

Woodland Improvement Grant – Habitats and Species

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

Table of Contents

[Aim](#)

[Grant support](#)

[Application eligibility criteria](#)

[Other eligibility criteria](#)

[Operations](#)

[Supporting information](#)

[Scoring criteria](#)

[How to claim](#)

[Technical guidance](#)

[Recent changes](#)

[Previous versions](#)

[Download guidance](#)

Aim

This option provides support for capital work that will benefit a range of priority habitats and species, as defined in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and European Directives.

[Scottish Biodiversity Strategy list of habitats and species](#)

This option is aimed at:

- improving the condition of native woodlands and restoring Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites to native woodland
- restoration or conservation of non-woodland habitats (such as lowland raised bogs and blanket bogs) that are present within the internal boundary of the woodland
- species associated with woodland edge (such as the pearl-bordered fritillary)
- Woodland Designed Landscapes

Grant support

A set list of capital items are eligible for funding under this Woodland Improvement Grant (see Operations below). You must complete the agreed work satisfactorily before submitting your claim.

Actual costs for capital items are eligible for funding if you carry out this work within woodland Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Natura sites.

You can claim 100 per cent of actual costs for specific eligible items (marked with † on the standard cost capital item list). You must carry out work that will make significant progress towards bringing the special features of the site into a favourable condition.

If you wish to apply for actual costs, you must supply all the necessary supporting information and quotes as detailed in quotes and estimates.

If you plan on applying for any of the annual management grants, such as Woodland Grazing, Livestock Exclusion or Native Woodland under the [Sustainable Management of Forests](#) options you should include them in your application, or apply for them first.

You should not apply for this grant prior to applying for the Sustainable Management of Forests options.

Application eligibility criteria

You should check that you are eligible to apply for Forestry Grant Scheme funding before progressing.

[Woodland Improvement Grant](#)

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](#)

If you are applying for capital items associated with the Sustainable Management of Forests – Woodland Grazing, then you must have an approved Woodland Grazing Plan.

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

You can find more details below on the supporting information you need to supply us when applying for this option.

You must use the appropriate standard template to give this information.

Native and ancient woodlands are eligible if they appear on the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland.

They can be native woodland (including native woodland scrub communities) or they can be near native sites or other Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites if you intend to restore these sites to native woodland.

Restoration of priority non-woodland habitats, or where priority species might benefit in the woodland or internal open ground, is eligible.

Priority habitats and species are those designated under the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy list of habitats and species.

Management within the woodland that would maintain or enhance habitats or species that are within our targeted designated sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Natura) is also eligible.

Management to preserve or enhance features within a Woodland Designed Landscape (only those listed on the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes) is also eligible.

All of your proposed work must comply with the [UK Forestry Standard](#).

Other eligibility criteria

If your application is within or affects a Site of Special Scientific Interest or Natura site, it must support the objectives set out in the site management statement. You must provide the site management statement with your application.

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 are too narrow to map in the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland, if these are locally important in landscapes with no woodlands.

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 must not be beyond 50 metres from the woodland edge and a viable seed source. In exceptional circumstances, and where there are good prospects of regeneration occurring, we may agree to an outer boundary 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 of woodland for natural regeneration is 15 metres. You should check the [New Natural Regeneration Establishment](#) capital item specification for the minimum requirements you must meet to be eligible for natural regeneration funding.

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

General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme

You can include up to 20 per cent of your proposed area as non-woodland and associated open-ground habitat. This must be integral to the woodland (i.e. either surrounded by woodland or comprising the treeline / moorland fringe).

If you are removing trees to clear woodland, you must have an approved felling licence. This will be approved in line with the Scottish Government's policy on the control of woodland removal.

Operations

You must carry out the work to the standard outlined in the specification for each item. To view the specification, click on each item in the list below. You must ensure that the completed work is maintained and is functional during the period of your contract.

Capital grant operations that can be applied for under this Woodland Improvement Grant are:

Capital grant operations	
Vegetation Removal	
Bracken Primary Treatment – Chemical or Mechanical †	£225/hectare of infested land
Bracken Primary Treatment – Manual †	£150/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Manual – Light †	£3500/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Manual – Medium †	£5500/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Manual – Difficult †	£7300/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Mechanised – Light †	£2200/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Mechanised – Medium †	£3400/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Mechanised – Difficult †	£5600/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Foliar Spray Treatment †	£200/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Stem Injection – Medium †	£3000/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Stem Injection – Difficult †	£4500/hectare of infested land
Rhododendron Eradication – Follow-up †	£200/hectare of infested land
Scrub / Woody Vegetation Eradication – Light †	£1100/hectare of infested land
Scrub / Woody Vegetation Eradication – Intermediate †	£1500/hectare of infested land
Scrub / Woody Vegetation Eradication – Heavy †	£2200/hectare of infested land
Scrub / Woody Vegetation Eradication – Removal From Site †	£1050/hectare of infested land
Heather Swiping	£210/hectare
Boundaries and Fencing	
Building / Restoring Drystone or Flagstone Dykes	£33/square metre
Stock Fence †	£5.50/metre

Enhancing / Modifying a Stock Fence †	£2.50/metre
Upgrading Stock to Deer Fence	£4.10/metre
Rabbit Proofing – Existing or New Stock / Deer Fence	£2.00/metre
Deer Fence †	£8.50/metre
Enhancing / Modifying a Deer Fence – Low Cost †	£2.50/metre
Enhancing / Modifying a Deer Fence – High Cost †	£5.60/metre
Conversion of Deer Fence to Stock Fence	£2.00/metre
Scare or Temporary Fencing – Scare †	£2.46/metre
Scare or Temporary Fencing – Temporary Electric †	£1.69/metre
Fence Removal	£2.50/metre
Gate – for Stock Fence	£170/each
Gate – for Deer Fence	£215/each
Self-closing Gate for Non-vehicular Access	£350/each
Badger Gate	£80/gate
Post and Rail Fence	£7/metre
Felling and Tree Removal	
Chipping / Mulching of Tree Debris And Brash †	£1200/hectare
Dead Wood Management	£40/hectare
Removal of Tree Crop 3 to 6 Metres Tall †	£1800/hectare
Seedling Tree Removal (Hand Pulling) †	£50/hectare
Seedling Tree Removal (Mechanical) †	£500/hectare
Woodland Clearance – Felling Only †	£1065/hectare
Woodland Clearance – Felling and Extraction †	£1400/hectare
Woodland Thinning	£380/hectare
Forest Management and Enhancement	
Small-scale Tree and Shrub Planting †	£3.00/tree or shrub
Replacement or New Single Standard Tree	£100/tree
Scarification †	£160/hectare
Day Rate – Forest Craftsman	£160/day
Protecting Natural Regeneration †	£2.90/each
New Natural Regeneration Establishment	£300/hectare
Ditches, Bridges and Stock Management	
Ditch Blocking – Peat Dams †	£13/each
Ditch Blocking with Plastic Piling Dams – Small Ditches †	£62 per dam up to one metre wide
Ditch Blocking with Plastic Piling Dams – Medium Ditches †	£151 per dam more than one metre, but less than two metres wide
Ditch Blocking with Plastic Piling Dams – Large Ditches †	£385 per dam greater than two metres wide
Stock Bridge for Habitat Management Small Bridge up to 2.6m Span*	£222/each
Stock Bridge for Habitat Management Large Bridge Greater than 2.6m Span *	£880/each
Provision of Water Troughs to Replace Traditional Watering Points	£550/each

2,270 Litre Trough With Service Box And Float Valve *	
Provision Of Water Troughs To Replace Traditional Watering Points	£215/each
680 Litre Trough With Service Box And Float Valve *	
Installation of Water Supply Pipe to Water Trough *	£7.77/metre
Water Trough Pump – Cattle Operation Pasture or Nose Pump *	£180/each

Operations marked with a * are only available if you are applying for, or have an approved live contract for, the option [Sustainable Management of Forests – Woodland Grazing](#).

Operations marked with a † are also available as actual costs for use in priority woodland Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Natura sites which will make significant progress in bringing features into favourable condition.

Supporting information

We need supporting information to help us assess your application. You must give the details as listed below using the template provided.



[Woodland Improvement Grant – Habitats and Species supporting information template \(MS Word, Size: 459.3 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/wig-habitats-species-supp-info-template.doc>

All applications must include information on the objectives and rationale for the operations you propose and how the operations will benefit the priority habitat or species.

You must provide a map that shows the perimeter of the areas where each component of your work will take place and map individual capital items as appropriate. For advice on how to mark up your map please use the example below. You can also refer to the general mapping guidance and the information available within each capital item's minimum specification.



[Example map – Woodland Improvement Grant – Habitats and Species \(PDF, Size: 763.0 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/FGS-WIG---Habitat-and-Species.pdf>

General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme

If your application is for either native or ancient woodlands 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 in-depth relevant information on the structure, species composition, threats, and other features of the native woodlands at the time of survey, and guidance about how to interpret 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 can access the Native Woodland Survey of Scotland on the [Forestry Commission Scotland Map Viewer](#).

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

If you are promoting natural regeneration, 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 / preparation (unless there is extensive advanced regeneration we expect you to mechanically disturb the ground on most sites)
- how you will control the impacts of grazing animals

If you are removing woodland, demonstrate that your application complies with the policy on the control of woodland removal.

If you are applying for actual costs, you must submit a minimum of three written quotations for the specific operations using the template provided. Please see [actual costs](#) in the full scheme guidance for more information.



[Woodland Improvement Grant – Habitats and Species actual costs quotation summary \(MS Excel, Size: 312.8 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/Actual-Costs-Quotation-Summary-WIG-HS-template-v1-0.xls>

Scoring criteria

We have set agreed financial budgets for each of the options under the Forestry Grant Scheme. In order to ensure that we make the most cost effective use of the money available and to meet Scottish Government objectives, we will assess each application using scoring criteria.

The criteria will be written as appropriate to each Forestry Grant Scheme option. We will set a minimum score that an application for any particular option 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 how activities proposed will benefit at least one of the six key woodland species identified for action under the Scottish Forestry Strategy as key species for woodland management

Or

- applications that can clearly demonstrate how activities proposed will benefit other species or habitats within woodlands that are listed as threatened (amber or red) within the Scottish Biodiversity List (see Scottish Biodiversity website)

Or

- applications that can clearly demonstrate how activities proposed will benefit the diversity and resilience of one of the: 'BAP Woodland Priority habitats'; ancient woodland sites or Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWs)

Or

- applications that can clearly demonstrate that the proposed activities 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

Or

- applications that can clearly demonstrate that the proposed activities in a target area for rhododendron control will help towards the eradication of the rhododendron in this area

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 activities in a SSSI/Natura designated woodlands, not currently meeting 'favourable' condition and working towards bringing 100 per cent of the feature into '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 contribute to a landscape scale project. You must clearly explain how the proposed activities will help towards the delivery of the project

Or

- applications can clearly demonstrate that the proposed activities, 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

You should only submit a claim once you have satisfactorily completed the work. Refer to the capital item's minimum specification guidance to find out what supporting documentation and maps you need to supply with your capital claim.

You must claim your capital items on the Forestry Grant Scheme manual Standard Costs Capital Items Claim Form once you have satisfactorily completed the work.

For designated sites, you may have an approved contract allowing you to claim actual costs. If so, then please apply to claim your grant using the FGS manual Actual Costs Capital Items Claim Form.

If claiming actual costs, then refer to our guidance on [actual costs](#) to find out what supporting documents you must supply to evidence that you have incurred the full costs.

Claim forms and guidance are available on the [Claims and payments page](#).

We may inspect all the capital items you claim to ensure that you have carried out the work to the correct specification.

Technical guidance

- [Scottish Biodiversity Strategy list of habitats and species](#)
- [Long-term Forest Plan technical guidance](#)
- [Management Plan](#)
- [UK Forestry Standard](#)
- [SNH Sitelink](#)
- [Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes](#)
- [Native Woodlands Survey of Scotland](#)
- [Felling licence guidance](#)
- [Policy on the Control of Woodland Removal](#)
- [Natural regeneration of broadleaved trees and shrubs](#)
- [Restoration of Native Woodland on Ancient Woodland Sites](#)
- [Choosing stand management methods for restoring planted ancient woodland sites](#)
- [Restoration of upland planted ancient woodland sites](#)
- [Approaches to the retention of timber potential when restoring or enhancing PAWS sites](#)
- [Managing open habitats in upland forests](#)
- [Peatland Habitats](#)
- [Forest Research Forest Fencing Technical Guide](#)
- [Joint Agency Fencing Guidance](#)

Recent changes

Section	Change	Previous text	New text
How to claim	Additional information on making a claim.	<p>You should only submit a claim once you have satisfactorily completed the work. Refer to the capital item's minimum specification guidance to find out what supporting documentation and maps you need to supply with your capital claim.</p> <p>We will inspect all the capital items you claim to ensure that you have carried out the work to the correct specification.</p>	<p>You should only submit a claim once you have satisfactorily completed the work. Refer to the capital item's minimum specification guidance to find out what supporting documentation and maps you need to supply with your capital claim.</p> <p>You must claim your capital items on the Forestry Grant Scheme manual Standard Costs Capital Items Claim Form once you have satisfactorily completed the work.</p> <p>For designated sites, you may have an approved contract allowing you to claim actual costs. If so, then please apply to claim your grant using the FGS manual Actual Costs Capital Items Claim Form.</p> <p>If claiming actual costs, then refer to our guidance on actual costs to find out what supporting documents you must supply to evidence that you have incurred the full costs.</p> <p>Claim forms and guidance are available on the Claims and payments page.</p> <p>We may inspect all the capital items you claim to ensure that you have carried out the work to the correct specification.</p>

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