Management or Restoration of Hedgerows

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To see recent changes to this guidance, check the bottom of this page.

Aim

The aim of this option is to restore or manage hedges as a habitat for wildlife and / or a landscape feature.

Hedges provide valuable food and cover for a variety of birds, insects and small mammals, and can act as an important link between habitats. They can also help prevent soil erosion and store carbon.

Trimming hedges every two or three years, and in rotation across the farm, will help create a good hedge structure and leave an abundance of flowers and berries for wildlife.

Eligibility

Existing hedges which are located entirely on your land and where there is access for both sides to be cut are eligible.

Single species beech hedges are not eligible unless you have prior approval.

A march hedge between two neighbouring holdings is only eligible where it is managed under the scheme by both parties.

Spatial targeting

Map of target area – Management of Hedgerows (PDF, Size: 919.8 kB)
doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/59_Hedgerow_Management.pdf This option is available within the target area shown on this map. It may be possible to apply for this option outside this area where there is strong justification as endorsed by Scottish Natural Heritage.

You can check if this option is available on your holding here.

Application requirements

You must prepare and submit for approval a hedgerow management plan. The plan must include a map showing the location(s) of the hedges to be managed. It must also show gaps greater than five metres wide. The plan must also detail the management you propose over the course of your contract and the timing of associated capital item works.

Hedgerow Management Plan (MS Word, Size: 133.8 kB)
doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/Hedgerow-Management-Plan-AECS-April-2015.docx [Plan template]

Management requirements

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

For hedgerow management or restoration

- you must fill gaps in the hedge that are greater than five metres wide. This can be done by coppicing, laying or planting. These are available as capital items
- you must retain existing hedgerow trees, unless you have prior approval to remove them
- with the exception of newly coppiced or laid hedges, you must trim your hedges so that they are visually wider at the bottom than at the top, and at least 1.5 metres tall
- you must not cut any more than one third of the length of your hedges managed within this contract in the same winter

For both hedgerow management or restoration and hedgerow creation

- you must not trim the same length of hedge annually
- hedge trimming must only be undertaken between 1 December and 1 March inclusive
- you must exclude grazing
- if new fencing is required, you must site any new fences at least one metre from the centre line of the hedge
- with the exception of spraying to aid establishment, 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 £0.11 per linear metre per year for hedgerow management.

There are separate capital items to support this option:

- Planting or Replanting of Hedges
- Coppicing of Hedges
- Laying of Hedges
- Stock Fence
- Rabbit-proofing an Existing or New Stock or Deer Fence
- Vole, Rabbit or Hare Guards
- Replacement or Planting of Individual Trees Within Ancient Wood Pasture or Hedgerows

Inspections

The inspectors will check:

- you must manage the same location and extent each year for the duration of your contract
- you have filled gaps in the hedge that are greater than five metres wide
- you have retained existing hedgerow trees, unless you had prior approval to remove them
- with the exception of newly coppiced or laid hedges, you have trimmed your hedges so that they are visually wider at the bottom than at the top, and at least 1.5 metres tall
- you have not cut any more than one third of the length of your hedges managed within this contract in the same winter

For both hedgerow management or restoration and hedgerow creation

- you have not trimmed the same length of hedge annually
- hedge trimming was undertaken between 1 December and 1 March inclusive
- you have excluded grazing
- if new fencing was required, you have erected any new fences at least one metre from the centre line of the hedge
- with the exception of spraying to aid establishment, 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	Previous text	New text
The guidance for this option was previously part of the Management, Restoration or Creation of Hedgerows page.			
Management requirements	Amendment on hedging cutting.	• you must not cut any more than 30 per cent of the length of your hedges managed within this contract in the same winter	• you must not cut any more than one third of the length of your hedges managed within this contract in the same winter

Previous versions

Previous versions of this page

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