later aftermath for the fledglings.

Chough benefit from having a variety of foraging habitats available to them throughout the year. Therefore, chough mown grassland fields are most effective when managed alongside fields under the Chough Grazing Management option. Where possible, apply the two options in combination to maximise the benefit to chough.

Eligibility

Grassland that is not rough grazing is eligible.

You should not include areas of land covering rocks, scree, water, dense bracken etc. We will check this using the same approach we use to check land for the Basic Payment Scheme.

Assessing your land eligibility

Spatial targeting

Map of target area – Chough Mown Grassland (PDF, Size: 613.0 kB)
doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/18_Chough_Mown_Grassland.pdf This option is available within the target area shown on this map.

You can check if this option is available on your holding using the search targeting tool which can be found on any of the following AECS guidance pages:

AECS Home

Eligibility

How to Apply

Management Options and Capital Items

Capital Items

Application requirements

You must provide a map, showing the locations of the areas to be managed, and prepare and submit for approval a simple chough management plan (which will include details of proposed grazing and details of other associated options or capital items to benefit chough).

Chough Management Plan (MS Word, Size: 100.7 kB)
doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/Chough-Management-Plan---October-2023.docx [Plan template]

Management requirements

This option can be moved around the farm within the normal rotation and on an annual basis.

To maximise flexibility you can manage a different total hectarage each year as long the area you manage each year is at least 90 per cent of the area you plan to manage in the first year under this option.

- you must graze the pasture until 14 June
- you must not treat any livestock with Avermectin-based drugs, unless advised by a veterinary surgeon and with prior written approval
- do not roll, harrow or graze the field from 15 June until 15 August
- the area must be mown, but not before 15 August
- the hay or silage must be cut in a wildlife-friendly manner
- do not spray, except for the spot-treatment of injurious weeds (requires prior written notification) or treatment of invasive species (requires prior written approval)
- you must maintain a diary

Payment

You can claim £224.75 per hectare per year.

You will only be paid for the area that you manage and declare annually.

Inspections

The inspectors will check:

- you have grazed the pasture until 14 June
- you have not treated any livestock with Avermectin-based drugs, unless advised by a veterinary surgeon and with prior written approval
- you have not rolled, harrowed or grazed the field from 15 June until 15 August
- the area has been mown, but not before 15 August
- the hay or silage has been cut in a wildlife-friendly manner
- you have not sprayed, unless with prior written notification or approval as appropriate
- you have maintained a diary

Additional guidance

Supporting guidance is available for this option.

Recent Changes

Section	Change
Application Requirements	Updated Chough Management Plan template

Previous versions

Previous versions of this page