

Sustainable Management of Forests – Woodland Grazing

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Aim

This option offers grants to enhance biodiversity and encourage tree regeneration through controlled livestock grazing in native woodlands or Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites that are actively being restored to native woodland.

The aims of this option are to:

- maintain or enhance the condition of native woodland habitat
- maintain or increase the overall extent of priority woodland habitat where feasible and desirable
- benefit designated features or priority habitats or species, such as the pearl-bordered fritillary and the chequered skipper butterfly

Grant support

We will pay this grant annually for up to a maximum five years.

The rate is £100 per hectare per year. We have calculated the grant as a payment for income foregone from the lower forage value of woodlands, the additional feed costs and the impact on production.

The grant rate also includes the extra time involved in checking and looking after stock within the woodland, and time allocated for monitoring as per the Woodland Grazing Toolbox.

You can also apply for grant under the [Woodland Improvement Grant – Habitat and Species](#) Species option to provide support for related capital items such as water troughs, stock bridges, and also to support work to improve the condition of native woods or restore Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites.

You can also apply for grant under the [Sustainable Management of Forests – Native Woodland](#) option to help control deer.

Please discuss applying for these options with your woodland officer.

Application eligibility criteria

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

[Sustainable Management of Forests](#)

You must have a Woodland Grazing Management Plan approved as per the Woodland Grazing Toolbox.

You must tailor the plan to individual woodlands to reflect woodland type, grazing history and site-specific management objectives. The plan must describe the expected environmental impact of the livestock grazing.

[Woodland Grazing Toolbox](#)

The Woodland Grazing Management Plan is eligible for funding under the Woodland Improvement Grant – Planning option. We must approve your plan before you apply for this woodland grazing option.

[Woodland Improvement Grant – Planning – Woodland Grazing Management Plan](#)

The woodland must be at least five hectares in size, with the exception of designated Natura sites or Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

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 towards native woodland.

If the application area is within or affecting a Site of Special Scientific Interest or Natura site the proposed work must accord with objectives set out in the site management statement. This statement must be supplied in support of your application.

You must consider deer impacts in combination with your proposals for livestock grazing. Together they must still achieve your stated biodiversity objectives. If you need to control deer then the methods you use must comply with Best Practice Guidance.

Supporting information

To help us assess your application, you must provide us with supporting information as listed below.

Please provide a Woodland Grazing Management Plan using the Grazing Plan template provided in the [Woodland Grazing Toolbox](#).

The Woodland Grazing Management Plan is eligible for funding under the Woodland Improvement Grant – Planning and so should be approved by Forestry Commission Scotland prior to applying for this Sustainable Management of Forests option.

If not already included in your plan, please provide a map that shows the perimeter of the Sustainable Management of Forests – Woodland Grazing boundary.



[Example map – Sustainable Management of Forests – Woodland Grazing \(PDF, Size: 926.5 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/FGS-SMF-Woodland-Grazing.pdf>

[General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme](#)

If applicable, please also supply the [SSSI, SPA, or SAC Management Statement](#).

Scoring criteria

To make sure we are achieving value for money and to ensure we meet the scheme's objectives, we assess each application using a scoring criteria. These criteria differ depending on the option.

We will set a minimum score that an application must achieve to be considered for approval. We will make details available before the start of the scheme.

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 woodland grazing, in native woodland 'BAP priority habitat type' detailed within the [UK Biodiversity Action Plan](#), and native tree species suitable to the site within wood pasture, will help towards maintaining or improving the good ecological condition of the woodland

Or

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

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

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

Or

- applications that contribute to a landscape scale project. You must clearly explain how woodland grazing will help towards the delivery of the project

Supplementary point – additional benefit

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

- applications can clearly demonstrate that woodland grazing, in a SSSI/Natura designated woodland not currently achieving '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 Woodland Grazing Plan. If your Woodland Grazing 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 Woodland Grazing Plan.

You must claim this grant on your Single Application Form.

You must submit all completed herbivore impact monitoring field sheets for the claim year. Information about [monitoring](#) is included in the Woodland Grazing Toolbox.

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.

Technical guidance

- [Woodland Grazing Toolbox](#)
- [General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme](#)
- [UK Forestry Standard](#)
- [Forestry Commission Scotland Guidance: Management of Ancient Wood Pasture](#)
- [Scottish Natural Heritage Guidance: Wood Pasture](#)
- [Deer Management Best Practice Guidance](#)

Recent changes

Section	Change	Previous text	New text
Supporting information	Example map – Sustainable Management of Forests – Woodland Grazing [PDF added]	-	-

Previous versions

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