

Updates to the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme for 2016

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All changes to the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme guidance are clearly marked on the individual web pages. The top of each page gives the date on which the page was updated (date published). At the bottom of the page there is a table summarising the changes. Previous versions of documents can also be accessed online.

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Opening and closing dates

The 2016 application round opens on 29 January, 2016 and closes on 15 April, 2016.

If you have any outstanding supporting documents to attach to the application, please upload them directly into the application system. If you have problems doing this then documents should be submitted to the relevant office by 22 April, 2016.

The 2016 application round for Improving Public Access opens on 21 March and close on 31 May, 2016.

Management options and capital items

Many of the changes are to clarify issues and address queries raised during the 2015 application period, and apply to both the option / item text and the associated supporting guidance.

The table below highlights options and items with more significant changes, but there are wording changes to others as well. We strongly advise applicants to check all options, items and supporting guidance when applying for the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme.

Habitat Mosaic Management	Change to eligibility in hill and upland grazing setting, with a requirement to provide Phase 1 or National Vegetation Classification survey data in this context.
Species-rich Grassland Management	
Management of Floodplains	Clarification that this option is intended for newly created grass swards on newly restored floodplains.
Management or Restoration of Hedgerows	Previously a single option – Management, Restoration or Creation of Hedgerows.
Creation of Hedgerows	
Managing Scrub of Conservation Value	Several willow species and Downy birch have been added to the list of eligible species.
Moorland Management	Revised Moorland Management and Grazing Plan template, with an example plan and example map also provided.
Planting of Dune Grasses	You must consult Scottish Natural Heritage before applying for this option.
Predator Control	Predator control can be funded within a 1.5 kilometre radius of black grouse leks.

Retention of Winter Stubbles for Wildlife and Water Quality	Limited to 10 hectares per location code.
Slurry Storage	This item is now open. For 2016, funding is only available for businesses that occupy land / steadings within the newly designated Nitrate Vulnerable Zones in the Stranraer Lowlands and the Finavon extension to the Strathmore and Fife Nitrate Vulnerable Zone.
Water Margins in Arable Fields	Requirement to complete a summary table outlining the management proposed.
Water Margins in Grassland Fields	
Grass Strips in Arable Fields	
Wader and Wildlife Mown Grassland	Clarification to the area you can manage.

Spatial targeting maps

A number of the spatial target maps for management options have been revised for 2016.

Enter your holding code into the [targeting tool](#) to get a list of options available on your holding in 2016.

Note – the target maps show the broad area available for an option, however, **you must still meet the individual eligibility requirements** of the option on your holding.

Revised spatial targeting maps
Arable options
All maps except Cropped Machair
Grassland options
Water Margins in Grassland Fields
Wader and Wildlife Mown Grassland
Wader Grazed Grassland
Corn Buntings Mown Grassland
Corncrake Mown Grassland
Corncrake Grazing Management
Management of Cover for Corncrake
Upland, peatland, moorland and heath options
Moorland Management
Stock Disposal
Away Wintering Sheep
Summer Hill Grazing of Cattle
Heath Management (Coastal, Serpentine, Lowland and Special Interest)
Predator Control
Managing water quality and flood risk options
Converting Arable at Risk of Erosion or Flooding to Low-input Grassland
Hard Standings for Troughs and Gateways
Livestock Crossing
Livestock Tracks
Managing Steading Drainage and Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems
Pesticide Handling Facilities
Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems – Retention Pond
Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems – Sediment Traps and Bunds

Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems – Swales
Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems – Wetland

Endorsements

For 2016, endorsements for options outside target areas are restricted to well-justified applications, where you meet the criteria specified in Table 1 on the [Endorsements](#) page.

All endorsements come from Scottish Natural Heritage, apart from rhododendron control which can also come from Forestry Commission Scotland.

You must apply to Scottish Natural Heritage for an endorsement **before** submitting your application. If Scottish Natural Heritage provides an endorsement you must include this with your application. To request an endorsement, complete the [endorsement template](#) and send it to Scottish Natural Heritage or Forestry Commission Scotland as appropriate.

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency has revised its spatial target maps, and therefore will not offer endorsements if you are outwith the target area for any of their options or capital items this year.

Additional changes

Plan templates

There are new versions of the Moorland Management and Grazing Plan template, Grazing Management Plan template and Deer Management Plan template.

The revised templates must be used.

How to apply

There is an updated checklist of documentation requirements for Agri-Environment Climate Scheme applications.

[Checklist](#)

Designations

There is an updated PDF on the 'Management of Scheduled Monuments', plus clarification that some capital items can be undertaken to benefit a Scheduled Monument.

[Designations](#)

Farm Environment Assessment

There is updated guidance, including revised templates for the Farm Environment Map and Farm Environment Table and revised examples of the Farm Environment Map and Farm Environment Table.

The revised templates must be used.

[Farm Environment Assessment](#)