Sustainable Management of Forests – Native Woodland

This is an old version of the page

This is an old version of the page

Date published: 14 January, 2016

Date superseded: 25 January, 2016

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

Table of Contents

Aim

Grant support

Application eligibility criteria

Supporting information

Scoring criteria

How to claim

Technical guidance

Recent changes

Previous versions

Download guidance

Aim

The aims of this option are to:

- maintain native woodland
- bring native woodlands and designated woodland features into good ecological condition
- restore Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites to native woodland through deer control and the natural regeneration

Native woodlands include a range of habitat types that are all UK priority habitats, while some are also European priority types. Good ecological condition of woodland depends partly on its character, age and management history.

In general, woodland in good ecological condition contains a variety of open ground, native trees and shrubs and wildlife species expected for the type of woodland.

The proposed management must be suitable for the ecosystem to be sustained, adapted or expanded.

You must control any threats from non-native species or inappropriate levels of grazing and browsing so that natural regeneration is encouraged.

Grant support

This is an annual grant to support the costs of:

- deer control
- monitoring of habitat impacts (including natural regeneration of trees and shrubs) and changes in condition (such as encroachment of non-native species)

The grant rate is £25 per hectare per year for up to a maximum of five years.

Native woodlands over 100 hectares in size will need to supply details on expenditure to justify the investment in monitoring and deer control so as to ensure public benefit is being achieved.

You can use the Woodland Improvement Grant – Habitats and Species option to support related works such as removal of non-native species, fencing and work to stimulate natural regeneration.

Other options which may be complementary are the Sustainable Management of Forests – Livestock Exclusion or Sustainable Management of Forests – Woodland Grazing options.

Please discuss these with your woodland officer.

Application eligibility criteria

You are eligible to apply for this grant if you are mainly proposing to control deer browsing.

Please check that you are eligible to apply for Forestry Grant Scheme funding before you begin your application.

Sustainable Management of Forests

To be eligible, you must have an approved forest plan for woodland areas of 100 hectares or more.

For woodland areas less than 100 hectares you must have an approved management plan or forest plan.

Long-term Forest Plan technical guidance

Management Plan

You must submit a Deer Management Plan with your application. All deer control must comply with best practice guidance. You must undertake habitat monitoring and keep records of culls.

Woodlands are eligible if they appear on the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland either as native woodland (including native woodland scrub communities) or if they are near-native sites or other Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites where you intend to restore these sites to native woodland.

Your application must take account of the current and relevant information within the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland, and verify and update the information if required.

Please read the supporting information below for the details you need to supply when applying for this option. Note that you must use the appropriate standard template to give this information.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Natura site

If the application area is within or affecting a Site of Special Scientific Interest or Natura site, the proposed work must fit with objectives set out in the site management statement.

This statement must be supplied in support of your application.

Native woodlands not in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland

Native woodlands that were not included in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland can also be eligible. You must give evidence for their area and condition. The woodland must be above the minimum size (0.5 hectares).

You can also include riparian woodlands, which were too narrow to map in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland, where they are locally important in landscapes with no woodlands.

Natural regeneration

If you intend to expand the woodland using natural regeneration you can include areas around the woodland edge, but only where natural regeneration is likely to occur.

The outer boundary of the proposed new naturally regenerated woodland should not exceed 50 metres from the woodland edge and a viable seed source.

In exceptional circumstances, and where there are prospects of regeneration occurring, we may agree to distances further than 50 metres from seed trees.

For example, if there is favourable topography and wind direction, or evidence of suppressed natural regeneration.

The minimum width for natural regeneration is 15 metres. You should check the Natural Regeneration Establishment capital item specification for the requirements you must meet to be eligible for funding.

If you intend to extend the woodland edge by natural regeneration you must map this area as a forest land parcel. This area will be capped as a component of the allowable 20 per cent open ground.

General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme

Boundary fences

You will be expected to maintain boundary fences and to ensure that deer are excluded from the woodland.

Supporting information

To help us assess your application, you must provide us with supporting information. You must give the details as listed below using the template provided.

Sustainable Management of Forests – Native Woodlands supporting information template (MS Word, Size: 393.2 kB)
doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/smf-nw-supp-info-template.doc

Please provide a summary of the current ecological condition of the woodland and the future condition that you aim to achieve.

The Native Woodlands Survey of Scotland provides information on the structure, species composition, threats and other features of the native woodlands at the time of survey, and guidance on interpreting it.

You must take this information into account when preparing your supporting information. A list of native woodland attributes is available that shows what to aim for.

You must provide a map that shows the perimeter of the Sustainable Management of Forests – Native Woodland boundary and include each priority woodland type as shown on the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland Habitat layer on the Forestry Commission Scotland map browser.

You must provide a Deer Management Plan and an assessment of the existing deer numbers and how deer impacts will be addressed, including control measures.

The aim should be to reduce deer to levels where natural regeneration is capable of occurring for all native trees and shrubs in the woodland.

Deer Management Plan template (MS Word, Size: 601.1 kB)
doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/general-deer-management-plan-v2.doc

If you are promoting natural regeneration to extend the woodland edge, please include:

- a survey map to show the location of an adequate seed source, and where there is any advanced regeneration
- protection methods and any planned ground disturbance or preparation. Unless there is extensive advanced regeneration we expect you to mechanically disturb the ground on most sites

General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme

If applicable, you should also supply the SSSI, SPA, or SAC Management Statement.

Scoring criteria

To make sure we achieve the best value for money and to meet the scheme objectives, we assess each application using a scoring criteria. These criteria differ depending on the option.

Rural Payments and Services - © Crown copyright

We will set a minimum score that an application must achieve to be considered for approval.

Threshold score = 2 points

Each option within your application must meet the threshold score to be considered for approval. In achieving the threshold score, your option must score against each criterion except for additional benefit. The scores will then be used as the basis for allocating funding on a competitive basis through the Forestry Grant Scheme clearing process.

Delivery of option benefits

1 POINT – for applications that meet the eligibility requirements but do not deliver any of the benefits detailed below.

3 POINTS – for applications that provide one or more of the following in addition to meeting the eligibility requirements:

- applications that can clearly demonstrate that the proposed native woodland management, for the 'BAP priority habitat types' detailed within the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, will help towards maintaining or improving the good ecological condition of the woodland

Or

- applications that can clearly demonstrate that the proposed native woodland management, in ancient semi-natural woodland or Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS), will help towards maintaining or improving the good ecological condition of the woodland

Or

- applications that can clearly demonstrate that the proposed native woodland management, in a SSSI/Natura designated woodland which currently meets 'favourable' condition but is at risk and identified as being 'favourable declining', will help towards maintaining the 'favourable' condition

5 POINTS – for applications that meet one of the three-point criteria above and the criteria below:

- applications that can clearly demonstrate that the proposed native woodland management, in a SSSI/Natura designated woodland not currently meeting 'favourable' condition, will help towards bringing 100 per cent of the feature into 'favourable' condition

Supplementary point – additional benefit

1 POINT – will be awarded, as an additional point, where:

- applications can clearly demonstrate that the proposed native woodland management, in a SSSI/Natura designated woodland not currently meeting 'favourable' condition, will help towards bringing 100 per cent of the feature into 'favourable' condition, and is identified by Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage as a priority. Contact your local conservancy office to confirm your application meets this requirement

How to claim

We will pay grants for up to five years for each year that your contract is covered by a Forest Plan or Management Plan. If your Forest Plan or Management Plan expires during the five years of your contract you must ensure that it is renewed in time to be able to continue making annual claims. We cannot pay your claim for any claim year that is not covered by a Forest Plan or Management Plan.

You must claim this grant on your Single Application Form.

Habitat monitoring must be undertaken and the evidence submitted annually. Use the herbivore impact assessment method and field guide below. You must also keep cull records as evidence of work done.

Herbivore impact assessment method (MS Word, Size: 233.5 kB)
doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/herbivore-impact-assessment-method.doc

You must submit your habitat monitoring and cull records to your local Forestry Commission Scotland office between 1 December and 31 January. If we do not receive your records within this period we will not be able to pay your claim.

Technical guidance

- Long-Term Forest Plan technical guidance
- Management Plan
- UK Forestry Standard
- Native Woodlands Survey of Scotland
- SNH Sitelink
- Natural regeneration of broadleaved trees and shrubs
- Deer Management Best Practice Guidance
- SNH Deer Code
- Deer Management Plan
- Wildlife & Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (WANE Act) authorisation
- Forest Research Forest Fencing Technical Guide
- Joint Agency Fencing Guidance

Recent changes

Section	Change	Previous text	New text
Supporting information	Sustainable Management of Forests – Native Woodlands supporting information template [Word document added]		
	Deer Management Plan template [Word document added]		
How to claim	Amendment to guidance. Herbivore impact assessment method [Word document added]	Habitat monitoring forms must be submitted annually and you must keep cull records as evidence of work done.	Habitat monitoring forms must be undertaken and the evidence submitted annually. Use the herbivore impact assessment method and field guide below. You and you must also keep cull records as evidence of work done.
	Clarification of guidance.	You must submit your records to your local Forestry Commission Scotland office between 1 December and 31 January. If we do not receive your records within this period we will not be able to pay your claim.	You must submit your habitat monitoring and cull records to your local Forestry Commission Scotland office between 1 December and 31 January. If we do not receive your records within this period we will not be able to pay your claim.

Previous versions

Previous versions of this page

Download guidance

Click 'Download this page' to create a printable version of this guidance you can save or print out.