

Management options and capital items

This is an old version of the page

Date published: 29 May, 2025

Date superseded: 12 November, 2025

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

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

Points to note

Please use the [targeting tool \(MS Excel, Size: 12.2 MB\)](#) to check which options are available on your holding. Please note: to use the targeting tool, you must download the file by clicking the link above, then selecting 'download file'.

You must enter all location codes separately for all holdings that form part of your farm business and which you wish to include in your AECS application. Some options may only be available on some holdings. If you find your location code is not appearing on the targeting tool please contact your local RPID or NatureScot office to discuss this matter further.

For some options, there is the ability to undertake activities, which are generally not permitted, as long as you have prior approval before you carry out your activity, **e.g. do not apply lime, unless you have prior approval**. In general, prior approval is only granted in exceptional circumstances, for example, when the case is made that an activity is required to maintain or enhance biodiversity value. It is up to the Case officer to assess if the activity proposed is acceptable. Justification will need to be provided as part of your application. You may wish to discuss the activity proposed before submission, to ensure that it is appropriate. Otherwise, there is a risk that the case officer will not approve it. If the activity is approved, the AECS contract itself acts as the "prior approval".

Note: Funding under this scheme cannot be used to support works that you are required to complete as part of a statutory or legislative obligation. This would include for example, applying for AECS management on land subject to a habitat or environmental management plan as an obligation created as part of a wind farm (or similar) planning approval.

Note: If you have a Scheduled Monument on your land, the pdf below has advice on options and capital items that may be relevant. You can also find more information in the Designations page.



[HES Guidance on AECS and Scheduled Monuments \(PDF, Size: 663.7 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/HES-Guidance-on-AECS-and-Scheduled-Monuments-2025.pdf>

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A wide range of management options and capital items are available under the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme.

There are rules and management requirements for each and they must be followed over the course of your contract. Also, each option and capital item webpage has a link to Supporting Information with recommendations and best practice in relation to the why, where, how and what for each option and capital item. It is important to read this before you prepare your application.

For all arable options, the spatial targeting maps include the entire upland area. This is to allow for arable activity on the in-bye in these areas, it does not mean all the upland area is eligible for these options.

Only land which meets the individual option eligibility requirements can be entered for the option. For example, you cannot apply for Wild Bird Seed for Farmland Birds on rough grazing. If you have any queries, please contact your local RPID or NatureScot office. [Contact us](#)

Arable options

- Unharvested Conservation Headlands for Wildlife
- Wild Bird Seed for Farmland Birds
- Forage Brassica Crops for Farmland Birds
- Stubbles Followed by Green Manure in an Arable Rotation
- Retention of Winter Stubbles for Wildlife and Water Quality
- Beetlebanks
- Grass Strips in Arable Fields
- Water Margins in Arable Fields
- Cropped Machair

Grassland options

- Species-rich Grassland Management
- 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
- Chough Mown Grassland
- Chough Grazing Management
- Hen Harrier Grassland Management

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
- Wildcat Friendly Predator Control

Wetland and bog options

- Wetland Management
- Lowland Bog Management
- Management of Buffer Areas for Fens and Lowland Bogs

Farmland habitat and feature options

- Management or Restoration of Hedgerows
- Creation of Hedgerows
- Habitat Mosaic Management
- Managing Scrub of Conservation Value
- Tall-herb Vegetation Management
- Ancient Wood Pasture

Small unit options

- Conservation Management of Small Units
- Cattle Management on Small Units

Control of invasive non-native species options

- Control of Invasive Non-native Plant Species – Primary Treatment
- Control of Invasive Non-native Plant Species – Follow-up Monitoring and Treatment
- Rhododendron Control – Manual Eradication – Light, Medium or Difficult
- Rhododendron Control – Mechanised Eradication – Light, Medium or Difficult
- Rhododendron Control – Stem Injection Eradication – Medium or Difficult
- Rhododendron Control – Foliar Spray / Treatment
- Rhododendron Control – Follow-up Treatment

Managing water quality and flood risk options

- Converting Arable at Risk of Erosion or Flooding to Low-input Grassland
- Management of Floodplains
- Alternative Watering
- Coastal Embankment Breaching, Lowering or Removal
- Hard Standings for Troughs and Gateways
- Livestock Crossing
- Livestock Tracks
- Managing Steading Drainage and Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Pesticide Handling Facilities
- Restoring (Protecting) River Banks
- River Embankment Breaching, Lowering or Removal
- Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems – Pond
- Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems – Sediment Traps and Bunds
- Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems – Swales
- Rural Sustainable Drainage Systems – Wetland
- Water-use Efficiency – Irrigation Lagoon

Organic options

- Organic Farming: Conversion
- Organic Farming: Maintenance

Improving Public access options (IPA will not re-open for applications)

- Improving Public Access

All capital items (note that some capital items are suspended or restricted for the 2025 round)

All capital items

Recent changes

Section	Change
Whole page	Updates for 2025

Previous versions

Previous versions of this page