

Eligibility

This is an old version of the page

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

The version of this page applicable to the AECS 2021 restricted round can be found in the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme full guidance archive

Introduction

Scheme eligibility

The Agri-Environment Climate scheme, including Improving Public Access, is open to farmers, groups of farmers and other land managers with land in Scotland who are registered with us and have a Business Reference Number (BRN*).

*Not all applicants will be eligible to apply for all options or activities under the scheme. For example, applications for the Organic Conversion and Organic Maintenance options are only open to farmers and crofters.

The Improving Public Access option is also open to local authorities and administrations, public bodies, public-private partnerships, NGOs, private companies, and organisations in charge of tourism and recreational development. There are separate eligibility requirements that also apply to applications for [Improving Public Access](#) in rural areas.

[You can find out how to register here](#)

You must be able to demonstrate that you are able, and have the legal right, to carry out the management proposed in your application, for the length of the contract and any associated monitoring period. Please see also our [Occupancy of Land page](#)

Funding under this scheme cannot be used to support works that you are required to complete as part of a statutory or legislative obligation.

Also, your application must not include any works which you have already started on (including purchase of associated items or equipment). And, if your application is successful, you must not start on any of the works applied for until you have a signed contract in place and an authority to proceed letter has been issued.

Also, you must not apply for funding for work which has already, partly or fully, secured funding from another source. Please see also the [Double Funding and option incompatibility webpage](#)

Note contracts entered into from the 2021 AECS round will be taken into account when assessing and scoring an application from the 2022 AECS round

Application Eligibility

You will normally be limited to a single AECS application [per business] per year. However, there are some exceptions which are set out below:

A. if you manage any of the following designated sites:SSSIs and European sites (SACs and SPAs): you can submit one application for the designated site management and another for management on other parts of your land

B. Land managers who have widely separated areas of land (normally at least five miles apart) where it is more appropriate to apply for each area separately.

C. Applications for Slurry Storage or Organic Conversion or Organic Maintenance may be made separately from other AECS applications.

D. Applications for IPA (Improving Public Access) must be made separately from any other AECS application. You may submit more than one IPA application in the same year if these are for completely separate projects. If you are unsure about this, it is important that you seek advice before applying, by emailing IPA@nature.scot

Management options and capital items eligibility

Before submitting an application, you must also carefully check that you meet the specific eligibility requirements for each individual management option and capital item which you wish to apply for. You can find this information using the links below:

[Management Options](#)

[Capital items](#)

Please also refer to the [Double funding and option incompatibility](#) page

Some of the Agri-Environment-Climate Scheme management options have been spatially targeted in order to make them available in the locations where they will deliver the greatest benefit. The other options are available throughout Scotland.

You can only apply for an option if it is listed under your holding and you should use your targeting tool to check this.

Some capital items are also spatially targeted. These are listed in the capital items webpage. The Targeting Tool will list the targeted capital items available on your holding. (Note that non-targeted capital items are not listed; these are available throughout Scotland.)

Please also refer to the [Double funding and option incompatibility](#) page.

The questions which case officers have to answer in 2022 when checking each applicant's eligibility for the scheme, will follow shortly.

Recent changes

Version in place for 2021 round can be found in the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme full guidance archive – see 'previous versions' below.

Section	Change
Introduction	Removal of restriction of application types in place for 2021 Round Updated/additional information under new sub headings: Scheme Eligibility, Application Eligibility and Management options and capital items eligibility

Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)

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