

Woodland Creation – Native Upland Birch

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Aim

The aim of this scheme is to encourage the creation of native upland birch woodland of the National Vegetation Classification W4: Downy birch with purple moor grass on shallow peaty soils (less than 50 centimetres peat depth).

Eligibility criteria

You must meet all eligibility criteria listed in the [Woodland Creation](#) page and:

- you must comply with the UK Forestry Standard
- the minimum planting width is 15 metres
- the minimum block size is 0.25 hectares in any one year
- your application must meet the species composition criteria in the table below

Composition of native upland birch woodland			
Item	Minimum (per cent)	Maximum (per cent)	Minimum stocking density on the planted area at year five (per hectare)
Native upland birch National Vegetation Classification W4 [1]	85	90	1600 initial planting and 1100 at establishment
Designed open ground [2]	0	15	n/a

[1] Please note that in order to comply with UKFS no more than 75 per cent is permitted for a single species. Up to 10 per cent native Scots pine, on sites within the pinewood zone, will be allowed for micro-site planting and up to 20 per cent of the native broadleaves can be native woody shrubs as recommended for this National Vegetation Classification woodland type in Forestry Commission Bulletin 112.

In recognition of the special significance of Scots pine in mainland Scotland out with the pinewood zone, up to 5% of Scots pine, of a suitable Scottish provenance, may be incorporated, where careful site evaluation indicates that it would be appropriate and deliver silvicultural benefits.

[2] You must refer to the designed open ground guidance on the [Forestry Commission Scotland Technical Support](#) page to see how designed open ground will apply to your application. For example additional open ground, in excess of the specified percentage, may be permissible depending on the specifics of the site, but will not be eligible for grant support.

Please note that in order to achieve 100 per cent from the table above you will not be able to select all minimum or all of the maximum values.

Species selection

As an initial first step in determining whether or not the site is climatically suitable, you should view the Forestry Grant Scheme (2014–2020) Site Suitability folder on the [Forestry Commission Scotland Map Viewer](#) page.

You should also demonstrate that this National Vegetation Classification woodland type is appropriate to the site, which will be determined by existing vegetation indicator (refer to Forestry Commission Bulletin 112 – Creating New Native Woodland), as well as climatic conditions, soil moisture and soil nutrient regimes.

Any applications that are not shown as being climatically suitable will only be considered if you can clearly demonstrate that the site is suitable for the chosen species of trees, for example where there is localised shelter in an otherwise exposed location.

As per the eligibility criteria of the woodland creation general guidance the tree species must be 'suitable' or 'very suitable' to the site.

For all native broadleaves and native Scots pine planted within this option, you must provide a copy of the supplier's document when submitting an initial planting claim (see [Forestry Commission Scotland Technical Support](#) for an example document).

As well as entering the quantity of trees and the Master Certificate Number on the suppliers document, you should also include the region of provenance, demonstrating that the trees are suitable for the site (refer to Forestry Commission Scotland guidance on [Seed sources for planting native trees and shrubs in Scotland](#)).

See the Forestry Commission's [Marketing and Supplying Forest Reproductive Materials](#) for further information.