

Management of Buffer Areas for Fens and Lowland Bogs

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](#).

Aim

The aim of this option is to benefit fens and lowland bogs by increasing the water levels and creating an effective buffer area of longer vegetation to intercept runoff, therefore reducing nutrient inputs on land immediately adjacent to the wet feature.

Buffer areas can help maintain water levels and reduce nutrients flowing into the bog or fen. They can also provide grazing stock with access to an area of drier land.

Field drains may have to be broken to improve the condition of the fen or bog. This can be funded by adopting one of the associated capital items.

Buffer areas also contribute to flood management, soil protection and carbon storage.

Eligibility

Land that is immediately adjacent to a fen or lowland bog 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

This option is available throughout Scotland.

Application requirements

You must identify on a map the locations of the bog or fen, and the buffer area to be managed and you must complete a grazing plan, even if you are managing solely by cutting.

We strongly advise that you use a template below. If you choose to create your own plan you **must** provide all information requested in the template. Failure to do so may result in your plan being deemed not fit for purpose and the option or item removed from your application.



[Grazing Management Plan template 2022 \(MS Word, Size: 174.4 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/Grazing-management-plan-template-2022.docx>

Management requirements

You must manage the same location and extent each year for the duration of your contract.

- if you are undertaking capital work to wet the buffer area, this must be completed by 1 June in the first year of your contract
- where no grassland exists, you must establish a grass sward by 1 June in the first year of your contract

- you must adhere to an approved grazing regime in the buffer area and/or fen or bog habitat defining the stocking density and grazing dates
- do not plough or cultivate the area, except to aid establishment in the spring of year one for land in an arable rotation
- do not carry out supplementary livestock feeding without prior approval
- do not apply lime, fertiliser, slurry or farmyard manure
- 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 management diary

Payment

You can claim £313.36 per hectare per year.

The following capital payments are available to support the creation of buffer areas:

- [Wetland Creation – Field Drain Breaking](#)
- [Wetland Creation – Pipe Sluices](#)
- [Ditch Blocking – Plastic Piling Dams](#)
- [Ditch Blocking – Peat Dams](#)
- [Moving or Realigning Ditches](#)
- [Creation of Buffer Areas for Fens and Bogs](#)

Note that this list is not exhaustive.

Inspections

The inspectors will check:

- if you undertook capital work to wet the buffer area, you have completed this by 1 June in the first year of your contract
- where no grassland exists, you have established a grass sward by 1 June in the first year of your contract
- you have adhered to an approved grazing regime defining the stocking density and grazing dates
- you have not sprayed, unless with prior written notification or approval as appropriate
- you have not carried out supplementary livestock feeding without prior approval
- you have not applied lime, fertiliser, slurry or farmyard manure
- you have not ploughed or cultivated
- you have maintained a diary

Additional guidance

[Supporting guidance is available for this option.](#)

Recent changes

Section	Change
Application requirements	Added the text you must complete a grazing plan, even if you are managing solely by cutting. Moved the grazing plan template to application requirements section from the Management requirements section.

Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)

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