



The European Agricultural Fund  
for Rural Development:  
Europe investing in rural areas



# **Countryside Stewardship: Options and Supplements** (Revised 4 December 2015)

Applies to all multi-year and Water Quality capital grant agreements commencing on 1 January 2016

Last updated December 4th 2015 to  
reflect revised payment rate and eligibility  
requirements on certain Organic options

[www.gov.uk/countrysidestewardship](http://www.gov.uk/countrysidestewardship)

The following information sets out the requirements an applicant will have to meet for each of the annual management options and supplements available within Countryside Stewardship.

Information on the requirements for Countryside Stewardship capital items can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-manual-print-version> <sup>1</sup>.

Further information on Countryside Stewardship is available within the [Scheme Manual](#) <sup>2</sup>.

## Version Control

These options may still be subject to updates during the summer of 2015. It is recommended that users should refer to the digital version on gov.uk, as any version that is printed may miss later updates.

The contents of this document will be finalised shortly before 2016 start date agreements are offered to successful applicants (in the autumn of 2015). That version will remain applicable to those agreements for their full duration.

From 2016 onwards the options will be updated annually in advance of the agreement offers being made. Each version will remain applicable for the duration of the agreements linked to it.

Page	Code	Option Title	Higher Tier	Mid Tier
<i>Arable</i>				
6	AB1	Nectar flower mix		
9	AB2	Basic overwinter stubble		
11	AB3	Beetle banks		
13	AB4	Skylark plots		
15	AB5	Nesting plots for lapwing and stone curlew		
17	AB6	Enhanced overwinter stubble		
19	AB7	Wholecrop cereals		
21	AB8	Flower-rich margins and plots		
24	AB9	Winter bird food		
27	AB10	Unharvested cereal headland		
29	AB11	Cultivated areas for arable plants		
31	AB12	Supplementary winter feeding for farmland birds		
34	AB13	Brassica fodder crop		
36	AB14	Harvested low input cereal		
38	AB15	Two year sown legume fallow		
41	AB16	Autumn sown bumblebird mix		
<i>Boundaries, Trees and Orchards</i>				
44	BE1	Protection of in-field trees on arable land		
47	BE2	Protection of in-field trees on intensive grassland		
50	BE3	Management of hedgerows		
53	BE4	Management of traditional orchards		
55	BE5	Creation of traditional orchards		
58	BE6	Veteran tree surgery		
61	BE7	Supplement for restorative pruning of fruit trees		

Page	Code	Option Title	Higher Tier	Mid Tier
<i>Coastal</i>				
63	CT1	Management of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle		
66	CT2	Creation of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle on arable land and improved grassland		
69	CT3	Management of coastal saltmarsh		
72	CT4	Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on arable land		
75	CT5	Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat by non-intervention		
78	CT6	Coastal vegetation management supplement		
80	CT7	Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on intensive grassland		
<i>Educational Access</i>				
83	ED1	Educational access		
<i>Grassland</i>				
85	GS1	Take field corners out of management		
87	GS2	Permanent grassland with very low inputs (outside SDAs)		
91	GS3	Ryegrass seed-set as winter food for birds		
93	GS4	Legume and herb-rich swards		
96	GS5	Permanent grassland with very low inputs in SDAs		
100	GS6	Management of species-rich grassland		
103	GS7	Restoration towards species-rich grassland		
106	GS8	Creation of species-rich grassland		
109	GS9	Management of wet grassland for breeding waders		
112	GS10	Management of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl		
115	GS11	Creation of wet grassland for breeding waders		
118	GS12	Creation of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl		
121	GS13	Management of grassland for target features		
124	GS14	Creation of grassland for target features		
127	GS15	Haymaking supplement		
129	GS16	Rush infestation control supplement		
132	GS17	Lenient grazing supplement		
<i>Historic Environment and Landscape</i>				
134	HS1	Maintenance of weatherproof traditional farm buildings		
138	HS2	Take historic and archaeological features out of cultivation		
141	HS3	Reduced-depth, non-inversion cultivation on historic and archaeological features		
144	HS4	Scrub control on historic and archaeological features		
147	HS5	Management of historic and archaeological features on grassland		
150	HS6	Maintenance of designed/engineered water bodies		
154	HS7	Management of historic water meadows through traditional irrigation		
157	HS8	Maintenance of weatherproof traditional farm buildings in remote areas		
161	HS9	Restricted depth crop establishment to protect archaeology under an arable rotation		

Page	Code	Option Title	Higher Tier	Mid Tier
<i>Lowland Heathland</i>				
165	LH1	Management of lowland heathland		
168	LH2	Restoration of forestry and woodland to lowland heathland		
171	LH3	Creation of heathland from arable or improved grassland		
<i>Organic</i>				
174	OP1	Overwintered stubble		
176	OP2	Wild bird seed mixture		
178	OP3	Supplementary feeding for farmland birds		
180	OP4	Multi species ley		
182	OP5	Undersown cereal		
184	OR1	Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland		
187	OR2	Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland		
190	OR3	Organic conversion - rotational land		
193	OR4	Organic conversion - horticulture		
196	OR5	Organic conversion - top fruit		
198	OT1	Organic land management - improved permanent grassland		
200	OT2	Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland		
202	OT3	Organic land management - rotational land		
204	OT4	Organic land management - horticulture		
206	OT5	Organic land management - top fruit		
209	OT6	Organic land management - enclosed rough grazing		
<i>Supplements</i>				
211	SP1	Difficult sites supplement		
213	SP2	Raised water level supplement		
216	SP3	Bracken control supplement		
218	SP4	Control of invasive plant species supplement		
222	SP5	Shepherding supplement		
224	SP6	Cattle grazing supplement		
226	SP7	Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly		
228	SP8	Native breeds at risk supplement		
230	SP9	Threatened species supplement		
231	SP10	Administration of group managed agreements supplement		
<i>Soil and Water</i>				
233	SW1	4 - 6 m buffer strip on cultivated land		
236	SW2	4 - 6 m buffer strip on intensive grassland		
239	SW3	In-field grass strips		
241	SW4	12 - 24m watercourse buffer strip on cultivated land		
244	SW5	Enhanced management of maize crops		
246	SW6	Winter cover crops		
248	SW7	Arable reversion to grassland with low fertiliser input		
251	SW8	Management of intensive grassland adjacent to a watercourse		
254	SW9	Seasonal livestock removal on intensive grassland		

Page	Code	Option Title	Higher Tier	Mid Tier
256	SW10	Seasonal livestock removal on grassland in SDAs next to streams, rivers and lakes		
258	SW11	Riparian management strip		
260	SW12	Making space for water		
263	SW13	Very low nitrogen inputs to groundwaters		
265	SW14	Nil fertiliser supplement		
<i>Uplands</i>				
267	UP1	Enclosed rough grazing		
270	UP2	Management of rough grazing for birds		
273	UP3	Management of moorland		
276	UP4	Management of moorland vegetation supplement		
278	UP5	Moorland re-wetting supplement		
280	UP6	Upland livestock exclusion supplement		
<i>Woodland and Scrub</i>				
282	WD1	Woodland creation – maintenance payments		
284	WD2	Woodland improvement		
287	WD3	Woodland edges on arable land		
289	WD4	Management of wood pasture and parkland		
293	WD5	Restoration of wood pasture and parkland		
297	WD6	Creation of wood pasture		
300	WD7	Management of successional areas and scrub		
303	WD8	Creation of successional areas and scrub		
306	WD9	Livestock exclusion supplement - scrub and successional areas		
<i>Wetlands</i>				
308	WT1	Buffering in-field ponds and ditches in improved grassland		
310	WT2	Buffering in-field ponds and ditches in arable land		
312	WT3	Management of ditches of high environmental value		
315	WT4	Pond management – first 100 sq m		
317	WT5	Pond management (areas more than 100 sq m)		
319	WT6	Management of reedbed		
321	WT7	Creation of reedbed		
324	WT8	Management of fen		
327	WT9	Creation of fen		
330	WT10	Management of lowland raised bog		
333	WT11	Wetland cutting supplement		
334	WT12	Wetland grazing supplement		

# Nectar flower mix (AB1)

## How much will be paid

£511 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £107 per ha.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grass
- bush orchards

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used:

- where evidence or records exist for important arable plants (Plantlife IAPA classification 4 and above) - these can either be historic (within the last 40 years) or from recent arable plant survey results
- on organic land or on land in conversion to organic status

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides areas of flowering plants to boost essential food sources for beneficial pollinators.

If successful there will be:

- an abundant supply of pollen and nectar-rich flowers between early and late summer
- pollinating insects such as bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies and hoverflies using the flowers

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a mix of at least 4 nectar-rich plants and at least 2 perennials
- establish the mix in blocks or strips between 15 March and 30 April or 15 July to 30 August

- rotationally cut 50% of the plot area each year between 15 April and 31 May - don't cut the same area in successive years
- cut the whole area between 15 September and 30 March, removing or shredding cuttings to avoid patches of dead material developing

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the established mixture
- seed invoices
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

### What must not be done

Don't graze between 15 March and 31 August.

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Pick the right location

Use lower-yielding areas if they:

- have a sunny aspect
- face south or south-southwest

Avoid planting:

- under overhanging trees
- next to tall hedges
- on land facing north or east

Leave access to surrounding crops for in-season management.

### Block and plot sizes

Use wide margins and big blocks between 0.25ha and 0.5ha. This lets insects move to safety when bordering fields are being sprayed.

Spacing five 0.5ha patches evenly within 100ha meets the food needs of many pollinators.

### What to sow

The seed mix used should contain both short-term nectar rich and perennial plants, such as:

- early and late flowering red clovers
- alsike clover
- sainfoin
- birdsfoot trefoil
- black knapweed
- musk mallow

Sow at 12kg per ha to provide enough plants.

Avoid short-term mixes that don't include knapweed or mallow as they won't supply pollinators with long-term food sources for years 4 and 5 of the agreement.

### **When to sow**

Establish the mix in spring or autumn of year 1 of the agreement.

Stop sowing by September to avoid slug and frost damage as this tends to happen more often in later sown mixes.

### **How to sow**

Sow by broadcasting seeds rather than drilling, when the soil is warm and moist. Use a ring roll before and after sowing. Check regularly for slug damage.

### **Management**

Cut emerging flowers and weeds at least 2 times in year 1 and up to 4 times if necessary, where the soil is particularly fertile. Regular cutting prevents weeds smothering the slow-growing flowers so all sown species are established successfully.

Plots can be grazed between 1 September and 14 March but there must not be any:

- poaching or soil compaction by livestock
- supplementary feeding carried out

Keep nectar plots until the end of the agreement.

### **Further information**

Order the 'Growing farm wildlife' DVD from Natural England which gives a step-by-step approach to sowing nectar flower mixtures.



# Basic overwinter stubble (AB2)

## How much will be paid

£84 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on stubble that follows the harvest of:

- cereals (not maize)
- oilseed rape
- linseed

## When this option can't be used:

This option can't be used on:

- parcels at risk of soil erosion or runoff, as identified in the guidance or Farm Environment Record (FER)
- organic land or land in conversion to organic status

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option creates a winter food source for seed-eating birds, which feed on spilt grain and the seeds of broad-leaved weeds. It also creates a foraging habitat for brown hare.

If successful there will be:

- naturally occurring arable plants providing seed and forage over the winter
- farmland birds and brown hare foraging on the seed shed during harvest

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

Successful applicants will need to keep the stubble from harvest to 15 February.

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the stubble area
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- location of this option submitted with your annual claim

### **What must not be done**

Do not apply:

- pre-harvest desiccants
- post-harvest herbicides
- any fertilisers, manures or lime to the stubble

### **How to carry out this option**

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### **Pick the right location**

This option suits most soil types but works best when arable plants in the soil seedbank create a range of natural habitats that can support different wildlife.

The best overwinter stubbles come from spring sown crops, especially barley.

### **Blocks or plot sizes**

Spread basic stubbles widely across the farm to help connect farmland wildlife with other farm habitats.

This option works best on a part or whole-field scale. The option is designed to rotate around the farm so it:

- fits in with the crop rotations
- gives the most benefit for biodiversity

### **Enhance basic stubble**

Enhance the stubble by broadcasting beneficial seed and nectar-producing plants, such as mustard and fodder radish. Do this after harvest on a maximum of 10% of the stubble area.

Use the stubble as areas for supplementary feeding when they are next to winter bird-food plots.

Keep the stubble from harvest until 31 December in year 5 of the agreement.

# Beetle banks (AB3)

## How much will be paid

£573 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £145 per ha.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on historic or archaeological features.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides nesting and foraging habitats for:

- insects - including those that feed on crop pests
- bumblebees
- small mammals
- some farmland birds

If successful there will be:

- a raised grass bank with dense tussocky cover providing warm and dry areas for invertebrates and farmland birds
- invertebrates such as bumblebees and some farmland birds foraging and nesting on the bank during the spring and summer
- beneficial insects which feed on farm crop pests

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- create or maintain an earth ridge, measuring between 3m to 5m wide and at least 0.4m high
- leave gaps no more than 25m wide at each end of the ridge to allow access for machinery

- establish or maintain a tussock grass mixture in year 1 of the agreement
- cut the established mixture to control woody growth and suckering species - cut after 1 August to protect nesting invertebrates
- only use pesticides, including herbicides, to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds, invasive non-natives, nettles or bracken

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operation records at parcel level, including associated invoices

### What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- apply any lime

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Pick the right location

This option is suitable for most soil types but especially where it's possible to form a free-draining raised bank. This will leave the upper bank area dry for insects to hibernate securely. It works best on larger fields as it's designed to provide the most benefit in more open landscapes. It can also help to slow down or stop soil erosion.

### Blocks and plot sizes

Spread beetle banks widely across the farm to help connect farmland wildlife with other farm habitats.

### What to sow

Sow a mixture of fine-leaved grasses such as red fescue and tall fescue together with some tussock-forming varieties like timothy and cocksfoot.

### Establish the bank

Plough in 2 directions towards each furrow to create the required size followed by shallow cultivation of the bank to produce a firm, fine seedbed if needed.

Broadcast the grass seed mixture onto the seedbed and roll. This will keep moisture in the soil. Don't overwork the bank, as this can cause a loss in overall height.

### When to cut

Cut the grass several times during the first summer to help it establish but avoid cutting when the bank is wet, to stop the soil compacting.

After year 1 only cut:

- after 1 August to protect any nesting invertebrates and beneficial insects
- to control parts of the bank where invasive perennial weeds or woody species such as creeping or spear thistle are growing.

# Skylark plots (AB4)

## How much will be paid

£18 (£9 per plot, minimum 2 plots per hectare (ha)).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £8 per ha (£4 per plot).

## Where the option is available

This option is rotational. It's available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland
- in winter cereal fields with an open aspect of more than 5ha

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used in parcels bounded by tree lines or adjacent to woods, unless the parcel is larger than 10ha.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides skylarks with suitable access to nesting habitats in winter cereal crops throughout their breeding season.

If successful there will be:

- plots providing access into the growing cereal during the spring and summer
- skylarks holding territory and singing over the fields of winter cereals where the plots are located and, ideally, landing in the plots themselves
- increased numbers of singing skylarks across the farm

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- create fallow plots at least 3m wide and with a minimum area of 16 square metres in winter cereal fields
- space plots across the field at a minimum density of 2 plots per ha, making sure they are located away from tramlines, boundaries and margins to minimise nest predation.

### **Keeping records**

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the plots

### **How to carry out this option**

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### **Pick the right location**

This option works best in large, open fields of winter cereals, preferably where skylarks are present or have been in the past. Avoid fields that are bordered by trees or next to woods as this increases the risks of predator attack.

Minimise attacks on nests from predators by placing plots:

- away from tramlines (choosing a middle spot between two sets of tramlines works best)
- at least 50m from field boundaries and margins

### **How to establish skylark plots**

Create plots either by:

- turning off the drill during sowing to leave an unsown plot
- sowing the crop as normal and spraying with herbicide to create the plot by 31 December

### **Managing the plots**

After drilling, the plots can be managed with the same treatments as the remainder of the field. There is no need to keep the plots weed-free but spot-treating with herbicide in April will help skylarks to access their nesting sites.

Mechanical weeding of crops with skylark plots in will destroy any nests present so it is not recommended.

# Nesting plots for lapwing and stone curlew (AB5)

## How much will be paid

£524 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £96 per ha.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on:

- parcels that are at risk of soil erosion or runoff as identified in the farm environment record (FER)
- historic or archaeological features

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides nesting sites for lapwing on arable land. The plots can also benefit other declining farmland birds, brown hare and some important arable plants.

If successful there will be:

- lapwing using plots for nesting and raising their young
- other farmland birds, brown hare and arable plants on the plot areas

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- create individual plots that are a minimum of 1ha and a maximum of 5ha in size, in a fixed location in or rotated around fields which must be a minimum of 5ha (or 10ha if woodland forms at least a quarter of the field boundary)
- create the cultivated plots by 20 March
- plots must be at least 100m away from woods, in-field and hedgerow trees, buildings, overhead

- power-lines, main roads and public rights of way, and at least 200m away from wind turbines
- restore suitable bare ground nesting habitat where natural regeneration covers more than 70% of the plot by 30 April, making sure no nesting birds are present
- retain cultivated areas until 31 July

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the plots
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Pick the right location

Plots should be located:

- on level or slightly sloping ground
- next to extensively managed grassland where lapwings can feed their chicks
- on arable fields of at least 5ha, or 10ha if woodland forms at least a quarter of the field boundary
- away from waterlogged areas or land with weeds such as black-grass, wild oats or sterile brome
- at least 100m away from woods, in-field and hedgerow trees, buildings, overhead power-lines, main roads and public rights of way
- at least 200m away from wind turbines

This option can be used in a sequence with basic over-winter stubble to provide a continuity of habitat for species such as skylark and corn bunting.

### How to establish the plots

Plots can be established by cultivation or spraying to create the fallow.

On heavier soils, plots can be ploughed the previous autumn and allowed to weather down to provide suitable nesting conditions in early spring.

### Managing the plots

Machinery carrying out day to day farm operations such as spraying and fertilising can travel over these plots provided that the machinery keeps to the tramlines and is switched off when doing so.

Plots and plot tramlines should be checked for signs of nests prior to this taking place.

### Nesting plots for stone curlews

There are specific areas in England where stone curlews are the target farmland bird for nesting plots. These plots and their specific management requirements will be available under Higher Tier.



# Enhanced overwinter stubble (AB6)

## How much will be paid

£436 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £8 per ha.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on stubble that follows the harvest of:

- cereals (not maize)
- oilseed rape
- linseed

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on parcels at risk of soil erosion or runoff, as identified in the guidance or Farm Environment Record (FER).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides important winter food sources for seed-eating birds, spring and summer foraging and nesting habitat for other farmland birds and undisturbed habitat for other farmland wildlife including many pollinators.

If successful there will be:

- naturally occurring arable plants providing seed and forage during winter, spring and summer
- farmland birds and pollinating insects using the winter stubble and spring fallow area
- only low populations of black-grass plants in the late spring that need patch-spraying

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- retain the stubble and any subsequent regeneration until 31 July of the following year after harvest
- return the stubble back to the farm rotation from 1 August

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- use pre-harvest desiccants
- apply fertilisers or manures to the stubble
- apply lime to the stubble
- apply pesticides to the stubble, except herbicides to control problem grass weeds by spraying the affected area from 15 May
- top or graze

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Pick the right location

This option can be used on most soil types but ideally choose a location with:

- low levels of black-grass or without a thistle problem as this avoids the need to spray after 15 May and lets arable flora set seed in late spring to early summer
- arable plants in the soil seedbank, these provide natural insect-rich habitats for foraging farmland birds

### Block sizes or plots

Spread enhanced stubble widely across the farm to help connect farmland wildlife with other farm habitats and provides some black-grass control benefits later in the season.

Make sure this option is planned into the farm rotation by selecting enough appropriately sized fields with a low black-grass burden.

### Rotational management

Remember the stubble needs to be kept from harvest until 31 December in year 5, after which it can be returned back to the rotation on 1 January.

# Whole crop cereals (AB7)

## How much will be paid

£495 per hectare (ha).

## Where this option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on parcels at risk of soil erosion or runoff, as identified in the farm environment record (FER).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will provide a valuable seed source in grass-dominated areas, from any unripe spilt grain after harvest and from the stubble in winter. It also delivers resource protection benefits when compared to maize.

If successful there will be:

- areas of open crop growth
- a crop structure supporting a range of declining arable plants and other broad-leaved species
- plants providing summer foraging for declining and localised farmland birds, small mammals and pollinator species such as bees and other beneficial insects
- a weedy stubble providing over-wintering habitat for insects and seed-eating farmland birds

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a cereal crop (not maize) between February and April every year
- harvest as whole crop cereals
- retain the stubble from harvest until 15 February

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the stubble area
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any herbicides except those on the list of permitted active ingredients available from Natural England for this option
- apply any insecticides between 15 March and the following harvest
- apply any fertilisers or manures to the stubble
- apply any lime to the stubble
- top or graze

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Stubbles in the rotation

The best overwinter stubbles come from spring sown crops, especially barley and those that receive limited herbicide use. In addition, the spring crop following these stubbles can also benefit farmland wildlife, especially if it is combined with another arable option.

For example a low-input spring crop can provide habitats for spring-germinating arable plants, as well as nesting and feeding habitat for birds and brown hares.

## Managing the whole crop option

Wholecrop cereal stubbles can be enhanced by broadcasting beneficial seed and nectar-producing plants such as mustard and fodder radish, on small areas during or after harvest up to a maximum of 10% of the total wholecrop stubble area. This will provide additional feeding and foraging value.

The stubbles can also be used as areas for supplementary feeding when they are next to winter bird food plots.

# Flower-rich margins and plots (AB8)

## How much will be paid

£539 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £209 per ha.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland
- bush orchards

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used:

- if there's evidence or records for important arable plants (Plantlife IAPA classification 4 and above) - these can either be historic (within the last 40 years) or from recent arable plant survey results
- adjacent to sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) or other botanically valuable sites as identified on the farm environment record (FER)

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option creates flower-rich grass margins or plots that provide important habitat and foraging sites for invertebrates (including wild pollinators) and birds.

If successful, there will be:

- an abundant supply of pollen and nectar-rich flowers throughout the summer
- pollinating and beneficial insects including bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies and hoverflies using these flowers
- farmland birds such as yellowhammers foraging within or on the edges of the margins and plots
- annual production of flowers for the length of the agreement

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a flower-rich margin or plot in between 15 March to 31 May or 15 July to 15 October based on the mixture specified in the “How to carry out this option” section
- cut plant growth (and remove if dense) if it is more than 15cm in height before 31 March, to achieve a plant height of between 5cm and 10cm tall
- cut (and remove if dense) or graze, 90% of the area between 15 August and 31 October to leave a plant height of between 10cm and 20cm. Leave 10% of the area uncut or ungrazed
- keep a monthly record of stock numbers grazing on parcels in this option and make the record available on request

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the margin or plot
- seed invoices
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Pick the right location

Use lower yielding areas if they have a sunny aspect, or face south or south-southwest. Avoid planting under overhanging trees, next to tall hedges or on land facing north or east. Leave access to surrounding crops for in-season management.

## Block and plot sizes

Wide margins and big blocks let insects move to safety when bordering fields are being sprayed. Spacing 5 patches of 0.5ha evenly within 100ha meets the food needs of many pollinators.

## What to sow

The seed mix should contain both grasses and perennial flowering plants, such as:

- |                               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| ■ slender red fescue          | ■ self heal          |
| ■ sorrel                      | ■ common bent        |
| ■ sheep's fescue              | ■ yarrow             |
| ■ bird's-foot trefoil         | ■ sweet vernal grass |
| ■ smooth-stalked meadow grass | ■ wild carrot        |
| ■ ribwort plantain            | ■ black knapweed     |
| ■ smaller cat's-tail          | ■ lady's bedstraw    |
| ■ yellow rattle               | ■ meadow buttercup   |
| ■ crested dog's-tail          | ■ ox-eye daisy       |

Sow at 20kg per ha to provide enough plants when the mixture is established.

### **Existing flower-rich plots and margins**

Use existing suitable flower-rich plots or margins instead of re-sowing provided they offer a variety of flowers that deliver a rich supply of pollen and nectar during the summer.

### **When to sow**

Establish the mix in spring or autumn of year 1 of the agreement.

### **Controlling weeds**

Top emerging flowers and weeds at least 3 times in year 1 for spring sowings and at least 2 times in year 2 for autumn sowings. Regular topping prevents weeds smothering the slow-growing flowers so that all sown species established successfully and toppings can be left.

At the beginning of April make sure vegetation is short enough to allow flower species to grow without competition from dominant grasses. Cut and remove summer growth between 15 August and 31 October which will help reduce soil fertility, boosting flower numbers in subsequent years.

Always leave 10% of the option area uncut or ungrazed to provide over-winter nesting and safe refuges for pollinators and other invertebrates.

Retain flower-rich margins and plots until 31 December in year 5 of the agreement.

# Winter bird food (AB9)

## How much will be paid

£640 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £271 per ha.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland
- bush orchards

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on organic parcels or land in conversion.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides important food resources for farmland birds, especially in autumn and winter.

If successful there will be:

- an abundant and available supply of small seeds during the autumn and winter months
- farmland birds eating the seeds from October and beneficial insects including bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies and hoverflies using the flowers during the summer

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to establish a seed mix of cereals, brassicas and other plants, producing small edible seeds between 1 March and 15 June to meet the autumn, winter and spring food needs of the following farmland birds if they're targeted in the area:

- grey partridge
- tree sparrow
- corn bunting
- turtle dove
- cirl bunting



Successful applicants will also need to:

- make sure blocks or strips are at least 6m wide and a minimum of 0.4ha in size - the maximum individual plots size is 5ha
- use a re-establishment mix from How to carry out this option if the first mixture fails to establish
- maintain seed production by re-establishing every year for annual mixtures and every 2 years where mixtures have plants that deliver feed over 2 winters

### **Keeping records**

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the blocks or strips
- seed invoices
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

### **How to carry out this option**

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### **Pick the right location**

Use this option on most areas of the farm but mixtures work best in sunny locations and fertile sites.

Avoid planting underneath overhanging trees or next to shading woodland as this leads to poorer establishment, growth and seed production.

Winter bird food mixes should be placed next to a field edge but can extend into the field. Leave access for in-season management.

### **Block and plot sizes**

Creating wider and bigger areas of winter bird food allows more seeds to remain undiscovered for longer, which extends their value well into winter. This also reduces the edge effect from adjacent land, such as fertiliser or pesticide drift.

Smaller areas tend to suffer from birds eating all the food within a short time.

### **What to sow**

Sow plants that offer a spread of seed across the late autumn and winter.

Annual mixtures should include species like barley, triticale, quinoa, linseed, millet, mustard, fodder radish and sunflower. Include kale in 2-year mixtures. The combination should cover a range of crop groups to minimise any pest and disease risks.

No single species should make up more than 70% by weight of the mix.

The following plants are not permitted:

- maize
- tick beans
- giant sorghum
- canary grass

- sweet clover
- artichokes

### **When and how to sow**

Establish the plot in the spring each year of the agreement, ideally between mid-March and early June.

The seedbed needs to be fine and firm with seed sown at a depth between 1.5cm and 2.5cm. Moisture and warmth will help any brassicas establish quickly to protect against flea beetle damage.

### **Managing the option**

Nitrogen applied at a minimum of 50kg per ha will create sufficient growth to smother annual weeds and produce plenty of seed. Successful applicants can use herbicides in some winter bird food mixes so check with a BASIS-qualified agronomist.

Rotate this option to a new site of clean ground if weed problems start to build up.

# Unharvested cereal headland (AB10)

## How much will be paid

£640 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will provide an important food source for farmland birds throughout the year, insects in the summer and both grain and seeding arable plants in winter.

If successful there will be:

- areas of open crop growth, allowing access for foraging farmland birds
- a crop structure supporting a range of declining arable plants and other broad-leaved plants
- plants providing summer and winter foraging for declining and localised farmland birds (especially grey partridge) mammals and important farmland pollinator species, such as bees and other beneficial insects
- strips or areas of weedy unharvested cereals providing over-wintering habitat for insects and food for seed-eating farmland birds

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a cereal crop (not maize) between February and April in strips between 6m and 24m wide or on a part-field or field scale
- create an open crop structure by managing the crop to deliver between 450 and 700 fertile tillers per square metre
- leave the option area unharvested until 1 February in the year following grain head production before returning to normal rotational management

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- records at parcel level of field operations, including seed invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- apply any lime
- use any herbicides except those on the list of permitted active ingredients available from Natural England for this option
- apply any insecticides after 15 March

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Pick the right location

This option can be successful on most soil types but ideally choose a location with low levels of thistles or problem weeds such as blackgrass. This will help the beneficial arable plants in the soil seedbank to grow without competition and provide a range of valuable habitats during the growing season. It will also allow the arable flora to set seed during the early summer period and retains the insect-rich habitat for foraging farmland birds.

### Sowing the crop

It is important to make sure the crop delivering the unharvested headland is not too dense, which restricts the foraging opportunities for farmland birds such as grey partridge. Managing the seed rate by considering drilling date, seed thousand grain weight, varietal tillering capacity and soil conditions will help achieve the required open crop structure.

### Using herbicides

The objective for this option is to encourage the natural populations of arable plants that support both insects and farmland birds so applying broad-spectrum herbicide during the cropping season and non-selective herbicides to help with harvest stop this from happening. There are only a limited list of herbicide actives that are permitted in this option and these are subject to change as UK pesticide approvals are reviewed. The most up-to-date list will be available from the Natural England office so contact the office to get hold of a copy.

# Cultivated areas for arable plants (AB11)

## How much will be paid

£532 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £165 per ha.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on arable land:

- where there's evidence or records for important arable plants (Plantlife IAPA classification of 4 and above) - these can either be historic (within the last 40 years) or from recent arable plant survey results
- where arable plant records don't exist but the land is part of the Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife Package

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will create uncropped, cultivated areas for a wide range of scarce and declining arable plants, provide areas of less densely vegetated ground for insects and other invertebrates, and summer foraging habitats for declining farmland birds.

If successful there will be:

- vulnerable species of arable plants germinating and completing their life cycle which will increase their populations over time
- foraging insects such as bumblebees, solitary bees and hoverflies visiting flowers and the bare ground created
- declining farmland birds, such as grey partridge and turtle dove, foraging in the arable plant area

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- create the fallow margins or plots annually
- cultivate in the spring between February and April or in the autumn between September and November - work the soil sufficiently to produce a fine surface across the whole area
- only use pesticides, including herbicides, to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds, invasive non-natives, nettles or bracken

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- records at parcel level of your field operations, including any associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- disturb cultivated areas before 31 August
- apply any fertilisers or manures
- apply any lime

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Pick the right location

Where sites have important arable plant species present or where they could be released from seed-bank (historic or local records will help identify them), this option can deliver tailored management for them.

The richest areas for arable plants are at the edges of fields, adjacent to old farm tracks and boundary features, so margins up to 6m wide will work best here.

Fields with a long history of cultivation, together with old grass margins that were previously arable, should also be considered.

Some of the more common species of arable plants are good 'indicator' species' and indicate the potential of an area to hold rich arable flora in the seed bank, so it's important to focus on these sites too, as well as those containing the rarest species.

### Managing your plots

Rotating the cultivated areas around the farm can help control and prevent a build-up of undesirable weed species.

Varying cultivation timing and depth can also help control undesirable species while providing suitable conditions for germinating arable plants in the spring and autumn.

Topping at a height of around 30cm to prevent seeding of undesirable weed species such wild oats and creeping thistle is allowed during the growing season as many of the desirable arable plant species are shorter than this. Where this weed burden develops on more than 40% of the area, targeted broad-spectrum herbicides can be used once annual species have set seed (normally in September).

If grass weeds become a problem then periodically (one year in 3) creating a stale autumn seedbed and cultivating in mid-March can help control them. This is particularly relevant on heavy clay sites. Ploughing can also be useful for controlling grass weeds.

Use this option as part of a sequence of arable options which can occupy the same area of land at different times of the year such as overwinter stubbles.

# Supplementary winter feeding for farmland birds (AB12)

## How much will be paid

£632 per tonne for every 2 hectares (ha) of winter bird food.

## Where the option is available:

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land, temporary grassland or bush orchards
- land when a qualifying area of [AB9 - Winter bird food](#)<sup>13</sup> is included in the agreement (2ha of AB9 winter bird food allows 500kg per annum of supplementary feeding, at each of two separate feeding stations)

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on organic parcels or land in conversion.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will provide important food resources for farmland birds in late winter and early spring on arable land and mixed farms by supplementing grown winter bird food with spread seed, once the sown resources have been depleted and before natural food resources become available again in late spring.

If successful there will be seed-eating farmland birds using the feeding areas from December to April, including:

- yellowhammer
- grey partridge
- tree sparrow
- corn bunting
- linnet
- turtle dove (seen during the spring and summer)

Target birds will be seen more frequently on the farm in the spring and there will be increased breeding success across the farm.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

#### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- spread the supplementary feed mixture specified in the agreement at an average rate of 25kg on the ground, at least once a week from 1 December until 30 April (end of May for turtle dove), at each of two separate feeding locations
- select feeding areas that are firm and free-draining such as farm tracks or hard standing areas and in close proximity to enhanced overwinter stubbles, game cover or wild bird seed mixtures

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- details of the mixture used (weight of components and cost)
- dates of feeding
- method of feeding (hopper or spreading)
- amount of feed
- the location of the feeding areas

### What must not be done

Do not:

- use hoppers to supply more than 10% of the total amount of feed provided during the specified feeding period
- use tailings (small seeds and chaff removed from the harvested crop) as supplementary feed

### How to carry out this option:

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

#### Pick the right location

When planning which feeding sites to use, make sure staff will be able to get to them regularly. This is especially important if bad weather will cause problems travelling to them during the winter.

It's important for the health of the birds benefiting from the supplementary feeding that clean and healthy feeding areas are maintained for them. Rotating feeding sites around the farm is really important but those used should always be near to existing sown resources.

#### Manage how and when to supplementary feed

Supplementary feeding should start before the sown winter bird food runs out. This keeps farmland birds using the areas and prevents a dip in their winter condition.

Distribute enough supplementary food to match the birds' consumption but without leaving seed uneaten. This will ensure a fresh supply of food is maintained, which will keep birds healthy and reduce any rodent problems. This is particularly important when ground feeding, or if hoppers are left unprotected.



Feed twice a week so that no food is left by the second day after feeding. This helps to reduce rodents and use of the supplementary feed areas by crows and pigeons. Feed should be well spread out on the areas chosen, rather than left in piles.

Prepare to be flexible, so that if the winter period is extended through bad weather, the amount of feeding planned can be adjusted and extended for any additional days or weeks that are needed. This ensures that birds are not left with a 'hungry gap' before the natural seed resources on the farm become available.

If turtle doves as part of a targeted agreement, feeding will need to continue until the end of May or longer.

# Brassica fodder crop (AB13)

## How much will be paid

£100 per hectare (ha).

## Where it's available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on:

- parcels identified as being at medium to high erosion risk or immediately adjacent to a watercourse
- historic or archaeological features

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides foraging sites for seed-eating birds in pastoral areas where broad-leaved plants can persist in the crop and set seed.

If successful, there will be:

- a weedy fodder crop during the summer and autumn
- an open grazed stubble which provides some winter cover and feeding areas for farmland birds

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a whole or part field of fodder brassica or fodder root crop before 31 July
- commence grazing after 15 October
- return the stubble to the farm rotation from 15 February

### **Keeping records**

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

### **What must not be done**

Don't apply any herbicides or insecticides.

### **How to carry out this option**

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### **Managing livestock in the option area**

Make sure that any grazing of the option area does not create poaching or soil erosion. The open structure of the fodder crop increases the risk of both occurring when it is being grazed.

Supplementary feeding of livestock on the area is not permitted.

# Harvested low input cereal (AB14)

## How much will be paid

£266 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used after the following break crops:

- oilseed rape
- potatoes
- beans
- peas

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will deliver an open-structured cereal crop to provide summer foraging sites for declining and localised farmland birds and habitat for brown hare, rare arable plants and pollinator species, such as bees and beneficial insects.

If successful there will be:

- areas of open crop growth suitable for crop nesting birds such as skylarks, and a range of declining arable plants and other broadleaved species
- brown hare and foraging farmland birds such as yellowhammer and reed bunting using the crop
- important farmland pollinator species, such as bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies and hoverflies visiting the flowers in these areas

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a cereal crop every year in the spring between February and April or in the autumn between October and December, either as strips 6m to 24m wide or on a field scale
- create an open crop structure by managing the crop to deliver between 450 and 700 fertile tillers per square metre

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- records at parcel level of field operations, including any associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- harvest the crop before 15 July
- apply any herbicides, except those on the list of permitted active ingredients available from Natural England for this option
- apply insecticides after 15 March

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Pick the right location

Sites with low levels of pernicious weeds such as couch, blackgrass, brome, ryegrass and wild oats are best, although it may be necessary to use this option on sites with higher weed burdens if important populations of target plants or birds are present.

### Managing the crop

Using lower seed rates between 50kg per ha and 100kg per ha will help make sure that the crop isn't too dense. It will allow broadleaved plants to establish and provide foraging options for fledged farmland bird chicks.

There are a range of cereals that can be used for this option, including wheat, barley, triticale, oats and rye. Don't use maize, sorghum of any kind or millet as the cereal in this option.

# Two year sown legume fallow (AB15)

## How much will be paid

£522 hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £144 per ha.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used:

- where evidence or records exist for important arable plants (Plantlife IAPA classification 4 and above) - these can either be historic (within the last 40 years) or from recent arable plant survey results
- on organic parcels or land in conversion

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will provide food for farmland wildlife, such as pollen and nectar for pollinators, and invertebrate chick food for farmland birds. It will also offer a rotational reduction of blackgrass.

If successful there will be:

- a reduction in flowering blackgrass and an abundant supply of sown pollen and nectar-rich flowers between early and late summer in year 3 and year 5 of the agreement
- pollinating and beneficial insects such as bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies and hoverflies, using these flowers
- some adult farmland birds and chicks seen foraging in and around the sown fallow between April and July

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a mixture of grass and flowering species as specified in the “How to carry out this option” section as soon as possible after harvest and before 7 September, in year 1 and year 3 of the agreement
- cut at least twice during the year as the mixture is establishing to stop blackgrass heading - don't cut after the end of October
- in the second year after establishment, cut once before the end of March if blackgrass is present
- return the option area back to the arable rotation from 15 August in the second year after establishment

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- records of field operations at the parcel level, including any associated invoices

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Pick the right location

This option works well on most soil types and where it can reduce the amount of blackgrass and increase wildlife resources.

It works best where some blackgrass germinates after cultivation in the autumn and more can grow from the seedbank during the winter and following spring. Mow the area as often as is needed to prevent the blackgrass from seeding.

## Size of blocks or plots

Plan this option into the rotation, selecting fields on a part or whole-field scale. This will give most benefits for blackgrass reduction and biodiversity.

Spread the legume fallow areas widely across the farm to help connect insects with other farm habitats.

## Sow a mixture of plant species

Sow a mixture in the autumn based on the suggestions below, at an overall seed rate of around 30kg per ha and retain for 2 years before re-establishment:

Plant species	Proportion by weight
Intermediate or late perennial ryegrass	66%
Red clover	15%
Common vetch	10%
Birdsfoot trefoil	7%
Common or black knapweed	2%

When soils are dry at sowing, substituting some of the ryegrass with cocksfoot (up to 30%) can help with rapid ground cover establishing.

**When to sow**

Establish the legume fallow as soon as possible after harvest in year 1 and year 3 of the agreement (ideally by the end of August).

**When to cut**

Cut at least twice in the first year following the autumn sowing to control emerging blackgrass. But be prepared for subsequent cuts to be as close as 3 weeks apart as blackgrass re-heads more rapidly after each cut.

Cutting before the end of March in year 2 controls any remaining blackgrass, before the legume fallow mixture grows away rapidly from April.

Grazing on the legume fallow area is not permitted.

**Return the option area back to crop production**

Spray the legume fallow mix with a non-selective herbicide if needed, before the area is cultivated for the next crop.

Return the area back to the farm rotation from 15 August.



# Autumn sown bumblebird mix (AB16)

## How much will be paid

£550 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £146 per ha.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used for:

- arable land
- temporary grassland
- bush orchards

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used where evidence or records exist for important arable plants (Plantlife IAPA classification 4 and above) - these can either be historic (within the last 40 years) or from recent arable plant survey results.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will provide important food resources for farmland birds and a range of nectar feeding insects, including butterflies and bumblebees on arable land and mixed farms.

If successful there will be:

- an abundant supply of small seeds during the winter months
- farmland birds such as tree sparrow and corn bunting eating these seeds
- an abundant supply of pollen and nectar-rich flowers between early and late summer
- pollinating and beneficial insects including bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies and hoverflies using these flowers

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a mixture of the flowering and seed bearing plants specified in the "How to carry out this option" section as soon as possible after harvest and before 7 September, in year 1 and year 3 of the agreement

- where the chosen mixture fails to establish, re-establish it using one of the re-establishment mixtures specified in option guidance
- make sure blocks or strips must be at least 6m wide and at least 0.4ha - the maximum individual plot size is 5ha
- top the established mixture between mid-February and mid-March in the second spring after sowing to promote legume flowering during early and mid-summer
- return the option area back to the arable rotation from 15 August in the second year after establishment
- maintain seed and flower provision, re-establish the mixture every 2 years

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the blocks or strips
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

#### Pick the right location

This option works well on most soil types and as with conventional crops, there will be more seeds and flowers produced where it is located on better ground. Ideally, pick sheltered sites that face south or west for maximum benefits to pollinators.

It also works on heavier soils where spring-sowing of winter bird food plots is difficult.

Avoid sites with high weed burdens to reduce competition from aggressive weeds such as thistles, blackgrass and sterile brome.

#### Size of blocks or plots

Sow larger plots as they're easier to manage and provide food for seed-eating farmland birds longer into the winter. Creating wider, bigger blocks also helps insects to move away to safety when neighbouring crops are treated.

#### What to sow

Sow a mixture in the autumn based on the suggestions below, at an overall seed rate of around 30kg per ha and retain for 2 years before re-establishment.

### When to sow

Establish the mixture as soon as possible after harvest in year 1 and year 3 of the agreement (ideally by 1 September).

Plots can receive 50kg per ha of nitrogen in the first spring after establishment to help increase seed production in the following winter.

Bird and insect plant species	Proportion by weight
Winter triticale	18%
Winter barley	18%
Fodder radish	15%
Crimson clover	15%
Birds foot trefoil	10%
Gold of pleasure	5%
Kale	5%
Phacelia	5%
Common vetch	5%
Common or black knapweed	2%
Rough hawkbit or wild carrot	1.50%
Ox-eye daisy	0.50%

### When to cut

Cut a few centimetres below the tops of the flowering plants in the spring of the second year to remove any over-winter seed plants. This allows flowering plants to develop with less competition. Grazing the bumblebird mixture is not permitted.

### Return the site back to crop rotation

The option area returns back to the farm rotation on 15 August which allows time to incorporate any legume biomass for healthier soils before drilling the next crop.

# Protection of in-field trees on arable land (BE1)

## How much will be paid

£420 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is a part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland
- trees (dead or alive) at least 30cm diameter at breast height (dbh)

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on a group or line of 4 or more trees whose canopies overlap.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

If successful there will be trees protected from agricultural operations and kept as important features in the local landscape. Tree roots will be protected from damage by cultivations with a grass fertiliser free buffer. Undisturbed standing and fallen deadwood will act as an invertebrate habitat.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a photograph of each tree
- the diameter at breast height (dbh) for each tree
- a map of existing land drainage in the field

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- protect trees from damage by livestock and wild animals
- make sure tree guards don't damage growing trees
- keep all fallen branches in the option area
- leave any trees that die or fall in position

## Sward creation and management

In year 1 establish and then maintain a sward around each tree by natural regeneration.

Tree diameter at breast height (dbh)	Sward radius	Area per tree
30cm to 99cm	10m	0.03ha
100cm to 199cm	20m	0.12ha
200cm or more	30m	0.28ha

Once established:

- make sure no more than 5% is covered in weeds or bare ground
- only cut to control woody growth
- only use pesticides and herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe to control nettles, bracken, injurious weeds or invasive non-natives (such as Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam)

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of each tree entered into the option
- photographs of the sward buffer
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

### What must not be done

Don't:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- apply any lime
- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- use supplementary feed
- harrow or roll
- remove any tree limbs, including the lower limbs or mature ivy growth
- carry out any drainage works, including modifying existing drainage without Natural England's written permission before any works take place

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Storing fallen branches

Fallen branches should not be cut into pieces but stacked in piles:

- with one pile in a sunny spot and one in a shady spot
- not too high, to stop the timber drying out
- with as much timber as possible in contact with the ground

### Setting tree guards

Don't attach tree guards to the trees as this can damage the trees.

### Using pesticides

Avoid damaging the trees when using spot-treat or weed-wipe. Using chemicals should be a last resort to avoid damage to root fungi in the soil. Trees depend on fungi for future good health.

### Controlling livestock damage

To prevent livestock damage:

- provide alternative shelter with water to attract animals away from trees
- fence off trees to stop animals rubbing and stripping bark or trampling the base

Fences should be placed at the edge of the option area.

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- BE6 - Veteran tree surgery<sup>28</sup>
- ED1 - Educational access<sup>52</sup>
- OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land<sup>119</sup>
- OR4 - Organic conversion - horticulture<sup>120</sup>
- OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land<sup>124</sup>
- OT4 - Organic land management - horticulture<sup>125</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement<sup>177</sup>

# Protection of in-field trees on intensive grassland (BE2)

## How much will be paid

£190 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- grassland receiving more than 100kg per ha of nitrogen a year in fertilisers or manures
- trees (dead or alive) at least 30cm diameter at breast height (dbh)

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on a group or line of 4 or more trees whose canopies overlap.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

If successful there will be trees protected from agricultural operations and kept as important features in the local landscape. Tree roots will be protected from damage by cultivations and a grass fertiliser free buffer. Undisturbed standing and fallen deadwood will act as an invertebrate habitat.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a photograph of each tree
- the diameter at breast height (dbh) for each tree
- a map of existing land drainage in each parcel
- evidence that the grassland receives more than 100kg of nitrogen per ha per year in fertilisers or manures

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- protect trees from damage by livestock and wild animals
- make sure tree guards don't damage growing trees
- keep all fallen branches in the option area
- leave any trees that die or fall in position

## Sward creation and management

In year 1 establish and then maintain a sward around each tree by natural regeneration.

Tree diameter at breast height (dbh)	Sward radius	Area per tree
30cm to 99cm	10m	0.03ha
100cm to 199cm	20m	0.12ha
200cm or more	30m	0.28ha

Once established:

- make sure no more than 5% is covered in weeds or bare ground
- only cut to control woody growth
- only use pesticides and herbicides, to spot-treat or weed-wipe to control nettles, bracken, injurious weeds or invasive non-natives (such as Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam)

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of each tree entered into the option
- photographs of the sward buffer
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

### What must not be done

Don't:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- apply any lime
- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- use supplementary feed
- harrow or roll
- remove any tree limbs including the lower limbs or mature ivy growth
- carry out any drainage works, including modifying existing drainage without Natural England's written permission before any works take place

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form a part of the requirements for this option.

### Storing fallen branches

Fallen branches should not be cut into pieces but stacked in piles:

- with one pile in a sunny spot and one in a shady spot
- not too high, to stop the timber drying out
- with as much timber as possible in contact with the ground

### Setting tree guards

Don't attach tree guards to the trees as this can damage them.



### Using pesticides

Avoid damaging the trees when using spot-treat or weed-wipe. Using chemicals should be a last resort to avoid damage to root fungi in the soil. Trees depend on fungi for future good health.

### Controlling livestock damage

To prevent livestock damage:

- provide alternative shelter with water to attract animals away from trees
- fence off trees to stop animals rubbing and stripping bark or trampling the base

Fences should be placed at the edge of the option area.

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- BE6 - Veteran tree surgery<sup>28</sup>
- ED1 - Educational access<sup>52</sup>
- OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland<sup>117</sup>
- OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland<sup>122</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement<sup>177</sup>

# Management of hedgerows (BE3)

## How much will be paid

- £8 per 100m for 1 side of a hedge
- £16 per 100m for 2 sides of a hedge

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

Only use this option on planted boundary lines of shrubs, which are:

- composed of woody plants with less than 2m in distance between the ground and the base of the leafy layer
- over 20m long
- less than 5m wide between major woody stems at the base
- made of at least 80% native shrubs

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on features that are trees for most of their length.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option increases the availability of blossom for invertebrates. By allowing fruit and berries to ripen it creates food for over-wintering birds. This option will also improve the structure and longevity of hedgerows.

If successful there will be:

- taller and wider hedges, with gaps less than 10% of the hedge
- a mix of hedges of different heights and width across the farm
- an increase in the weight of berries produced by 2 to 4 times that compared with hedges cut every year
- an increase in the blossom available to insect pollinators
- dense cover, which is important for successful breeding
- an improvement in overall hedge condition which will help maintain them as distinctive and often historic field boundary features

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The following requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

With their application, applicants will have to send base maps showing:

- the location of standing deadwood
- lengths of hedge which need gapping-up

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- maintain a hedge that's at least 2m tall and 1.5m wide by year 2. Sections gapped up, layed or coppiced during the agreement term are excluded
- either: cut hedgerows no more than one year in three between 1 January and 28 February or 1 September and 31 December. Leave at least two-thirds of hedges untrimmed each year
- or, cut hedgerows no more than one year in two between 1 January and 28 February. Leave at least one half of hedges untrimmed each year
- gap up any length of hedge with more than 10% gaps within the first 2 years

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- frequency and timing of hedge trimming on the option for each parcel
- photographs of each hedge entered into the option

## What must not be done

Don't:

- remove any tree limbs, including the lower limbs or mature ivy growth from hedgerow trees
- remove any standing deadwood
- use supplementary feed within 2m of the centre of the hedge

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Pick the right hedge

If you don't have management control of both sides of a hedge then only enter 1 side into the option.

Select hedges that:

- are connected to other hedges or habitats (such as woodlands and ponds)
- have other components such as hedgerow trees, bases or banks rich in flowers, or an adjacent ditch or margin

Use the option to improve the condition and longevity of hedges which are of particular historic interest, such as parish boundaries, or are especially important in the landscape.

## Managing the hedges

Flails are effective cutting 2 to 3-year-old growth of most woody species if they are well maintained and the correct rotor and forward speeds are used.

Fast growing species, such as ash or willow, may need heavier duty flails or more powerful cutting heads. Alternatively, use a circular saw or leave hedges uncut. There is no requirement to trim hedges during the agreement. Instead, leave hedgerows to grow then manage in a coppicing or laying rotation.

Cut incrementally, rather than trimming back to the same point. This allows hedges to increase in height and width by several centimetres at each cut, encouraging a dense healthy hedgerow.

Use native shrubs species that already occur in hedgerows in the local area to gap up. A gap is a complete break in the canopy. Where a tree canopy overlaps the hedgerow canopy is not counted as a gap.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [BE6 - Veteran tree surgery](#)<sup>28</sup>
- [BE7 - Supplement for restorative pruning of fruit trees](#)<sup>29</sup>
- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>178</sup>

Lengths of hedge managed under this option are also eligible for capital item payments, except for:

- [BN7 - Hedgerow gapping-up](#)<sup>36</sup>

## Further information

Read more on:

- [managing hedgerows in a long-term cycle](#)<sup>248</sup>
- [common questions on hedge cutting](#)<sup>249</sup>

# Management of traditional orchards (BE4)

## How much will be paid

£212 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on traditional orchards (apple, pear, cherry, plum, damson or cobnut plots) where at least one-third of the original stations are occupied by trees over 25 years old.

The following features can be included if they're part of the parcel, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS).

- ditches
- drains
- dykes
- rivers and streams (boundary or internal)

The features must be less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

If successful there will be a well-managed traditional orchard with a range of healthy young and old trees. This includes established grass, tall bushy hedges, scrub and tall herb vegetation abundant with invertebrates, birds and wildflowers.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a map of existing land drainage in each parcel
- a photograph of each tree entered into the option

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- manage grassland by grazing or hay cutting
- maintain the characteristic tree form by pruning
- restore tree numbers
- protect trees from damage by livestock
- keep and protect all mature and over-mature standing trees
- keep some standing deadwood and some deadwood on living trees
- use no manures, fertilisers, pesticides or supplementary feed
- control scrub and invasive species

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with any work
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel
- dates and locations of formative or maintenance pruning carried out for each parcel
- a base map or table showing the location, species, rootstock, variety and age class of trees present in each parcel
- a monthly record of stock numbers grazing each parcel
- if managing by hay cutting, photographs of the areas cut and un-cut in each parcel
- photographs of cut areas of scrub

## What must not be done

Don't:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- roll or harrow

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Traditional orchards

Traditional orchards are defined as groups of fruit and nut trees planted on vigorous rootstocks at low densities in permanent grassland, and managed in a low intensity way. Cobnut plats are included.

## Preventing weeds

Prevent weeds from competing with newly planted trees for water and nutrients. Keep a 1m diameter circle clear of all vegetation for at least the first 3 years after planting.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [BE7 - Supplement for restorative pruning of fruit trees](#)<sup>29</sup>
- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup>
- [OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>
- [OR5 - Organic conversion - top fruit](#)<sup>121</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [OT5 - Organic land management - top fruit](#)<sup>126</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>

# Creation of traditional orchards (BE5)

## How much will be paid

£281 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option will last for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole and part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- traditional orchards (apple, pear, cherry, plum, damson or cobnut plants) where less than one-third of the original stations are occupied by trees over 25 years old
- sites with evidence (such as maps or photographs) that a traditional orchard was once there - this includes sites currently under arable cultivation
- sites where creation extends, links or buffers existing areas of a traditional orchard

The following features can be included if they're part of the parcel, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS).

Features must be less than 4m for the majority of their length in the parcel and includes:

- ditches
- drains
- dykes
- rivers and streams (boundary or internal)

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

If successful there will be a well-managed traditional orchard with a range of healthy young and old trees. This includes established grass, tall bushy hedges, scrub and tall herb vegetation abundant with invertebrates, birds and wildflowers.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a map of existing land drainage in each parcel
- a photograph of each tree entered into the option

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- establish and then manage grassland by grazing or hay cutting
- maintain the characteristic tree form by pruning
- restore tree numbers
- protect trees from damage by livestock
- keep and protect all mature and over-mature standing trees
- keep some standing deadwood and some deadwood on living trees
- use no manures, fertilisers, pesticides or supplementary feed
- control scrub and invasive species

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel
- dates and locations of formative or maintenance pruning carried out for each parcel
- a base map or table showing the location, species, rootstock, variety and age class of trees present in each parcel
- a monthly record of stock numbers grazing each parcel
- if managing by hay cutting, photographs of the areas cut and un-cut in each parcel
- photographs of cut areas of scrub
- photographs of each tree and all standing deadwood entered into the option

## What must not be done

Don't:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- roll or harrow

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form a part of the requirements for this option.

## Traditional orchards

Traditional orchards are defined as groups of fruit and nut trees planted on vigorous rootstocks at low densities in permanent grassland, and managed in a low intensity way. Cobnut plots are included.

## Preventing weeds

Prevent weeds from competing with newly planted trees for water and nutrients. Keep a 1m diameter circle clear of all vegetation for at least the first 3 years after planting.



## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- BE7 - Supplement for restorative pruning of fruit trees <sup>29</sup>
- ED1 - Educational access <sup>52</sup>
- GS15 - Haymaking supplement <sup>86</sup>
- OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland <sup>117</sup>
- OR5 - Organic conversion - top fruit <sup>121</sup>
- OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland <sup>122</sup>
- OT5 - Organic land management - top fruit <sup>126</sup>
- SP1 - Difficult sites supplement <sup>168</sup>
- SP3 - Bracken control supplement <sup>170</sup>
- SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement <sup>171</sup>
- SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement <sup>175</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement <sup>176</sup>

# Veteran tree surgery (BE6)

## How much will be paid

£221 per tree.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on veteran open grown trees and trees in open canopy woodlands
- where specialist tree surgery is agreed by Natural England

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on the same trees as the following capital items or supplements:

- BE7 - Supplement for restorative pruning of fruit trees<sup>29</sup>
- TE10 - Coppicing bankside trees<sup>201</sup>
- TE11 - Tree surgery<sup>202</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

Use this option to reduce the rate of loss of veteran trees by carrying out specialist tree surgery to extend their lifespan.

If successful veteran trees at risk of collapse will have been stabilised, resulting in the continuation of:

- living trees with standing deadwood
- trees forming distinctive features in the landscape
- trees providing valuable habitat
- areas under tree canopies free from scrub, soil compaction, or anything which threatens the tree's longevity

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants are likely to need to send photographs of each tree being managed with their application.

## On the land

Successful applicants may also need to:

- carry out agreed tree surgery works within the agreed timetable and dates
- remove secondary growth from around veteran trees

- retain all material close to the tree (not stacked against the veteran tree) and leave undisturbed

Stack cut material in a shaded location. Do not cut it up any more than is necessary to allow safe movement. Do not burn cut material.

### **Keeping records**

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken submitted with final claim

### **How to carry out this option**

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option:

Tree surgery must be identified in a report by a professionally qualified arboriculturalist. Individual plans for each tree may be required. The timing of work should take account of the impact on the tree, bird breeding season, presence of European Protected Species etc. Permissions may be required.

Many veteran trees have only grown so old through active management, mostly long abandoned.

Reinstating management would pose great risk but they can be at significant risk of catastrophic failure due to crown weight.

A tree in general decline should not be pruned any more than necessary to prevent catastrophic failure.

The importance of lower canopy branches increases as trees die back. Their removal should be avoided.

Epicormic shoots (small side shoots) should not be removed as they can take over if the main part of the stem is lost.

Dead and decaying branches, as well as any live material, removed from the tree should be retained close to the source without cutting it up.

Previously open grown trees now surrounded by others, may require opening up. Avoid sudden exposure of trees shaded for many years. Clear around the tree at least a year before any tree surgery, possibly in stages over a few years. Make sure any species of interest such as lichens, fungi and invertebrates, as well as hole nesting birds and bat roosts, are known and the impact of any work assessed.

Burning damages dead wood and soil structure, killing living organisms and harming trees if too close.

Activities which damage and compact tree roots, including by stock, should be avoided.

Be aware that various consents and permissions may apply:

- the Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) and Conservation Orders may apply to the trees on site
- veteran trees often host European Protected Species, such as bats.

Read more about useful [tree management](#), [safety information](#)<sup>248</sup> and felling licences from the Forestry Commission.

Fruit trees in traditional orchards are not normally eligible. See instead [BE7 - Supplement for restorative pruning of fruit trees](#)<sup>36</sup>.

### Related options

These options, supplements and capital items can be located on the same area as this option:

- [BE1 - Protection of in-field trees on arable land](#)<sup>23</sup>
- [BE2 - Protection of in-field trees on intensive grassland](#)<sup>24</sup>
- [BE3 - Management of hedgerows](#)<sup>25</sup>
- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [WD1 - Woodland creation - maintenance payments](#)<sup>215</sup>
- [WD2 - Woodland improvement](#)<sup>216</sup>
- [WD4 - Management of wood pasture and parkland](#)<sup>218</sup>
- [WD5 - Restoration of wood pasture and parkland](#)<sup>219</sup>
- [WD6 - Creation of wood pasture](#)<sup>220</sup>

### Further information

Read these useful guidance booklets for more information on managing ancient or veteran trees:

- [Ancient tree guides \(booklets 1 to 8\)](#)<sup>249</sup>
- Lonsdale, D (ed) 2013 [Ancient and other veteran trees](#): further guidance on management Tree Council
- Read, H. 2000 [Veteran trees](#): A guide to good management. Veteran Trees Initiative available to download from Natural England publications pages

# Supplement for restorative pruning of fruit trees (BE7)

## How much will be paid

£62 per tree.

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- for a maximum of 3 years on an individual tree
- on neglected fruit trees with options:
  - [BE3 - Management of hedgerows](#)<sup>25</sup>
  - [BE4 - Management of traditional orchards](#)<sup>26</sup>
  - [BE5 - Creation of traditional orchards](#)<sup>27</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

If successful there will be restored mature fruit trees with undisturbed standing and fallen deadwood providing a habitat for a wide range of invertebrates.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- a map of existing land drainage in each parcel
- a photograph of each tree entered into the supplement

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- restore the tree form by pruning
- keep some standing deadwood or dead wood on living trees

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken

## Related supplements

This supplement can be located on the same tree as the following supplement:

- [SPg - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>

# Management of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle (CT1)

## How much will be paid

£217 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option and is non-rotational. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on:

- coastal sand dune priority habitat
- vegetated shingle priority habitat

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- scrub
- open water
- bare ground

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How it benefits the environment

This option is designed to make sure that existing coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle sites are managed appropriately. This includes both sites in good condition or those that need restoration, such as where management has stopped or scrub has invaded.

If successful there will be:

- sand dunes and shingle areas in favourable condition on sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), meaning they're adequately conserved and are meeting conservation objectives
- sand dunes and shingle areas in improving condition if not on SSSIs, meaning measures are in place that if maintained will make them favourable over time
- a mosaic of open habitats and bare ground with typical sand dune and shingle plant species, such as sand couch, marram grass and sand sedge, although the exact species will depend on the habitat's location
- a gradual change from less stable and seasonal habitats near the beach (including drift line vegetation) to more stable landward habitats, connected by moving sand or shingle

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application (to ensure no new access or drainage is added during the agreement period):

- a map of permitted access routes
- a map of the land drainage system (if any)

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- provide or maintain areas of bare ground
- carry out extensive grazing (or cutting if grazing is not possible) to encourage vegetation mosaics
- allow natural and dynamic coastal changes, such as changes due to storms or windblow (deposits of windblown sand)
- control scrub or other invasive plant species

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely that successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- use fertilisers or manures
- use supplementary feed
- apply any lime
- plough, cultivate or re-seed

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

Dunes and shingle are important elements of coastal landscapes, with active processes creating variation in their structure. These coastal systems also act as an important form of natural sea defence, and thus play a significant part in adaptation to climate change. The history of management is important to understand: sites that have a tradition of low-intensity grazing should maintain this, while in other areas, such as shingle, the habitat would be damaged if grazing was introduced for the first time.

While grazing is therefore encouraged on many dune sites, it is not mandatory in all cases; where dune grazing is not possible, a selective cutting regime is an acceptable alternative. On many shingle sites, neither grazing or cutting is appropriate, but this option may still be used where the shingle forms part of a wider coastal system (see below). Any seaweed or driftwood accumulations should be retained.



Where invasion of tall coarse grasses and scrub such as blackthorn, bramble and sea buckthorn has occurred due to under-grazing, capital works should be undertaken to keep the scrub within agreed limits and grazing or cutting regimes adjusted to prevent re-invasion.

### Related options

Option [CT2 - Creation of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle on arable land and improved grassland](#)<sup>46</sup> should be considered, if the habitat is expanding through rollback onto nearby arable or grassland. Rollback is the movement of dunes inland due to coastal processes and windblow.

These supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement.](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

### Further information

Further information can be found on:

- Buglife habitat management pages for [coastal sand dunes](#)<sup>250</sup> and [coastal vegetated shingle](#)<sup>251</sup>

# Creation of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle on arable land and improved grassland (CT2)

## How much will be paid

£314 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option and is non-rotational. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on land next to existing sand dunes or shingle that is either:

- arable land
- improved grassland

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- scrub
- open water
- bare ground

## Option length

This option runs for 10 years, not the standard 5 years for the scheme, in recognition of the level of management change involved.

## When this option can't be used

For the creation sand dunes and coastal vegetated shingle in the following situations:

- as compensation, planning consent condition or other [Habitat Regulations](#)<sup>252</sup> requirement
- if the work is necessary as part of a planning permission condition
- on land that's previously received 20 years' agri-environment funding for coastal habitat creation

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option creates sand dunes and coastal vegetated shingle on arable land or improved grassland locations that were:

- once part of sand dune or shingle systems
- next to active sand dune or shingle systems

If successful, developing features will include:

- sand dunes and vegetated shingle
- transition areas (transitions between shingle and dune and nearby habitats)
- the specialised and local species that sand dunes and vegetated shingle in the area support

### **Requirements**

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### **Applications**

Applicants will need to send the following with their application (to ensure no new access or drainage is added during the agreement period):

- a map of permitted access routes
- a map of the land drainage system (if any)

### **On the land**

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- provide or maintain areas of bare ground
- carry out extensive grazing (or cutting if grazing is not possible) to encourage vegetation mosaics
- allow natural and dynamic coastal changes, such as changes due to storms or windblow (deposits of windblown sand)
- control scrub or other invasive plant species

### **Keeping records**

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

### **What must not be done**

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely that successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- use fertilisers or manures
- use supplementary feed
- apply any lime
- plough, cultivate or re-seed

### **How to carry out this option**

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

Dunes and shingle are important elements of coastal landscapes, with active processes creating variation in their structure. These coastal systems also act as an important form of natural sea defence, and thus play a significant part in adaptation to climate change. Sand and shingle should be allowed to accumulate or migrate inland following storms and other coastal processes.

While dune vegetation is establishing on the rollback areas some light grazing or cutting may be appropriate, but this should be very carefully monitored to avoid damage. Once dune vegetation is established grazing would be encouraged on most sites, but is not mandatory in all cases.

Where dune grazing is not possible, a selective cutting regime is an acceptable alternative. On many shingle sites, neither grazing or cutting is appropriate, but this option may still be used where the shingle forms part of a wider coastal system (see below). Any seaweed or driftwood accumulations should be retained.

### Related options

These supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement.](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

### Further information

Further information can be found on:

- Buglife habitat management pages for [coastal sand dunes](#)<sup>250</sup> and [coastal vegetated shingle](#)<sup>251</sup>

# Management of coastal saltmarsh (CT3)

## How much will be paid

£77 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option and is non-rotational. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on saltmarsh and transitional areas (transitions to adjacent shingle or dune habitats) that are both:

- above mean high water neap tide level (the average throughout the year of the heights of two successive high waters when the tidal range is at its smallest)
- covered by seawater between 25 and 600 times a year (1 to 24 times a year for transitional areas)

The following features can be included if they're part of the saltmarsh area, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- open water (such as small lagoons and creeks)
- bare mud (if within the saltmarsh mosaic, but not separate external areas of mudflat)

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How it benefits the environment

This option maintains coastal saltmarsh in good condition and restores saltmarsh in unfavourable condition when grazing or cutting are key factors.

If successful there will be:

- saltmarsh areas in favourable condition on sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), meaning they're adequately conserved and are meeting conservation objectives
- saltmarsh areas in improving condition if not on SSSIs, meaning measures are in place that if maintained will make them favourable over time
- a mosaic of open habitats and bare ground with typical saltmarsh plant species such as sea aster, sea purslane, sea-blite and sea-lavender, although the exact species will depend on the location of the saltmarsh
- a gradual change from less stable and seasonal habitats on the seaward side to the more stable, well-established landward saltmarsh and transitions covered only by the highest tides

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application (to ensure no new access or drainage is added during the agreement period):

- a map of permitted access routes
- a map of the land drainage system (if any)

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- maintain or re-introduce favourable management, mainly through suitable grazing, where appropriate, but also by limiting disturbance
- continue an appropriate grazing regime (the right types of stock, in the right numbers and at the right times of year) or exclude grazing where necessary, such as to restore condition or prevent erosion
- maintain the saltmarsh vegetation by not disturbing the surface, but allow natural and dynamic coastal changes, such as changes due to storms or windblow

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken submitted with final claim
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely that successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- use fertilisers or manures
- use supplementary feed
- plough, cultivate or re-seed

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

The precise management agreed will depend on the particular conditions on a site. It could include maintaining an absence of grazing, light grazing and controlling damaging activities associated with public access. This option will contribute to climate change adaptation and help to conserve and strengthen the distinctive local character of estuarine and coastal landscapes.

A site suitable for restoration through this option may be one that is currently being grazed but where this is impacting on the quality of the habitat and associated species. For example, a site may currently be over-grazed or grazed at an inappropriate time of year. Alternatively, it may be a site that needs grazing, but is difficult to graze and has become dominated by a few coarse plant species. Where significant changes to grazing levels are required, these can be supported under the CT6 supplement (to be used with this option). The transitions between saltmarsh and other

habitats to landward, exposed to infrequent tidal inundation, can be included in this option as they can support important species and plant communities which are increasingly rare.

Any seaweed or driftwood accumulations should be retained and sediment allowed to accumulate or migrate inland following storms and other coastal processes. Where invasion of tall coarse grasses and scrub such as blackthorn, bramble and sea buckthorn has occurred due to under-grazing, then capital works should be undertaken to keep the scrub within agreed limits and grazing or cutting regimes adjusted to prevent re-invasion.

### Related options

These supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [CT6 - Coastal vegetation management supplement](#) <sup>50</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#) <sup>168</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#) <sup>171</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#) <sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#) <sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement.](#) <sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#) <sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#) <sup>177</sup>

### Further information

Further information can be found in:

- the Environment Agency's [saltmarsh management manual](#) <sup>253</sup>
- the [climate change adaptation manual](#) <sup>254</sup>

# Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on arable land (CT4)

## How much will be paid

£442 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on sites that are both:

- next to saltmarsh or other inter-tidal habitats
- arable land that lies behind a coastal defence - most of the land must lie below mean high water spring tide level (the average of the heights of two successive high waters when the tidal range is greatest)

The creation of the inter-tidal habitat must both:

- conform to the [Environment Agency's flood and coastal risk management strategy for England](#)<sup>253</sup>
- be approved by the Environment Agency and Natural England

## Features that may be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land area (once inter-tidal habitat is created), even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- open water (such as lagoons and creeks)
- bare mud

## Option length

This option runs for 20 years, not the standard 5 years for the scheme, in recognition of the level of management change involved and its largely irreversible nature.

## When this option can't be used:

This option can't be used if the planned creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat is:

- as compensation, planning consent condition or other [Habitat Regulations](#)<sup>252</sup> requirement
- on land that has previously received 20 years' agri-environment funding for inter-tidal habitat creation

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option creates inter-tidal and saline habitats, including transitional areas (transitions between saltmarsh and nearby habitats), on arable land or improved grassland.



If successful there will be:

- inter-tidal and saltmarsh areas developing (note that it will not be possible to precisely predict the balance of saltmarsh and mudflat in a dynamic coastal system)
- a mosaic of open habitats such as lagoons, creeks and mud flats
- saltmarsh plants colonising more stable higher areas of the habitats
- lugworm casts, feeding birds and other evidence of marine invertebrates

As a result of tides bringing in sediment and seeds, a range of inter-tidal habitats will form such as mudflats, coastal saltmarsh, together with saline lagoons and transitions between these and other habitats where the topography promotes this. These habitats will benefit many specialised plants and animals adapted to the differing degrees of tidal inundation and saline influence. These factors result in variations in vegetation cover from bare mud to dense saltmarsh, and succession between them over time.

The creation of small-scale saline lagoons, which require an input of seawater, can be promoted by this option. This option will also contribute to more sustainable flood management, adaptation to climate change and enhancement of the coastal landscape. Where sediment is deposited, the option may contribute to the protection of important archaeological sites from the impacts of ploughing or other forms of cultivation (but early consultation with historic specialists will be needed where such sites are present).

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Before applying for this option applicants should contact both Natural England and the Environment Agency for advice.

Applicants will need to send the following with their application (to ensure no new access or drainage is added during the agreement period):

- a map of permitted access routes
- a map of the land drainage system (if any)
- written support from the Environment Agency and Natural England

## On the land

If the application is successful the planned management is likely to be detailed in a feasibility study for the site. It will include how to:

- prepare the site and manage any existing vegetation
- excavate any lagoons or creeks
- manage vegetation once established
- carry out any necessary breaches to the sea wall

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

This is a specialised option that is only likely to be used in a relatively small number of cases, where a managed breach of coastal defences is planned. On sites where there is interest and potential for this option, discussions should be held with Natural England and the Environment Agency at an early stage. Planning for such projects can often take several years, with coastal process modelling and feasibility studies usually needed.

Where coastal defences are not being maintained and are then overtopped or breached naturally, option [CT5 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat by non-intervention](#)<sup>49</sup> would apply.

## Related options

These supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [CT6 - Coastal vegetation management supplement](#)<sup>50</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

## Further information

Further information is available from:

- the Environment Agency's [saltmarsh management manual](#)<sup>253</sup>
- The Saltmarsh Creation Handbook: A Project Manager's Guide to the Creation of Saltmarsh and Inter-tidal Mudflat by AS Nottage and PA Robertson (RSPB/CIWEM, 2005)

# Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat by non-intervention (CT5)

## How much will be paid

£271 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is whole or part parcel option and is non-rotational. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on sites that are both:

- next to either saltmarsh or other inter-tidal habitats
- on land that lies behind a coastal defence - most of the land must lie below mean high water spring tide level (the average of the heights of two successive high waters when the tidal range is greatest)

Suitable sites may have:

- defences that are overtopped by high tides
- recently been breached and show evidence of being inundated or percolated by salt water through the defences

The creation of the inter-tidal habitat must both:

- conform to the [Environment Agency's flood and coastal risk management strategy for England](#)<sup>253</sup>
- be approved by the Environment Agency and Natural England

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land area (once inter-tidal habitat is created), even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- open water (such as lagoons and creeks)
- bare mud

## Option length

This option runs for 20 years, not the standard 5 years for the scheme, in recognition of the level of management change involved and its largely irreversible nature.

## When this option can't be used:

This option can't be used if the creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat is:

- as compensation, planning consent condition or other [Habitat Regulations](#)<sup>252</sup> requirement
- on land that's previously received 20 years' agri-environment funding for coastal habitat creation.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option creates inter-tidal and saline habitats, including transitional areas (transitions between saltmarsh and nearby habitats), following the unmanaged breach of sea walls or the overtopping of sea walls.

If successful there will be:

- inter-tidal and saltmarsh areas developing (note that it will not be possible to precisely predict the balance of saltmarsh and mudflat in a dynamic coastal system)
- a mosaic of open habitats such as lagoons, creeks and mudflats
- saltmarsh plants colonising more stable higher areas of the habitats
- lugworm casts, feeding birds and other evidence of marine invertebrates

As a result of tides bringing in sediment and seeds, a range of inter-tidal habitats will form such as mudflats, coastal saltmarsh, together with saline lagoons and transitions between these and other habitats where the topography promotes this. These habitats will benefit many specialised plants and animals adapted to the differing degrees of tidal inundation and saline influence. These factors result in variations in vegetation cover from bare mud to dense grassland, and succession between them over time.

The creation of small-scale saline lagoons, which require an input of seawater, can be promoted by this option. This option will also contribute to more sustainable flood management, adaptation to climate change and enhancement of the coastal landscape. Where sediment is deposited, the option may contribute to the protection of important archaeological sites from the impacts of ploughing or other forms of cultivation (but early consultation with historic specialists will be needed where such sites are present).

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Application

Before applying for this option applicants should contact both Natural England and the Environment Agency for advice.

Applicants will need to send the following with their application (to ensure no new access or drainage is added during the agreement period):

- a map of permitted access routes
- a map of land drainage system (if any)
- written support from the Environment Agency and Natural England

## On the land

If the application is successful the planned management is likely to be detailed in a feasibility study for the site. It will include how to:

- prepare the site and manage any existing vegetation
- excavate any lagoons or creeks
- manage vegetation once established
- make any further breaches to the sea wall, where needed.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## How to carry out this option

This is a specialised option that is only likely to be used in a relatively small number of cases, where coastal defences are not being maintained and are then overtopped or breached naturally. Where a managed breach is planned, then options [CT4 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on arable land](#)<sup>48</sup> or [CT7 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on intensive grassland](#)<sup>51</sup> would apply.

On sites where there is interest and potential for this option, discussions should be held with Natural England and the Environment Agency at an early stage. It should be recognised that unmanaged sea wall breaches are of course unpredictable, but contingency plans can be put in place.

## Related options

These supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [CT6 - Coastal vegetation management supplement](#)<sup>50</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

## Further information

Further information is available from:

- The [Environment Agency's saltmarsh management manual](#)<sup>253</sup>
- The Saltmarsh Creation Handbook: A Project Manager's Guide to the Creation of Saltmarsh and Inter-tidal Mudflat by AS Nottage and PA Robertson (RSPB/CIWEM, 2005)

# Coastal vegetation management supplement (CT6)

## How much will be paid

£117 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This is whole or part parcel option and is non-rotational. This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used with one of the following options:

- CT3 - Management of coastal saltmarsh <sup>47</sup>
- CT4 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on arable land <sup>48</sup>
- CT5 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat by non-intervention <sup>49</sup>
- CT7 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on intensive grassland <sup>51</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#) <sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#) <sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement supports saltmarsh vegetation management, for example by reducing existing levels of grazing, or introducing grazing or cutting.

If successful there will be:

- more varied sward structure and greater wildlife diversity
- better control of any scrub and coarse vegetation
- increased numbers of saltmarsh nesting species (such as redshank) due to more varied vegetation structure
- a reduction in trampling damage where grazing levels have been reduced

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to carry out specific cutting or grazing management tailored to their site.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## Related options

This supplement can be located on the same area as the following options and supplements:

- CT3 - Management of coastal saltmarsh <sup>47</sup>
- CT4 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on arable land <sup>48</sup>
- CT5 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat by non-intervention <sup>49</sup>
- CT7 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on intensive grassland <sup>51</sup>
- SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement <sup>171</sup>
- SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement <sup>173</sup>
- SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly <sup>174</sup>
- SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement. <sup>175</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement <sup>176</sup>
- SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement <sup>177</sup>

## Further information

Further information is available from:

- the [Environment Agency's saltmarsh management manual](#) <sup>253</sup>
- [advice on managing coastal saltmarsh](#) <sup>254</sup>

# Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on intensive grassland (CT7)

## How much will be paid

£276 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part-parcel option and is non-rotational. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on sites that are both:

- next to saltmarsh or other inter-tidal habitats
- grassland that lies behind a coastal defence - most of the land must lie below mean high water spring tide level (the average of the heights of two successive high waters when the tidal range is greatest)

The creation of the inter-tidal habitat must both:

- conform to the [Environment Agency's flood and coastal risk management strategy for England](#)<sup>253</sup>
- be approved by the Environment Agency and Natural England

## Features that may be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land area (once inter-tidal habitat is created), even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- open water (such as lagoons and creeks)
- bare mud

## Option length

This option runs for 20 years, not the standard 5 years for the scheme, in recognition of the level of management change involved and its largely irreversible nature.

## When this option can't be used:

This option can't be used if the planned creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat is:

- as compensation, planning consent condition or other [Habitat Regulations](#)<sup>252</sup> requirement
- on areas of grassland priority habitat, unless agreed with Natural England
- on land that has previously received 20 years' agri-environment funding for inter-tidal habitat creation

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option creates inter-tidal and saline habitats, including transitional areas (transitions between saltmarsh and nearby habitats), on grassland or improved grassland.



If successful there will be:

- inter-tidal and saltmarsh areas developing
- a mosaic of open habitats such as lagoons, creeks and mudflats
- saltmarsh plants colonising more stable higher areas of the habitats
- lugworm casts, feeding birds and other evidence of marine invertebrates

As a result of tides bringing in sediment and seeds, a range of inter-tidal habitats will form such as mudflats, coastal saltmarsh, together with saline lagoons and transitions between these and other habitats where the topography promotes this. These habitats will benefit many specialised plants and animals adapted to the differing degrees of tidal inundation and saline influence. These factors result in variations in vegetation cover from bare mud to dense saltmarsh, and succession between them over time.

The creation of small-scale saline lagoons, which require an input of seawater, can be promoted by this option. This option will also contribute to more sustainable flood management, adaptation to climate change and enhancement of the coastal landscape. Where sediment is deposited, the option may contribute to the protection of important archaeological sites from the impacts of ploughing or other forms of cultivation (but early consultation with historic specialists will be needed where such sites are present).

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Before applying for this option applicants should contact both Natural England and the Environment Agency for advice.

Applicants will need to send the following with their application (to ensure no new access or drainage is added during the agreement period):

- a map of permitted access routes
- a map of the land drainage system (if any)
- written support from the Environment Agency and Natural England

## On the land

If the application is successful the planned management is likely to be detailed in a feasibility study for the site. It will include how to:

- prepare the site and manage any existing vegetation
- excavate any lagoons or creeks
- manage vegetation once established
- carry out any necessary breaches to the sea wall

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

This is a specialised option that is only likely to be used in a relatively small number of cases, where a managed breach of coastal defences is planned. On sites where there is interest and potential for this option, discussions should be held with Natural England and the Environment Agency at an early stage. Planning for such projects can often take several years, with coastal process modelling and feasibility studies usually needed.

Where coastal defences are not being maintained and are then overtopped or breached naturally, option [CT5 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat by non-intervention](#)<sup>49</sup> would apply.

## Related options

These supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [CT6 - Coastal vegetation management supplement](#)<sup>50</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

## Further information

Further information is available from:

- the [Environment Agency's saltmarsh management manual](#)<sup>253</sup>
- [The Saltmarsh Creation Handbook: A Project Manager's Guide to the Creation of Saltmarsh and Inter-tidal Mudflat](#) by AS Nottage and PA Robertson (RSPB/CIWEM, 2005)

# Educational access (ED1)

## How much will be paid

£290 per visit.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher tier

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option lets school pupils visit the farm for educational experiences. It also allows for the hosting of care farming visits.

If successful there will be positive feedback on the [farm visit evaluation form](#)<sup>255</sup>.

## Requirements

### For the tours

Successful applicants will need to:

- carry out a health and safety check and prepare a risk assessment for the farm, then give this to potential group leaders
- complete the online [Farm Facts Template](#)<sup>258</sup> for the farm within 3 months of the start of the agreement
- carry out enough promotion so that at least 1 and at most 25 group visits happen every year
- make sure the tour of the farm lasts at least 2 hours and is conducted by a member of farm staff or volunteer who suits the visitors' needs
- make sure the tour explains the links between farming, conservation and food production using the agreement land as a classroom
- complete and submit 'Farm Visit Evaluation' online forms for each visit claimed.

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- copies of the standard farm visit evaluation form with promotional material submitted annually with claim
- copy of the farm facts leaflet submitted with first claim
- copy of the risk assessment and health and safety check on request

### What must not be done

Do not:

- charge for visits
- receive any other direct income from government funds relating to the educational visit

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option

### Get letters of support

When applying for this option applicants should supply letters of support from 3 or more local schools or care service providers (such as care homes, mental health care providers).

The letters must show a desire to visit the farm for educational experiences.

### Carrying out visits

It is acceptable to use all or part of the farm for visits. Neighbouring land can be used if it offers additional benefit.

Visits should aim to last at least 2 hours and involve at least 6 attendees. There is no upper restriction on visitor numbers or length of time a visit lasts.

These groups and individuals are eligible for visits:

- schools and other educational establishments for children from birth to the end of Key Stage 4 (age 16)
- care farming parties or individuals

Parties should not be split into smaller groups and claims presented for each group. Parties can be split for tours, but it is only possible to claim one visit for the total number of visitors on the holding at the same time.

This includes if the visitors come from different establishments.

### Related options

This option can be located with all other options, items and supplements.

### Further information

The following websites have useful information on how to host a farm visit:

- [Visit My Farm](#)<sup>256</sup> has resources for land managers to support educational visits, ideas for successful visits, health and safety information and suggestions on how to maximise visitor numbers and enjoyment.
- [Care Farming UK](#)<sup>257</sup> offers support and resources on the therapeutic use of farms.
- [Farming and Countryside Education](#)<sup>258</sup> educates children and young people about food and farming in a sustainable countryside. [Linking Environment and Farming](#)<sup>259</sup> works to build public understanding of food and farming.

# Take field corners out of management (GS1)

## How much will be paid

£365 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole and part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- permanent grassland fields
- small areas of a parcel (such as a field corner)

**It can't be used on historic or archaeological features.**

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option creates a year-round habitat and food for a range of wildlife.

If successful there will be tall grass tussocks with abundant flowering plants during the summer and dead seed heads throughout the winter.

## Requirements

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- only cut or graze 1 year in every 5
- create a patch no more than 0.5ha in area

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

### What must not be done

Do not:

- use the option more than once in every 5ha of permanent grassland on the holding
- locate the option next to another area under the same option
- cut or graze all areas in the same year if there is more than 1 area
- cut or graze during the bird breeding season 1 March to 31 August
- apply any fertilisers or manures
- apply any lime
- use pesticides, including herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds or invasive non-natives

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully, but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Using the mosaic approach

Better results will be achieved when the areas of longer vegetation are scattered widely across a landscape and located close to other habitat features. This is known as the mosaic approach.

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

# Permanent grassland with very low inputs (outside SDAs) (GS2)

## How much will be paid

£95 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on permanent grassland outside severely disadvantaged areas (SDAs) and below the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup>, which is grassland that qualifies as semi-improved or species-rich.

If the grassland is not semi-improved or species-rich it can only be used:

- to help the sustainable management and buffering of sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) or priority habitats
- to maintain grassland to conserve species of national or regional importance, or protect historic or archaeological features
- when in-field scrub cover is less than 1% and the option will be used in target areas for ground-nesting wading birds
- as part of the Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife Package

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers, streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- temporary water
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways, as long as the Requirements can still be met
- bracken
- areas of scree, rock outcrops and boulders - each area can cover up to 0.1ha
- permanent water up to 0.1ha
- grazed woodland and scrub that allows livestock access and has grass underneath

## How this option will benefit the environment

If successful there will be:

- more flowering grass and wildflower species
- varied structures offering nectar and shelter for invertebrates
- increased food supply for birds

## Requirements

### Higher Tier sites

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- evidence to show that the land is eligible
- photographs showing the extent of scrub
- a map of the land drainage system
- a standard soil analysis including organic matter (by loss on ignition)

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- graze or cut for hay or silage
- remove any cuttings

Successful applicants must also maintain a sward with a range of heights during the growing season so that at least:

- 20% is less than 7cm
- 20% is more than 7cm

This height variation doesn't have to be maintained when the field is closed up for a cut of hay or silage.

## Liming

Maintain soil between pH 5.4 and pH 6.0 on non-calcareous grassland, unless the target is to maintain acid grassland.

This can be done by liming if necessary. Don't apply paper waste or other industrial by-products.

## Fertilisers and manures

When a parcel is cut for hay, haylage or silage, 1 of the following can be applied:

- up to 12 tonnes/ha of farmyard manure
- fertiliser at a maximum rate of:
  - 9 kg/ha nitrogen
  - 23 kg/ha phosphate
  - 83 kg/ha potash

Applications must not be increased if the current rate is less than this.

## Manage rushes and scrub

Successful applicants will need to:

- graze or cut areas of dense rush growth so by 30 September stands don't cover more than 20% of the parcel area and are less than 20 cm high
- keep areas of well-established scrub in separate small patches, lines and occasional individual bushes across the site where scrub cover is less than 5%
- maintain between 5% and 10% scrub coverage in parcel areas where cover is equal to or above 5%
- keep historic and archaeological features free of scrub



## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- a standard soil analysis, to be completed in the final agreement year and results submitted with final claim
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## What must not be done

Do not:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- use pesticides and herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe to control nettles, bracken, injurious weeds or invasive non-native species
- cut more than one-half of scrub in any one year, except on historic and archaeological features
- harrow or roll on historic or archaeological features
- use supplementary feed except for mineral blocks
- apply fertiliser or manure in years where the parcel isn't cut for hay, haylage or silage
- top more than 50% of the total area in any one year
- carry out drainage works, including modifying existing drainage, without Natural England's written permission before work starts

## Restrictions that apply on certain dates

Do not:

- apply fertiliser or manure between 15 March and 20 June
- cut for hay or silage between 15 March and 30 June
- operate machinery or allow activities that disturb breeding birds between 15 March and 15 July
- cut bracken between 15 March and 15 July
- cut rush between 15 March and 31 July
- top between 1 October and 31 July except in patches to control:
  - injurious weeds
  - invasive non-native species

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but the advice is not compulsory.

### Choose the right location

The grassland may contain rare plant species. It can still be valuable, and suited to this option, if it contains commoner species:

- legumes such as red clover, lesser trefoil and black medick
- herbs such as ribwort plantain and yarrow
- attractive wildflowers such as selfheal and germander speedwell

The land will be much more valuable for insects, birds and other animals if it has a varied, patchy structure all year round.

Graze with cattle to get this patchy structure. It's much more difficult using sheep alone.

It's alright to graze rotationally or intermittently as long as the sward doesn't get rank during the rest periods, and the stock eat the sward down well during the grazing periods.

Keep wet areas as important sources of insect food.

### **Related options**

These options and supplements can be located in the same area as this option:

- [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>
- [GS17 - Lenient grazing supplement](#)
- [OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>

### **Further information**

The best results are gained when low input grassland is located alongside other important landscape features such as scrub and wetlands. This is known as the mosaic approach.

Grassland is also the best protection for historic and archaeological features. This is only the case if plants with powerful roots like scrub or bracken do not take hold, and bare ground does not develop. See this illustrated guide [Farming the historic landscape: caring for archaeological sites in grassland](#)<sup>261</sup>.

# Ryegrass seed-set as winter food for birds (GS3)

## How much will be paid

£331 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- temporary grassland
- grassland that has been cultivated and re-sown within the last 5 years
- swards that contain at least 50% ryegrass (perennial, Italian or hybrid)

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

Evidence of the sward composition will be needed with an application. When applying to use this option on permanent grassland, evidence will be needed that the grassland has been cultivated within the last 5 years.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will lead to an abundance of ryegrass seed in the autumn, providing food for many birds (including yellowhammers and other buntings, gamebirds such as grey partridge, and skylarks) until late winter.

## Requirements

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- close the field for at least 5 weeks before cutting, and take a silage cut before 31 May
- close the field after cutting and removal, allow the sward to flower and set seed in the autumn, and leave the sward undisturbed until 1 March
- apply this option on a whole parcel or a part parcel. Part parcels must be at least 10m wide

On swards containing at least 70% Italian or hybrid ryegrass, a second cut of silage (or hay) can be taken before 30 June.

This is a rotational option. It can be moved between different eligible parcels of land. However, the same total area (hectare) must be maintained each year.

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

### Higher Tier sites

Requirements may differ slightly when this option is applied in a Higher Tier agreement, as it can be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### What must not be done

Do not:

- allow any grazing for at least 5 weeks before the first cut or, for Italian or hybrid ryegrass, in the period before the second cut.

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option, but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### How to choose a site

This option is designed to benefit buntings and other declining farmland birds, though it can also bring benefits to invertebrates and small mammals. For best results it should be used in areas that have:

- a population of buntings
- dense hedges and scrub for nesting
- invertebrate-rich habitat for summer feed (eg leniently grazed, low-input grassland and enhanced arable margins)

This option can provide essential winter seed food. On mixed farms it can be combined with arable options such as [AB9 - Winter bird food](#)<sup>13</sup>. To find out more about putting together a package of options for farmland birds, see the Farm Wildlife Package guidance.

In a part-field the best results can be obtained by using this option next to a hedgerow or wooded edge. However, it should be kept well away from hedges and trees to feed skylarks.

This option should only be used on areas that are at least 0.5ha in size. More birds will benefit if the option is used on a farm that's split between 2 or more locations up to 500m apart.

### How to manage this option

Keep a large mass of herbage over the winter, to leave a sward on which substantial harrowing or a clearing cut could be carried out.

If grass is in rotation on the farm, or is regularly ploughed and re-sown, this option could be used:

- on fields due to be ploughed or re-sown
- on thinned swards that would benefit from the self-seeding this option provides.

# Legume and herb-rich swards (GS4)

## How much will be paid

£309 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on arable land, temporary grassland or grassland that has been cultivated and re-sown within the last 5 years. It can be used on a whole parcel or a part parcel.

The applicant must also meet at least one of the following conditions to use this option:

- following a recommended fertiliser management system to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- adopt a recommended fertiliser management system within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- qualifies as a low intensity farmer

## When the option can't be used

It can't be used on:

- parcels at risk of soil erosion or runoff
- organic parcels
- land in conversion
- on parcels with historic or archaeological features

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will produce a vigorous sward with abundant legumes and herbs suitable for productive cattle and sheep. It will also provide habitat and food for invertebrates, including crop pollinators, and improve soil structure and water infiltration.

This option doesn't use nitrogen fertilisers, which contribute to climate change.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

If applicants intend to use this option on permanent grassland, they will need to provide evidence with the application that it has been cultivated within the last 5 years.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a mixed sward of grasses, legumes and herbs or wildflowers in the first 12 months of the agreement
- maintain the required area of mixed sward for the remainder of the agreement
- make sure the sward has a minimum 10% cover of red clover
- make sure the sward has an additional 10% cover of other legumes, herbs and wildflowers (white clover, creeping buttercup and injurious weeds don't count as cover)
- make sure that the sward contains at least 5 species of grass, 3 species of legume (including bird's-foot trefoil) and 5 species of herb or wildflower
- re-establish the sward if necessary, on the same or a different field, to maintain these minimum requirements
- manage the sward by cutting or grazing
- leave the sward to rest for at least 5 weeks between 1 May and 31 July, so that the majority of red clover flowers are open and available for pollinators

This is a rotational option, so it may be moved between different eligible parcels of land. However, the same total area (hectarage) must be maintained each year.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## What must not be done

Do not use:

- any pesticides (except herbicides to spot treat or weed-wipe injurious weeds or invasive non-native species)
- inorganic fertilisers containing nitrogen

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### How to choose a site

The option allows only very limited use of pesticides so only fields that don't have a burden of weeds or slugs should be chosen. Clovers, in particular, grow less well in soil that has a pH less than 6.0 and that is below index 2 for phosphorus and potassium. Soil can be improved with lime, manures or PK (but not N) fertiliser.

### How to establish the site

Sow shallowly on to a firm, clean, fine seedbed. Alternatively, sow into an established grass sward.

Create at least 50% bare ground (and preferably 70%) and pay careful attention to slugs and other pests. Sowing legumes and herbs after August may not allow good enough establishment before the winter.

## **Legumes**

Most of the widely available, inexpensive cultivars of red clover have low persistence, so the sward is likely to need to be re-established in its third year.

Also be aware that white and red clover can cause bloat, particularly in cattle.

## **Herbs**

Chicory is a highly productive species, eaten by cattle and sheep, that can protect against internal parasites. It's better suited to grazing than cutting, as it produces a stout stem that's difficult to dry and that can damage the wrapping of big bales.

# Permanent grassland with very low inputs in SDAs (GS5)

## How much will be paid

£16 per hectare (ha)

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on permanent grassland within severely disadvantaged areas (SDAs) and below the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup>, which is grassland that qualifies as semi-improved or species-rich.

If the grassland is not semi-improved or species-rich it can only be used:

- to help the sustainable management and buffering of sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) or priority habitats
- to maintain grassland to conserve species of national or regional importance, or protect historic or archaeological features
- when in-field scrub cover is less than 1% and the option will be used in target areas for ground-nesting wading birds

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS)

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers, streams that are less than 4 metres wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- temporary water
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways, as long as the requirements below can be met
- bracken
- areas of scree, rock outcrops and boulders - each area can cover up to 0.1ha
- permanent water up to 0.1ha
- grazed woodland and scrub that allows livestock access and has grass underneath

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

If successful there will be:

- more flowering grass and wildflower species
- varied structures offering nectar and shelter for invertebrates
- increased numbers of ground-nesting and feeding birds, particularly waders such as lapwing and snipe



## Requirements

### Higher tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- photos showing the extent of scrub and bracken on historic and archaeological features
- relevant maps and photographs, including a map of the drainage system and a map of areas of dwarf shrub
- a standard soil analysis including organic matter (by loss on ignition)

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- graze or cut for hay or silage
- remove any cuttings

Successful applicants must also maintain a sward with a range of heights during the growing season so that at least:

- 20% is less than 7cm
- 20% is more than 7cm

This height variation doesn't have to be maintained when the field is closed up for a cut of hay or silage.

### Manage rushes, scrub and bracken

Successful applicants will need to:

- graze or cut areas of dense rush growth so by 30 September stands don't cover more than 20% of the parcel area and are less than 20cm high
- keep areas of well-established scrub in separate small patches, lines and occasional individual bushes across the site where scrub cover is less than 5%
- maintain between 5% and 10% scrub coverage in parcel areas where cover is equal to or above 5%
- control areas where bracken is present so that the area doesn't increase
- maintain areas covered by dwarf shrub
- keep historic and archaeological features free of scrub and bracken

### Liming

Maintain soil between pH 5.4 and pH 6.0 on non-calcareous grassland, unless the target is to maintain acid grassland.

This can be done by liming if necessary. Don't apply paper waste or other industrial by-products.

## Fertilisers and manures

When a parcel is cut for hay, haylage or silage, 1 of the following can be applied:

- up to 12 tonnes/ha of farmyard manure
- fertiliser at a maximum rate of:
  - 9 kg/ha nitrogen
  - 23 kg/ha phosphate
  - 83 kg/ha potash

Applications must not be increased if the current rate is less than this.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- a standard soil analysis, to be completed in the final agreement year and results submitted with final claim
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## What must not be done

Do not:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- use pesticides and herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe to control nettles, bracken, injurious weeds or invasive non-native species
- cut more than one-half of scrub in any one year, except on historic and archaeological features
- harrow or roll on historic or archaeological features
- use supplementary feed except for mineral blocks
- apply fertiliser or manure in years where the parcel isn't cut for hay, haylage or silage
- allow bare ground in the form of small, well-distributed areas to cover more than 5% of the option area
- allow bare ground to develop on historic or archaeological features
- allow more than 5 square metres of localised patches of bare ground around rabbit warrens by year 2
- carry out drainage works, including modifying existing drainage, without having Natural England's written permission before work starts

## Restrictions that apply on certain dates

Do not:

- apply fertiliser or manure between 15 March and 20 June
- cut for hay or silage between 15 March and 30 June
- operate machinery or allow activities that disturbs breeding birds between 15 March and 15 July
- cut bracken between 15 March and 15 July
- cut rush between 15 March and 31 July

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Getting the best results

The field may contain rare plant species. It can still be valuable and suited to this option if it has a range of commoner herbs or dwarf shrubs such as red clover, yarrow, self heal, heather and bilberry.

The land will be more valuable for insects, birds and other animals if it has a varied, patchy structure all year round.

Grazing with cattle produces the best conditions - it's more difficult using sheep alone. Keep wet areas as important sources of insect food.

### The mosaic approach

The best results are obtained when low input grassland is located alongside other important landscape features such as scrub and wetlands. This is known as the mosaic approach.

Grassland is also the best protection for historic and archaeological features. But only if plants with powerful roots like scrub or bracken do not take hold, and bare ground does not develop. See this illustrated guide:

- [Farming the historic landscape: caring for archaeological sites in grassland](#)<sup>261</sup>

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>
- [OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>

# Management of species-rich grassland (GS6)

## How much will be paid

£182 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole and part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on grassland priority habitat.

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even though they're permanently ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme:

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers or streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- temporary water
- permanent water less than or equal to 0.1ha, at the discretion of Natural England)
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways (as long as the requirements of the option can still be carried out)
- bracken
- scree, rock outcrops and boulders up to 0.1ha
- grazed woodland and scrub that has grass underneath it and that livestock can access, at the discretion of Natural England
- small areas of other habitat types, such as reedbeds, at the discretion of Natural England

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will maintain and enhance priority grasslands. It will increase the number and frequency of important plant species, with most wildflowers in bloom over the summer. Many other priority species, such as bumblebees, butterflies, birds or bats, will benefit, and buried archaeological features will not be disturbed.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- a standard soil analysis, including analysis of organic matter by loss on ignition.
- a map of the existing drainage system.

If there's scrub on the site, send photographs showing the extent of it. Also send photographs showing the extent of scrub or bracken on historic or archaeological features.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- maintain or increase the presence and abundance of high value plant species
- maintain a range of plant heights suitable for invertebrates, birds or other priority species
- manage the grassland by grazing, hay cutting, or a mixture of both
- maintain a continuous cover, particularly over historic features
- use very little or no manure, fertiliser, pesticide or supplementary feed
- maintain scrub, rushes and other potentially dominating plants at the levels set out in your agreement
- control undesirable plants (these can be specified in the agreement)

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- a standard soil analysis, to be completed in the final agreement year and results submitted with final claim
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record
- bag returns, if an agreed wildfowl strategy is in place

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely that successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed, unless agreed with Natural England
- harrow, roll or allow scrub or bracken to encroach on historic or archaeological features
- carry out activities that may disturb breeding birds or damage nests

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

For successful management, in most cases the following will be needed:

- appropriate livestock (which will often be cattle), over which the agreement-holder has full control
- machinery to carry out management requirements such as hay cutting
- consideration of how best to manage associated features such as ditches and scrub
- capital works to support this option (eg to oversow with additional plant species, use option [FM2 - Major preparatory works for priority habitats \(creation and restoration\) and priority species](#))<sup>69</sup>

## Related options

Upland calcareous and other very extensively managed grassland, especially in large parcels, may not be accepted for this option. Such grassland may be eligible for other options, such as [GS13 - Management of grassland for target features](#)<sup>84</sup>.

These options and supplements can be located in the same area as this option:

- BE3 - Management of hedgerows<sup>25</sup>
- BE6 - Veteran tree surgery<sup>28</sup>
- ED1 - Educational access<sup>52</sup>
- GS15 - Haymaking supplement<sup>86</sup>
- GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement<sup>87</sup>
- GS17 - Lenient grazing supplement<sup>88</sup>
- OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland<sup>118</sup>
- OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland<sup>123</sup>
- SP1 - Difficult sites supplement<sup>168</sup>
- SP2 - Raised water level supplement<sup>169</sup>
- SP3 - Bracken control supplement<sup>170</sup>
- SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement<sup>171</sup>
- SP5 - Shepherding supplement<sup>172</sup>
- SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement<sup>173</sup>
- SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly<sup>174</sup>
- SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement<sup>175</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement<sup>176</sup>
- SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement<sup>177</sup>
- WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value<sup>236</sup>

# Restoration towards species-rich grassland (GS7)

## How much will be paid

£145 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on parcels of grassland that have high or medium potential for being restored to grassland priority habitat.

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included in this option if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers or streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- temporary water
- permanent water less than or equal to 0.1ha, at the discretion of Natural England)
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways (as long as the applicant is still able to carry out the requirements of the option)
- bracken
- scree, rock outcrops and boulders up to 0.1ha
- grazed woodland and scrub that has grass underneath it and that livestock can access, at the discretion of Natural England
- small areas of other habitat types, such as reedbeds, at the discretion of Natural England

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will restore grasslands that have the potential to become priority grasslands. It will increase the number and frequency of important plant species. Many other priority species, such as bumblebees, butterflies, birds or bats, will also benefit. Buried archaeological features will not be disturbed.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants must submit a standard soil analysis, including analysis of organic matter by loss on ignition, with their application. A map must also be submitted of the existing drainage system.

Photographs showing the extent of scrub or bracken on any historic or archaeological features must be taken. Photographs must also be taken showing any areas where sward enhancement will be carried out.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- increase the presence and abundance of high value plant species, for example by deliberately introducing new species
- maintain a range of plant heights suitable for invertebrates, birds or other priority species
- manage the grassland by grazing, hay cutting, or a mixture of both
- maintain a continuous cover, particularly over historic features
- use very little or no manure, fertiliser, pesticide or supplementary feed
- maintain scrub, rushes and other potentially dominating plants at the levels set out in the agreement
- control undesirable plants (these can be specified in the agreement)

A detailed timetable will need to be agreed setting out how the grassland will be restored and the timetable to achieve it. This should include details of how seeds or plants will be introduced, identifying the source of the material and the varieties and quantities to be used. It should also set out how the grassland will be managed after the plants or seeds are introduced.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- a standard soil analysis, to be completed in the final agreement year and results submitted with final claim
- soil analysis results
- inputs used
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed, unless agreed with Natural England
- harrow, roll or allow scrub or bracken to encroach on historic or archaeological features
- carry out activities that may disturb breeding birds or damage nests

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## How to choose a site

This option works best on infertile soils where the soil phosphorus index (as shown by soil analysis) is low and where the sward isn't dominated by aggressive plant species or injurious weeds. It's best used where it will extend an existing area of priority habitat.



## How to manage the site

The management for this option will be tailored to the site, but in most cases the following will be needed:

- appropriate livestock (which will often be cattle), over which the agreement-holder has full control
- machinery to allow management requirements such as hay cutting to be carried out
- consideration of how best to manage associated features such as ditches and scrub
- capital works to support this option (eg to increase the number of plant species, use option FM2 - Major preparatory work for priority habitats and priority species)
- change of hay cutting and grazing patterns, at least in the short term

## Related options

Upland calcareous and other very extensively managed grassland, especially in large parcels, may not be accepted for this option. Such grassland may be eligible for other options, such as [GS13 - Management of grassland for target features](#)<sup>84</sup>.

Once the grassland is restored to priority habitat, it may be eligible for option [GS6 - Management of species-rich grassland](#)<sup>77</sup>.

Applicants can use the following options and supplements with this option:

- [BE3 - Management of hedgerows](#)<sup>25</sup>
- [BE6 - Veteran tree surgery](#)<sup>28</sup>
- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup>
- [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>
- [GS17 - Lenient grazing supplement](#)<sup>88</sup>
- [OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

# Creation of species-rich grassland (GS8)

## How much will be paid

£267 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or a part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on arable, set-aside or temporary grassland that has high or medium potential for the creation of priority habitat (if it has medium potential written support from a Natural England specialist is required).

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even though they're permanently ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers or streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- temporary water
- permanent water less than or equal to 0.1ha, at the discretion of Natural England)
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways (as long as the requirements of the option can still be carried out)
- bracken
- scree, rock outcrops and boulders up to 0.1ha
- grazed woodland and scrub that has grass underneath it and that livestock can access, at the discretion of Natural England
- small areas of other habitat types, such as reedbeds, at the discretion of Natural England

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will create priority grasslands and establish a wide range of important plant species.

Many other priority species, such as bumblebees, butterflies, birds or bats, will also benefit, and buried archaeological features won't be disturbed.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants must submit a standard soil analysis, including analysis of organic matter by loss on ignition, with their application. A map of the existing drainage system must also be submitted.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- establish a flower rich grassland in the first year
- maintain it as permanent grassland
- maintain a range of plant heights suitable for invertebrates, birds or other priority species
- manage the grassland by grazing, hay cutting, or a mixture of both
- maintain a continuous cover, particularly over historic features
- use very little or no manure, fertiliser, pesticide or supplementary feed
- maintain scrub, rushes and other potentially dominating plants at the levels set out in the agreement
- control undesirable plants (these can be specified in the agreement)

A detailed implementation timetable must be agreed to create the grassland. This should set out how it will be created, including details of the varieties and quantities of seed or plant material to be used and where they'll come from, and how the grassland will be managed after the seeds or plants are introduced.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- a standard soil analysis, to be completed in the final agreement year and results submitted with final claim
- soil analysis results
- inputs used
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## What must not be done

Don't:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed after the grassland has been successfully established, unless agreed with Natural England
- harrow, roll or allow scrub or bracken to encroach on historic or archaeological features
- carry out activities that may disturb breeding birds or damage nests

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on how to carry out this option successfully, but may not be specified in the prescriptions.

## How to choose a site

This option works best on infertile soils where the soil phosphorus index (as shown by the soil analysis) is low, and the sward and soil seedbank are not dominated by aggressive plant species or injurious weeds.

Species-rich grassland can sometimes be created by natural regeneration (possibly by adding extra plant species) or, much more commonly, through cultivating and sowing an agreed seed mix.

This option will normally be targeted at sites that are next to or close to existing species-rich grasslands.

## How to manage the site

The requirements for this option will be tailored to the site, but in most cases the following will be needed:

- appropriate livestock (which will often be cattle), over which the agreement-holder has full control
- consideration of how best to manage associated features such as ditches and scrub
- capital works to support this option (eg to increase the number of plant species, use option FM2 - Major preparatory work for priority habitats and priority species)

## Related options

Upland calcareous and other very extensively managed grassland, especially in large parcels, may not be accepted for this option. Such grassland may be eligible for other options, such as:

- [GS13 - Management of grassland for target features](#)<sup>84</sup>
- [GS14 - Creation of grassland for target features](#)<sup>85</sup>

Once the grassland has become a priority habitat, it may be eligible for option [GS6 - Management of species-rich grassland](#)<sup>77</sup>

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [BE3 - Management of hedgerows](#)<sup>25</sup>
- [BE6 - Veteran tree surgery](#)<sup>28</sup>
- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup>
- [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>
- [GS17 - Lenient grazing supplement](#)<sup>88</sup>
- [OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

# Management of wet grassland for breeding waders (GS9)

## How much will be paid

£264 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on permanent grassland that is either:

- coastal or floodplain grazing marsh identified as priority habitat
- other grassland identified as habitat for breeding waders

The grassland must already support breeding waders or have high potential for being restored for them.

It must also meet one of the following conditions:

- a recommended fertiliser management system is currently being followed to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- a recommended fertiliser management system will be adopted within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- the applicant qualifies as a low intensity farmer

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers or streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- permanent water less than or equal to 0.1ha (larger areas may be eligible at the discretion of Natural England)
- temporary water
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways (as long as the applicant is still able to carry out the requirements of the option)
- small areas of other types of habitat, such as reedbeds and scrub, at the discretion of Natural England

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will provide habitat in wet grassland for breeding wading birds. Fields will have wet areas and suitable sward conditions throughout the winter and spring and into the early summer. Waders will be able to nest and, in most years, successfully fledge their young.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- photographs showing the extent of scrub or bracken on any historic or archaeological features on the site (if present)
- photographs showing any areas where sward enhancement will be carried out
- a map of the existing drainage system
- evidence that a recommended fertiliser management system is being followed or that the applicant qualifies as a low intensity farmer

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- provide the correct sward conditions for the target species by grazing, mainly with cattle, in accordance with the stocking calendar agreed with Natural England
- manage livestock during the breeding season to reduce the risk of them trampling nests
- provide wet features (such as footdrains, gutters and scrapes) for waders to feed (these areas will need to be kept wet into the early summer, usually by holding high ditch water levels)
- control and manage trees, scrub, hedges, rushes and undesirable species
- use little or no manure, fertiliser, pesticide or supplementary feed

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- inputs used
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record
- bag returns, if an agreed wildfowl strategy is in place

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- plough, cultivate or reseed the grassland, unless agreed in writing with Natural England
- harrow or roll on historic features
- carry out activities that may disturb birds or damage nests

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option .

For best results:

- use this option as part of a suite of wet grassland and target features options, over a wide area, potentially linking with other landowners
- use this option within, next to or linking special protection areas (SPAs) or sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) containing wading birds
- use this option within, next to or linking non-designated areas with good wader populations
- make sure this option doesn't conflict with Environment Agency, internal drainage Board or local authority policies on flood storage, ditch and river management, water resources and fish migration
- apply for land drainage consent if necessary
- discuss the location of capital works with the Environment Agency, internal drainage boards and local authorities
- discuss the location of capital works with the Historic Environment Service if historic and archaeological features are present

Sites which may be unsuitable for this option include:

- sites with botanical interest, where hydrological changes could damage plant communities
- washlands and other areas that flood during the wader breeding season

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option, if they're needed to meet its objectives or those of other features on the site:

- [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

The following supplements may also be used with this option, but only in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of Natural England:

- [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>

# Management of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl (GS10)

## How much will be paid

£157 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on permanent grassland that's either:

- coastal or floodplain grazing marsh identified as priority habitat
- other grassland identified as habitat for wintering waders and wildfowl

The grassland must already support wintering wildfowl and waders or have high potential for being enhanced to support them.

It must also meet one of the following conditions:

- a recommended fertiliser management system is currently being used to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- a recommended fertiliser management system will be adopted within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- the applicant qualifies as a low intensity farmer

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers or streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- permanent water less than or equal to 0.1ha (larger areas may be eligible at the discretion of Natural England)
- temporary water
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways (as long as the applicant is still able to carry out the requirements of the option)
- small areas of other types of habitat, such as reedbeds and scrub, at the discretion of the delivery body

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will provide habitat in wet grassland for wintering wildfowl and wading birds. Fields will have wet areas throughout the winter, attracting wading birds and wildfowl, which will be able to feed and roost undisturbed.



## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- photographs showing the extent of scrub or bracken on any historic or archaeological features on the site (if present)
- photographs showing any areas where sward enhancement will be carried out
- a map of the existing drainage system
- evidence that a recommended fertiliser management system is being followed or that the applicant qualifies as a low intensity farmer

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- manage the land by grazing, and possibly cutting
- provide areas of standing water and wet features (such as footdrains, gutters and scrapes) to attract waders and wildfowl through the winter months (ditch water levels may need to be held high to achieve this)
- control and manage trees, scrub, hedges, rushes and undesirable species
- use little or no manure, fertiliser, pesticide or supplementary feed

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- inputs used
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record
- bag returns, if an agreed wildfowl strategy is in place

### What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- plough, cultivate or reseed the grassland, unless agreed in writing with Natural England
- harrow or roll on historic features
- carry out activities that may disturb birds or damage nests

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

For best results:

- use this option as part of a suite of wet grassland and target features options, over a wide area, potentially linking with other landowners
- use this option within, next to or linking special protection areas (SPAs) or sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) that have wintering waders and wildfowl as interest features
- use this option within, next to or linking non-designated areas with good wader and wildfowl populations
- make sure this option doesn't conflict with Environment Agency, internal drainage board or local authority policies on flood storage, ditch and river management, water resources and fish migration
- apply for land drainage consent if necessary
- discuss the location of capital works with the Environment Agency, internal drainage boards and local authorities
- discuss the location of capital works with the Historic Environment Service if historic and archaeological features are present

Sites which may be unsuitable for this option include:

- sites with an unreliable water supply
- improved, intensively managed grassland for geese, which is cut for silage and receives more than 50kg per ha of inorganic nitrogen fertiliser
- sites with botanical interest, where hydrological changes could damage plant communities

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option, if they're needed to meet its objectives or those of other features on the site:

- [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

The following supplements may also be used with this option, but only in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of Natural England:

- [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>

# Creation of wet grassland for breeding waders (GS11)

## How much will be paid

£406 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on parcels that have been in arable, fallow or temporary grass in the last 5 years and have high potential for being restored to habitat for breeding waders.

It must also meet one of the following conditions:

- a recommended fertiliser management system is currently being followed to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- a recommended fertiliser management system will be adopted within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- the applicant qualifies as a low intensity farmer

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers or streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- permanent water less than or equal to 0.1ha (larger areas may be eligible at the discretion of Natural England)
- temporary water
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways (as long as the applicant is still able to carry out the requirements of the option)
- small areas of other types of habitat, such as reedbeds and scrub, at the discretion of Natural England

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will create wet grassland for breeding wading birds from arable or temporary grassland. Fields will have well-established swards, with wet areas throughout the winter and spring and into the early summer. Waders will be able to nest and, in most years, successfully fledge their young.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- photographs showing any areas where sward enhancement will be carried out
- a map of the existing drainage system
- evidence that a recommended fertiliser management system is being followed or that the applicant qualifies as a low intensity farmer

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- establish a suitable sward and manage it by grazing, mainly with cattle, in accordance with the stocking calendar agreed with Natural England
- manage livestock during the breeding season to reduce the risk of them trampling nests
- provide wet features (such as footdrains, gutters and scrapes) for waders to feed (these areas will need to be kept wet into the early summer, usually by holding high ditch water levels)
- control and manage trees, scrub, hedges, rushes and undesirable species
- use little or no manure, fertiliser, pesticide or supplementary feed

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- inputs used
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- plough, cultivate or reseed the grassland after successfully establishing it, unless agreed in writing with Natural England
- harrow and roll on historic features
- carry out activities that may disturb birds or damage nests

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

For best results:

- use this option as part of a suite of wet grassland and target features options, over a wide area, potentially linking with other landowners
- use this option within, next to or linking special protection areas (SPAs) or sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) that have wading birds as interest features
- use this option within, next to or linking non-designated areas with good wader populations
- make sure this option doesn't conflict with Environment Agency, internal drainage board or local authority policies on flood storage, ditch and river management, water resources and fish migration

- apply for land drainage consent if necessary
- discuss the location of capital works with the Environment Agency, internal drainage boards and local authorities
- discuss the location of capital works with the Historic Environment Service if historic and archaeological features are present

Sites which may be unsuitable for this option include:

- washlands
- other areas that flood during the wader breeding season

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option, if they're needed to meet its objectives or those of other features on the site:

- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

The following supplements may also be used with this option, but only in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of Natural England:

- [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>

# Creation of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl (GS12)

## How much will be paid

£310 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on parcels that have been in arable, fallow or temporary grass in the last 5 years. They must also have high potential for being restored to habitat for wintering waders and wildfowl.

It must also meet one of the following conditions:

- a recommended fertiliser management system is currently being used to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- a recommended fertiliser management system will be adopted within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- the applicant qualifies as a low intensity farmer

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers or streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- permanent water less than or equal to 0.1ha (larger areas may be eligible at the discretion of Natural England)
- temporary water
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways (as long as the applicant is still able to carry out the requirements of the option)
- small areas of other types of habitat, such as reedbeds and scrub, at the discretion of the delivery body

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will create wet grassland for wintering wildfowl and wading birds from arable or temporary grassland. Fields will have well-established swards, with wet areas throughout the winter. Wading birds and wildfowl will be able to feed and roost undisturbed.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- photographs showing any areas where sward enhancement will be carried out
- a map of the existing drainage system
- evidence that a recommended fertiliser management system is being followed or that the applicant qualifies as a low intensity farmer

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- establish a suitable sward and manage it by grazing, and possibly cutting
- provide areas of standing water and wet features (such as footdrains, gutters and scrapes) to attract waders and wildfowl through the winter months (ditch water levels may need to be held high to achieve this)
- control and manage trees, scrub, hedges, rushes and undesirable species
- use little or no manure, fertiliser, pesticide or supplementary feed

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- inputs used
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record
- bag returns, if an agreed wildfowl strategy is in place

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- plough, cultivate or reseed the grassland after successfully establishing it, unless agreed in writing with Natural England
- harrow or roll on historic features
- carry out activities that may disturb birds or damage nests

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

For best results:

- use this option as part of a suite of wet grassland and target features options, over a wide area, potentially linking with other landowners
- use this option within, next to or linking special protection areas (SPAs) or sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) that have wintering waders and wildfowl as interest features
- use this option within, next to or linking non-designated areas with good wader and wildfowl populations
- make sure this option doesn't conflict with Environment Agency, internal drainage board or local authority policies on flood storage, ditch and river management, water resources and fish migration
- apply for land drainage consent if necessary
- discuss the location of capital works with the Environment Agency, internal drainage boards and local authorities
- discuss the location of capital works with the Historic Environment Service if historic and archaeological features are present

Sites where the water supply is unreliable are not suitable for this option.

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option, if they're needed to meet its objectives or those of other features on the site:

- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

The following supplements may also be used with this option, but only in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of Natural England:

- [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>



# Management of grassland for target features (GS13)

## How much is paid

£90 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel or part parcel option and is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on grassland that meets both of the following requirements:

- it has moderate or low potential for being restored to priority habitat
- it's clearly associated with a species or feature that would benefit from focused management

Alternatively, it can be used on priority coastal and floodplain grazing marsh that meets both of the following requirements:

- isn't targeted for the wet grassland options (GS9, GS10, GS11 and GS12)
- is clearly associated with a species or feature that's targeted by Natural England and that would benefit from focused management

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even though they're permanently ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme:

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers or streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- permanent water less than or equal to 0.1ha, at the discretion of Natural England (larger areas may be permitted on coastal and floodplain grazing marsh)
- temporary water
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways (as long as the requirements of the option can still be carried out)
- bracken
- scree, rock outcrops and boulders up to 0.1ha
- grazed woodland and scrub that has grass underneath it and that livestock can access, at the discretion of Natural England
- small areas of other habitat types, such as reedbeds, at the discretion of Natural England

## When this option can't be used

It can't be used on grassland that is classed as grassland priority habitat (with the exception of priority coastal and floodplain grazing marsh).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will maintain or increase the quantity of the targeted habitat, species or features. Many priority species such as bumblebees, butterflies, birds or bats will also benefit. Buried archaeological features won't be disturbed.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- a standard soil analysis, including analysis of organic matter by loss on ignition
- a map of the existing drainage system
- if there's scrub on the site, photographs showing the extent of it
- if there's scrub or bracken on historic or archaeological features, photographs of the extent of it
- photographs showing any areas where sward enhancement will be carried out

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- maintain or increase the presence, quality or abundance of the targeted feature
- maintain a range of plant heights suitable for invertebrates, birds or other priority species
- manage the grassland by grazing or cutting
- maintain a continuous cover, particularly over historic features
- use little or no manure, fertiliser, pesticide or supplementary feed
- maintain scrub, rushes and other potentially dominating plants at the levels set out in the agreement
- control undesirable plants (these will be specified in the agreement)

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- a standard soil analysis, to be completed in the final agreement year and results submitted with final claim
- soil analysis results
- inputs used
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## What must not be done

Don't:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed the grassland, unless agreed with Natural England
- harrow, roll or allow scrub or bracken to encroach on historic or archaeological features
- carry out activities that may disturb birds or damage nests

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully, but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Species and features this option can be used for

- The option can be used for a wide range of species or other features, such as:
- priority species
- scarce plants
- bumblebees, butterflies or other targeted invertebrates
- birds or other targeted vertebrates
- feeding areas for over-wintering geese in target locations that are free from disturbance
- areas that have breeding waders but that aren't suitable for option [GS9 - Management of wet grassland for breeding waders](#)<sup>80</sup>
- buried historic or archaeological features

## What is needed

The management of land under this option can be very varied, but it's likely to need:

- appropriate livestock, over which the agreement-holder has full control
- machinery to carry out management requirements, such as cutting
- consideration of how best to manage associated features such as ditches
- capital works to support this option (eg to oversow with additional plant species, use option [FM2 - Major preparatory works for priority habitats \(creation and restoration\) and priority species](#))<sup>69</sup>

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [BE3 - Management of hedgerows](#)<sup>25</sup>
- [BE6 - Veteran tree surgery](#)<sup>28</sup>
- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup>
- [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>
- [GS17 - Lenient grazing supplement](#)<sup>88</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

# Creation of grassland for target features (GS14)

## How much is paid

£253 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where this option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option and is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on arable, temporary or former set-aside grassland that has low or moderate potential for the creation of grassland priority habitat.

## Features that can be included in this option

It can be used on the following features if they're part of the land, even though they're permanently ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme:

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers or streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- permanent water less than or equal to 0.1ha, at the discretion of Natural England (larger areas may be permitted on coastal and floodplain grazing marsh)
- temporary water
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways (as long as the requirements of the option can still be carried out)
- bracken
- scree, rock outcrops and boulders up to 0.1ha
- grazed woodland and scrub that has grass underneath it and that livestock can access, at the discretion of Natural England
- small areas of other habitat types, such as reedbeds, at the discretion of Natural England

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will establish a suitable sward with a range of grass, legume and wildflower species.

This will protect and enhance the targeted feature, as well as benefiting a range of other species, such as bumblebees, butterflies, birds or bats. Buried archaeological features won't be disturbed.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- a standard soil analysis, including analysis of organic matter by loss on ignition,
- photographs showing any areas where sward enhancement will be carried out,
- a map of the existing drainage system.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to establish a grassy sward with a range of grass, legume and wildflower species in the first year of the agreement.

And, once this is established:

- maintain it as permanent grassland
- maintain a range of plant heights suitable for invertebrates, birds or other priority species
- manage the grassland by grazing or cutting
- maintain a continuous cover over historic features
- use little or no manure, fertiliser, pesticide or supplementary feed
- maintain scrub, rushes and other potentially dominating plants at the levels set out in the agreement
- control undesirable plants (these will be specified in the agreement)

A detailed implementation timetable for the creation of the grassland will also need to be agreed.

This should set out how it will be created, including details of the varieties and quantities of seed or plant material to be used and where they'll come from. It should also set out how the sward will be managed once it's been established.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- a standard soil analysis, to be completed in the final agreement year and results submitted with final claim
- soil analysis results
- inputs used
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## What must not be done

Don't:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed the grassland after successfully establishing it, unless agreed in writing with Natural England
- harrow, roll or allow scrub or bracken to encroach on historic or archaeological features
- carry out activities that may disturb birds or damage nests

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully, but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Species and features this option can be used for

It can be used for a wide range of species or other features, such as:

- priority species
- scarce plants
- bumblebees, butterflies or other targeted invertebrates
- birds or other targeted vertebrates
- feeding areas for over-wintering geese in target locations that are free from disturbance
- buried archaeological features

Clear evidence will be needed that the feature is present on the site or close to it. Applicants should discuss the suitability of the site with their adviser and agree what management is needed.

## What is needed

The management of land under this option can be very varied, but it's likely to need:

- appropriate livestock, over which the agreement-holder has full control
- machinery to carry out management requirements, such as cutting
- consideration of how best to manage associated features, such as ditches
- capital works to support this option (eg to oversow with additional plant species, use option [FM2 - Major preparatory works for priority habitats \(creation and restoration\) and priority species](#))<sup>69</sup>

After the agreement term, the grassland may be eligible for option [GS13 - Management of grassland for target features](#)<sup>84</sup>.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [BE3 - Management of hedgerows](#)<sup>25</sup>
- [BE6 - Veteran tree surgery](#)<sup>28</sup>
- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup>
- [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>
- [GS17 - Lenient grazing supplement](#)<sup>88</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

# Haymaking supplement (GS15)

## How much will be paid

£85 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

The supplement can be used on a part-parcel. This supplement can only be used in combination with one of the following land management options:

- BE4 - Management of traditional orchards<sup>26</sup>
- BE5 - Creation of traditional orchards<sup>27</sup>
- GS6 - Management of species-rich grassland<sup>77</sup>
- GS7 - Restoration towards species-rich grassland<sup>78</sup>
- GS8 - Creation of species-rich grassland<sup>79</sup>
- GS13 - Management of grassland for target features<sup>84</sup>
- GS14 - Creation of grassland for target features<sup>85</sup>
- WD4 - Management of wood pasture and parkland<sup>218</sup>
- WD5 - Restoration of wood pasture and parkland<sup>219</sup>
- WD6 - Creation of wood pasture<sup>220</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement allows a crop of herb-rich hay to be grown and harvested, which will lead to wildflowers and grasses blossoming and setting seed. This will help to conserve many of the plants in the meadow and provide pollen and nectar for bees and other insects.

## Requirements

### On the land

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

Successful applicants will need to:

- cut and remove field-dried hay every year
- graze the aftermath sward, preferably with cattle

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully, but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement.

## Cost of haymaking

This supplement is normally only available if the cost of haymaking is particularly high, for example:

- if buying machinery or livestock would lead to additional costs for making or storing hay
- if there are long distances between the meadows and the hay barn

## Related supplements

The supplement can be located on the same area as the following supplements:

- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>



# Rush infestation control supplement (GS16)

## How much is paid

£73 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on a single parcel of land with continuous rush cover of more than 50% of the parcel. It can be used for a maximum of 3 years.

## Options to use with this supplement

This supplement must be used with 1 of the following options:

- GS2 - Permanent grassland with very low inputs (outside SDAs)<sup>73</sup>
- GS5 - Permanent grassland with very low inputs in SDAs<sup>76</sup>
- GS6 - Management of species-rich grassland<sup>77</sup>
- GS7 - Restoration towards species-rich grassland<sup>78</sup>
- GS9 - Management of wet grassland for breeding waders<sup>79</sup>
- GS10 - Management of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl<sup>81</sup>
- GS13 - Management of grassland for target features<sup>84</sup>
- HS7 - Management of historic water meadows through traditional irrigation<sup>98</sup>
- UP2 - Management of rough grazing for birds<sup>207</sup>
- WD4 - Management of wood pasture and parkland<sup>218</sup>
- WD5 - Restoration of wood pasture and parkland<sup>219</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement is a short-term incentive to reduce rush cover in parcels with heavy infestations.

It will help prevent the loss of botanically rich grasslands or provide nesting areas for breeding wading birds.

The rush cover on the site will reduce to below 30%.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send a map and photographs showing the extent of rush cover with their application.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- graze or cut areas of dense rush growth every year so that rushes are less than 20cm high by 30 September
- keep bare ground cover at less than 10%
- reduce cover of dense rush growth to less than 30% of the parcel area by the end of year 3 of the agreement

For Higher Tier agreements only it may be possible to:

- spot treat or weed wipe areas of dense rush growth with herbicides

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## What must not be done

Cutting rushes between 15 March and 15 July is not permitted.

## How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully, but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement.

## Maintaining rushes

This supplement will help to reduce heavy infestations of rushes to a cover below 30%. Cover should then be maintained at between 10% and 30%, or at the level set in the main Higher Tier prescription.

Also:

- ensure damage to nests or disturbance of chicks is avoided when cutting
- avoid controlling rush where there is standing or flowing water on or close to the surface for most of the year
- avoid cutting areas where rush is growing in association with sphagnum mosses
- graze with cattle, as sheep normally avoid grazing rush
- remove cuttings to prevent the smothering of low growing plants wherever possible

## Cutting machinery

These machines are generally used for cutting:

- a grass mower trailed by a tractor
- a pasture topper

- a forage harvester

### Related supplements

These supplements can be located on the same area as this supplement:

- SP1 - Difficult sites supplement<sup>168</sup>
- SP2 - Raised water level supplement<sup>169</sup>
- SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement<sup>171</sup>
- SP5 - Shepherding supplement<sup>172</sup>
- SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly<sup>174</sup>
- SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement<sup>175</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement<sup>176</sup>
- SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement<sup>177</sup>

# Lenient grazing supplement (GS17)

## How much is paid

£44 per hectare (ha).

## Where this supplement is available

This is a whole or part parcel supplement. This supplement is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

There are 2 ways this supplement can be selected:

- as part of the Wild pollinator and farm wildlife package
- in Higher Tier agreements, in combination with [GS13 - Management of grassland for target features](#)<sup>84</sup>

## Rotating the supplement

This is a rotational supplement, meaning it can be moved between eligible parcels.

The same total area must be maintained each year and once applied to a parcel it must remain for at least 3 successive years.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement provides the critical spring and summer invertebrate food needed by species such as yellowhammers.

There should be:

- plenty of spiders and insects, including larger ones such as grasshoppers and beetles
- birds, such as yellowhammers, reed buntings and skylarks flying in to the field to feed

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to graze during the growing season to maintain a sward:

- that has an average height of 7cm to 13cm
- where at least 20% is shorter than 10cm
- where at least 20% is over 10cm tall

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

### What must not be done

Do not:

- cut for hay or silage

### How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on how to carry out this supplement successfully, but does not form part of the requirements for the supplement.

### Sward height importance

The option is usually used as part of a package to benefit declining farmland birds. It provides the critical spring and summer invertebrate food needed by species such as yellowhammers.

Most invertebrates are much more abundant in taller grass but birds find it difficult to access them if the whole sward is tall. Birds need shorter patches where they can land and check for danger.

Birds can then dart into the taller patches to catch their prey, or wait for them to move to the edge of the tall grass or out into the shorter patches.

### Option amount and location

Normally at least 1ha of this option per 100ha of the farm area is needed to provide sufficient invertebrates.

Place the supplement on part-parcels next to hedges or scrub for yellowhammers and other buntings. For skylarks it should be placed away from trees, hedges or other tall structures.

Since the target birds do not generally feed more than 300m from their nests, parcels of this option should not be more than 500m apart.

This option will be more effective on grassland including herbs and wildflowers. However, it can be used on grassland with few, if any, herbs or wildflowers.

### Checking sward height

Measure sward height using a ruler, or lines on wellies. Ignore stems and seedheads – measure to the top green leaf.

### How to achieve the right sward

Cattle are needed to achieve the correct diverse sward structure.

Cattle can graze rotationally or intermittently as long as:

- the sward does not get rank during the rest periods
- they eat the sward down well during the grazing periods

### Related options

This supplement can be located on the same area as the following supplements and options:

- [GS2 - Permanent grassland with very low inputs \(outside SDAs\)](#)<sup>73</sup>
- [GS13 - Management of grassland for target features](#)<sup>84</sup>
- [OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>

# Maintenance of weatherproof traditional farm buildings (HS1)

## How much will be paid

£3.25 per square metre.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option can only be used for a traditional farm building or part of one that the applicant owns or controls and that:

- was built before 1940 for agricultural use, e.g. housing machinery or animals, or storing or processing crops and food
- is still in agricultural use on a farm holding, whether or not this was the original use
- is sound and weatherproof
- is recorded on the farm environment record (FER)

Applicants must own or control the building or the part of the building that's entered into the option for the life of the agreement. It must be built using traditional methods such as timber, brick, stone, tile or slate.

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used if the building is a:

- metal-framed dutch barn
- dwelling (or was originally)
- farmhouse, residential or domestic building

## How to apply

Applicants can read [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will help to maintain traditional farm buildings, using traditional methods and materials.

This will also enhance the local landscape and preserve places for wildlife.

If successful there will be:

- traditional farm buildings, fixtures and fittings in a sound condition and weatherproof
- buildings maintained using traditional materials and methods
- preserved and accessible features as identified in the wildlife assessment (which is submitted with the application)
- new bat or owl boxes, where a need has been identified
- a building maintenance plan and log of work being updated annually

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- photographs showing the condition of the building
- a wildlife assessment of the building's suitability for barn owls, kestrels and bats
- proof the applicant owns or controls the building and that it hasn't been converted for other use

### Year 1

Successful applicants will need to:

- complete a building maintenance plan
- install bat or barn owl boxes with open access points, if recommended in the wildlife assessment

### Every year

Successful applicants will need to:

- carry out visual inspections at least once and keep records of the results in the building maintenance plan and wildlife assessment
- record the maintenance work carried out each year in the buildings maintenance plan log
- keep the building weatherproof, including fixtures, fittings and features such as mounting blocks, stack or stook bases
- carry out maintenance work and repairs on a 'like for like' basis
- use traditional material and methods for any maintenance work, keeping the character of the building within its local setting
- maintain areas where a non-traditional material has been used to repair or re-clad the building, such as corrugated iron sheeting to cover roofs
- maintain existing features identified as possible roosting areas for bats, such as non-structural crevices and cavities, taking care not to disturb any bats
- get advice from a licensed ecological consultant if bat activity has been identified - this will apply at any time in the agreement
- follow any advice from the ecological consultant about when work can be undertaken on the building's fabric and get any bat licences that are needed

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- copy of [building maintenance plan](#) to be submitted by second claim. This is also to be updated with inspection results and completed works throughout the life of the agreement
- any bank statements, receipted invoices consents or permissions connected with this work
- [building wildlife assessment](#) to record annual inspection results

### Annual claims

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and submit them when making a claim:

- photographs of all completed maintenance work
- updated copies of the building maintenance plan and wildlife assessment
- a copy of advice given by the licensed ecological consultant on any identified bat activity
- a bat licence, if this has been recommended by the licensed ecological consultant

## What must not be done

Successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- sell or convert the building for non-agricultural use during the life of the agreement.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Carrying out maintenance

Carry out routine maintenance work to protect the fabric of the building and to keep it weatherproof. This doesn't include work to fix significant defects or decay, or work to bring a building in poor repair back to a good condition.

## Regular inspections

Inspect the site regularly to identify areas that might need attention such as:

- blocked downpipes and gutters
- broken or slipped slates, tiles or glass
- pointing on walls
- the condition of paintwork
- barriers to wildlife access
- vegetation that needs clearing
- any other items that need minor repairs

## Specific tasks and minor repairs

Carry out specific tasks regularly so the building stays in good condition and is weatherproof. Tasks could include:

- clearing gutters from debris and leaves
- fixing slipped slate or broken roofing slates and tiles to prevent rainwater penetration
- renewing cast iron gutters and drainpipes
- replacing broken glass
- repainting woodwork and metalwork
- repointing walls
- clearing vegetation

## How often the work needs doing

Some work will be required every year. Seasonal tasks, such as clearing gutters and removing vegetation, may need to be done several times a year.

Start on any agreed work as soon as the agreement begins, such as:

- installing wildlife boxes
- work to enable access for wildlife
- completing the building maintenance plan

## How to calculate the eligible area

Calculate the eligible area for this option by measuring the length and width of the ground floor exterior walls and multiplying these together. Don't include any other space from extra floors, or any parts of the yard in the calculation.



### Related options

This option can be used on the same building as the following options and supplements:

- [WB1 - Small wildlife box](#) <sup>212</sup>
- [WB2 - Medium wildlife box](#) <sup>213</sup>
- [WB3 - Large wildlife box](#) <sup>214</sup>

### Further information

For information on the law and bats see [bats: protection, surveys and licences](#) <sup>262</sup>.

Also, read English Heritage's (Historic England from 1 April 2015) guidance leaflet about [caring for farm buildings](#) <sup>263</sup>.

# Take historic and archaeological features out of cultivation (HS2)

## How much will be paid

£425 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £91 per hectare (ha)

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used in the Mid-Tier on Scheduled Monuments with the approval of Historic England.

It can only be used on a historic or archaeological feature that's on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will protect historic and archaeological features from damaging cultivation practices. Depending on land use and location this option may also:

- reduce diffuse pollution
- reduce soil erosion

By protecting these features the character of the farm will be conserved and England's heritage will be protected for future generations.

This option may also maintain and conserve landscape character and contribute to the experience for the [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup> option.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

All applicants will need to submit a land drainage map with the application.

Mid Tier applicants will also need to submit a map of existing tracks and written approval from Historic England.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- use shallow cultivation on arable land to establish a grass or flower mixture
- re-seed temporary grassland by slotting seeding into the sward, making sure not to damage the existing sward.
- maintain a continuous grass sward over the feature
- make sure vehicle or stock access routes are at least 6m away from the feature (existing surfaced tracks can be used)
- agree with Natural England in writing all drainage works, including modification to existing drainage, before any works take place

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- plough on earthwork sites when establishing grass or flower mixtures
- harrow or roll
- apply supplementary feed within 6m of the option area
- allow scrub or bracken growth on the option area

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Pick the right location

Choose a boundary that includes all of the features and provides a practical field division.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

### Further information

Information on the location of scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and listed buildings, as well as undesignated historic and archaeological features can be found on:

- the English Heritage (Historic England from 1 April 2015) annual [Heritage at Risk register](#)<sup>264</sup> - this identifies historic environment features at high risk from cultivation
- the [MAGIC website](#)<sup>265</sup> for information in map form
- the [Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England](#)<sup>266</sup> website
- the county [historic environment record](#)<sup>267</sup>

The following guides from English Heritage may also be useful:

- [Farming the historic landscape: caring for archaeological sites on arable land](#)<sup>268</sup>
- [Farming the historic landscape: caring for archaeological sites in grassland](#)<sup>261</sup>

# Reduced-depth, non-inversion cultivation on historic and archaeological features (HS3)

## How much will be paid

£79 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier on Scheduled Monuments only
- Higher Tier

It can only be used in the Mid-Tier on Scheduled Monuments with the approval of Historic England.

This option can only be used on arable land or temporary grassland with a historic or archaeological feature.

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used:

- where historic or archaeological earthworks exist
- on parcels at risk of soil erosion or runoff, as identified in the Farm Environment Record (FER).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will reduce damage to historic and archaeological features under cultivation by using non-inversion (minimum tillage) machinery and shallower cultivation depths.

By protecting these features the historic character of the farm will be conserved and England's heritage protected for future generations.

This option may maintain and conserve landscape character and contribute to the experience for [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>.

If successful there will be a soil surface with no evidence of:

- erosion
- subsoil (which indicates a deeper cultivation depth)
- freshly disturbed archaeological remains, such as pottery, burnt flint, flint tools, animal and human bone and building stone and tile

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications:

All applicants must submit land drainage maps with the application.

Mid Tier applicants will also need to submit a map of existing tracks and written approval from Historic England.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- use non-inversion (minimum tillage) machinery to reduce cultivation depths
- make sure vehicle or stock access routes are at least 6m away from the feature (existing surfaced tracks can be used)
- agree with Natural England in writing all drainage works, including modification to existing drainage, before any works take place

Make sure field operations don't go deeper than 15cm when:

- tilling
- managing soil
- planting
- harvesting

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- consents or permissions connected with this work

### What must not be done

Do not grow:

- maize
- lucerne
- root and tuber crops, (excluding non-harvestable root crops such as grazed fodder beet and forage turnips)
- short rotation coppice
- miscanthus

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Reduce cultivation depth

Cultivation depth can be reduced by:

- raising the height of the chisel
- using depth control chains or gauges
- using a GPS depth controller
- increasing the number of discs (14 discs for a 3m width instead of the usual 9)
- using depth wheels with parallelogram mounting

## Reduce compaction

Compaction can be reduced by:

- not working in wet soil conditions
- reducing tyre pressure on vehicles travelling on the site to spread the load more evenly

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [AB7 - Whole crop cereals](#)<sup>11</sup>
- [AB10 - Unharvested cereal headland](#)<sup>14</sup>
- [AB14 - Harvested low input cereal](#)<sup>18</sup>
- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OP5 - Undersown cereal](#)<sup>116</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OR4 - Organic conversion - horticulture](#)<sup>120</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [OT4 - Organic land management - horticulture](#)<sup>125</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [SW6 - Winter cover crops](#)<sup>183</sup>

## Further information

Information on the location of scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and listed buildings as well as undesignated historic and archaeological features can be found on:

- the English Heritage (Historic England from 1 April 2015) annual [Heritage at Risk register](#)<sup>264</sup> - this identifies historic environment features at high risk from loss or damage from cultivation
- the [MAGIC website](#)<sup>265</sup> for information in map form
- the [Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England](#)<sup>266</sup> website
- the county [historic environment record](#)<sup>267</sup>

The following English Heritage guide may be of use:

- [Farming the historic landscape: caring for archaeological sites on arable land](#)<sup>268</sup> on English Heritage

# Scrub control on historic and archaeological features (HS4)

## How much will be paid

£137 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on historical and archaeological features with more than 5% scrub cover.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will reduce the risk of root damage to historic and archaeological features by permanently removing the majority of scrub from them.

By protecting these features the character of the farm will be conserved and England's heritage protected for future generations.

This option may maintain and conserve landscape character and contribute to the experience for [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>.

If successful there will be:

- visible historic or archaeological features with less scrub
- very little bare soil with no burrowing animals
- a well-managed grass sward

Depending on the site's location, this option may also help to:

- reduce diffuse pollution
- reduce soil erosion

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

All applicants will need to send photographs of the historic and archaeological features and the extent of scrub.

Mid Tier applicants will also need to send a map of existing tracks.



## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- remove 75% scrub, cuttings and brash from the features within the first 3 years, clearing only between 1 October and 28 February
- prevent and control scrub re-growth
- maintain a continuous grass sward or vegetation cover over the features so that no more than 5% have bare patches and erosion
- make sure vehicle or stock access routes are at least 6m away from the feature (existing surfaced tracks can be used)

Ensure all necessary consents are in place to remove any mature trees.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- consents or permissions connected with this work

## Annual Claims

Successful applicants will need supply the following records when submitting a claim:

- photographs, showing the extent of scrub at application stage and then every year afterwards from the same position
- copies of all necessary consents for removing any mature trees

## What must not be done

Do not:

- grub out stumps and roots
- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- harrow or roll
- apply supplementary feed on or within 6m of the historic or archaeological feature

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Ways to remove scrub

Scrub can be removed by:

- mowing
- flailing
- using a chainsaw or strimmer
- clearing by hand

Scrub should be cut down to ground level without disturbing the roots. Make sure all cut material is removed from the site.

## Control scrub regrowth

Scrub regrowth can be controlled using:

- livestock grazing
- machinery
- chemicals to treat roots

Make sure the legal requirements for using [herbicides](#)<sup>312</sup> are followed.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [UP1 - Enclosed rough grazing](#)<sup>206</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

## Further information

Information on the location of scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and listed buildings, as well as undesignated historic and archaeological features can be found on:

- the English Heritage (Historic England from 1 April 2015) annual [Heritage at Risk register](#)<sup>264</sup> - this identifies historic environment features at high risk from scrub encroachment
- the [MAGIC website](#)<sup>265</sup> for information in map form
- the [Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England](#)<sup>266</sup> website
- the county [historic environment record](#)<sup>267</sup>

# Management of historic and archaeological features on grassland (HS5)

## How much will be paid

£30 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on historic and archaeological features on parcels of permanent grassland. The permanent grassland may form a mosaic with other vegetation types, such as heathland and moorland.

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on land parcels of more than 15ha above the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup>.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will maintain permanent grassland on historic and archaeological features. By maintaining these features the character of the farm will be conserved and England's heritage protected for future generations.

If successful there will be:

- a well-managed grass sward covering the feature
- very little bare soil
- no scrub or bracken
- no poaching or erosion
- no burrowing animals
- no farm tracks

This option may maintain and conserve landscape character and contribute to the experience for [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Mid Tier applicants will need to supply a map of existing tracks when submitting an application.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to submit photographs of the historic or archaeological features, both at the start and end of the agreement. Photographs must clearly show the extent of:

- scrub
- bracken
- pernicious weeds
- grass sward
- vegetation cover

Successful applicants will also need to:

- maintain a continuous grass sward or vegetation cover so that no more than 5% of the features develop bare patches or erosion
- make sure scrub, bracken or pernicious weeds cover no more than 5% of the features
- make sure vehicle or stock access routes are at least 6m away from the feature (existing surfaced tracks can be used)

### Keeping Records:

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- consents or permissions connected with this work

### What must not be done

Do not:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- harrow or roll
- apply supplementary feed on or within 6m of the feature

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Plan drainage works

Installing or maintaining drainage systems can damage historic and archaeological features. To avoid damage install access points outside of the feature so that drains can be maintained without having to excavate.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- ED1 - Educational access<sup>52</sup>
- OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland<sup>117</sup>
- OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland<sup>118</sup>
- OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland<sup>122</sup>
- OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland<sup>123</sup>
- SP1 - Difficult sites supplement<sup>168</sup>
- SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement<sup>173</sup>
- SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement<sup>177</sup>

## Further information

Information on the location of scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and listed buildings, as well as undesignated historic and archaeological features can be found on:

- the English Heritage (Historic England from 1 April 2015) annual [Heritage at Risk register](#)<sup>264</sup> - this identifies historic environment features at high risk loss or damage
- the [MAGIC website](#)<sup>265</sup> for information in map form
- the [Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England](#)<sup>266</sup> website
- the county [historic environment record](#)<sup>267</sup>

The following English Heritage guide may be of use:

- [Farming the historic landscape: caring for archaeological sites in grassland](#)<sup>261</sup>

# Maintenance of designed/engineered water bodies (HS6)

## How much will be paid

£440 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on:

- water bodies with an artificially retained area of open standing water
- the banks of the water body and buffer strips around associated features (such as leats and culverts)

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used:

- to include areas of water - only land can be included in a claim
- for field ponds dug to below the water table
- for water meadows (both bedwork and catch meadow systems)
- for water bodies that are covered by the [Reservoirs Act 1975](#)<sup>269</sup>
- for raised water bodies that are deemed at high-risk by the Environment Agency under the [Flood and Water Management Act 2010](#)<sup>270</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option protects the banks and associated historic built water-control features of designed or engineered historic water bodies. It maintains or strengthens the role of these features in water quality management.

If successful there will be:

- a well-managed grass buffer with no scrub developing
- a water body that contains clear water and is not over-shaded
- structurally sound water control features
- maintenance carried out using traditional materials and methods

By maintaining archaeological and historic features, the character of the farm will be conserved and England's heritage protected for future generations.

This option can also help to maintain and conserve landscape character.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- photographs of the water feature, clearly showing its shape and design and all associated engineering features such as sluices, weirs, dams and other water control structures
- photographs of the water feature and surrounding buffers, clearly showing the extent of any areas of scrub, bracken or pernicious weeds
- evidence on how the eligibility criteria are met

### Buffer strips

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish or maintain a permanently vegetated buffer strip at least 4 metres (m) wide on the perimeter or bank of the water body
- establish or maintain a permanently vegetated buffer strip at least 2m wide around associated features outside the 4m buffer strip
- manage the buffer strips to control woody growth and make sure there is no more than 5% bare ground
- make sure that no more than 25% of the water surface is in permanent shade

### On the land

Successful applicants will also need to:

- control scrub and undesirable plant species so that there's no more than 5% covering the banks of the water body by year 2
- remove all cut material
- keep the depth, shape, profile and design of the built water body and associated engineering without alteration
- keep the character of the feature in its local setting by:
  - carrying out maintenance works and minor repairs on structural historic or archaeological features on a 'like-for-like' basis
  - keeping and maintaining any non-traditional material that was previously used to repair or re-clad the structures

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- a [structures maintenance record](#) using the template and:
  - at least once a year, carry out and record the results of an inspection of the water body and associated features
  - complete the record with a list of items needing attention and a record of repair and maintenance work that has been carried out

- photographs - before and after shots of all maintenance works and minor repairs that have been carried out to be submitted with the final claim
- any bank statements, receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel

For the final claim, successful applicants will need to submit photographs of:

- the water feature, clearly showing its shape and design and all associated engineering features such as sluices, weirs, dams and other water control structures
- the water feature and surrounding buffers, clearly showing the extent of any areas of scrub, bracken or pernicious weeds

### What must not be done

Do not:

- erect new fences.

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option:

#### Carrying out maintenance

Maintenance is the routine work that's needed to protect structures and features to ensure they survive.

Annual maintenance should be carried out to spot and prevent the start of serious structural problems. This should help to avoid expensive restoration in the future.

Typical maintenance work can include:

- regularly inspecting buffer strips to make sure no scrub is developing
- making sure the buffer strips are not on compacted soil - this allows water to infiltrate
- inspecting the water body to make sure it's clear, and inspecting associated structures to make sure they're working properly
- undertaking minor repairs such as clearing vegetation from leats, sluices, hatches and dams, and repointing retaining walls

Summer is usually the best time for inspections and minor repair works. This is when the water levels are lower and more of the water structures are visible.

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>



### Further information

Information on the location of scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and listed buildings, as well as undesignated historic and archaeological features can be found on:

- the English Heritage (Historic England from 1 April 2015) annual [Heritage at Risk register](#)<sup>264</sup> - this identifies historic environment features at high risk loss or damage
- the [MAGIC website](#)<sup>265</sup> for information in map form
- the [Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England](#)<sup>266</sup> website
- the county [historic environment record](#)<sup>267</sup>

The following guides may be of use:

- [Reservoirs: a guide for owners and operators on GOV.UK](#)<sup>271</sup>
- [Moats, Ponds and Ornamental Lakes in the Historic Environment on English Heritage \(Historic England from April 2015\)](#)<sup>272</sup>
- [Historic Parks and Gardens and changes to reservoir safety on English Heritage \(Historic England from April 2015\)](#)<sup>273</sup>

# Management of historic water meadows through traditional irrigation (HS7)

## How much will be paid

£440 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used:

- on functioning water meadows that are managed using traditional practices, i.e. where irrigation is achieved through a system of inlet and outlet channels
- where management has written support from the Environment Agency

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on meadows:

- that flood naturally and don't have control structures such as sluices and hatches to regulate water levels
- where water can't be controlled - water needs to flow evenly across the meadow at up to 25mm in depth when drowned.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option protects heritage by conserving historic water meadow systems and keeping them in a stable condition.

The option maintains the demanding traditional management needed on both 'bedwork' and 'catch' water meadows. It also maintains habitat and water quality.

If successful there will be:

- a well-managed grass sward with no scrub developing
- a working water meadow system with structurally sound water control features
- maintenance carried out using traditional materials and methods

This option will also help conserve the character of the farm and traditional land-use patterns.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier sites

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- photographs of the current state of the water meadow and its structural, historic and archaeological features
- a copy of the Environment Agency written approval and any necessary consents
- a map of existing tracks and routes

## On the land

Successful applicants will usually need to:

- float or drown the meadow for an agreed period of time each year
- maintain the gutters, carriers or channels to encourage an even film of water approximately 25mm deep to flow over the sward
- maintain and repair the water control structures such as sluices, weirs and hatches, keeping a record of the work
- manage the meadow by grazing or hay cutting once the land has dried out
- use very little or no manures, fertilisers, pesticides or supplementary feed
- control undesirable plants

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- a [structures maintenance record](#) using the template and:
  - at least once a year, carry out and record the results of an inspection of the water body and associated features
  - complete the record with a list of items needing attention and a record of repair and maintenance work that has been carried out
  - photographs - before and after shots of all maintenance works and minor repairs that have been carried out to be submitted with the final claim
  - stock grazing records
  - any bank statements, receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
  - records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel

For the final claim, successful applicants will need to submit photographs of:

- the water feature, clearly showing its shape and design and all associated engineering features such as sluices, weirs, dams and other water control structures
- the water feature and surrounding buffers, clearly showing the extent of any areas of scrub, bracken or pernicious weeds

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- harrow or roll
- work on the gutters, carriers or channels during late spring and summer
- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- remove, replace or relocate historic structures

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Carrying out maintenance

Routine maintenance work should be carried out to protect structures and features to ensure they survive.

Annual maintenance should be carried out to spot and prevent the start of serious structural problems by carrying out annual maintenance. This should help to avoid expensive restoration in the future.

Typical maintenance work may include:

- inspecting the water control structures such as sluices, weirs and hatches to make sure they are all working properly
- clearing carriers, leats, gutters and drains of vegetation and silt
- carrying out minor repairs to sluices, hatches, weirs, bridges, aqueducts, culverts and dams

Historic fabric should be kept as far as possible and not over-restored.

Field operations and stocking should not damage the soil structure, e.g. by letting animals' hooves press and compact the soil (poaching).

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

### Further information

Information on the location of scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and listed buildings, as well as undesignated historic and archaeological features can be found on:

- the English Heritage (Historic England from 1 April 2015) annual [Heritage at Risk register](#)<sup>264</sup> - this identifies historic environment features at high risk loss or damage
- the [MAGIC website](#)<sup>265</sup> for information in map form
- the [Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England](#)<sup>266</sup> website
- the county [historic environment record](#)<sup>267</sup>

Also read about [Conserving historic water meadows](#)<sup>274</sup> on the English Heritage website.

# Maintenance of weatherproof traditional farm buildings in remote areas (HS8)

## How much will be paid

£6.73 per square metre.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option can only be used for a traditional farm building or part of one that the applicant owns or controls, and that:

- is at least 400m from the main farmstead
- is 200m from a public road (by the shortest practical route) which has a hard surface like asphalt, concrete, paving stones, bricks and cobbles
- is still in agricultural use on a farm holding, whether or not this was the original use
- is sound and weatherproof
- is on the Farm Environment Record (FER)
- was built using traditional methods such as timber, brick, stone, tile or slate
- was built before 1940 for agricultural use, eg housing machinery or animals or storing or processing crops and food

Applicants must own or control the building or the part of the building that's entered into the option for the life of the agreement.

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used if the building:

- is a metal-framed Dutch barn
- was originally a dwelling
- is a farmhouse, residential or domestic building

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will help to maintain traditional farm buildings, using traditional methods and materials.

This will also enhance the local landscape and preserve places for wildlife.

If successful there will be:

- traditional farm buildings, fixtures and fittings in a sound condition and weatherproof
- traditional materials and methods used in maintenance work

- preserved and accessible features as identified in the wildlife assessment ( submitted with the application)
- new bat or owl boxes where a need has been identified
- annual updates of any work in the Buildings Maintenance Plan and log

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- photographs of the condition of the building before the start of the agreement
- a wildlife assessment of the building's suitability for barn owls, kestrels and various bat species
- proof of ownership or control of the building, and that it hasn't been converted for any other use.

### Year 1

Successful applicants will need to:

- complete a building maintenance plan
- install bat or barn owl boxes with open access points, if this is recommended in the initial wildlife assessment

### Every year

Successful applicants will need to:

- carry out visual inspections at least once a year keeping records of the results in the Building Maintenance Plan and Wildlife Assessment
- record the maintenance work that has been carried out each year in the buildings maintenance plan log
- keep the building weatherproof (this includes fixtures, fittings and features such as mounting blocks, stook or stackbases)
- carry out maintenance work and repairs on a 'like for like' basis
- use traditional material and methods for any maintenance work, keeping the character of the building within its local setting
- maintain areas where a non-traditional material has been used to repair or re-clad the building, such as corrugated iron sheeting to cover roofs
- maintain existing features identified as possible roosting areas for bats, such as non-structural crevices and cavities, taking care not to disturb any bats
- get advice from a licensed ecological consultant if bat activity has been identified - this will apply at any time in the agreement
- follow any advice from a licensed ecological consultant about when work can be undertaken on the building's fabric and get any bat licences that are needed

### Keeping Records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- copy of [building maintenance plan](#) to be submitted by second claim. This is also to be updated with inspection results and completed works throughout the life of the agreement
- any bank statements, receipted invoices consents or permissions connected with this work
- [building wildlife assessment](#) to record annual inspection results

## Annual claims

Successful applicants will need to keep and submit the following records with their annual claim:

- photographs of all completed maintenance work
- updated copies of the building maintenance plan and wildlife assessment
- advice from the licensed ecological consultant if bat activity is identified
- a bat licence, if advised to do so by the ecological consultant

## What must not be done

Do not:

- sell or convert the building for non-agricultural use during the life of the agreement.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Maintenance work

Carry out routine maintenance work to protect the fabric of the building and to keep it weatherproof. This doesn't include work to fix significant defects or decay, or work to bring a building in poor repair back to a good condition.

## Regular inspections

Inspect the site regularly to identify areas that might need attention such as:

- blocked downpipes and gutters
- broken or slipped slates, tiles or glass
- pointing on walls
- the condition of paintwork
- barriers to wildlife access
- vegetation that needs clearing
- any other items that need minor repairs

## Specific tasks and minor repairs

Carry out specific tasks regularly so the building stays in good condition and is weatherproof. Tasks could include:

- clearing gutters from debris and leaves
- fixing slipped slate or broken roofing slates and tiles to prevent rainwater penetration
- renewing cast iron gutters and drainpipes
- replacing broken glass
- repainting woodwork and metalwork
- repointing walls
- clearing vegetation

## How often the work needs doing

Some work will be required every year. Seasonal tasks, such as clearing gutters and removing vegetation may need to be done several times a year.

Successful applicants should start on any agreed work as soon as their contract begins, such as:

- installing wildlife boxes
- undertaking work to enable access for wildlife
- completing the buildings maintenance plan

### Measure the option area

Calculate the eligible area for this option by measuring the length and width of the ground floor exterior walls and multiplying these together. Don't include any other space from extra floors, or any parts of the yard in the calculation.

### Related options

This option can be used on the same building as the following options and supplements:

- [WB1 - Small wildlife box](#)<sup>212</sup>
- [WB2 - Medium wildlife box](#)<sup>213</sup>
- [WB3 - Large wildlife box](#)<sup>214</sup>

### Further information

For information on the law and bats see [bats: protection, surveys and licences](#)<sup>262</sup>.

Also, read English Heritage's (Historic England from 1 April 2015) guidance leaflet about [caring for farm buildings](#)<sup>263</sup>.



# Restricted depth crop establishment to protect archaeology under an arable rotation (HS9)

## How much will be paid

£174 per hectare (ha).

## Where this option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier on scheduled monuments only
- Higher Tier

It can only be used in the Mid-Tier on Scheduled Monuments with the approval of Historic England.

This option can only be used on arable land or temporary grassland with a historic or archaeological feature.

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on parcels at risk of soil erosion or runoff, as identified in the farm environment record (FER).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option reduces the risk of damage to historic and archaeological features on arable land, particularly where subtle earthwork remains survive.

By maintaining archaeological and historic features, the character of the farm will be conserved and England's heritage protected for future generations.

Arable cultivation damages archaeological remains by:

- levelling out earthworks
- cutting through and churning up remains below ground
- eroding protective layers of soil

Cover-cropping techniques can protect the structure of the soil by:

- reducing compaction
- limiting erosion
- suppressing weeds

Using direct drill machinery across earthwork remains reduces the risk of damage to archaeological features.

If successful there will be a soil surface with no evidence of:

- erosion
- subsoil (which indicates a deeper cultivation depth)

- freshly disturbed archaeological remains, such as pottery, burnt flint, flint tools, animal and human bone and building stone and tile

There will also be an improved soil structure and fewer weeds.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

All applicants will need to send a land drainage map with their application.

Mid Tier applicants will also need to submit a map of existing tracks and written approval from Historic England.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- make sure field operations don't go deeper than 15cm for all work involving:
  - tillage
  - soil management
  - planting
  - harvesting
- use a direct drill system where historic or archaeological earthworks are known to survive
- place vehicle or stock access routes at least 6m away from the historic or archaeological feature - existing surfaced tracks may still be used
- include a sown cover one year in every 5 years - base the mixture on what's specified in the scheme guidance as part of the crop rotation

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the management taken
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- consents or permissions connected with this work

### What must not be done

Do not:

- use equipment trains that are longer than 6m
- grow:
  - maize
  - lucerne
  - root and tuber crops (excluding non-harvestable root crops such as grazed fodder beet and forage turnips)
  - short rotation coppice
  - miscanthus
- carry out drainage works, including modifying existing drainage, before gaining written approval from Natural England

### **How to carry out this option**

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

#### **What to sow**

For Higher Tier sites the plants to sow will be specified by a Natural England adviser.

For Mid Tier sites a mixture should be created based on the following that will supply over-winter cover and cover into the next year:

- ryegrass
- millet
- triticale
- red clover
- crimson clover
- birdsfoot trefoil
- phacelia
- common vetch
- mustard

#### **When to sow**

The cover crop should be established quickly to get the most environmental benefits. This can be done by:

- including the cover crop in the preceding crop at harvest time using auto-casting equipment
- sowing the cover crop immediately following harvest in the autumn

Depending on the seed mixture, the cover crop can be broadcast onto the surface and rolled afterwards.

Sow in the autumn and keep until 31 July the following year.

Use shallow rooting species. This will prevent damage from plants with a deeper, penetrating root structure like sweet clover.

#### **Sowing**

Successful applicants are more likely to succeed if they:

- establish the cover crop quickly
- sow mixtures with good frost tolerance
- have good ground cover

#### **Reduce cultivation depth and compaction**

Cultivation depth can be reduced through:

- direct drilling
- raising the height of the chisel
- using depth control chains or gauges
- using a GPS depth controller
- increasing the number of discs (14 discs for a 3m width instead of the usual 9)
- using depth wheels with parallelogram mounting

Compaction can be reduced by:

- not working in wet soil conditions
- reducing tyre pressure to spread the load more evenly

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this:

- [AB7 - Whole crop cereals](#)<sup>11</sup>
- [AB10 - Unharvested cereal headland](#)<sup>14</sup>
- [AB14 - Harvested low input cereal](#)<sup>18</sup>
- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OP5 - Undersown cereal](#)<sup>116</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OR4 - Organic conversion - horticulture](#)<sup>120</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [OT4 - Organic land management - horticulture](#)<sup>125</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

Information on archaeological and historic features can contribute to visitor packs for [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>.

### Further information

Information on the location of scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and listed buildings as well as undesignated historic and archaeological features can be found on:

- the English Heritage (Historic England from 1 April 2015) annual [Heritage at Risk register](#)<sup>264</sup> - this identifies historic environment features at high risk from loss or damage from cultivation
- the [MAGIC website](#)<sup>265</sup> for information in map form
- the [Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England](#)<sup>266</sup> website
- the county [historic environment record](#)<sup>267</sup>

The following English Heritage guide may be of use:

- [Farming the historic landscape: caring for archaeological sites on arable land](#)<sup>268</sup>

# Management of lowland heathland (LH1)

## How much will be paid

£274 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option and is non-rotational. It is available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on lowland heathland priority habitat; this can include areas of acid grassland mixed with heathland.

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- bare ground
- open water
- scrub

## When this option can't be used:

Applicants can't use this option on extensive grassland areas (without heather or dwarf shrubs) as these should be put into a relevant grassland option, such as:

- [GS6 - Management of species-rich grassland](#)<sup>77</sup>
- [GS13 - Management of grassland for target features](#)<sup>84</sup>
- on upland heathland over 300m above sea level and within the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup> and the severely disadvantaged area

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

The option creates a diverse mosaic of vegetation, allowing all heathland types (such as wet or dry heath, transitional heaths, acidic mires and coastal heaths) to flourish. This includes pioneer heath and bare ground, which benefits rarer invertebrates, birds, reptiles and plants.

If successful there will be heathland areas with a diverse mosaic structure, including undisturbed bare ground and vegetation in all stages of its life cycle.

The cover of undesirable species will be low and species that increase when undermanaged (bracken, trees, dense grass tussocks) kept under control. Locally characteristic plant communities and the species they support (such as nightjar, woodlark, smooth snake and sand lizard, where within their range) are common.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- create a wide range of heather ages and structure through appropriate management (grazing, burning and/or cutting)
- provide bare ground cover between 1% and 10%
- maintain tree and scrub cover below 15%
- maintain the full range of age classes of Western or European gorse and coverage of at least 1% of the site
- manage bracken so that cover is less than 10% in dense canopy

### Keeping records

A valid Wildfire Risk Assessment and a Wildfire Response Plan (agreed with fire service) will be needed. For guidance and example plans [see the Forestry Commission's guide](#)<sup>275</sup>. Copies of the Wildfire Risk Assessment and, where required, the Wildfire Response Plan and Wildfire Management Plan will need to be submitted with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- consents or permissions connected with this work
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

### What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- create bare ground on historic or archaeological features.
- use fertilisers or manures
- apply any lime
- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- carry out supplementary feeding

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

Heathland sites should be managed to keep their ecological value. Heathland is characteristic of acidic and nutrient-poor soils and depends on an open and diverse vegetation structure.

Sensitive, sustainable management will be needed, using a combination of appropriate grazing, cutting and removal and/or burning. In some cases herbicide application may be needed (such as for some scrub or bracken control).

Larger sites will often also include adjacent areas of acid grassland or wetland habitats - the transitional zones between heathland and such habitats are particularly valuable. If a heathland site is neglected or poorly managed, it's likely to lead to bare ground disappearing and an increase in cover of scrub, bracken, gorse, invasive grasses or secondary woodland.

The removal or disturbance of top soil may be needed, to create or maintain some features, such as bare ground. Do not create bare ground on historic or archaeological features. Such features are best protected by implementing an appropriate grazing or cutting regime, and/or preventing scrub and bracken growth.

### **Related options**

These supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

### **Further information**

Symes, N., Day, J. 2003. A practical guide to the restoration and management of lowland heathland, The RSPB, Sandy

# Restoration of forestry and woodland to lowland heathland (LH2)

## How much will be paid

£184 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option and is non-rotational. It is available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on lowland heathland that has established tree cover over most of its area.

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- bare ground
- open water
- scrub

## When this option can't be used:

This option can't be used with:

- areas of heathland with scattered trees and scrub - use [LH1 - Management of lowland heathland](#)<sup>101</sup>, to restore existing heathland habitat
- woodland being cleared on grassland areas (without dwarf shrubs) - use a relevant grassland option

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option re-establishes lowland heathland on forested land or land recently (since 1900) colonised by woodland.

Once trees are felled and removed and extensive areas of sandy soil are exposed, heathland areas should develop over the first 2-3 years. The area will have a tree cover under 15%, with a diverse mosaic structure and composition, including undisturbed bare ground and varied heathland vegetation types.

The cover of undesirable species will be low and vegetation that increases when undermanaged (bracken, scrub, dense grass tussocks) should be kept under control.

Locally characteristic plant communities and the species they support (such as nightjar, woodlark, smooth snake or sand lizard) will successfully colonise the site, if within their range.



## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- remove trees and scrub, along with the accumulated organic litter layer when it's deeper than 5cm
- graze or cut to manage the colonising heathland vegetation, leading to a balanced range and distribution of dwarf shrub age classes
- follow set times for grazing or cutting
- carry out hydrological restoration measures, if needed, such as damming ditches or blocking drainage, if appropriate
- create or maintain between 1% to 10% of bare ground cover - don't create bare ground on historic or archaeological features.
- maintain tree or scrub cover below 15%
- maintain the full range of age classes of Western or European gorse and coverage of at least 1% of the site
- manage bracken so that cover is less than 10%

### Keeping records

A valid Wildfire Risk Assessment and a Wildfire Response Plan (agreed with fire service) will be needed. For guidance and example plans [see the Forestry Commission's guide<sup>275</sup>](#). Copies of the Wildfire Risk Assessment and, where required, the Wildfire Response Plan and Wildfire Management Plan will need to be submitted with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- consents or permissions connected with this work
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

### What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- apply fertilisers, manures or lime
- carry out supplementary feeding
- use pesticides, including herbicides, except to spot treat or weed wipe or to control injurious weeds or invasive non-natives

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option

## Tree removal and burning

Some areas where trees are well established will look more like woodland than heathland before management takes place. Remove felled trees from the site – but some wood can be retained on the site as a wildlife habitat if Natural England have given permission.

Thin branches and twigs can be burned on site, but don't burn in species-rich grassland, anthills or on other ecological or archaeological features. Clean the area as soon as possible after burning. Control nettles, thistle, dock, ragwort and other weed species as the site regenerates.

## Site maintenance

Supplementary seed or heather brash from neighbouring sites may be needed to help heathland establish if there isn't enough seed in the soil. Heathland features should be maintained and encouraged as they develop. Heathland sites have acidic and nutrient-poor soils and need active management to keep their ecological value. Such management will usually combine grazing, cutting and removal and/or burning.

Larger sites will often also include nearby areas of acid grassland or wetland habitats, with the transitional zones between heathland and such habitats being of particular value.

The removal or disturbance of top soil may be needed, to create or maintain some features, such as bare ground. Do not create bare ground on historic or archaeological features. Such features are best protected by implementing an appropriate grazing or cutting regime, and/or preventing scrub and bracken growth.

## Related options

These supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

## Further information

The Forestry Commission should be consulted when developing this option. They will advise on the need for a felling licence or an environmental impact assessment.

Further information is available from:

- Symes, N. & Day, J. 2003. A practical guide to the restoration and management of lowland heathland, The RSPB, Sandy
- guidance on [habitat management for reptiles](#)<sup>276</sup> at the Arc Trust

# Creation of heathland from arable or improved grassland (LH3)

## How much will be paid

£517 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option and is non-rotational. It is available for:

### ■ Higher Tier

This option can be used on the following land if soil nutrient levels are low (a soil test will be needed to confirm this when applying, see below):

- arable
- temporary grassland
- improved permanent grassland

The best site is likely to be on well-drained sandy soil, former heathland that, ideally, has only been intensively managed for a few years. Sites are ideally near existing heathlands, so as to increase their extent and decrease fragmentation.

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- bare ground
- open water
- scrub

## When this option can't be used

On land that has previously been granted 10 years agri-environment funding (such as Higher Level Stewardship) for the creation of lowland heathland.

On areas that are better suited to grassland creation options (where those options should be used instead).

Unsuitable sites are likely to:

- have a high pH with high (above 2) residual N, P and K indices
- have been intensively managed for many years
- be small, isolated areas away from existing heathland
- have never been heathland in the past

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

### How this option will benefit the environment

Lowland heathland will be created, which includes mosaics with lowland acid grassland, on arable or improved grassland sites that have largely lost their heathland seed bank.

Heathland species should normally start to appear within 1 to 3 years. The heathland areas in this option will develop a diverse mosaic structure and composition, including undisturbed bare ground and varied vegetation of different ages.

The cover of undesirable species should be low and vegetation that increases when undermanaged (such as bracken, trees, dense grass tussocks) will need to be kept under control. Locally characteristic plant communities and the species they support (such as nightjar, woodlark, smooth snake or sand lizard) will colonise the site, if it's within their range.

### Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

When applying a standard soil analysis including organic matter (by loss on ignition) will be needed - see [Soil sampling for habitat recreation and restoration](#)<sup>277</sup>.

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- where necessary, carry out hydrological restoration measures, such as reversing drainage on potential wet heath areas by damming ditches or blocking drains
- encourage colonisation by using heather seed (directly or in brush or capsules) or cuttings, preferably from a donor site nearby
- graze or cut the colonising heathland vegetation at set times
- manage undesirable species, such as thistles, willowherbs, bramble and bracken, to keep cover under 10%

### Keeping records

A valid Wildfire Risk Assessment and a Wildfire Response Plan (agreed with fire service) will be needed. For guidance and example plans see [the Forestry Commission's guide](#)<sup>275</sup>. Copies of the Wildfire Risk Assessment and, where required, the Wildfire Response Plan and Wildfire Management Plan will need to be submitted with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- consents or permissions connected with this work
- any sites eventually grazed will require a grazing activity record

## What must not be done

Applicants must not:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- apply fertilisers, manures or lime
- carry out supplementary feeding
- use pesticides, including herbicides, except to spot treat or weed wipe or to control injurious weeds or invasive non-natives

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

Take an integrated approach to heathland restoration. This includes considering landscape character and visual effects, archaeology and wildlife. Boundaries with nearby land uses will need to be considered, as will possible scrub clearance, fencing and public access issues.

## Related options

The following supplements may be located on all or part of the same area as this option:

- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

## Further information

Get further information from:

- Symes, N. & Day, J. 2003. A practical guide to the restoration and management of lowland heathland, The RSPB, Sandy
- guidance on [habitat management for reptiles](#)<sup>276</sup> at the Arc Trust

# Overwintered stubble (OP1)

## How much will be paid

£116 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part parcel option. This option is available for

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land registered as organic or 'in conversion' by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement with a Defra-licensed organic control body
- on stubble that follows the harvest of:
  - cereals (not maize)
  - oilseed rape
  - linseed

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on:

- parcels at risk of soil erosion or run-off (as identified in farm environment record (FER))

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option creates a winter food source for seed-eating birds, which feed on spilt grain and the seeds of broad-leaved weeds, and a foraging habitat for brown hare

If successful there will be an increase in the number of farmland birds using the overwinter stubble.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a valid organic certificate and schedule or a fully completed Viability Assessment for all the parcels entered into this option

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- bale, chop or spread straw after harvest
- retain the stubble from harvest until 15 February
- establish a green overwinter cover crop (such as mustard or fodder radish) on at least 10% of the option area

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the stubble area
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- location of this option submitted with your annual claim
- a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually

Successful applicants who submitted a Viability Assessment with their application must submit a copy of the Conversion Plan agreed with the Organic Control Body with the first claim.

## What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any fertilisers or manures or lime to the stubble
- top or graze
- cultivate the stubble after harvest

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option

## Rotating this option

This is a rotational option - it can move between eligible parcels but maintain the same total area (hectarage) each year.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>

## Further information

### Useful websites

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>

# Wild bird seed mixture (OP2)

## How much will be paid

£640 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £375 per hectare (ha)

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on organic rotational land or “in-conversion” rotational land that has been sown to grass for fewer than 7 years

Land must be in conversion by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides a valuable year-round habitat and food for farmland wildlife such as pollinators and farmland birds.

If successful there should be an increase in important food resources for farmland birds, especially in winter and early spring.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a valid organic certificate and schedule or a fully completed Viability Assessment for all the parcels entered into this option

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to establish a balanced seed mix of at least 3 small-seed bearing plants chosen from the following list:

- |           |             |                 |
|-----------|-------------|-----------------|
| ■ barley  | ■ millet    | ■ triticale     |
| ■ mustard | ■ kale      | ■ fodder radish |
| ■ quinoa  | ■ sunflower | ■ linseed       |

If the chosen mixture fails to establish, re-establish with one of the re-establishment mixtures specified in the option guidance.



Re-establish the mixture every 2 years to maintain seed production.

### Land size

Create blocks:

- at least 6m wide
- at least 0.4ha in area
- at most 5ha in area

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the blocks or strips
- seed invoices
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually

Successful applicants who submitted a Viability Assessment with their application must submit a copy of the Conversion Plan agreed with the Organic Control Body with the first claim.

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

This is a rotational option – and can be moved between eligible parcels but the same total area (hectarage) should be maintained each year.

No single species should make up more than 70% of the mix by weight.

The mix should comply with organic standards. If organic seed is unavailable, a derogation will be needed from the relevant OCB.

### Related options

This option can be used on the same area as:

- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>

### Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>

# Supplementary feeding for farmland birds (OP3)

## How much will be paid

£494 per tonne for every 2 hectares (ha) of wild bird seed mixture.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier It can only be used:
  - on land registered as organic or ‘in conversion’ by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement with a Defra-licensed organic control body
  - when a qualifying area of OP2 wild bird seed mixture option is included in the agreement (2ha of [OP2 - Wild bird seed mixture](#)<sup>13</sup> allows 500kg per annum of supplementary feeding, at each of two separate feeding stations)

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides important food sources for farmland birds in late winter and early spring.

It supplements grown winter bird food on arable and mixed farms with spread seed, such as cereal, oilseed and specialised grains. It gives the birds food through the ‘hungry gap’ (the late winter period when seed is in short supply) and as they enter the breeding season.

If successful there will be farmland birds feeding off the spread seed once the grown resources have run out.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a valid organic certificate and schedule or a fully completed Viability Assessment for all the parcels entered into this option

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- spread the seed mix every week from 1 December to 30 April
- spread an average of 25kg at each of two separate feeding stations
- select feeding areas that are:
  - firm and free-draining such as farm tracks or hard standing areas
  - close to enhanced winter stubbles, game cover or wild bird seed mixtures

## Get the right feeding mix

The feeding mix must:

- comply with organic standards
- be made of 70% cereals
- be made of 30% small seeds

Tailings (small seeds removed from the harvested crop) may be used but they must not exceed 30% of the seed mix by weight.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- details of the mixture used (weight of components and cost)
- dates of feeding
- method of feeding (hopper or spreading)
- amount of feed
- the location of feeding areas
- a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually

Successful applicants who submitted a Viability Assessment with their application must submit a copy of the Conversion Plan agreed with the Organic Control Body with the first claim.

## What must not be done

Do not use hoppers to supply more than 10% of the feeding mix.

## Related Options

These options can be located on the same area as this option:

- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>

# Multi species ley (OP4)

## How much will be paid

£115 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part parcel option. This option is available for

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier It can only be used:
  - on organic rotational land or “in-conversion” rotational land that has been sown to grass for fewer than 7 years

Land must be in conversion by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option provides a valuable year-round habitat and food for farmland wildlife such as pollinators and farmland birds.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a copy of a valid organic certificate and schedule or a fully completed Viability Assessment for all the parcels entered into this option

### On the land

Successful applicants in year 1 of the agreement will need to establish a multi-species ley containing at least:

- 5 grass species
- 3 legume species
- 3 herb species

The grass component must not exceed 75% of the seed mix by weight (measured in kilograms per hectare).

Once established, the multi species ley will need to be managed with rotational cutting or grazing.

## Cutting and grazing times

For 50% of the option:

- cut or graze between 1 April and 15 May
- do not cut or graze this area again until 1 August

For the remaining 50% of the option area:

- cut or graze between 15 May and 30 June
- do not cut or graze this area again until 15 September

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels
- a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually

Successful applicants who submitted a Viability Assessment with their application must submit a copy of the Conversion Plan agreed with the Organic Control Body with the first claim.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option

## Rotating this option

This is a rotational option – it can be moved between eligible parcels but the same total area (hectarage) must be maintained each year.

## Related options

These options can be located on the same area as this option:

- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>

## Further information

### Useful websites:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>

# Undersown cereal (OP5)

## How much will be paid

£86 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole or part parcel option. This option is available for

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land registered as 'fully organic' or 'in conversion' by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement with a Defra-licensed organic control body

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option creates a habitat that benefits animals including invertebrates and birds that forage within the undersown cereal crop.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a copy of a valid organic certificate and schedule or a fully completed Viability Assessment for all the parcels entered into this option

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to establish an undersown autumn or spring sown cereal crop (not maize) with a grass or flower- rich legume ley in the spring between 14 February and 30 April.

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually

Successful applicants who submitted a Viability Assessment with their application must submit a copy of the Conversion Plan agreed with the Organic Control Body with the first claim.

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

This is a rotational option – it may be moved between eligible parcels but the same total area (hectare) should be maintained each year.

## Related options

These options can be located on the same area as this option:

- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>

# Organic conversion – improved permanent grassland (OR1)

## How much will be paid

£75 per hectare (ha) per year, for a maximum of 24 months.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on:

- land registered as ‘in conversion’ with a Defra-licensed organic control body by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement
- improved permanent grassland

## When this option can't be used

This option cannot be used on parcels that either:

- have previously been registered with an organic control body by the applicant or on behalf of the applicant or the applicants farming business, or
- the applicant has previously received conversion aid for the parcels

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option helps to convert permanent grassland from conventional management to organic management.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body or a fully completed Viability Assessment with their application.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- follow the conversion/viability plan agreed with an organic control body for the land and associated stock
- comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement
- make sure all land has completed conversion and is registered as ‘fully organic’ before the end of the agreement



## Keeping records

Successful applicants who submitted a viability assessment with their application must submit a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body, a valid organic certificate and schedule with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep up-to-date and supply on request an OCB-approved conversion plan and viability plan.

## How to carry out this option

This section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicants should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

## Related options

This option cannot be used on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [www.agricology.co.uk](http://www.agricology.co.uk)<sup>283</sup>

Relevant publications include:

- 2014 Organic Farm Management Handbook 10th Edition. Nic Lampkin, Mark Measures & Susanne Padel Organic Research Centre ISBN 978-1-872064-45-0
- Grassland Management for Organic Farmers. David Younie Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-387-0
- Organic Cereal and Pulse Production. Stephen Briggs Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-861269-53-9
- Organic Vegetable Production . Gareth Davies & Margi Lennartsson, Crowood Press
- Growing Green: Organic Techniques for a Sustainable Future. Jenny Hall and Iain Tolhurst
- Organic Fruit Production and Viticulture. Stella Cubison Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-092-3

# Organic conversion – unimproved permanent grassland (OR2)

## How much will be paid

£50 per hectare (ha) per year, for a maximum of 24 months.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on:

- land registered as ‘in conversion’ with a Defra-licensed organic control body by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement
- unimproved permanent grassland and rough grazing that is below the moorland line
- parcels less than 15ha in size

## When this option can't be used

This option cannot be used on parcels that either:

- have previously been registered with an organic control body by the applicant or on behalf of the applicant or applicants farming business, or,
- the applicant has previously received conversion aid for the parcels

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option supports conversion of unimproved grassland to organic management.

If successful there will be an increase in the overall area of land registered and managed as organic.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body or a fully completed Viability Assessment
- records to show the land is unimproved grassland.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- follow the conversion plan agreed with an organic control body for the land and associated stock
- comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement
- make sure all land has completed conversion and is registered as 'fully organic' before the end of the agreement

## Keeping records

Successful applicants who submitted a viability assessment with their application must submit a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body, a valid organic certificate and schedule with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep up-to-date and supply on request an OCB-approved conversion plan and viability plan.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Unimproved grassland

To qualify as unimproved grassland, at least 2 of the following need to apply:

- cover of both ryegrass and white clover is less than 10%
- the sward is species rich (more than 15 species per square metre, including grasses)
- there is a high cover (more than 30%) of wildflowers and sedges, excluding white clover, creeping buttercup or injurious weeds

## Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicants should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

### Related options

This option cannot be used on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

### Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [www.agricology.co.uk](http://www.agricology.co.uk)<sup>283</sup>

Relevant publications include:

- 2014 Organic Farm Management Handbook 10th Edition. Nic Lampkin, Mark Measures & Susanne Padel Organic Research Centre ISBN 978-1-872064-45-0
- Grassland Management for Organic Farmers. David Younie Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-387-0
- Organic Cereal and Pulse Production. Stephen Briggs Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-861269-53-9
- Organic Vegetable Production . Gareth Davies & Margi Lennartsson, Crowood Press
- Growing Green: Organic Techniques for a Sustainable Future. Jenny Hall and Iain Tolhurst
- Organic Fruit Production and Viticulture. Stella Cubison Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-092-3

# Organic conversion – rotational land (OR3)

## How much will be paid

£175 per hectare (ha) per year, for a maximum of 24 months.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole parcel option. This option is available for

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option can only be used:

- on land registered as ‘in conversion’ with a Defra-licensed organic control body by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement
- on arable land or temporary grassland

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on parcels that either:

- have previously been registered with an organic control body by the applicant or on behalf of the applicant or applicants farming business, or,
- the applicant has previously received conversion aid for the parcels

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option helps to convert rotational land under conventional management to organic management.

If successful there will be an increase in the overall area of land registered and managed as organic.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body or a fully completed Viability Assessment
- farm records to show that the parcels entered for this option have been ploughed or have received artificial fertiliser in the last 20 years

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- follow the conversion plan agreed with an organic control body for the land and associated stock
- comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement
- make sure all land has completed conversion and is registered as ‘fully organic’ before the end of the agreement

## Keeping records

Successful applicants who submitted a viability assessment with their application must submit a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body, a valid organic certificate and schedule with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep up-to-date and supply on request an OCB-approved conversion plan and viability plan.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicants should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

## Related options

Applicants can't use this option on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#) <sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#) <sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#) <sup>282</sup>
- [www.agricology.co.uk](http://www.agricology.co.uk) <sup>283</sup>

Relevant publications include:

- 2014 Organic Farm Management Handbook 10th Edition. Nic Lampkin, Mark Measures & Susanne Padel Organic Research Centre ISBN 978-1-872064-45-0
- Grassland Management for Organic Farmers. David Younie Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-387-0
- Organic Cereal and Pulse Production. Stephen Briggs Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-861269-53-9
- Organic Vegetable Production . Gareth Davies & Margi Lennartsson, Crowood Pres
- Growing Green: Organic Techniques for a Sustainable Future. Jenny Hall and Iain Tolhurst
- Organic Fruit Production and Viticulture. Stella Cubison Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-092-3



# Organic conversion - horticulture (OR4)

## How much will be paid

£400 per hectare (ha) per year, for a maximum of 24 months.

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational, whole parcel option. This option is available for

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land registered as 'in conversion' with a Defra-licensed organic control body by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement
- on arable land or temporary grassland

## When this option can't be used

This option cannot be used on parcels that either:

- have previously been registered with an organic control body by the applicant or on behalf of the applicant or applicants farming business, or,
- the applicant has previously received conversion aid for the parcels

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option is for converting rotational land used to produce vegetables or salads into organic status land.

If successful there will be an increase in the overall area of land used to produce organic products.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body or a fully completed Viability Assessment
- farm records to show that the parcels entered for this option have been ploughed or have received artificial fertiliser in the last 20 years

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- follow the conversion plan agreed with an organic control body for the land and associated stock
- comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement
- make sure all land has completed conversion and is registered as 'fully organic' before the end of the agreement

## Keeping records

Successful applicants who submitted a viability assessment with their application must submit a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body, a valid organic certificate and schedule with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep up-to-date and supply on request an OCB-approved conversion plan and viability plan.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicants should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

## Related options

Applicants cannot use this option on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [www.agricology.co.uk](http://www.agricology.co.uk)<sup>283</sup>

Relevant publications include:

- 2014 Organic Farm Management Handbook 10th Edition. Nic Lampkin, Mark Measures & Susanne Padel Organic Research Centre ISBN 978-1-872064-45-0
- Grassland Management for Organic Farmers. David Younie Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-387-0
- Organic Cereal and Pulse Production. Stephen Briggs Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-861269-53-9
- Organic Vegetable Production . Gareth Davies & Margi Lennartsson, Crowood Press
- Growing Green: Organic Techniques for a Sustainable Future. Jenny Hall and Iain Tolhurst
- Organic Fruit Production and Viticulture. Stella Cubison Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-092-3

# Organic conversion - top fruit (OR5)

## How much will be paid

£450 per hectare (ha) per year, for a maximum of 36 months.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- land registered as 'in conversion' with a Defra-licensed organic control body by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement
- parcels that are managed primarily for the production of top fruit (such as apples, pears and plums) and permanent bush crops (such as gooseberries and redcurrants)
- orchards fully stocked at the appropriate spacing for the species and variety of fruit tree or bush

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used:

- on parcels that have previously been registered with an organic control body by the applicant or on behalf of the applicant or applicants farming business, or,
- on parcels where the applicant has previously received conversion aid for the parcels
- on orchards that are used for the production of alcoholic drinks
- on orchards that are not in commercial production

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option helps recently planted and traditional standard orchards (and permanent fruit or berry bushes) convert to organic management.

If successful there will be an increase in the overall land area registered as organic, providing a range of environmental and public benefits.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- photographs of the trees they're entering into the option with their application
- a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body or a fully completed Viability Assessment
- copies of fruit sale receipts to show that the orchards are in commercial production and not used for the production of alcoholic drinks

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- follow the conversion plan agreed with an organic control body for the land and any associated stock
- comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement
- make sure all land has completed conversion and is registered as 'fully organic' before the end of the agreement
- protect trees to prevent damage from livestock and wild animals
- manage tree guards to prevent any damage to growing trees
- keep a 1m diameter circle around the base of all newly planted trees clear of vegetation for at least 3 years after planting

## Keeping records

Successful applicants who submitted a viability assessment with their application must submit a copy of the conversion plan agreed with the organic control body, a valid organic certificate and schedule with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the trees entered into this option
- sales receipts for fruit crops - submitted with the annual claim
- an up-to-date and OCB-approved conversion plan and viability Plan

## Related options

Applicants cannot use this option on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#) <sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#) <sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#) <sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#) <sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#) <sup>282</sup>
- [www.agricology.co.uk](http://www.agricology.co.uk) <sup>283</sup>

Relevant publications include:

- 2014 Organic Farm Management Handbook 10th Edition. Nic Lampkin, Mark Measures & Susanne Padel Organic Research Centre ISBN 978-1-872064-45-0
- Grassland Management for Organic Farmers. David Younie Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-387-0
- Organic Cereal and Pulse Production. Stephen Briggs Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-861269-53-9
- Organic Vegetable Production . Gareth Davies & Margi Lennartsson, Crowood Press
- Growing Green: Organic Techniques for a Sustainable Future. Jenny Hall and Iain Tolhurst
- Organic Fruit Production and Viticulture. Stella Cubison Crowood Press ISBN 978-1-84797-092-3

# Organic land management - improved permanent grassland (OT1)

## How much will be paid

£40 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel option. This option is available for

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on:

- land registered as 'fully organic' by a Defra-licensed organic control body
- improved permanent grassland

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option maintains land under organic management, providing a wide range of environmental and public benefits.

If successful associated benefits will increase as the organic area is maintained.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option with their application.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement.

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually
- an up to date OCB approved Conversion & Viability Plan

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicants should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

## Related options

Applicants cannot use this option on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>

# Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland (OT2)

## How much will be paid

£20 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land registered as 'fully organic' by a Defra-licensed organic control body
- on unimproved permanent grassland and rough grazing that is below the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup>
- on parcels less than 15ha in size

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option maintains unimproved grassland under organic management, providing a wide range of environmental and public benefits.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option
- records to show the land is unimproved grassland

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement.

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually
- an up to date OCB approved Conversion & Viability Plan

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.



## Unimproved grassland

To qualify as unimproved grassland, at least 2 of these need to apply:

- cover of both ryegrass and white clover is less than 10%
- the sward is species rich (more than 15 species per square metre, including grasses)
- there is a high cover (more than 30%) of wildflowers and sedges, excluding white clover, buttercup, injurious weeds

## Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicants should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

## Related options

Applicants can't use this option on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#) <sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#) <sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#) <sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#) <sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#) <sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#) <sup>283</sup>

# Organic land management - rotational land (OT3)

## How much will be paid

£65 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land registered as 'fully organic' by a Defra-licensed organic control body
- on arable land or temporary grassland

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option maintains rotational land under organic management, providing a wide range of environmental and public benefits.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- farm records to show that the parcels entered for this option have been ploughed or have received artificial fertiliser in the last 20 years
- a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement.

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually
- an up to date OCB approved Conversion & Viability Plan

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicant should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

### **Related options**

Applicants may use this option on the same area as many other options for cultivated land. But this option cannot be used on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

### **Further information**

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>

# Organic land management - horticulture (OT4)

## How much will be paid

£200 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a rotational whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land registered as 'fully organic' by a Defra-licensed organic control body
- on arable land or temporary grassland

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option maintains land under organic management, providing a wide range of environmental and public benefits.

If successful you should see these benefits increase and the organic area maintained.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- farm records to show that the parcels entered for this option have been ploughed or have received artificial fertiliser in the last 20 years
- a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option

### On your land

Successful applicants will need to:

- comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement
- enter a maximum area of 20ha into the option
- maintain the total hectareage (area) that was committed to at the beginning of the agreement for the whole of the agreement
- keep at least 40% of the area entered for this option in horticultural production with produce for human consumption at any single stage of the rotation
- keep at least 1 horticultural crop in each field parcel during the agreement

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually
- an up to date OCB approved Conversion & Viability Plan

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicants should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

## Related options

Applicants can't use this option on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>

# Organic land management - top fruit (OT5)

## How much will be paid

£300 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land registered as 'fully organic' by a Defra-licensed organic control body
- on parcels that are managed primarily for the production of top fruit (such as apples, pears and plums) and permanent bush crops (such as gooseberries and redcurrants)
- on orchards that are fully stocked at the appropriate spacing for the species and variety of the fruit tree or bush

When this option can't be used:

- on orchards that are used for the production of alcoholic drinks
- on orchards that are not in commercial production

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option maintains top fruit orchards under organic management, providing a range of environmental and public benefits.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- photographs of the trees they're entering into the option with their application
- a copy of a valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option
- copies of fruit sale receipts to show that the orchards are in commercial production and not used for the production of alcoholic drinks

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement
- keep a 1m diameter circle around the base of all newly planted trees clear of vegetation for at least 3 years after planting
- protect trees to prevent damage from livestock and wild animals
- manage tree guards to prevent any damage to growing trees

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually
- an up to date OCB approved Conversion & Viability Plan
- photographs of the trees entered into this option
- sales receipts for fruit crops - submitted with annual claim
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicants should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

## Related options

Applicants cannot use this option on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards
- [IOTA](#)<sup>279</sup>, which has a national database of independently accredited advisers with organic expertise

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>



# Organic land management - enclosed rough grazing (OT6)

## How much will be paid

£8 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- land registered as 'in conversion' by 15 May in the year when the option starts in the agreement or 'fully organic' by a Defra-licensed organic control body
- enclosed parcels that are:
  - less than 15ha
  - within a severely disadvantaged area (SDA)
  - above the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option maintains organic management of enclosed rough grazing parcels no greater than 15ha within the SDA and above the moorland line. This creates a wide range of environmental and public goods.

If successful applicants should see these benefits increase and organic management maintained.

## Requirements

### Applications

Applicants will have to send a valid organic certificate and schedule or a fully completed Viability Assessment for all the parcels entered into this option with their application.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to comply with organic standards for the life of the agreement.

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- valid organic certificate and schedule for all the parcels entered into this option annually
- an up to date OCB approved Conversion & Viability Plan

Successful applicants who submitted a Viability Assessment with their application must submit a copy of the Conversion Plan agreed with the Organic Control Body with the first claim.

## Related options

This option cannot be located on the same area as any other organic land management or conversion option.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Assessing the farm

Although most farm types perform well under organic management, an assessment should be undertaken of the farm's conversion potential. Some farms are better suited to organic farming than others and are more likely to be successful.

Farms most likely to succeed tend to:

- have completed a viability plan
- have existing skills and infrastructure for the intended activity
- be on a sound financial footing
- have access to good markets
- include quality systems and risk planning

Applicants should:

- make sure there is ready access to an organic market if the success of the conversion is dependent on premiums on organic produce to support the farm financially
- develop an organic conversion plan, one that accounts for the farm's condition
- set a timetable for introducing organic management to the field parcels and any livestock
- set budgets for the conversion period, including any capital costs, to assess if conversion is possible

Permanent ineligible features (PIF) and temporary ineligible features (TIF) areas may be eligible as part of the option area if registered with a control body.

## Further information

Further information is available at:

- the [DEFRA guide to organic farming](#)<sup>278</sup> for more information on converting to organic status, certification and standards

For technical information, advice and training see:

- [Organic Research Centre](#)<sup>280</sup>
- [Soil Association Farmer & Growers](#)<sup>281</sup>
- [Organic Farmers and Growers](#)<sup>282</sup>
- [Ecofarming Info](#)<sup>283</sup>

# Difficult sites supplement (SP1)

## How much is paid

£62 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher tier

It can only be used in combination with a land management option on whole parcels if any of these apply:

- where grazing management has been abandoned or is in danger of abandonment
- on parcels less than 1ha in area with stockproof traditional boundaries, including banks, hedges, walls or wet ditches (gateways must be less than 3.6m wide)

## The Isles of Scilly

In the Isles of Scilly it can be used in combination with a land management option on whole parcels if any of these apply:

- on arable land up to and including 0.4ha in area
- on arable fields up to and including 5ha in area that are sub-divided into small bulb fields no bigger than 0.4ha, and are bounded by granite walls or salt tolerant shrub hedges ('fences')
- on pastoral fields up to and including 2ha in area

## When this supplement can't be used

This supplement can't be used with:

- [UP3 - Management of moorland](#)<sup>208</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement supports the management of particularly difficult sites. It also retains small fields and their locally characteristic boundary pattern.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to submit evidence of previous stocking levels if re-introducing grazing, or if grazing is in danger of abandonment.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to keep boundaries and, where required, reintroduce grazing.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- records of stock movement (that are not required in other formats)
- retained maps and photographs showing gateway locations
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement

This supplement is available at the discretion of Natural England on sites that need an exceptionally high and sustained time and labour input.

Examples include sites:

- with very poor accessibility, remoteness or isolation, where it's very difficult to walk livestock or to transport livestock to the site
- with hazards to personnel and livestock within or next to the site, such as:
  - cliffs or extremely steep slopes or screes
  - spate riverside land
  - islands
  - mineshafts
  - landslips
  - subsidence
  - gullies
  - with hazards to livestock, such as:
    - poisonous vegetation from which stock can't be excluded
    - regular disturbance by dogs
    - urban fringe locations
    - where it's very difficult to locate stock within a site for welfare checks

## Where this supplement can't be used

The supplement is not intended for:

- mechanical vegetation control - supplements such as [GS15 - Haymaking supplement](#)<sup>86</sup> or a capital item are more appropriate
- sites currently grazed to acceptable levels for nature conservation
- sites where grazing is not secured for the lifetime of the agreement
- small parcels which are not stockproof or are not managed individually

## Related supplements

This supplement can be located on the same area as all other appropriate supplements for the underlying option except:

- [GS17 - Lenient grazing supplement](#)<sup>88</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>

# Raised water level supplement (SP2)

## How much will be paid

£127 per hectare (ha).

## How long the supplement lasts

This supplement and the options it is used with last for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for

- Higher Tier

It can only be used in combination with the following land management options:

- [GS6 - Management of species-rich grassland](#)<sup>77</sup>
- [GS7 - Restoration towards species-rich grassland](#)<sup>78</sup>
- [GS8 - Creation of species-rich grassland](#)<sup>79</sup>
- [GS13 - Management of grassland for target features](#)<sup>84</sup>
- [GS14 - Creation of grassland for target features](#)<sup>85</sup>

Or in combination with another land management option with written confirmation from a Natural England specialist.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement is for raising or maintaining water levels in ditches and adjacent land.

Suitable water levels will be maintained on the option the supplement's applied to.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to raise and maintain high water levels using suitable water control structures, or maintain existing in-field wetness.

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken
- consents or permissions connected with this work

## How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement

### **Pick the right location**

This supplement can be used when the cost of raising or maintaining water levels is not covered by the underlying option.

The supplement usually requires active management of water levels. However, naturally wet sites (where groundwater levels are naturally high or where levels are managed by a third party, such as the local internal drainage board) may also be suitable.

To justify the supplement the site wetness should both:

- be appropriate for the habitat or historic feature and any targeted species present
- lead to increased management costs which are not accounted for by the option (such as difficulties in sward management or livestock health implications)

When water levels are being actively managed, the land levels, topography, soils and underlying geology should be suitable for water level management. The site, either alone or combined with a group of sites, should form a natural hydrological unit.

Water management structures (such as sluices or bunds) may be needed to separate the site from neighbouring land - these may be available as capital items.

### **Unsuitable sites**

Unsuitable sites include those where:

- the base option already includes the costs of water level management (such as the wet grassland and wetland options), unless the supplement is approved by a Natural England specialist
- the supplement increases the risk of flooding or waterlogging elsewhere
- the water supply lacks the quantity or quality to achieve the objectives
- raising water levels would damage priority habitats or species, or features of archaeological, historic or landscape value, unless approved mitigation measures can be taken
- the proposal would damage third party land or buildings, infrastructure or other assets unless approved mitigation measures are taken
- there are conflicts with public access or other uses of the area that can't be resolved

### **Consents and permissions**

Applicants should always consult the local land drainage authority about changes to water levels or restoration works that affect water courses or the floodplain. This may be the local internal drainage board, the Environment Agency or the local authority.

Planning consent may be needed, such as for flood defence bank removal, or for the installation of bunds or embankments within the floodplain.

Applicants may also need the local planning authority's permission to divert a public right of way.

## Related options

This supplement can be located on the same area as the following options and supplements - in some cases, specialist approval will be needed:

- GS6 - Management of species-rich grassland<sup>77</sup>
- GS7 - Restoration towards species-rich grassland<sup>78</sup>
- GS8 - Creation of species-rich grassland<sup>79</sup>
- GS9 - Management of wet grassland for breeding waders<sup>80</sup>
- GS10 - Management of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl<sup>81</sup>
- GS11 - Creation of wet grassland for breeding waders<sup>82</sup>
- GS12 - Creation of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl<sup>83</sup>
- GS13 - Management of grassland for target features<sup>84</sup>
- GS14 - Creation of grassland for target features<sup>85</sup>
- GS15 - Haymaking supplement<sup>86</sup>
- GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement<sup>87</sup>
- GS17 - Lenient grazing supplement<sup>88</sup>
- HS5 - Management of historic and archaeological features on grassland<sup>96</sup>
- HS7 - Management of historic water meadows through traditional irrigation<sup>98</sup>
- LH1 - Management of lowland heathland<sup>101</sup>
- LH2 - Restoration of forestry and woodland to lowland heathland<sup>102</sup>
- LH3 - Creation of heathland from arable or improved grassland<sup>103</sup>
- OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland<sup>117</sup>
- OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland<sup>118</sup>
- SP1 - Difficult sites supplement<sup>168</sup>
- SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement<sup>171</sup>
- SP5 - Shepherding supplement<sup>172</sup>
- SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement<sup>173</sup>
- SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly<sup>174</sup>
- SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement<sup>175</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement<sup>176</sup>
- SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement<sup>177</sup>
- UP2 - Management of rough grazing for birds<sup>207</sup>
- WD1 - Woodland creation - maintenance payments<sup>215</sup>
- WD2 - Woodland improvement<sup>216</sup>
- WD7 - Management of successional areas and scrub<sup>221</sup>
- WD8 - Creation of successional areas and scrub<sup>222</sup>
- WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value<sup>236</sup>
- WT6 - Management of reedbed<sup>239</sup>
- WT7 - Creation of reedbed<sup>240</sup>
- WT8 - Management of fen<sup>241</sup>
- WT9 - Creation of fen<sup>242</sup>
- WT10 - Management of lowland raised bog<sup>243</sup>
- WT11 - Wetland cutting supplement<sup>244</sup>
- WT12 - Wetland grazing supplement<sup>245</sup>

# Bracken control supplement (SP3)

## How much will be paid

£153 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

This is a whole and part-parcel supplement.

This supplement can only be used in combination with a land management option. The most common such options include:

- LH1 - Management of lowland heathland<sup>101</sup>
- LH2 - Restoration of forestry and woodland to lowland heathland<sup>102</sup>
- LH3 - Creation of heathland from arable or improved grassland<sup>103</sup>
- UP1 - Enclosed rough grazing<sup>206</sup>
- UP2 - Management of rough grazing for birds<sup>207</sup>
- UP3 - Management of moorland<sup>208</sup>

This supplement can also be used to control bracken on other options, such as on dry grassland, woodland or sand dunes.

## When this supplement cannot be used

This supplement can't be used on the same area in the same year as the bracken control capital items:

- SB4 - Chemical bracken control<sup>165</sup>
- SB5 - Mechanical bracken control<sup>166</sup>

This supplement would normally be used in subsequent years, as a follow-up to these items.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement controls the spread of, or removes, existing dense stands of bracken. This will maintain or restore biodiversity value and protect archaeological sites.

If successful the underlying vegetation will develop and spread, and will develop a diverse mosaic structure and composition, including undisturbed bare ground and varied vegetation types.

Successfully managing the remaining vegetation (usually by grazing or cutting) will reduce the chances of bracken spreading back. Locally characteristic plant communities and the species they support will expand or even colonise the site.



## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- a map of the extent of bracken
- the Environment Agency's consent if this is within a water catchment area

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- control bracken so that cover is reduced to a set proportion by a set date
- only carry out chemical control on specifically identified areas
- use temporary grazing controls to protect vegetation regeneration
- graze to break up litter beds and damage young fronds to offer extra bracken control
- control any re-infestation during the term of the agreement
- carry out specific follow up cutting or grazing management tailored to their site

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels
- consents or permissions connected with this work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

### Related options

This supplement can be located on the same area as the following options and supplements, in addition to the base options as given above:

- [UP6 - Upland livestock exclusion supplement](#)<sup>211</sup>
- [WD9 - Livestock exclusion supplement - scrub and successional areas](#)<sup>223</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

# Control of invasive plant species supplement (SP4)

## How much will be paid

£324 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

This is a whole and part-parcel supplement.

This supplement can only be used in combination with an appropriate annual management option (see list below).

## When this supplement can't be used

This supplement can't be used for rush control.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement supports the active management and eradication of particularly severe infestations of invasive non-native species that are damaging a feature of interest, such as:

- Himalayan balsam
- Japanese knotweed
- floating pennywort and other invasive aquatic plants

Active management is needed to maintain or restore wildlife value or protect archaeological features.

If successful there should be a reduction in cover and density of non-native invasive species. Native plants and animals will re-establish the area cleared, returning a more natural balance to the habitat.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- photographs of existing areas of invasive plant species
- a map showing the location of the invasive plant species

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- control the invasive species so that cover is reduced to a set proportion by a set date
- only carry out chemical control on specifically identified areas
- use temporary grazing controls to protect vegetation regeneration
- control any re-infestation during the term of the agreement
- carry out specific follow up cutting or grazing management tailored to their site

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement

## Non-native invasive species

Invasive non-native plants are species that:

- have been introduced to the UK either intentionally or unintentionally
- spread and damage the environment, the economy and health

## Where this supplement can be used

Use this supplement when aiming to do more than just control an invasive species' spread and, if feasible, eradicate it. Exact details will be agreed with Natural England.

This supplement can also be used to control non-native invasive species in marginal areas (such as riverbanks, riparian habitats, ditches, channels, field margins, corners and ponds). This can only be done if there is a Countryside Stewardship land management option on that land parcel.

## When this supplement can't be used

- to control [weeds listed in the Weeds Act 1959](#)<sup>291</sup>
- to control bracken and gorse - use the appropriate supplement
- for complying with cross compliance requirements
- for rush infestations - if this is on land under a Countryside Stewardship option then apply for [GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement](#)<sup>87</sup>

## Controlling non-native invasive species

Invasive species can be controlled through a range of methods, including:

- containing a species in a limited area
- preventing (or slowing) its spread
- localised population reduction or eradication in particular areas

Alternative methods include cutting by hand or cutting mechanically, applying herbicide or an alternative agreed method, depending on the plant being controlled.

If the applicant has permission to spray herbicide make sure that the person spraying has the relevant qualifications and certifications.

When controlling and disposing of invasive non-native plants on land, specific legal responsibilities must be complied with, including:

- spraying with herbicide
- cutting and burning
- burying invasive plant material
- disposing of invasive plant and contaminated soil off site

### Related options and supplements

This supplement can be located on the same area as the following options and supplements; indeed it must be located on one of the base options in the first list below.

### Base options

Wetland options:

- WT1 - Buffering in-field ponds and ditches in improved grassland <sup>234</sup>
- WT2 - Buffering in-field ponds and ditches on arable land <sup>235</sup>
- WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value <sup>236</sup>
- WT4 - Pond management – first 100 sq m <sup>237</sup>
- WT5 - Pond management (areas more than 100 sq m) <sup>238</sup>
- WT6 - Management of reedbed <sup>239</sup>
- WT7 - Creation of reedbed <sup>240</sup>
- WT8 - Management of fen <sup>241</sup>
- WT9 - Creation of fen <sup>242</sup>
- WT10 - Management of lowland raised bog <sup>243</sup>

Orchard options:

- BE4 - Management of traditional orchards <sup>26</sup>
- BE5 - Creation of traditional orchards <sup>27</sup>

All woodland options except for:

- WD1 - Woodland creation - maintenance payments <sup>215</sup>

Soil and water options:

- SW1 - 4m to 6m buffer strip on cultivated land <sup>178</sup>
- SW2 - 4m to 6m buffer strip on intensive grassland <sup>179</sup>
- SW4 - 12m to 24m watercourse buffer strip on cultivated land <sup>181</sup>
- SW12 - Making space for water <sup>189</sup>

All grassland options except for:

- [GS1 - Take field corners out of management](#)<sup>72</sup>
- [GS3 - Ryegrass seed-set as winter food for birds](#)<sup>74</sup>
- [GS4 - Legume and herb-rich swards](#)<sup>75</sup>

Rough grazing options:

- [UP1 - Enclosed rough grazing](#)<sup>206</sup>
- [UP2 - Management of rough grazing for birds](#)<sup>207</sup>

Lowland heathland options:

- [LH1 - Management of lowland heathland](#)<sup>101</sup>
- [LH2 - Restoration of forestry and woodland to lowland heathland](#)<sup>102</sup>
- [LH3 - Creation of heathland from arable or improved grassland](#)<sup>103</sup>

Coastal options:

- [CT1 - Management of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle](#)<sup>45</sup>
- [CT2 - Creation of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle on arable land and improved grassland](#)<sup>46</sup>
- [CT3 - Management of coastal saltmarsh](#)<sup>47</sup>
- [CT4 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on arable land](#)<sup>48</sup>
- [CT5 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat by non-intervention](#)<sup>49</sup>
- [CT7 - Creation of inter-tidal and saline habitat on intensive grassland](#)<sup>51</sup>

Historic environment and landscape options:

- [HS6 - Maintenance of designed/engineered water bodies](#)<sup>97</sup>
- [HS7 - Management of historic water meadows through traditional irrigation](#)<sup>98</sup>

Other related supplements

- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly](#)<sup>174</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

### Further information

Get more information on invasive weeds from:

- the guide to [landowners' legal responsibilities for invasive plants](#)<sup>292</sup>
- guidance on the [Wildlife and Countryside Act and landowners' responsibilities](#)<sup>293</sup>

# Shepherding supplement (SP5)

## How much will be paid

£7 per hectare (ha)

## Where it's available

This is a part-parcel supplement. It's available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on land where shepherding needs to be introduced, reintroduced or where significant changes to current practices are needed. It must be combined with one of the following options:

- CT1 - Management of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle <sup>45</sup>
- CT2 - Creation of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle on arable land and improved grassland <sup>46</sup>
- GS6 - Management of species-rich grassland <sup>77</sup>
- GS7 - Restoration towards species-rich grassland <sup>78</sup>
- GS8 - Creation of species-rich grassland <sup>79</sup>
- GS9 - Management of wet grassland for breeding waders <sup>80</sup>
- GS10 - Management of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl <sup>81</sup>
- GS11 - Creation of wet grassland for breeding waders <sup>82</sup>
- GS12 - Creation of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl <sup>83</sup>
- GS13 - Management of grassland for target features <sup>84</sup>
- GS14 - Creation of grassland for target features <sup>85</sup>
- LH1 - Management of lowland heathland <sup>101</sup>
- LH2 - Restoration of forestry and woodland to lowland heathland <sup>102</sup>
- LH3 - Creation of heathland from arable or improved grassland <sup>103</sup>
- UP2 - Management of rough grazing for birds <sup>207</sup>
- UP3 - Management of moorland <sup>208</sup>
- WT6 - Management of reedbed <sup>239</sup>
- WT7 - Creation of reedbed <sup>240</sup>
- WT8 - Management of fen <sup>241</sup>
- WT9 - Creation of fen <sup>242</sup>
- WT10 - Management of lowland raised bog <sup>243</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#) <sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#) <sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

If successful there will be:

- improvements in the quality of vegetation
- overgrazing reduced in some areas and increased in others
- better habitats for birds, mammals and insects
- less damage to archaeological features, vulnerable soils and poaching (trampling)
- more suitable conditions for threatened species to thrive
- improved visibility of historic and archaeological features

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- Evidence of past management to show what the required change in management should be

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- keep records of shepherding or herding activities on the agreed area

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- shepherding calendar submitted annually with the claim
- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of management taken

## How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement.

## Pick the right location

Only use this supplement in areas where it has been agreed with Natural England that shepherding is needed to help improve the option land.

Use mineral licks or supplementary feed in agreed locations to help with stock management

Don't use this supplement where:

- boundaries aren't proofed against livestock and they can't be controlled effectively
- there's little or no shepherding available in the area
- the site isn't grazed
- there's already a local practice, custom or regulation in place for shepherding

# Cattle grazing supplement (SP6)

## How much is paid

£45 per hectare (ha).

## Where this supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used in combination with a land management option where cattle grazing is appropriate for delivering the aims of the option.

In exceptional circumstances as agreed by Natural England it can also be used with:

- GS9 - Management of wet grassland for breeding waders<sup>80</sup>
- GS10 - Management of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl<sup>81</sup>
- GS11 - Creation of wet grassland for breeding waders<sup>82</sup>
- GS12 - Creation of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl<sup>83</sup>

## When this supplement can't be used

Do not use this supplement with:

- CT6 - Coastal vegetation management supplement<sup>50</sup>
- GS17 - Lenient grazing supplement<sup>88</sup>
- SP1 - Difficult sites supplement<sup>168</sup>
- SP7 - Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly<sup>174</sup>
- SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement<sup>175</sup>
- SW14 - Nil fertiliser supplement<sup>191</sup>
- WT11 - Wetland cutting supplement<sup>244</sup>
- WT12 - Wetland grazing supplement<sup>245</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

There should be:

- a more varied sward structure, which will increase wildlife diversity
- better control of scrub, bracken and coarse vegetation
- better grazing of wet areas and difficult sites such as steep slopes

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to graze the site according to a stocking calendar agreed with Natural England.



### **Keeping records**

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

### **How to carry out this supplement**

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully, but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement.

### **Where to use this supplement**

It can be used at sites where:

- cattle are being introduced
- significant changes to the current grazing regime are needed to improve the quality of the habitat

### **Type of cattle**

Many cattle breeds or cross-breeds may be capable of meeting requirements:

- cattle with low nutritional requirements, such as dry suckler cows, are best for sites with fibrous herbage
- mature, placid cattle are best suited for sites where there are ground-nesting birds, as they reduce the risk of trampling

### **Timing**

Graze different habitat types at different times of the year and with a range of cattle numbers. Applicants should discuss the numbers and timing of cattle grazing with their Natural England adviser during the application process.

# Introduction of cattle grazing on the Isles of Scilly (SP7)

## How much will be paid

£279 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

## It can only be used:

- in the Isles of Scilly
- with a land management option where cattle grazing will help achieve the option's goals

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement is for the introduction of conservation grazing on the Isles of Scilly on land that's not currently grazed by cattle.

If successful there will be:

- a more varied sward structure that will increase wildlife diversity
- better control of scrub, bracken and coarse vegetation
- better grazing of wet areas and difficult sites such as steep slopes

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send a stocking calendar agreed with Natural England with their application.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to graze cattle on the land with the option. Grazing needs to follow the stocking calendar agreed with Natural England.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## Related options

This supplement can be used with 1 of the following options:

- coastal options, such as [CT1 - Management of coastal sand dunes and vegetated shingle](#)<sup>45</sup> and [CT3 - Management of coastal saltmarsh](#)<sup>47</sup>
- grassland options, such as [GS6 - Management of species-rich grassland](#)<sup>77</sup> and [GS7 - Restoration towards species-rich grassland](#)<sup>78</sup>
- lowland heath options, such as [LH1 - Management of lowland heathland](#)<sup>101</sup> and [LH2 - Restoration of forestry and woodland to lowland heathland](#)<sup>102</sup>
- scrub options, such as [WD7 - Management of successional areas and scrub](#)<sup>221</sup> and [WD8 - Creation of successional areas and scrub](#)<sup>222</sup>
- wetland options, such as [WT8 - Management of fen](#)<sup>241</sup>

In exceptional situations, with the agreement of Natural England, applicants may be able to use this supplement with the following options:

- [GS9 - Management of wet grassland for breeding waders](#)<sup>80</sup>
- [GS10 - Management of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl](#)<sup>81</sup>
- [GS11 - Creation of wet grassland for breeding waders](#)<sup>82</sup>
- [GS12 - Creation of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl](#)<sup>83</sup>

# Native breeds at risk supplement (SP8)

## How much is paid

£94 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on land in combination with a land management option. The species and breed used for grazing must be confirmed in writing by Natural England as being appropriate for achieving the option's aims.

Native breed at risk<sup>294</sup> (NBAR) grazing livestock must be used that are either:

- registered pedigree purebreeding animals
- genetically-provable purebred progeny of registered pedigree purebreeding parents of the same eligible NBAR breed

## When this supplement can't be used

It can't be used on common land and shared grazing areas when there are 2 or more active graziers.

It can't be used in combination with [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement is for the conservation of genetic diversity in native breeds at risk.

The number of NBAR stock on the farm will increase or be maintained as agreed. This makes sure that the breeds won't become extinct in England.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will have to submit breed registration records and proof of animal provenance, parentage and availability for each animal.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to state how many registered pedigree purebreeding NBAR livestock they'll be keeping, or agreeing to keep, by the end of the agreement.

They will have to graze specific parcels with the breeds at risk in accordance with a stocking calendar.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- a monthly record of grazing animals at the parcel level
- unique individual animal movement identification numbers for each eligible animal
- any changes to the original documentation since submission of the application, such as replacement animals

Records are also needed of the unique individual permanent NBAR breed identification numbers for each eligible animal that independently verify that each animal is:

- a registered pedigree purebreeding NBAR animal; or
- the genetically-provable purebred progeny of registered pedigree purebreeding parents of the same eligible NBAR breed

These NBAR breed identification numbers for each eligible animal can be either:

- the unique individual pedigree registration number
- the unique individual birth notification number

## How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement.

### Breeds

The [UK NBAR list](#)<sup>298</sup> shows the eligible breeds. Information on suitable breeds for different types of grassland and how to manage them is available at the [Grazing Animals Project](#)<sup>295</sup>.

On farms with mainstream breeds as well as NBAR livestock payment will be limited to an area of land sufficient to maintain the eligible NBAR livestock.

### Related supplements

This supplement can be used on the same area as all other appropriate supplements for the base option, except for [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>.

# Threatened species supplement (SP9)

## How much will be paid

£120 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used along with a land management option where either:

- at least 1 [priority species](#)<sup>296</sup> is present on the site
- the site can be managed to create the right conditions to allow the introduction, re-colonisation or range extension of a named priority species

Use of the supplement needs to have written support from a species specialist for the work.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement is for tailored habitat management to benefit identified priority species.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this item will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

If the work is specified in an implementation plan or feasibility study that Natural England has approved, send a copy of the approved plan or study with the application.

## On the land

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- consents or permissions connected with this work
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## When not to use this supplement

Do not use this supplement for any work within the scope of standard options or capital items.

## Related supplements

Use this supplement on the same area as all other supplements suitable for the land management option.

# Administration of group managed agreements supplement (SP10)

## How much will be paid

£6 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used in combination with an annual management option. The agreement land must be common land or have shared tenure with 2 or more legal interests.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement is for agreements with shared tenure. It supports good administration of these agreements.

A well-administered agreement group will meet regularly and keep suitable records.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application

- a copy of a written internal agreement

## Register with the Rural Payments Agency

Successful applicants will need to [register with the Rural Payments Agency \(RPA\)](#)<sup>297</sup> if they haven't already done so. All participants in the agreement must be registered with the RPA and have their own Single Business Identifier. The agreement group must be separately registered.

Carry out the management as set out in the agreement.

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- an up to date list of agreement participants. Send revised versions to the RPA and Natural England within 30 days of any change
- any bank statements, receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work.
- records documenting the activities and decisions of the group, association or committee. This includes records of meetings, constitution and agreement documentation and management of changes to the group membership or participants list

### **How to carry out this supplement**

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement.

### **Picking the right situation**

This supplement can be used where a group rather than an individual manages agreement land. This will often apply where the agreement is on common land or where there's shared grazing.

### **Internal agreements**

This internal agreement needs to state:

- the group's governance
- responsibilities for achieving the agri-environment agreement requirements
- how members will be paid
- the evidence that all participants and the group are registered as a business with the RPA

### **Related options**

This supplement may be used with most land management options but not with the organic conversion or organic land management options.



# 4m to 6m buffer strip on cultivated land (SW1)

## How much will be paid

£353 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

If this option is used to meet [Ecological Focus Area \(EFA\) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme \(BPS\)](#)<sup>298</sup>, the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £79 per ha.

It can be used on the edges of cultivated fields to form a grass buffer between the productive part of the field and an existing feature or habitat. Suitable features and habitats (which must be identified in the farm environment record (FER)) include:

- hedgerows and hedge trees
- lines of trees on former boundary lines
- stone walls
- woodlands
- ponds, ditches, rivers and streams

It can also be used next to:

- trackways that channel runoff water directly to a watercourse
- fence lines that form links between areas of wildlife habitat identified in the FER

## When this option can't be used

This option must not be placed on a public right of way (such as a footpath or bridleway).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will establish a permanent grass buffer strip that may provide new habitat, protect existing landscape features, and improve water quality.

If it's used next to a watercourse, it will prevent pollutants, such as sediment and nutrients, from being transported in surface water runoff.

If it's used next to existing features, it will provide habitat for wildlife, and form links or corridors between other habitats.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish or maintain a 4 to 6m wide grass buffer strip during the first 12 months of the agreement
- cut between 1 and 3m of the strip next to the crop edge every year after 15 July, once the strip has been established
- only cut the remaining width to control woody growth (leaving aside areas containing fallen timber)
- not remove the limbs (including lower limbs) of any hedgerow trees that are over 30cm in diameter at breast height
- leave fallen timber beneath the canopy, stacking any timber that obstructs management of the buffer strip

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the strips
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- use the buffer strip as an access route for vehicles or stock
- use pesticides (including herbicides), except to weed wipe or spot treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully, but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Using this option on existing buffer strips

This option can be used on buffer strips that are already established, unless they are paid for through another scheme. However, the buffer strip must be on land that can be cultivated (eg it can't be on a very steeply banked strip alongside a boundary).

Buffer strips established under Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) can continue to be managed under a new Countryside Stewardship agreement.

### How to manage the buffer strip

Applicants should:

- remove any subsoil compaction where required to prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features
- control weeds and cut regularly in the first 12 to 24 months to encourage grasses to tiller
- avoid cutting when the soil is moist, to prevent compaction

The buffer strip can be partly covered by a hedge, as long as the hedge is located on land that is eligible for this option.

The buffer strip can be enhanced by carrying out capital works, such as:

- planting trees
- creating [rural sustainable drainage systems \(RSuDS\)](#)<sup>299</sup>

### How to choose a site

To protect watercourses, create the buffer strip:

- next to the watercourse
- across the slope on long, steep slopes, to intercept runoff before it builds to damaging flow

To benefit wildlife, select a location that links habitats, or that's next to:

- watercourses
- hedgerows (particularly hedges with mature hedgerow trees)
- stone walls
- remnants of trees on former boundary lines
- groups of trees in fields and in strips along the edge of woodland

To protect archaeological features, create the buffer strip on:

- archaeological features located above the ground
- historic features
- metal parkland fencing

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

### Related options

The following options and supplements can be used on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OR4 - Organic conversion - horticulture](#)<sup>120</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [OT4 - Organic land management - horticulture](#)<sup>125</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

# 4m to 6m buffer strip on intensive grassland (SW2)

## How much will be paid

£170 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option can be used on the edges of intensively managed grassland fields to form a buffer between the productive part of the field and a feature or habitat. Suitable features and habitats (which must be identified in the farm environment record (FER)) include:

- hedgerows and hedge trees
- lines of trees on former boundary lines
- stone walls
- woodlands
- ditches, rivers and streams

This option can also be used:

- next to trackways that channel runoff water directly to a watercourse
- next to fence lines that form links between areas of wildlife habitat identified in the FER

This option is only suitable on improved grassland that receives more than 100kg of nitrogen per ha per year in the form of fertilisers or manures.

## When this option can't be used

This option must not be placed on a public right of way (such as a footpath or bridleway).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will provide new habitat, and protect existing landscape features.

When placed next to existing features, it will provide habitat for wildlife, and form links or corridors between other habitats.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- input records showing that the grassland has received more than 100kg of nitrogen per ha per year
- an assessment by a qualified third party supporting the input records

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish or maintain a 4 to 6m wide grass buffer strip during the first 12 months of the agreement
- leave an uncut buffer strip 4 to 6m wide around the edge of any fields that will be mowed (livestock can graze this strip, along with the aftermath)
- only cut the sward to control woody growth
- do not remove the limbs (including lower limbs) of any hedgerow trees that are over 30cm in diameter at breast height
- leave fallen timber beneath the canopy, stacking any timber that obstructs management of the buffer strip

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the strips
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- use the buffer strip as an access route for vehicles or stock
- use pesticides (including herbicides), except to weed wipe or spot treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully, but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Using this option on existing buffer strips

This option can be used on buffer strips that are already established, unless they are required or paid for through another scheme. However, the buffer strip must be on land that can be cultivated (eg it can't be on a very steeply banked strip alongside a boundary).

Buffer strips established under Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) can continue to be managed under a new Countryside Stewardship agreement.

## How to manage the buffer strip

Where reseeded, applicants should:

- remove any subsoil compaction where required to prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features
- control weeds and cut regularly in the first 12 to 24 months to encourage grasses to tiller
- avoid cutting when the soil is moist, to prevent compaction
- consider using option [SW11 - Riparian management strip](#)<sup>188</sup> on sloping fields next to a watercourse where there's a risk of soil erosion, runoff or bankside trampling

The buffer strip can be enhanced by carrying out capital works, such as:

- planting trees
- creating [rural sustainable drainage systems \(RSuDS\)](#)<sup>299</sup>

## How to choose a site

To benefit wildlife, select a location that links habitats, or that's next to:

- watercourses
- hedgerows (particularly hedges with mature hedgerow trees)
- stone walls
- remnants of trees on former boundary lines
- groups of trees in fields and in strips along the edge of woodland

To protect archaeological features, create the buffer strip on:

- archaeological features located above the ground
- historic features
- metal parkland fencing

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be used on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

# In-field grass strips (SW3)

## How much will be paid

£557 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

If this option is used to meet [Ecological Focus Area \(EFA\) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme \(BPS\)](#)<sup>298</sup>, the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £94 per ha.

It can only be used on cultivated land identified on the farm environment record (FER) as at risk of soil erosion or surface runoff.

It can only be used on part parcels that are no more than 30% of the parcel area.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will establish permanent grass areas or strips. This will help reduce the quantity of sediment, nutrients and pesticides transported through surface runoff water, both within fields and from field to field.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- the FER, with parcels with soil erosion and runoff risk clearly marked

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish or maintain a dense grassy area during the first 12 months of the agreement
- cut the entire area every year after 15 July, once it has been established
- exclude all livestock from the strip

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

### What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- use the grassed area as an access route for vehicles or stock

- use pesticides (including herbicides), except to weed wipe or spot treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### How to achieve the best results

Water infiltration on the grass strip will be improved through appropriate management of the adjoining land. Strips will trap sediment better if large volumes of overland flow aren't coming from surrounding land.

This option can be used at the margins of fields that are vulnerable to erosion to capture sediment or materials carried in runoff water.

Creating breaks, such as hedgerows and woodland, on long, steep slopes will complement the grass strips.

### How to manage the grass strip

Applicants should:

- remove any subsoil compaction where required to prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features
- control weeds and cut regularly in the first 12 to 24 months to encourage grasses to tiller
- avoid cutting when the soil is moist, to prevent compaction

The buffer strip may be enhanced by carrying out capital works, such as:

- planting trees
- creating [rural sustainable drainage systems \(RSuDS\)](#)<sup>299</sup>

### How to choose a site

The grass strip should be created:

- on natural drainage pathways (eg the bottom of a valley) - to stop runoff water from creating rills and gullies
- on long, sloping fields, with the strip placed parallel to the slope and alternated with wide, cultivated strips - to slow runoff water and trap sediment and organic material

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

The grass strip should not be created:

- on public rights of way along the edges of fields, such as footpaths or bridleways

Applicants should consider using option [SW7 - Arable reversion to grassland with low fertiliser input](#)<sup>184</sup> to cover a larger area.

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OR4 - Organic conversion - horticulture](#)<sup>120</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>



# 12m to 24m watercourse buffer strip on cultivated land (SW4)

## How much will be paid

£512 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

If this option is used to meet [Ecological Focus Area \(EFA\) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme \(BPS\)](#)<sup>298</sup>, the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £96 per ha.

It can only be used on cultivated land identified on the farm environment record (FER) as at risk of soil erosion or surface runoff.

It can only be used on land next to ditches, rivers or streams.

## When this option can't be used

The buffer strip must not overlap with a public right of way (such as a footpath or bridleway).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will establish a permanent grass buffer. This will help reduce the risk of potential pollutants, such as sediment, pesticides and nutrients (mainly phosphate), being transported to watercourses in surface water runoff. It may also provide habitat for wildlife, and form links between other habitats.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- the FER, with parcels with soil erosion and runoff risk clearly marked

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish or maintain a 12 to 24m wide grass buffer strip during the first 12 months of the agreement
- cut the 6m next to the crop along the entire length of the buffer strip every year after 15 July, once the strip has been established
- only cut the remainder of the strip to control woody growth
- exclude all livestock from the strip

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- use the buffer strip as an access route for vehicles or stock
- use pesticides (including herbicides), except to weed wipe or spot treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Using this option on existing buffer strips

This option can be used on buffer strips that are already established, unless they are required or paid for through another scheme. The buffer strip must be on land that can be cultivated (eg it can't be on a very steeply banked strip alongside a boundary).

Buffer strips established under Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) can continue to be managed under a new Countryside Stewardship agreement.

### How to choose a site

Create the buffer strip across adjacent to a watercourse on a long, steep slope, to intercept and slow runoff water before it builds to a damaging flow. Care must be taken to minimise the amount of water that's channelled along the edge of the buffer strip.

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

### How to manage the buffer strip

Applicants should:

- remove any subsoil compaction where required to prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features
- control weeds and cut regularly in the first 12 to 24 months to encourage grasses to tiller
- avoid cutting when the soil is moist, to prevent compaction

The buffer strip can be partly covered by a hedge, as long as the hedge is located on land that is eligible for this option.

The buffer strip can be enhanced by carrying out capital works, such as:

- planting trees
- creating rural sustainable drainage systems (RSuDS)<sup>299</sup>

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- ED1 - Educational access<sup>52</sup>
- OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land<sup>119</sup>
- OR4 - Organic conversion - horticulture<sup>120</sup>
- OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land<sup>124</sup>
- OT4 - Organic land management - horticulture<sup>125</sup>
- SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement<sup>177</sup>

# Enhanced management of maize crops (SW5)

## How much will be paid

£133 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on land where maize is grown.

This is a rotational option, it can move between different eligible parcels during the period of the agreement. It can only be used on whole parcels.

## When this option can't be used

This option must not be used on parcels identified in the farm environment record (FER) at high risk of soil erosion or surface runoff.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will reduce the risk of soil erosion and surface runoff in fields where maize is grown. It will slow runoff water before it builds to a damaging flow, and remove sediment, organic material, nutrients and chemicals carried in the water.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to your site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- the FER, with parcels with soil erosion and runoff risk clearly marked

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- harvest the maize crop by 1 October
- establish a quick-growing cover crop by 15 October that will provide a dense cover and protect the land from soil erosion

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the option taken on 2 October
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## How to choose the right location

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

## How to harvest the crop

Applicant should:

- remove any areas of soil compaction but do not subsoil on archaeological features
- sow the cover crop (within 2 weeks of harvesting)

## How to establish the cover crop

The cover crop should be established by drilling or broadcasting. The cover crop can be a mixture of seeds, such as vetch, phacelia, barley or mustard. The choice of cover crop will depend on herbicide selected and the rates of application for the previous crop.

Nutrients should only be used in line with crop requirements. No more than the recommended amount of slurry or manure should be applied for either the maize or the crop that follows it. The nutrient input must be based on an approved fertiliser management recommendation system ([Fertiliser manual RB209](#)<sup>301</sup> or similar).

## Using this option next to a watercourse

For fields next to a watercourse, options [SW1 - 4m to 6m buffer strip on cultivated land](#)<sup>178</sup> or [SW4 - 12m to 24m watercourse buffer strip on cultivated land](#)<sup>181</sup> should be considered alongside this option.

These field margin options will help to capture any sediment or organic materials carried in the runoff water.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

# Winter cover crops (SW6)

## How much will be paid

£114 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

If this option is used to meet [Ecological Focus Area \(EFA\) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme \(BPS\)](#)<sup>298</sup>, there is no payment because of double funding.

It can only be used on:

- cultivated land that's vulnerable to nitrate leaching
- cultivated land, draining directly to a watercourse, that's identified in your farm environment record (FER) as at risk of soil erosion or surface runoff

This is a rotational option, it can move between different eligible parcels during the period of the agreement. It can only be used on whole parcels.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will establish cover crops to reduce nitrate leaching on land that would normally be left bare or down to stubbles during winter. It may also reduce the risk of potential pollutants, such as sediment and nutrients, being carried to neighbouring watercourses.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to your site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- the FER, with parcels with soil erosion and runoff risk clearly marked

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a quick-growing cover crop by 15 September that will provide a dense cover and protect the land from soil erosion
- destroy the cover crop by cultivation no more than 6 weeks before establishing the following spring crop

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## How to choose the right location

This option should be used on vulnerable soil types, particularly light sandy soils within nitrate vulnerable areas.

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

## How to manage the crop

The cover crop should be established by drilling or broadcasting. The cover crop can be a mixture of seeds, such as rye, vetch, phacelia, barley or mustard. The choice of cover crop will depend on herbicide selected and the rates of application for the previous crop.

Applicants should:

- establish the cover crop by mid-September, so it can take up soil nitrate before winter drainage water leaches it below the depth of the developing plant
- remove any areas of soil compaction but do not subsoil on archaeological features
- the cover crop should be destroyed in late January or February, before it's too well developed – if left too late nitrate leaching may increase the following winter

## When to use buffer strips

On fields next to a watercourse that are at risk of soil erosion and runoff, applicants should also consider creating permanent grass buffer strips. They will help to capture any sediment or organic materials carried in runoff water. Options [SW1 - 4m to 6m buffer strip on cultivated land](#)<sup>178</sup>, [SW4 - 12m to 24m watercourse buffer strip on cultivated land](#)<sup>181</sup>, or other permanent grass buffer options may be used.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [HS3 - Reduced-depth, non-inversion cultivation on historic and archaeological features](#)<sup>94</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OR4 - Organic conversion - horticulture](#)<sup>120</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [OT4 - Organic land management - horticulture](#)<sup>125</sup>

# Arable reversion to grassland with low fertiliser input (SW7)

## How much will be paid

£311 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

This option runs for 5 years. However, if part of a 10 year Higher Tier agreement it can be extended in year 5 to 10 years where there is sufficient justification.

It can only be used on:

- cultivated land that is identified in the farm environment record (FER) as at risk of soil erosion or surface runoff or
- cultivated land that has been identified as important for buffering sensitive habitats

Applicants must have support from a Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) officer to use this option.

To use this option an applicant must meet one of the following conditions:

- be following a recommended fertiliser management system to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- plan to adopt a recommended fertiliser management system within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- qualify as a low intensity farmer

This option can be used on both whole and part-parcels.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will establish a dense grass sward in arable fields that are at risk of soil erosion or surface runoff. This will stabilise the soil, reduce nutrient losses, and buffer sensitive habitats such as, designated aquatic habitats. It will also reduce surface runoff, which may help to reduce the risk of flooding.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.



## Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- the FER, with parcels with soil erosion and runoff risk clearly marked
- written support from a CSF officer
- evidence that a recommended fertiliser management system is used or evidence to support low intensity farmer claim - this information can be provided with the application or within 18 months of the start of the agreement, as applicable

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish a grass sward by 1 October using a seed mixture of at least 5 species, where it is necessary to reseed
- manage the sward by grazing or cutting from year 2, to achieve an average sward height of between 5cm and 15cm in November
- where cutting, cut the sward after 15 July from year 2 and remove all cuttings
- exclude all livestock from the strip from 1 October to 15 March
- make sure that, by year 2, less than 10% of the area is bare ground
- livestock manures may be applied to supply up to 100kg of total nitrogen per ha per year - where livestock manures are not used, nitrogen fertiliser can be used to supply no more than 50kg of total nitrogen per ha per year

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## What must not be done

Do not use pesticides (including herbicides), except to weed wipe or spot treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken.

Apply any manure or fertiliser between 15 August and 1 February.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## How to choose the right location

This option should be used in targeted areas to reduce diffuse water pollution. It can be also be used to buffer sensitive habitats (ie site of special scientific interest (SSSI) designated aquatic habitat) that are under significant threat from diffuse water pollution. For further advice on where this option should be used, refer to national and regional targeting guidelines.

This option must not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under cross compliance.

This option must not be used:

- if it will have a damaging effect on sites of archaeological interest
- on sites with pests (eg rabbits, mink, thistles and ragwort) that are not under control, and that prevent land management or threaten the established vegetative cover

Where this option is used to buffer sensitive habitats, it should be combined with [SW14 - Nil fertiliser supplement](#)<sup>191</sup>.

### How to manage the sward

Applicants should:

- when preparing a seedbed, remove any subsoil compaction, except on archaeological features
- control weeds and cut regularly in the first 12 to 24 months to encourage grasses to tiller
- where cutting, avoid doing so when the soil is moist, to prevent compaction
- remove any cuttings that will otherwise damage the sward

### Fertiliser and feeding

Applicant must not:

- apply any manure or fertiliser between 15 August and 1 February
- carry out any supplementary feeding, except with mineral blocks

### What to use in the seed mix

The choice of grass species should be tailored to the soil type and cutting regime.

The following species will grow in most conditions and can form part of a basic grass seed mixture (however, cocksfoot and timothy should be used with care, as they are tussocky, vigorous and can become dominant):

- timothy
- cocksfoot
- crested dogstail
- red fescue
- smooth stalked meadow grass

The environmental benefits can be increased by adding wild flowers. Where adding wild flowers, applicants should ensure that the grass mixture isn't too vigorous. A fairly robust flower species should be used, such as:

- ox-eye daisy
- black knapweed
- bird's-foot-trefoil
- common sorrel

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [SW14 - Nil fertiliser supplement](#)<sup>191</sup>

# Management of intensive grassland adjacent to a watercourse (SW8)

## How much will be paid

£202 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on grassland that meets each of the following requirements:

- it's located next to a watercourse on sloping fields
- it receives more than 200kg of nitrogen per ha per year
- it's identified in the farm environment record (FER) as at risk of soil erosion or surface runoff, or it's been identified as important for buffering sensitive habitats

Applicants must have support from a Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) officer to use this option.

To use this option an applicant must also meet one of the following conditions:

- be following a recommended fertiliser management system to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- plan to adopt a recommended fertiliser management system within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- qualify as a low intensity farmer

This option can only be used on whole parcels.

## When this option can't be used

This option must not be used on parcels within a severely disadvantaged area (SDA).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will reduce stocking density and fertiliser inputs on improved grassland. This will help reduce soil compaction, surface run-off and risk of diffuse pollution to the watercourse. Reducing surface runoff may help to reduce the risk of flooding. The option may also reduce the risk of nitrate loss to ground and surface water if it is used with [SW14 - Nil fertiliser supplement](#)<sup>191</sup>.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- the FER, with parcels with soil erosion and runoff risk clearly marked
- written support from a CSF officer
- evidence that a recommended fertiliser management system is used or evidence to support low intensity farmer claim - this information can be provided with the application or within 18 months of the start of the agreement, as applicable
- input records showing that the grassland has received more than 200kg of nitrogen per ha per year

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- Where it is necessary to reseed, establish a grass sward by 1 October using a seed mixture of at least 5 species
- manage the sward by grazing or cutting from year 2, to achieve an average sward height of between 5cm and 15cm in November
- where cutting, cut the sward after 15 July
- exclude all livestock from 1 October to 15 March
- make sure that, by year 2, less than 10% of the area is bare ground
- livestock manures may be applied to supply up to 100 kg of total nitrogen per ha per year - where livestock manures are not used, nitrogen fertiliser can be used to supply no more than 50 kg total nitrogen per ha per year

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## What must not be done

Do not use pesticides (including herbicides), except to weed wipe or spot treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken.

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## How to choose the right location

This option should be used in targeted areas to reduce diffuse water pollution. It can also be used to buffer sensitive habitats (ie site of special scientific interest (SSSI) designated aquatic habitat) that are under significant threat from diffuse pollution. For further advice on where this option should be used, refer to national and regional targeting guidelines.

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

This option must not be used:

- if it will have a damaging effect on sites of archaeological interest
- on sites with pests (eg rabbits, mink, thistles and ragwort) that are not under control, and that prevent land management or threaten the established vegetative cover

Where this option is used to buffer sensitive habitats, it should be combined with [SW14 - Nil fertiliser supplement](#)<sup>191</sup>.

## How to manage the sward

Applicants should:

- where required to reseed, remove any subsoil compaction except on archaeological features
- control weeds and cut regularly in the first 12 to 24 months to encourage grasses to tiller
- where cutting, avoid doing so when the soil is moist, to prevent compaction
- remove any cuttings that will otherwise damage the sward

## Fertiliser and feeding

Applicants must not:

- apply any manure or fertiliser between 15 August and 1 February
- carry out any supplementary feeding, except with mineral blocks

## What to use in the seed mix

Where required to reseed, the choice of grass species should be tailored to the soil type and cutting regime.

The following species will grow in most conditions and can form part of a basic grass seed mixture (however, cocksfoot and timothy should be used with care, as they are tussocky, vigorous and can become dominant):

- timothy
- cocksfoot
- crested dogstail
- red fescue
- smooth stalked meadow grass

The environmental benefits can be increased by adding wild flowers. Where adding wild flowers, applicants should ensure that the grass mixture isn't too vigorous. A fairly robust flower species should be used, such as:

- ox-eye daisy
- black knapweed
- bird's-foot-trefoil
- common sorrel

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [SW14 - Nil fertiliser supplement](#)<sup>191</sup>

# Seasonal livestock removal on intensive grassland (SW9)

## How much will be paid

£88 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on grassland that meets each of the following requirements:

- it's located next to a watercourse
- it receives more than 100kg of nitrogen per ha per year
- it's identified in the farm environment record (FER) as at risk of soil erosion or surface runoff, or it's been identified as important for buffering sensitive habitats or species

This option can only be used on whole parcels.

## When this option can't be used

This option must not be used on parcels within a severely disadvantaged area (SDA).

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will remove livestock at particular times of the year from fields adjacent to a watercourse that are prone to waterlogging, compaction or poaching. This will help improve soil structure, reduce surface runoff and risk of diffuse pollution to the watercourse. Reducing surface runoff may help to reduce the risk of flooding.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- the FER, with parcels with soil erosion and runoff risk clearly marked
- input records showing that the grassland has received more than 100kg of nitrogen per ha per year

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- exclude all livestock from the land for 5 and a half consecutive months during the period 1 September to 15 April, which must include livestock exclusion from 1 December to 15 March

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Storing manures and moving livestock

Applicants should not:

- store manure on the site
- cause soil damage on other parcels by removing livestock from the site
- apply any fertilisers or manures from 15 August to 31 January

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

# Seasonal livestock removal on grassland in SDAs next to streams, rivers and lakes (SW10)

## How much will be paid

£36 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on grassland that meets each of the following requirements:

- permanent grassland next to a watercourse watercourse that are prone to waterlogging, compaction or poaching, where it is important to remove livestock during the winter
- in a severely disadvantaged area (SDA) and below the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup>

This option can only be used on whole parcels.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will remove livestock at particular times of the year from fields adjacent to a watercourse that are prone to waterlogging, compaction or poaching. This option will help enhance water quality by reducing the input of nutrients and sediment to streams, rivers and lakes caused by surface run-off and the leaching of nutrients from adjacent farmland.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- proof that the parcel is prone to waterlogging, compacting or poaching

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- exclude all livestock from the land from 1 October to 15 March



## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Storing manures and moving livestock

Applicant should not:

- store manure on the site
- cause soil damage on other parcels by removing livestock from the site
- apply any fertilisers or manures from 15 August to 31 January

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>118</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland](#)<sup>123</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

# Riparian management strip (SW11)

## How much will be paid

£440 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on land that meets each of the following requirements:

- it's located next to a watercourse
- it's grazed

This is a part parcel option.

## When this option can't be used

This option must not be used on:

- parcels that are being managed under any other grassland or woodland option
- moorland or unenclosed land
- designated open access land
- sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) unless approved by Natural England

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will prevent livestock access to the watercourse and provide a buffer strip. This will help reduce bankside erosion and the transport of pollutants to the watercourse. It will also provide habitat for wildlife and form links between other habitats. It may also as the scrub develops help to shade and cool the watercourse.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement, as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- keep livestock from the riparian strip, leaving no access the watercourse
- make sure the riparian strip is at least 4m wide, but not more than 12m
- control all invasive non-native species such as Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed or Himalayan balsam
- cut only to control woody growth so that cover is between 50% to 80% of the total area

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- apply pesticides (including herbicides), except to weed wipe or spot treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## How to choose a site

This option should be used in targeted areas to reduce diffuse water pollution in particular where livestock access to the watercourse is causing a significant water quality issue.

This option should not be used to deliver mandatory requirements under [cross compliance](#)<sup>300</sup>.

## How to manage the strip

Permanent fencing should be used to exclude livestock from the strip and watercourse. A gate should be included in the fence to provide access to the site for management. Grants are available for a variety of fencing and water supply capital items.

High tensile wires should be used rather than netting if the fence alongside the strip is likely to be flooded. This will help to reduce the chance debris snagging which is better to withstand flood pressure.

Invasive or non-native weeds should be controlled in a way that's not harmful to the stream. Woody species such as alder, willow and sallow should be encouraged, but not permitted to completely cover the strip. Trees or scrub must be controlled if they start to dominate the strip. This should be carried out in small stages and patches by:

- making scalloped indents along the field or riparian edges
- cutting back isolated sections of larger trees

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

# Making space for water (SW12)

## How much will be paid

£640 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 20 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme. This is because the work needs a high level of change.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on arable, temporary grassland or improved permanent grassland that meets all of the following conditions:

- the site, either alone or as part of a group application, forms a natural hydrological unit
- the Environment Agency have provided written support
- the site is identified in a relevant site of specific interest (SSSI) strategic river restoration plan, or [River Basin Management Plan](#)<sup>302</sup>

To use this option an applicant must also meet one of the following conditions:

- be following a recommended fertiliser management system to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- plan to adopt a recommended fertiliser management system within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- qualify as a low intensity farmer

This option can be used on whole and part parcels.

## Features that can be included in this option

Over the life of the agreement the features present on the land may change or move. The following features can be included even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- new areas of water (rivers, streams, becks and brooks, ponds, standing water), bare ground, cobble, gravel
- increased areas of water (rivers, streams, becks and brooks, ponds, standing water)

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will help water flow in a winding course across floodplains, flooding temporarily to restore river and wetland habitats. This will also reduce the risk of high energy flows and soil erosion, and allow water to drain freely back into the river channel.

If successful there will be:

- new areas of river and wetland habitats appearing, such as new channels, temporary ponds in old channels and wet grassland
- gradual erosion and movement of the river bed and river banks
- deposits of gravel, sand and silt appearing in the river channel and on the floodplain after a flood

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- written support from the Environment Agency
- a map of the land drainage system
- a map of permitted access routes
- photographs of areas proposed for works on shingle banks, river channels, flood defences or bank protection, or areas of land forming and earthworks
- evidence that a recommended fertiliser management system is used or evidence to support low intensity farmer claim - this information can be provided with the application or within 18 months of the start of the agreement, as applicable

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- prepare the land to receive additional floodwater from the watercourse next to it and allow the river and water to move freely in the floodplain
- establish grassland
- follow grazing or cutting requirements, including exclude livestock at certain times
- limit manure and fertiliser applications

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- any bank statements, receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected to the work
- a record of all management activity on the option area for each parcel
- a monthly record of the numbers of livestock grazing each parcel
- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of work completed on shingle banks, river channels, flood defences or bank protection, or any completed land forming or earth works

### What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- use pesticides other than for control of injurious weeds or invasive species
- create new tracks for vehicle access
- undertake land forming and earthworks, works to river banks or bed, flood defences or bank protection and drainage works other than as set out in the agreement
- carry out supplementary feeding

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### How to choose the right location

In most cases professional advice will be needed to choose the right location for this option.

It is usually in areas where flooding and river movement is the most active. Marginal land next to river SSSIs that require restoration for river habitats and species is suitable. In some circumstances this option may be suitable for land next to priority habitat rivers.

The option must not be used where there is an existing obligation to carry out the works or management required, eg as a planning condition or as compensation.

This options aims to restore natural river movement which in most cases is likely to make the land ineligible for BPS. Applicants should check with the RPA before claiming BPS on the land under this option.

### **Consents and permissions**

Applicant will need advice and relevant consents from the Environment Agency, Natural England and the local authority before carrying out any work.

### **Feasibility studies**

A feasibility study will be required to assess the feasibility to restore the river on the site. A feasibility study can be funded.

### **Capital works plan**

A capital works plan will be needed to set out how to alter the current course of the river. It should include the engineering requirements to remove flood banks or bank protection. Funding is available to help support the development of an implementation plan and to carry out major preparatory works.

### **Get help to carry out this option**

In some cases it may be necessary to hire a specialist project or site manager to act as a clerk of works to help carry out this option.

### **Access routes and managing flood risk**

New routes or bridges to access and maintain the site may be required. These should not be located where they will affect future river movement or temporary flooding.

Escape routes and refuge areas for people or livestock to use during floods must be identified.

### **Work with neighbouring farms**

Applicant might need to work with neighbouring farms to manage land within the hydrological unit and ensure access to the land.

### **Related options**

These options and supplements can be located in the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement](#)<sup>175</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

### **Further information**

Whole-river restoration strategies have been developed for rivers designated as SSSIs. This option can be used to help implement them. Read more about restoring designated rivers in England on the [River Restoration Centre website](#)<sup>303</sup>.

[River Basin Management Plans](#)<sup>302</sup> are drawn up for river basin districts in England, Wales and Scotland as a requirement of the water framework directive.

# Very low nitrogen inputs to groundwaters (SW13)

## How much will be paid

£251 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on improved grassland that meets each of the following requirements:

- the area receives more than 200kg of nitrogen per ha per year
- the area is specified as a priority Water Framework Directive (WFD) groundwater failure within the Countryside Stewardship targeting, for which this option is a priority
- this option must be applied to all land parcels within the target area

To use this option an applicant must also meet one of the following conditions:

- be following a recommended fertiliser management system to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- plan to adopt a recommended fertiliser management system within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- qualify as a low intensity farmer

This option can only be used on whole parcels.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will reduce nutrient input to grassland in highly targeted locations to help slow or reverse nutrient levels in groundwater. This will be targeted to help specific designated sites and Water Framework Directive Protected Areas.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- evidence that a recommended fertiliser management system is used or evidence to support low intensity farmer claim - this information can be provided with the application or within 18 months of the start of the agreement, as applicable

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- graze or cut for hay or silage to get an average sward height of between 5cm and 15cm in November
- make sure bare ground covers less than 10% of the total area by year 2

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected to the work
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel
- a monthly record of the number of livestock grazing the land

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- supplementary feed except for mineral blocks
- use pesticides or herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe to control injurious weeds, invasive non-natives, nettles or bracken
- apply manures or fertilisers except when the parcel is cut, and limit this to either 12 tonnes of well-rotted farmyard manure per ha per year or up to 50kg of nitrogen per ha per year

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## How to choose the right location

This option is only available in targeted areas. The targeting is restricted to specified areas to improve the quality of groundwater feeding into at risk (nitrogen-limited) designated sites and failing groundwater drinking water protected areas.

This option will also be restricted to areas where grassland is the major agricultural land use, ie at least 80% of land is grassland receiving more than 200 kg nitrogen per hectare per year.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>



# Nil fertiliser supplement (SW14)

## How much will be paid

£131 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land parcels or part parcels greater than 1ha
- when combination with either [SW7 - Arable reversion to grassland with low fertiliser input](#)<sup>184</sup> or [SW8 - Management of intensive grassland adjacent to a watercourse](#)<sup>185</sup>.

To use this supplement an applicant must also meet one of the following conditions:

- be following a recommended fertiliser management system to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- plan to adopt a recommended fertiliser management system within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- qualify as a low intensity farmer

Applicants must have support from a Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) officer to use this supplement.

This supplement can only be used on whole or part parcels.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement benefits the environment

This supplement will help to reduce the risk of nitrate loss to ground and surface water by reducing nutrient inputs to zero.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- written support from a CSF officer
- evidence that a recommended fertiliser management system is used or evidence to support low intensity farmer claim - this information can be provided with the application or within 18 months of the start of the agreement, as applicable

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- fertiliser records, including associated invoices

### What must not be done

Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this supplement:

- [SW7 - Arable reversion to grassland with low fertiliser input<sup>184</sup>](#)
- [SW8 - Management of intensive grassland adjacent to a watercourse<sup>185</sup>](#)
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement<sup>177</sup>](#)

# Enclosed rough grazing (UP1)

## How much will be paid

£39 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is whole parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on land above the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup> within severely disadvantaged areas on parcels less than 15ha in area - parcels must be enclosed.

When this option is targeted at ground nesting birds, parcels must have scrub cover of less than 1% of the area if it's to benefit ground nesting birds.

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- bracken
- ditches
- dykes
- scrub including gorse bushes and briar
- scree, rock, outcrops or boulders
- streams less than 4m wide and that take up less than 1 ha of the parcel

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option maintains and enhances areas of enclosed rough grazing land within an upland farming system. This land contains extensive areas of moorland vegetation but it does not meet moorland priority habitat status over the majority of the parcel.

If successful there will be:

- benefits to moorland birds such as short eared owl and ring ouzel
- improved breeding and feeding habitat for birds such as golden plover and redshank
- a mosaic of upland rough grazing habitats with diverse sward heights and extended areas of wet, marshy grassland vegetation
- any historic environment features (such as old walls) should be visible with low dwarf shrub or grassy cover with no bare soil or sodden trampled land (poaching)

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- photos showing the extent of scrub on the site
- a map of the areas of dwarf shrub, bracken and gorse
- a map of the drainage system

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- only spot-treat or weed-wipe when using pesticides and herbicides to control injurious weeds, invasive non-natives, nettles and bracken
- contain bracken and common gorse so that they don't spread to new areas of land
- control common gorse by cutting or burning in blocks
- maintain dwarf shrub coverage

## Maintain scrub coverage

Maintain any scrub as discrete small patches, lines and occasional individual bushes scattered across the site. How much depends on the cover:

- less than 5% - keep the full extent of well-established scrub
- more than 5% - keep scrub cover between 5% and 10% of the parcel area

## Maintain swards

Maintain a sward with a range of heights during the growing season so that at least:

- 20% is less than 7cm high
- 20% is more than 7cm high

There is no need to maintain this height variation when the field is closed up for a cut of hay or silage.

## Seasonal requirements

Successful Applicants will need to:

- only use machinery or allow other activities that disturb breeding birds between 1 January and 14 March, and between 16 July and 31 December
- control dense rush by grazing or cutting every year by 30 September so that stands don't cover more than 20% of the parcel area and are less than 20cm high

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel
- timings of herbicide or pesticide applications along with the product used and application rate
- burning and cutting dates and locations
- a monthly record of stock numbers grazing each parcel in this option
- any written agreements from Natural England for drainage works
- a photographic record of the extent of dwarf shrub, bracken and gorse on the site
- annual bag records

## What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any lime, fertilisers or manures
- supplementary feed except for mineral blocks
- cut rushes between 15 March and 31 July
- cut more than half of the scrub in any year, except on historic and archaeological features
- use herbicides on ferns other than bracken
- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- carry out any drainage works, including modifying existing drainage, unless Natural England has given written permission before work takes place

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Pick the right location

There are land and activity restrictions that could affect how management of the land. Consider these before choosing this option.

Suitable land includes:

- uncultivated grassland
- unimproved pasture
- allotments that have been historically set aside for the grazing of animals
- steeper or less accessible parcels not routinely used for producing forage
- seasonally wet parcels
- parcels with naturally occurring flushes or rock outcrops

These parcels tend to have unimproved soils that support semi-natural vegetation, Priority Habitats or [species listed under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act](#)<sup>304</sup>.

Avoid damaging historic and archaeological features as these are particularly vulnerable in historically uncultivated parcels

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located in the same area as this option if the land is in the Higher Tier:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

More than 1 supplement may be used within the parcel as long as they're on different areas of the parcel. The exceptions are [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup> and [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>, which can be used across the area.

# Management of rough grazing for birds (UP2)

## How much will be paid

£88 per hectare (ha).

## Where it's available

This is a whole or part parcel option. It's available for:

- Higher Tier

This option can only be used on permanent grassland parcels of at least 2ha that are within a less favoured area. This includes allotments, intakes, newtakes and semi-improved inbye that already support (or have the potential to support) breeding waders.

The applicant must also meet at least one of the following conditions to use this option:

- following a recommended fertiliser management system to plan nutrient inputs across the farm
- adopt a recommended fertiliser management system within 18 months of the start of the agreement
- qualifies as a low intensity farmer

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, dykes, drains, rivers, streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- temporary water
- natural unsurfaced roads, tracks, paths and bridleways, as long as the requirements can still be met
- bracken
- areas of scree, rock outcrops and boulders – each area can cover up to 0.1ha
- permanent water up to 0.1ha
- grazed woodland and scrub that allows livestock access and has grass underneath

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option is for restoring or maintaining upland bird populations. These are normally breeding waders such as lapwing, snipe, redshank, curlew and golden plover, but may also include yellow wagtail, black grouse or other priority species. The option brings about water level management and provides the appropriate grassland habitat and sward structure for feeding and nesting.

If successful there will be rough grassland habitat supporting target species. Where appropriate, a water level management regime may also be in place, including scrapes and foot-drains.

The water level management will also have enhanced pools or ditches for aquatic plants, invertebrates and other important species.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- where applicable, photographs of the extent of bracken on historic and archaeological features
- a map and photographs of the extent of bracken on the option area
- a map of the land drainage system
- a stocking calendar approved by Natural England

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- only graze in line with an agreed stocking calendar, which includes minimum and maximum stocking rates by grazing animal type by month
- manage grazing with cattle, sheep or both at an agreed stocking density during the bird-breeding period - at other times, manage stocking densities to achieve the desired sward heights
- follow agreed stock-feeding practices
- manage field operations to reduce effects on breeding birds
- create or maintain wet features, for example by blocking existing surface drains and ditches, or creating grips or scrapes

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels
- photographs of the management taken
- consents or permissions connected with this work
- annual bag records
- a count of breeding birds in Year 5 of the agreement – send this with the final claim

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option

## Pick the right location

Choose sites that:

- have proven breeding for at least 2 of the target wader species, have black grouse present, or are within 2km of a known lek site (where males gather to entice mates)
- are open, with any surrounding hedges less than about 2m high
- experience minimal disturbance (from footpaths or public rights of way)
- have no overhead pylons or power lines
- have no in-field trees
- aren't next to woodland
- have either an existing high water table or surface water attributes (flushes, ditches, foot drains), or where they could be created

## **Sites to avoid**

Avoid sites that are:

- steep (above 14:1, or 8 degrees)
- less than 2ha and bounded by tall (over 2m) hedgerows, scrub or trees

## **Vegetation management**

Tailor vegetation management to the target species - usually a range of vegetation heights is preferred.

### **Management of wet features (drains, grips, scrapes)**

Provide surface wet features from 1 March to 1 June (such as scrapes, flushes, foot drains or surface standing water). At least 50% of the wet features' edges should have exposed mud at the water's edge to promote invertebrate activity and allow chicks access to feed.

Consider the need to re-profile man-made wet features annually and maintain as required.

Any mechanical operations should be scheduled for the driest period of the year (or after mid-August if breeding snipe are present).

Manage rushes so that they cover no more than 20% of the option land.

## **Grazing**

Use quiet stock on these sites to avoid unnecessary trampling of nests and chicks.

Adequate grazing and appropriate mechanical operations after the breeding season (August to March) are vital to create the desired vegetation mosaic for the following spring.

It's important that there is adequate grazing available which is not in breeding bird options to retain flexibility to manage the breeding bird areas correctly during the breeding season.



# Management of moorland (UP3)

## How much will be paid

£43 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part parcel option. It's available for:

- Higher Tier

## Option length

This option runs for 10 years not the standard five years for the scheme.

It can only be used on parcels:

- above the [Moorland Line](#)<sup>260</sup>
- that cross the Moorland Line
- that contribute to a single grazing unit above the Moorland Line
- that contain one or more moorland priority habitats or species
- above the stock-proof boundary of enclosed in-by-land that contain semi-natural moorland habitat vegetation, eg allotments, intakes or newtakes

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- bracken
- ditches
- dykes
- scrub including gorse bushes and briar
- scree, rock, outcrops or boulders
- streams less than 4m wide and that take up less than 1ha of the parcel
- ponds less than 1 ha of the parcel
- unsurfaced roads, tracks and paths

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will:

- maintain and restore moorland priority habitats and ecosystem function
- maintain and restore species
- protect historic features
- strengthen landscape character

If successful there will be:

- improved condition of moorland habitats and associated species
- enhanced soil management
- reduced diffuse pollution
- improvements to water quality and flood risk management
- historic environmental features with no bare soil or poaching (trampling)
- stabilized and permanently re-vegetated areas that were previously eroded
- historic features unaffected by trees, bracken and scrub
- no animal burrows developing on historic features

### Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- a stocking calendar approved by Natural England
- photographs of the extent of scrub and bracken on any historic and archaeological features on the site
- a map of the land drainage system

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- only graze the land in accordance with the stocking calendar
- stick to the minimum and maximum stocking rates for each month and for different types of grazing animal
- manage vegetation by burning or cutting, using agreed practices
- prevent spread of bracken or scrub on historic or archaeological sites
- carry out a wildfire risk assessment

### Keeping records

A valid Wildfire Risk Assessment and a Wildfire Response Plan (agreed with fire service) will be needed. For guidance and example plans see the [Forestry Commission's guide](#). Copies of the Wildfire Risk Assessment and, where required, the Wildfire Response Plan and Wildfire Management Plan will need to be submitted with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel
- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- photographs of the extent of scrub and bracken on historic and archaeological features
- a monthly record of stock numbers by parcel and stock type

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- plough, harrow or roll
- cultivate or re-seed
- apply any fertilisers, manures or lime
- apply supplementary feed other than as prescribed
- use pesticides other than as prescribed

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Contact organisations early

Contact Natural England or other relevant organisations well before making an application.

## Related supplements

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [UP4 - Management of moorland vegetation supplement](#)<sup>209</sup>
- [UP5 - Moorland re-wetting supplement](#)<sup>210</sup>
- [UP6 - Upland livestock exclusion supplement](#)<sup>211</sup>

More than one supplement may be used if Natural England agree that it's needed.

## Further information

Read about the regulations on [burning heather and grass](#)<sup>305</sup>.

# Management of moorland vegetation supplement (UP4)

## How much will be paid

£10 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

Use this supplement with the [UP3 - Management of moorland](#)<sup>208</sup> option.

It can only be used when land is within the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup> and severely disadvantaged areas (SDAs) and where either:

- significant changes to vegetation management are needed to bring about favourable or recovering condition, or benefit priority habitats and species
- introduction or reintroduction of rotational burning or cutting is necessary to achieve favourable environmental condition

## When this supplement can't be used

This supplement cannot be used to support existing burning or cutting regimes, or minor modifications to them.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

The supplement is for carrying out an appropriate programme of vegetation management to contribute to restoration and improvement in functionality of priority habitats such as dry heath, wet heath and blanket bog where significant changes to current management are required.

If successful there will be a significant change to burning and/or cutting management so that it is carried out to promote restoration of habitats. These changes will have created more diverse vegetation or opportunities for colonisation by key species such as Sphagnum. There will also be positive impacts on water quality, reduced erosion and enhanced carbon storage.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- evidence of previous management to demonstrate the extent of changes proposed

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to follow a programme of management as agreed in [UP3 - Management of moorland](#)<sup>208</sup>.

A wildfire risk assessment may be needed.

## Keeping records

A valid Wildfire Risk Assessment and a Wildfire Response Plan (agreed with fire service) will be needed. For guidance and example plans see the [Forestry Commission's guide](#). Copies of the Wildfire Risk Assessment and, where required, the Wildfire Response Plan and Wildfire Management Plan will need to be submitted with the first claim.

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- records of vegetation management
- a copy of a burning or cutting plan

## How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement

### Pick the right site

This supplement should be used on deep peat (including blanket bog or other mires) and wet heath only when there's a clear need identified in a restoration plan. Don't burn these habitats unless specified as part of a restoration plan or as part of an agreed wildfire management plan.

It should not be used on montane habitats or where damage to woodland or environmentally valuable scrub may occur.

This supplement should not be used to support the rotational burning of purple moor-grass on wet heath, but cutting may be appropriate.

### Taking care of historic or archaeological features

Sometimes these features may benefit from management that controls vegetation cover and in some cases burning is preferred to cutting. Avoid burning where heat may damage features such as boundary stones, or cutting where damage may be caused by machinery. Refer to the Management of Moorland option prescriptions and seek advice from the Natural England advisor.

Do not cross historic or archaeological features with access routes for heavy machinery and vehicles.

### Related options

This supplement may be used on the same area as the following supplements:

- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [UP5 - Moorland re-wetting supplement](#)<sup>210</sup>
- [UP6 - Upland livestock exclusion supplement](#)<sup>211</sup>

More than one supplement may be used if agreed with Natural England.

# Moorland re-wetting supplement (UP5)

## How much will be paid

£18 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- with option [UP3 - Management of moorland](#)<sup>208</sup>
- if a peat restoration programme has been started or completed

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement will maintain and restore vegetation mosaics, wetland habitats and associated wildlife.

If successful there will be:

- improved hydrology of moorland habitats
- benefits to upland flora and fauna, eg increased sphagnum moss growth
- benefits to historic features
- strengthened landscape character
- improved breeding habitat for invertebrates, a food source for grouse and wader chicks

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to maintain blocks. Do this by making sure that:

- there are no breaches in the blocks
- excess water from the grip doesn't flow into the channel below
- excess water soaks into the ground, down slope from the grip
- no water - except natural peak surface water, flows between dams

Make sure in the re-profiled area that:

- bare peat has stabilised
- vegetation has established
- channel water levels are maintained at ground surface
- channels are actively silting up behind grip blocks

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- records of all management work including grazing, grip blocking and other re-wetting work
- any bank statements, receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- inspection reports and photographs or geo-tagged photographs of grips and blocks submitted annually with the claim
- photographs showing the stabilised peat
- photographs of any excavation or construction work, if applicable
- records of maintenance work done to meet the requirements

## How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement.

## Pick the right location

Good sites for this supplement are:

- deep peat soils that can support peat forming blanket bog vegetation
- Natural England's priority habitat for blanket bog
- restored areas with reduced grazing capacity due to re-wetting

## Related options

This supplement can be located on the same area as the following options and supplements

- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [UP3 - Management of moorland](#)<sup>208</sup>
- [UP6 - Upland livestock exclusion supplement](#)<sup>211</sup>

More than one supplement may be used if agreed with Natural England adviser.

# Upland livestock exclusion supplement (UP6)

## How much will be paid

£16 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- with UP3 - Management of moorland
- where livestock are kept from the site for at least 4 months

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement will improve habitat and feature conditions.

If successful there will be:

- increased rates of heather regeneration
- improved rates of flowering of rare species such as spring gentian
- a regeneration of scrub such as juniper
- improved downstream water quality
- improvements in the condition and visibility of archaeological sites and other historic features

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- only graze the land as scheduled in the stocking calendar, including a period of livestock exclusion
- agree where the excluded livestock should be kept and how they're managed
- stick to the minimum and maximum stocking rates for each month and for different types of grazing animal

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels



### How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement.

Natural England should agree that habitats and other features on this site will improve more quickly than under the current or common practice.

The supplement might finish before the end of the agreement if it's used for a period of restoration.

### Plan for livestock exclusions

Livestock exclusions will usually be done in winter, but some habitats are different.

Be aware of exceptions, which include removing livestock:

- from limestone grassland from May to August
- from limestone pavement areas for a specified number of years
- during bare peat restoration works for a specified number of years
- from September to April during dry or wet heath restoration

### Erect fencing

Consider erecting temporary or permanent fencing if this is a part-parcel supplement, as it helps when removing stock from parts of grazing units.

### Related options

This supplement can be located on the same area as the following options and supplements:

- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement](#)<sup>173</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [UP3 - Management of moorland](#)<sup>208</sup>
- [UP4 - Management of moorland vegetation supplement](#)<sup>209</sup>
- [UP5 - Moorland re-wetting supplement](#)<sup>210</sup>

More than one supplement may be used if agreed with Natural England.

# Woodland creation - maintenance payments (WD1)

## How much will be paid

£200 per hectare (ha) per annum for a 10 year period.

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for Higher Tier.

The capital item [TE4 - Supply and plant tree](#)<sup>195</sup> must be used with this option.

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used on land owned by public authorities. This includes land owned by the state, the Crown, county councils, district councils, and local authorities.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will help create woodland that:

- supports wildlife, by linking habitats together or providing a protective buffer between them
- reduces the risk of floods, improves water quality and prevents soil erosion
- is resilient and can adapt to climate change
- enhances the landscape

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser. Successful applicants will need to carry out maintenance so that the woodland is fully established by year 10.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- keep all newly planted trees free from competing vegetation for 10 years by using approved herbicides, mulch, or a clearing saw, hook or scythe
- replace any trees that die
- maintain fences, tree shelters or spiral guards
- maintain areas of open space
- remove individual tree protection in year 10

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs showing the level of maintenance in years 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 (submitted with the annual claim)
- a self-certification checklist after planting in years 4, 7, and 10, confirming that all the agreed operations have been carried out (submitted with the annual claim)
- any bank statements, receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- use any herbicides if trees are being planted on land next to a watercourse.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located in the same area as this option:

- TE4 - Supply and plant tree<sup>195</sup>
- TE5 - Supplement for use of individual tree-shelters<sup>196</sup>
- FG1 - Fencing<sup>53</sup>
- FG2 - Sheep netting<sup>54</sup>
- FG4 - Rabbit fencing supplement<sup>56</sup>
- FG9 - Deer fencing<sup>61</sup>
- FG12 - Wooden field gate<sup>64</sup>
- FG14 - Badger gate<sup>66</sup>
- FG15 - Water gates<sup>67</sup>

# Woodland improvement (WD2)

## How much will be paid

£100 per hectare (ha) per year.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will improve the biodiversity of woodland or make it more resilient to climate change.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

The agreement will set out the objectives and what must be done to achieve them. This will be based on a pre-existing woodland management plan approved by the Forestry Commission.

This option can only be used on areas covered by the agreement. It can't be used on other woodland areas also covered by the management plan. The specific compartments where this option will be used will be identified in the application process.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to carry out one or more of the following objectives. Each objective has requirements specific to it. There are further requirements that apply to all of the objectives.

### Objective: Restore plantations on ancient woodland sites

To restore plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), applicants must:

- reduce the percentage of coniferous species by year 5, as agreed with an adviser
- use regeneration felling to encourage crown development or natural regeneration
- replant 1,100 trees per ha if native species haven't started to regenerate naturally 2 years after the removal of conifers (this is for areas larger than 0.25ha)

### Objective: Enhance priority habitats

To enhance priority habitats, applicants must:

- manage successional scrub through cyclical cutting
- re-coppice as agreed with an adviser
- thin or selectively fell trees as agreed with an adviser

### **Objective: Enhance priority species**

To enhance priority species, applicants must:

- manage successional scrub through cyclical cutting
- re-coppice as agreed with an adviser
- thin or selectively fell trees as agreed with an adviser

### **Objective: Improve resilience to climate change through continuous cover forestry (CCF)**

To improve resilience to climate change through CCF, applicants must:

- implement silvicultural transformation
- use regeneration felling to encourage crown development or natural regeneration
- replant 1,100 trees per ha if native species haven't started to regenerate naturally 2 years after the removal of conifers (this is for areas larger than 0.25ha)

### **All the objectives**

The following requirements must be carried out for all 4 objectives unless they don't apply to the site (eg if there aren't any veteran trees on the site the requirement to release them from competing tree growth doesn't apply):

- use hair tubes to monitor the presence of red and grey squirrels in red squirrel strongholds
- release veteran trees from competing tree growth
- control deer if they're identified as a threat in the woodland management plan, put in place a deer management plan and manage deer populations using lethal control or fencing to allow establishment of ground flora and understory
- remove competing, non-native or invasive species by mechanical or chemical control, as agreed with an adviser
- create or manage permanent open space and access rides
- manage ride edges by cyclical cutting
- create or maintain appropriate levels of deadwood habitat in line with the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS)
- show evidence of activities undertaken through monitoring, photography and marking
- complete an operational site assessment, or similar, to show UKFS compliant operational activities
- provide monitoring reports in years 3 and 5 to confirm progress (eg providing before and after photographs, a record of the number of deer culled, and the results of squirrel monitoring)
- control grey squirrels if they're identified as a threat in the woodland management plan

Control grey squirrels using live or lethal traps at 1 per ha and check them daily. In areas that also contain red squirrels only live traps can be used. Shooting may be undertaken outside the warfarin control period.

### **Keeping records**

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- any bank statements, receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel
- an FC approved management plan that justifies the need for this option
- monitoring reports, send these with the claim in year 3 and 5

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located in the same area as this option:

- AC1 - Access capital items <sup>21</sup>
- FG1 - Fencing <sup>53</sup>
- FG2 - Sheep netting <sup>54</sup>
- FG4 - Rabbit fencing supplement <sup>56</sup>
- FG5 - Fencing supplement - difficult sites <sup>57</sup>
- FG9 - Deer fencing <sup>61</sup>
- FG10 - Temporary deer fencing <sup>62</sup>
- FG11 - Deer enclosure plot <sup>63</sup>
- FG12 - Wooden field gate <sup>64</sup>
- FG14 - Badger gate <sup>66</sup>
- FG15 - Water gates <sup>67</sup>
- FY1 - Deer high seat <sup>70</sup>
- SB1 - Scrub control and felling diseased trees <sup>162</sup>
- SB2 - Scrub control - difficult sites <sup>163</sup>
- SB4 - Chemical bracken control <sup>165</sup>
- SB5 - Mechanical bracken control <sup>166</sup>
- SB6 - Rhododendron control <sup>167</sup>
- RP3 - Watercourse crossings <sup>133</sup>
- RP5 - Cross drains <sup>135</sup>
- RP6 - Installation of piped culverts in ditches <sup>136</sup>
- RP12 - Check dams <sup>142</sup>
- WN5 - Pond management (first 100 sq m) <sup>228</sup>
- WN8 - Timber sluice <sup>231</sup>
- WB1 - Small wildlife box <sup>212</sup>
- WB2 - Medium wildlife box <sup>213</sup>
- WB3 - Large wildlife box <sup>214</sup>

# Woodland edges on arable land (WD3)

## How much will be paid

£323 per hectare (ha)

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced because of double funding to £17 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on land right next to predominantly native or ancient semi-natural woodlands.

## When this option can't be used

This option must not be located on historic or archaeological features.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option allows a scrub and grass mosaic to develop on the strip of land adjacent to woodland.

If successful a scrub and grass mosaic will have developed through natural regeneration between the arable land and existing woodland. New woodland edge habitat will have been created resulting in an increase in birds, invertebrates, small mammals and other wildlife.

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- only use pesticides, including herbicides, to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds, invasive non-natives, nettles and bracken
- only cut to maintain the scrub and grass mosaic and for the control of injurious weeds and invasive non-native species
- cut no more than a third of the shrubby growth in any one calendar year. Do not cut during the bird breeding season (1 March to 31 August)

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels
- photographs of the management taken

## What must not be done

Do not:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- use supplementary feeding
- cultivate within 6m of the woodland edge. Allow the woodland edge to grow out for up to 6m

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

This option is designed to encourage the woodland edge to grow out into the field and requires 6 m to be left uncultivated from the edge of the wood. A scrub and grass mosaic should be allowed to develop. This mosaic needs to be maintained so that it doesn't develop into secondary woodland. The mosaic should be maintained through controlled grazing and/or cutting. Applicants should discuss and agree the most appropriate method with their adviser.

The option should be placed adjacent to predominantly native woodland, in particular ancient woodland. The woodland can be under active or passive management. It may be used to enhance woodland within the holding, as well as woodland that immediately borders but is not part of the farm.

The option is also eligible adjacent to woodlands where a ditch runs between the woodland and the arable field. It may not be practical, however, to use this option if the ditch requires ongoing management or maintenance. Special care is needed to ensure that historic features such as woodbanks are undamaged.

The option may be located immediately adjacent to woodland receiving funding under the woodland options, but there must be no overlap. Buffer strip options may also be located adjacent to this option.

Be aware that the woodlands against which this option is placed may be home to European Protected Species, which could migrate into the scrub and grass land mosaic created. Young scrub is, for example, ideal habitat for dormice. Applicants should check and seek advice from their adviser.

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OR4 - Organic conversion - horticulture](#)<sup>120</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [OT4 - Organic land management - horticulture](#)<sup>125</sup>



# Management of wood pasture and parkland (WD4)

## How much will be paid

£46 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used for managing existing lowland wood pasture and parkland in good condition.

Recreational parkland is only eligible where it forms part of the farmed environment.

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- rivers, streams, ditches, drains and dykes or any open water less than 4 metres wide
- ponds or inland standing water less than 100 square metres
- unsurfaced roads such as tracks, paths or bridleways
- small areas of scrub and woodland that don't qualify for specific scrub, woodland or other options

The adviser will provide information on which features can be included.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option benefits the environment

This option will maintain existing lowland wood pasture and parkland on sites that still support mature and veteran trees.

If successful there will be many of the following, depending on whether the site is predominantly wood pasture, parkland or a combination of both:

- undisturbed standing and fallen deadwood that will provide habitats for invertebrates
- additional semi-mature or mature trees that will provide continuity of the tree population
- newly planted trees, spaced evenly with open crowns or patches of regeneration with space to allow open grown crowns to develop
- open grown scrub covering 10% to 20% of the wood-pasture
- flowering trees and scrub such as hawthorn, crab apple and wild pear that will provide food and nectar sources for wildlife
- well managed unimproved or semi-improved grassland or heathland, grazed by traditional cattle in wood pasture and deer and traditional cattle in parkland
- well maintained historic and archaeological features
- well maintained historic designed landscape planting features

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- photographs of all trees and standing and fallen deadwood
- photographs of any proposed areas to enhance a sward
- a map of the drainage system

For parklands, also likely are details of:

- photographs/records of structural historic and archaeological features
- photographs/records of built water bodies showing their depth, shape, profile and design

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- graze and/or cut to maintain area of closely grazed turf interspersed with taller tussocks
- retain all mature and veteran standing trees and all standing and fallen deadwood, provided that it is consistent with the National Tree Safety Group document 'Common Sense risk management of trees: Landowner Summary'. Fallen dead wood must be left uncut and in situ
- protect existing trees to prevent damage from livestock and wild animals. Manage tree guards to prevent any damage to growing trees
- protect parkland features, such as fencing, historic structures, lakes and ponds
- plant additional trees or encourage regeneration where required
- maintain the current water regime and agree all drainage works, including modification to existing drainage in writing with Natural England before undertaking any works
- carry out maintenance works and minor repairs on structural historic or archaeological features on a 'like for like' basis to retain the character of the feature in its local setting

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- any bank statements, receipted invoices or permissions connected with the work
- the agreed historic parkland site feasibility study/management plan
- photographs of trees and standing and fallen deadwood - send these with the final claim
- photographs of water levels at certain times of the year for specific water features and water bodies
- photographs of structural, historic and archaeological features send these with the final claim
- a monthly record of the number of grazing livestock in each parcel
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- use apply any fertilisers or manures
- use pesticides, including herbicides, except to spot tree or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds, invasive non-natives, nettles, rushes or bracken
- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- use supplementary feeding
- harrow or roll
- allow damage to existing trees or vegetation or remove deadwood from the site

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Veterinary treatments

Avoid applying veterinary treatments on grazing livestock wherever possible. Chemicals from these treatments could harm the insects and fungi that are typical of wood pasture and parkland.

## Maintaining wood pasture and parkland

On historic parkland, provide a detailed feasibility study (management plan) tailored to the site, funded through PA2 Feasibility study item.

Use grazing livestock, preferably traditional breed cattle in wood pasture or traditional bread cattle and deer in parkland, to maintain the site. Avoid compaction around veteran trees.

Continuity of veteran tree/dead wood habitat is a major concern on wood pasture. If sufficient semi-mature trees are present consider the creation of dead wood habitat on trees capital item and encourage new trees through natural regeneration if possible or with planting.

## Planting new trees

Try to:

- space out newly planted trees (or patches of natural regeneration) so they are wide enough to grow an open crown
- pick trees that are suitable as eventual replacements for mature or veteran trees
- select tree species appropriate to the historic parkland design but consider varieties/provenances that are resilient to local climate change
- on wood pasture/site with veteran trees maintaining the genetic stock of the veteran trees on site is important. Choose varieties that provide the same ecological wood decay conditions as mature or veteran trees already on the site

## Consents and permissions

Be aware that a number of consents and permissions may apply:

- the Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) and Conservation Orders may apply to the trees on site
- old trees especially can host European Protected Species, such as bats

Read more about useful [tree management and safety information](#)<sup>306</sup> and felling licences requirements from the Forestry Commission (FC).

## Related options

These options, supplements and capital items can be located on the same area as this option:

- BE6 - Veteran tree surgery <sup>28</sup>
- ED1 - Educational access <sup>52</sup>
- GS15 - Haymaking supplement <sup>86</sup>
- GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement <sup>87</sup>
- HE1 - Historic and archaeological feature protection <sup>89</sup>
- OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland <sup>117</sup>
- OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland <sup>118</sup>
- OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland <sup>122</sup>
- OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland <sup>123</sup>
- PA2 - Feasibility study <sup>129</sup>
- SP1 - Difficult sites supplement <sup>168</sup>
- SP3 - Bracken control supplement <sup>170</sup>
- SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement <sup>171</sup>
- SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement <sup>173</sup>
- SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement <sup>175</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement <sup>176</sup>
- SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement <sup>177</sup>
- TE2 - Planting standard parkland tree <sup>193</sup>
- TE7 - Tree guard (wood post and rail) <sup>198</sup>
- TE8 - Tree guard (wood post and wire) <sup>199</sup>
- TE9 - Parkland tree guard - welded steel <sup>200</sup>
- TE11 - Tree surgery <sup>202</sup>
- TE13 - Creation of dead wood habitat on trees <sup>204</sup>

## Further information

Read the following guidance booklets for more detail on managing ancient or veteran trees:

- [Ancient tree guides \(booklets 1 to 8\)](#) <sup>307</sup>
- Lonsdale, D. (ed) 2014, Ancient and other veteran trees: further guidance on management, Tree Council
- Read, H. (ed) 2000, Veteran trees: a guide to good management

# Restoration of wood pasture and parkland (WD5)

## How much will be paid

£244 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used to restore existing lowland wood pasture and parkland that's in poor condition.

Recreational parkland is only eligible where it forms part of the farmed environment.

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- rivers, streams, ditches, drains and dykes or any open water less than 4m wide
- ponds or inland standing water less than 100m square in size
- unsurfaced roads such as tracks, paths or bridleways
- small areas of scrub and woodland that don't qualify for specific scrub, woodland or other options

The advisor will provide information on which features can be included.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option restores existing lowland wood pasture and parkland on sites that support veteran trees or parkland features.

If successful there will be many of the following, depending on whether the site is predominantly wood pasture, parkland or a combination of both:

- undisturbed standing and fallen deadwood that will provide habitats for invertebrates
- additional semi-mature or mature trees that will provide continuity of the tree population
- newly planted trees, spaced evenly with open crowns or patches of regeneration with space to allow open grown crowns to develop
- open grown scrub covering 10% to 20% of the wood pasture
- flowering trees and scrub such as hawthorn, crab apple and wild pear to provide food and nectar sources for invertebrates
- well managed unimproved or semi-improved grassland or heathland, grazed by traditional breed cattle in wood-pasture and deer and traditional breed cattle in parkland
- well maintained historic and archaeological features
- well maintained historic designed landscape planting and features

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- photographs of all trees and standing and fallen deadwood
- photographs of any proposed areas to enhance a sward
- a map of the drainage system

For parklands, also likely are details of:

- photographs/records of structural, historic and archaeological features
- photographs/records of built water bodies showing their depth, shape, profile and design

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- graze and/or cut to maintain area of closely grazed turf interspersed with taller tussocks
- retain all mature and veteran standing trees and all standing and fallen deadwood, provided that it is consistent with the National Tree Safety Group document 'Common Sense risk management of trees: Landowner Summary'. Fallen dead wood must be left uncut and in situ
- protect existing trees to prevent damage from livestock and wild animals. Manage tree guards to prevent any damage to growing trees
- protect parkland features, such as fencing, historical structures, lakes and ponds
- plant additional trees or encourage regeneration where required
- maintain the current water regime and agree all drainage works, including modification to existing drainage in writing with Natural England before undertaking any works
- carry out maintenance works and minor repairs on structural historic or archaeological features on a 'like for like' basis to retain the character of the feature in its local setting

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- any bank statements, receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- the agreed historic parkland site feasibility study/management plan
- photographs of trees and standing and fallen deadwood - send these with the final claim
- photographs of any completed sward enhancement work
- photographs of water levels at certain times of the year for specific water features and built water bodies
- photographs of structural, historic and archaeological features - send these with the final claim
- a monthly record of the number of grazing livestock in each parcel
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- use pesticides, including herbicides, except to spot tree or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds, invasive non-natives, nettles, rushes or bracken
- use supplementary feeding
- harrow or roll
- allow damage to existing trees or vegetation or remove deadwood from the site

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Veterinary treatments

Avoid applying veterinary treatments on grazing livestock wherever possible. Chemicals from these treatments could harm the insects and fungi that are typical of wood pasture and parkland.

## Maintaining wood pasture and parkland

On historic parkland, provide a detailed feasibility study (management plan) tailored to the site, funded through [PA2 - Feasibility study](#)<sup>129</sup>.

Use grazing livestock, preferably traditional breed cattle in wood pasture or traditional bread cattle and deer in parkland, to maintain the site. Avoid compaction around veteran trees.

Continuity of veteran tree/dead wood habitat is a major concern on wood pasture. If sufficient semi-mature trees are present consider the creation of dead wood habitat on trees capital item and encourage new trees through natural regeneration if possible or with planting.

## Planting new trees

Try to:

- space out newly planted trees (or patches of natural regeneration) so they are wide enough to grow an open crown
- pick trees that are suitable as eventual replacements for mature or veteran trees on adjacent sites
- select tree species appropriate to the historic parkland design but consider varieties/provenances that are resilient to local climate change
- on wood pasture/site with veteran trees maintaining the genetic stock of the veteran trees on site is important. Choose varieties that provide the same ecological wood decay conditions as mature or veteran trees already on the site

## Consents and permissions

Be aware that a number of consents and permissions may apply:

- the Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) and Conservation Orders may apply to the trees on site
- old trees especially can host European Protected Species, such as bats

Read more about useful [tree management and safety information](#)<sup>306</sup> felling licence requirements from the Forestry Commission (FC).



## Related options

These options, supplements and capital items can be located on the same area as this option:

- BE6 - Veteran tree surgery <sup>28</sup>
- ED1 - Educational access <sup>52</sup>
- GS15 - Haymaking supplement <sup>86</sup>
- GS16 - Rush infestation control supplement <sup>87</sup>
- HE1 - Historic and archaeological feature protection <sup>89</sup>
- OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland <sup>117</sup>
- OR2 - Organic conversion - unimproved permanent grassland <sup>118</sup>
- OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland <sup>122</sup>
- OT2 - Organic land management - unimproved permanent grassland <sup>123</sup>
- PA2 - Feasibility study <sup>129</sup>
- SP1 - Difficult sites supplement <sup>168</sup>
- SP3 - Bracken control supplement <sup>170</sup>
- SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement <sup>171</sup>
- SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement <sup>173</sup>
- SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement <sup>175</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement <sup>176</sup>
- SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement <sup>177</sup>
- TE2 - Planting standard parkland tree <sup>193</sup>
- TE7 - Tree guard (wood post and rail) <sup>198</sup>
- TE8 - Tree guard (wood post and wire) <sup>199</sup>
- TE9 - Parkland tree guard - welded steel <sup>200</sup>
- TE11 - Tree surgery <sup>202</sup>
- TE13 - Creation of dead wood habitat on trees <sup>204</sup>

## Further information

Read these useful guidance booklets for more information on managing ancient or veteran trees:

- [Ancient tree guides \(booklets 1 to 8\)](#) <sup>307</sup>
- Lonsdale, D (ed) 2013 Ancient and other veteran trees: further guidance on management, Tree Council
- Read, H. 2000 Veteran trees: A guide to good management. Veteran Trees Initiative



# Creation of wood pasture (WD6)

## How much will be paid

£409 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used to create new wood pasture on one of the following sites:

- where wood pasture was once present, including ones under arable land
- where it extends, links or buffers existing wood pasture or priority woodland habitats

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- rivers, streams, ditches, drains and dykes or any open water less than 4m wide
- ponds or inland standing water less than 100 square metres
- unsurfaced roads such as tracks, paths or bridleways
- scrub, woodland and other areas normally included in scrub or woodland options

The adviser will provide information on which features can be included.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will create new wood-pastures.

If successful there will be:

- undisturbed standing and fallen deadwood providing habitats for invertebrates on land adjacent to that where the creation is being carried out
- newly planted trees, spaced evenly with open crowns or patches of regeneration with space to allow open grown crowns to develop
- open grown scrub covering 10% to 20% of the wood pasture
- flowering trees and scrub such as hawthorn, crab apple and wild pear that will provide food and nectar sources for wildlife
- enhanced grassland sward or heathland

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- photographs of any proposed areas to enhance a sward
- a map of the drainage system
- for sites adjacent to or linking existing wood pasture, maps or photographs of veteran trees/ parkland that it connects to
- for sites that have previously been wood pasture, proof demonstrated by maps or photographs

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- use grazing animals or cut to maintain areas of closely grazed turf interspersed with taller tussocks
- retain deadwood in or around standing trees, if any present on site
- protect trees to prevent damage from livestock and wild animals. Manage tree guards to protect any damage to growing trees
- plant additional trees or encourage regeneration trees and scrub
- limit use of supplementary feed

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- any bank statements, receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- photographs of newly established trees (whether planted or naturally regenerated)
- photographs of completed sward enhancement work
- a monthly record of the number of grazing livestock in each parcel
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel

### What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- use pesticides, including herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control injurious weeds, invasive non-natives, nettles, rushes or bracken
- plough, cultivate or re-seed, except as part of an agreed sward enhancement programme
- harrow or roll
- apply fertilisers or manures
- make any changes to existing drainage without having written agreement from Natural England
- supplementary feed (except for the provision of mineral blocks) without agreement

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Veterinary treatments

Avoid veterinary treatments on livestock that graze on these sites. Chemicals from these treatments could harm the insects and fungi that are typical of wood pasture.

## Maintaining wood pasture

Use grazing livestock, preferably traditional breed cattle, to establish and maintain the site.

## Planting new trees

Try to:

- space out newly planted trees or regeneration so they are wide enough to grow an open crown
- pick varieties that are suitable as eventual replacements for nearby mature and veteran trees, ideally using the same genetic stock

Read more about useful [tree management and safety information](#) <sup>306</sup> from the Forestry Commission (FC).

## Related options

This option can be used on the same area as the following options and supplements:

- ED1 - Educational access <sup>52</sup>
- GS15 - Haymaking supplement <sup>86</sup>
- OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland <sup>117</sup>
- OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland <sup>122</sup>
- SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement <sup>171</sup>
- SP6 - Cattle grazing supplement <sup>173</sup>
- SP8 - Native breeds at risk supplement <sup>175</sup>
- SP9 - Threatened species supplement <sup>176</sup>
- SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement <sup>177</sup>
- TE7 - Tree guard (wood post and rail) <sup>198</sup>
- TE8 - Tree guard (wood post and wire) <sup>199</sup>
- TE9 - Parkland tree guard - welded steel <sup>200</sup>
- TE13 - Creation of dead wood habitat on trees <sup>204</sup>

## Further information

Read the following guidance booklets for more information on managing wood pasture with ancient or veteran trees:

- [Ancient tree guides \(booklets 1 to 8\)](#) <sup>307</sup>
- Lonsdale, D (ed) 2013, Ancient and other veteran trees: further guidance on management
- Read, H (ed) 2000, Veteran trees, a guide to good management

# Management of successional areas and scrub (WD7)

## How much will be paid

£74 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land next to existing scrub or woodland areas
- in areas already inhabited by target species
- and where scrub cover makes up at least 10% of the area

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- water-bodies that are less than 4m wide
- unsurfaced roads (such as tracks, paths or bridleways)

## When this option can't be used

This option cannot be used:

- where there are historic or archaeological features
- on existing open habitats (where scrub can be included in a relevant option)
- where scrub would be out of character for the area

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option enhances habitats for a wide range of wildlife and improves the quality of the woodland edge. It also helps prevent soil erosion and holds back water to reduce downstream flood risks.

If successful there will be:

- more scrub growing close to grassland, woodland and other habitats
- birds and invertebrates using the scrub
- less soil erosion in scrub areas
- reduced flooding in scrub areas

## Requirements

### Higher Tier agreements

The requirements may differ slightly for a Higher Tier agreement as the option will be tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- photographs of trees and standing and fallen deadwood
- a map of the drainage system

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- keep livestock out of the option area from 1 October to 30 April
- only cut to maintain the scrub and grass mosaic
- only cut to control the spread of injurious weeds and invasive non-native species
- protect growing trees from livestock and wild animals
- make sure tree guards don't damage growing trees
- keep all mature and veteran trees and all standing deadwood
- keep all fallen deadwood uncut and in place, stacked in piles
- agree all drainage works (including modifying existing drainage) with Natural England in writing before any works take place

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels
- photographs of the management taken
- soil analyses
- any consents or permissions connected with this work

### What must not be done

Do not:

- cut more than one-third of shrub growth in any one calendar year
- cut during the bird breeding season (1 March to 31 August)
- apply fertilisers or manures
- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- harrow or roll
- use supplementary feed
- use pesticides (including herbicides), except to weed wipe or spot treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### **Pick the right location**

This option works best where:

- there is some open ground among the scrub for grasses and non-woody plants to grow
- scrub is next to other habitats such as grassland or heath
- scrub is established by woodland edges
- scrub can hold soils together and slow down surface runoff

### **Remove livestock**

Remove grazing livestock to allow scrub plants to establish. Once established, stop scrub from becoming too dense by cutting on rotation, or grazing.

### **Establish a variety of scrub**

Establish a variety of scrub to provide habitats and food for target species. For example:

- gorse scrub can support birds like the Dartford warbler, stonechat, linnet and yellowhammer
- willow scrub in wetlands can support warblers, reed bunting and willow tits
- buds and berries and caterpillars on scrub are essential food sources for birds

### **Dead and fallen trees**

Leave any trees that die or fall in position, except where it's necessary to remove them for [health and safety reasons](#)<sup>306</sup>.

### **Related options**

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WD9 - Livestock exclusion supplement - scrub and successional areas](#)<sup>223</sup>

# Creation of successional areas and scrub (WD8)

## How much will be paid

£87 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used:

- on land next to existing scrub or woodland areas
- in areas already inhabited by target species

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- water-bodies that are less than 4m wide
- unsurfaced roads such as tracks, paths or bridleways

## When this option can't be used

This option cannot be used:

- on historic or archaeological features
- on existing wildlife sites
- where scrub would be harmful to the landscape

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option regenerates a succession of scrub. This enhances habitats for specific target species and improves the quality of the woodland edge.

Establishing scrub growth also restricts soil erosion and holds back water to reduce downstream flood risks.

If successful there will be:

- more scrub growing close to grassland, woodland and other habitats
- birds and invertebrates using the scrub
- less soil erosion in scrub areas
- reduced flooding in scrub areas

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### Applications

Applicants will have to send the following with their application:

- photographs of all trees and standing and fallen deadwood
- a map of the drainage system

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- keep livestock out of the option area from 1 October to 30 April
- only cut to maintain the scrub and grass mosaic
- only cut to control the spread of injurious weeds and invasive non-native species protect growing trees from livestock and wild animals
- make sure tree guards don't damage growing trees
- keep all mature and veteran trees and standing deadwood
- keep all fallen deadwood in place uncut although applicants can stack them in piles
- graze to maintain the scrub and grass mosaic
- agree with Natural England in writing all drainage works, including modifying existing drainage, before any works take place

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices
- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels
- photographs of the management taken
- soil analyses
- any consents or permissions connected with this work

### What must not be done

Do not:

- use pesticides and herbicides except to spot-treat or weed-wipe to control nettles, bracken, injurious weeds or invasive non-native species
- cut more than one-third of shrub growth in any one calendar year
- cut during the bird breeding season (1 March to 31 August)
- apply fertilisers or manures
- plough, cultivate or re-seed
- harrow or roll
- use supplementary feed

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.



### **Pick the right location**

This option works best where:

- there's some open ground amongst the scrub for grasses and non-woody plants to grow
- scrub is next to other habitats such as grassland or heath
- scrub is established by woodland edges
- scrub can hold soils together and slow down surface runoff

### **Remove livestock**

Remove grazing livestock to allow scrub plants to establish. Once established, stop scrub from becoming too dense by cutting on rotation, or grazing.

### **Establish a variety of scrub**

Establish a variety of scrub to provide habitats and food for target species. For example:

- gorse scrub can support birds like the Dartford warbler, stonechat, linnet and yellowhammer
- willow scrub in wetlands can support warblers, reed bunting and willow tits
- buds and berries and caterpillars on scrub are essential food sources for birds

### **Related options**

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [ED1 - Educational access](#)<sup>52</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>
- [WD9 - Livestock exclusion supplement - scrub and successional areas](#)<sup>223</sup>

# Livestock exclusion supplement - scrub and successional areas (WD9)

## How much will be paid

£121 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This is a whole or part-parcel supplement. This supplement is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used in when combined with:

- [WD7 - Management of successional areas and scrub](#)<sup>221</sup>
- [WD8 - Creation of successional areas and scrub](#)<sup>222</sup>

It can only be used if the land:

- is below the [moorland line](#)<sup>260</sup>
- contains mostly native species of trees and scrubs

## When this supplement can't be used

This supplement cannot be used for woodlands with an existing scheme to exclude livestock.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement will help scrub to develop through natural regeneration.

If successful there will be:

- more scrub growing close to grassland, woodland and other habitats
- birds and invertebrates using the scrub
- less soil erosion in scrub areas
- reduced floods in scrub areas

## Requirements

### On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- keep livestock from the agreed area at all times
- submit an annual return to confirm that no livestock have grazed land under this supplement

### Keeping records

An annual declaration on your claim form will be required to confirm that no stock have grazed land under this option.

### How to carry out this supplement

The following section gives advice on carrying out this supplement successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this supplement.

Usually, re-introduce grazing once scrub has established this supplement may not be needed for the full duration of the agreement.

### Related supplements

This supplement can be located on the same area as the following supplements:

- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement<sup>170</sup>](#)
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement<sup>171</sup>](#)
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement<sup>176</sup>](#)
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement<sup>177</sup>](#)

# Buffering in-field ponds and ditches in improved grassland (WT1)

## How much will be paid

£201 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on either:

- improved grassland next to ponds
- improved grassland next to ditches being managed with option [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used:

- around artificially created ponds such as dew ponds, fishponds, decoy ponds or parkland ponds
- around ponds associated with industrial features such as effluent ponds, balancing ponds or small water supply reservoirs

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will protect ponds and high value ditches from nutrient leaching and runoff. This will maintain and enhance water quality and wildlife.

If successful there will be:

- a grassy strip with a mix of grasses, flowering plants, scrub and trees
- a decrease in the amount of sediment and nutrient entering the pond or ditch

## Requirements

Requirements may differ for a Higher Tier agreement as it's tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree Higher Tier requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- If the buffer strip is for a pond, submit evidence that the grassland is improved, including photographs of the pond

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- leave a 10 metre (m) to 20m wide buffer strip next to the pond or ditch
- let tussocky grass and low scrub develop
- only cut to control the spread of woody growth
- use only pesticides (including herbicides) as weed wiper or to spot treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the strips
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- let scrub develop on more than half of the pond or ditch margin - the southern side of the pond or ditch needs to remain open
- let livestock poach more than a third of the pond or ditch margin
- apply any fertilisers or manures
- cut between 1 March and 31 August

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Location

Start buffer strip options where other uncultivated land ends - 2m from the centre of a hedge or ditch, and at least 1m from the top of a ditch bank.

Buffer strip options can't overlap with:

- the Basic Payment requirement not to cultivate land within 2m of the centre of a hedgerow or watercourse (and within 1m of the top of the bank of a watercourse)
- any other buffer strips, fallow areas or other land management chosen to meet [Ecological Focus Area requirements](#)<sup>308</sup>
- any other buffer strips or uncultivated strips being managed under agri-environment schemes (including Countryside Stewardship)

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [OR1 - Organic conversion - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>117</sup>
- [OT1 - Organic land management - improved permanent grassland](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>

# Buffering in-field ponds and ditches on arable land (WT2)

## How much will be paid

£501 per hectare (ha).

If this option is used to meet Ecological Focus Area (EFA) requirements for the Basic Payments Scheme (BPS), the payment rate is reduced to £73 per hectare (ha) to avoid double funding.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Mid Tier
- Higher Tier

It can only be used on either:

- arable land next to ponds
- arable land next to ditches being managed with [WT3 - Management of ditches of high environmental value](#)<sup>236</sup>

## When this option can't be used

This option can't be used:

- around artificially created ponds such as dew ponds, fishponds, decoy ponds or parkland ponds
- around ponds associated with industrial features such as effluent ponds, balancing ponds or small water supply reservoirs

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How it benefits the environment

This option will protect ponds and high value ditches from nutrient leaching and runoff. This will maintain and enhance water quality and wildlife.

If successful there will be:

- a grassy strip with a mix of grasses, flowering plants, scrub and trees
- a decrease in the amount of sediment and nutrient entering the pond or ditch

## Requirements

Requirements may differ for a Higher Tier agreement as it's tailored to the site. Applicants should discuss and agree Higher Tier requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- photographs of the pond, if the buffer strip is for a pond

## On the land

Successful applicants will need to:

- establish or maintain a 10m to 20m wide buffer strip next to the pond or ditch in the first 12 months of the agreement
- let tussocky grass and low scrub develop
- only cut to control the spread of woody growth
- only use pesticides, including herbicides, to weed-wipe or spot-treat injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the strips
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

Do not:

- let scrub develop on more than half of the pond or ditch margin - the southern side of the pond or ditch needs to remain open
- let livestock poach more than a third of the pond or ditch margin
- apply any fertilisers or manures
- cut between 1 March and 31 August

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

## Location

Start buffer strip options where other uncultivated land ends - 2m from the centre of a hedge or ditch, and at least 1m from the top of a ditch bank.

Buffer strip options can't overlap with:

- the Basic Payment requirement not to cultivate land within 2m of the centre of a hedgerow or watercourse (and within 1m of the top of the bank of a watercourse)
- any other buffer strips, fallow areas or other land management required chosen to meet [Ecological Focus Area requirements](#)<sup>308</sup>
- any other buffer strips or uncultivated strips being managed under agri-environment schemes (including Countryside Stewardship)

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [OR3 - Organic conversion - rotational land](#)<sup>119</sup>
- [OR4 - Organic conversion - horticulture](#)<sup>120</sup>
- [OT3 - Organic land management - rotational land](#)<sup>124</sup>
- [OT4 - Organic land management - horticulture](#)<sup>125</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>

# Management of ditches of high environmental value (WT3)

## How much will be paid

£37 per 100 metres for the management of both sides of the ditch.

## Where it's available

Where the option is available:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on ditches of high environmental value and ditches essential for the management of the following options:

- GS9 - Management of wet grassland for breeding waders<sup>80</sup>
- GS10 - Management of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl<sup>81</sup>
- GS11 - Creation of wet grassland for breeding waders<sup>82</sup>
- GS12 - Creation of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl<sup>83</sup>
- UP2 - Management of rough grazing for birds<sup>207</sup>
- WT6 - Management of reedbed<sup>239</sup>
- WT7 - Creation of reedbed<sup>240</sup>
- WT8 - Management of fen<sup>241</sup>
- WT9 - Creation of fen<sup>242</sup>
- WT10 - Management of lowland raised bog<sup>243</sup>

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches
- dykes
- drains

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will manage ditches of high environmental value that support target species of plants, birds, mammals and invertebrates. It will also manage ditches that are essential to carrying out the wet grassland and wetland options.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.



## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- manage ditches and banks in a suitable manner and at the correct time of year for the target species or habitats
- leave one bank or section of the ditch unmanaged, as a refuge for plants and invertebrates
- dispose of spoil in an appropriate manner
- control and manage invasive alien species, if they're present
- manage ditch water levels appropriately

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the strips
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- re-profile or increase the width or depth of the ditch
- using spoil to fill hollows or low areas within the field, or placing spoil on historic or archaeological features
- managing all the ditches in any one year
- fence off ditches

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option

## What to do if the work is complex

Maintain a variety of successional stages within the ditch network. These may range from open water to well-developed aquatic plant communities. Draw up an implementation plan specific to the site if the work proposed is particularly complex.

## How to manage the ditches

Manage the ditches in a way appropriate to their scale, number and local area (methods of ditch management vary across the country).

## Using the option on one side of a ditch

Normally use this option on both sides of a ditch. However, where control is limited to one side of a ditch, use this option if it will bring about the objectives.

## Restoring ditches

Restore ditches covered by this option with funding from the appropriate ditch restoration capital item. However, this will need to be agreed with Natural England first.

### Protected species

If the ditch contains a protected species, a [wildlife licence](#)<sup>309</sup> will be required.

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [SP10 - Administration of group managed agreements supplement](#)<sup>177</sup>

If the ditch is partly located on a neighbouring parcel of land, this option can be used with any whole-field options or supplements that can be used on that parcel.

# Pond management – first 100 sq m (WT4)

## How much will be paid

£103 per pond.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- on priority ponds (these are defined on the [Freshwater Habitats Trust website](#)<sup>310</sup>)
- on other ponds with flora and fauna of nature conservation importance, good quality water and natural water levels
- when the neighbouring land is under a management option that restricts fertilisers, manures and pesticides

## When this option can't be used

It can't be used in combination with pond management capital items.

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will protect and enhance small ponds of high wildlife value.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- a photograph of the pond
- an assessment of existing biological interest

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- manage vegetation in the pond
- control scrub and invasive non-native plants
- retain overhanging trees, bushes and deadwood
- graze or cut the margins of the pond
- carry out the work within the dates agreed with the adviser
- maintain clear, unpolluted water
- maintain the current water regime

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the strips
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- introduce any plants or animals (including fish and waterfowl) to the pond
- deepen or change the original profile of the pond
- infill the pond

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

To avoid damaging the pond:

- survey it to check which species are present
- if the pond contains a protected species, a [wildlife licence](#)<sup>309</sup> will be required
- only manage one section of it at a time
- keep some of the existing habitat
- keep some of the leaf litter, logs and woody debris
- aim to maintain diversity in the pond complex - if there are several ponds on the site, don't carry out the same management on all of them at the same time

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>

# Pond management (areas more than 100 sq m) (WT5)

## How much will be paid

£183 per pond.

## Where the option is available

This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- priority ponds (these are defined on the [Freshwater Habitats Trust website](#)<sup>309</sup>)
- other ponds with flora and fauna of nature conservation importance, good quality water, and natural water levels
- when the neighbouring land is under a management option that restricts fertilisers, manures and pesticides

## When this option can't be used

It can't be used:

- in combination with pond management capital items
- on ponds of area less than 100 square metres or greater than 1 ha

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will protect and enhance larger ponds of high wildlife value.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants are likely to have to send the following with their application:

- a photograph of the pond
- an assessment of existing biological interest

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- manage vegetation in the pond
- control scrub and invasive non-native plants
- retain overhanging trees and bushes and deadwood
- graze or cut the margins of the pond
- carry out the work within the dates agreed with the adviser
- maintain clear, unpolluted water
- maintain the current water regime

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- photographs of the strips
- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- introduce any plants or animals (including fish and waterfowl) to the pond
- deepen or change the original profile of the pond
- infill the pond

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

To avoid damaging the pond:

- survey it to check which species are present
- If the pond contains a protected species, a [wildlife licence](#)<sup>309</sup> will be required
- only manage one section of it at a time
- keep some of the existing habitat
- keep some of the leaf litter, logs and woody debris
- aim to maintain diversity in the pond complex - if there are several ponds on the site, don't carry out the same management on all of them at the same time

## Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>

# Management of reedbed (WT6)

## How much will be paid

£78 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole and part-parcel option. It's available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- priority habitat reedbed in good condition and more than 2ha in area
- degraded reedbed more than 2ha in area with the potential for restoration

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- areas of open water up to 1 ha

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option is for managing, maintaining and restoring priority reedbed habitat.

If successful there will be predominantly open, reed-dominated vegetation with occasional scrub, and open water features along ditch lines and ponded areas. High water levels will sustain open water features all year round. Reedbeds will be well maintained or recovering and will support healthy populations of target reedbed species.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- manage water levels and water supply
- manage distribution and flow of water through the site
- maintain any culverts, sluices, tidal flaps or bunds
- manage scrub and vegetation to maintain a predominantly open reedbed
- dispose of cut material appropriately
- manage open water features

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

### What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- apply fertilisers or manures
- use pesticides or herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control injurious weeds and invasive non-native species

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

Reedbed habitat quality can vary greatly. Reedbed size, degrees of wetness and dryness, scrub cover, soil type, water quality and reed management practices all affect wildlife opportunities. For example, a small scrubby reedbed might support a diverse invertebrate assemblage but will not attract breeding bittern.

Manage the reedbed with a planned set of wildlife goals. Plans should be appropriate and feasible and take account of:

- area available
- water supply
- topography
- other landscape and management constraints such as flood risk, historic environment and landscape impact

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [WT11 - Wetland cutting supplement](#)<sup>244</sup>
- [WT12 - Wetland grazing supplement](#)<sup>245</sup>

Other additional supplements can also be used with this option, except [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup> and [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>.

### Further information

The RSPB website is a useful source of information, including the report [Bringing Reedbeds to Life](#)<sup>311</sup>.



# Creation of reedbed (WT7)

## How much will be paid

£323 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole and part-parcel option. It's available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land
- temporary grassland
- improved grassland
- wetland habitat in poor condition if approved by a specialist
- land with a level or very shallow gradient and a reliable, sufficient water supply that will maintain adequate flow and water table elevation during the summer

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- areas of open water up to 1 ha

## When this option can't be used

It can't be used:

- on existing semi-natural habitat, unless existing wetland is in poor condition and the work is agreed by a specialist
- on historic or archaeological features
- when it could flood someone else's land
- if it's associated with poor water quality
- on areas of open water 1ha or more in area

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will help create new areas of reedbed priority habitat on land that's currently of low wildlife value.

If successful it will generate open reed-dominated vegetation on waterlogged ground, interspersed with open water features along ditch lines and pond areas sustained all year round. The reedbed will support healthy populations of target reedbed species.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Before applying for this item applicants should contact the Environment Agency.

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- a copy of any advice or consent received from the Environment Agency
- any other relevant consents, for example from the Internal Drainage Board
- a feasibility study or implementation plan agreed with Natural England, if applicable
- photographs of areas proposed for land-forming or earthworks and works to establish vegetation

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- implement earthworks to create ground and water conditions suitable for reedbed
- establish reedbed vegetation
- manage water levels and water supply
- manage distribution and flow of water through the site
- maintain any culverts, sluices, tidal flaps or bunds
- manage scrub and opportunistic species to assist reedbed establishment
- dispose of cut material appropriately
- manage open water features

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- the agreed implementation plan and feasibility study
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel
- photographs of the completed work

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- apply fertilisers or manures
- use pesticides or herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control injurious weeds and invasive non-native species

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

Reedbed habitat quality can vary greatly. Reedbed size, degrees of wetness and dryness, scrub cover, soil type, water quality and reed management practices affect wildlife opportunities. For example, a small scrubby reedbed can support a diverse invertebrate assemblage but will not attract breeding bittern.

Create the reedbed with a planned set of wildlife goals. Feasibility and impact should be fully assessed in advance and all appropriate advice and permissions obtained. A detailed implementation plan for the works should be agreed with Natural England. Plans should be appropriate and feasible and take account of:

- area available
- water supply
- topography
- other landscape and management constraints such as flood risk, historic environment and landscape impact.

### Related options

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [WT11 - Wetland cutting supplement](#)<sup>244</sup>
- [WT12 - Wetland grazing supplement](#)<sup>245</sup>

This option cannot be used on the same area as the following supplements:

- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>

### Further Information

The RSPB website is a useful source of information, including the report [Bringing Reedbeds to Life](#)<sup>311</sup>.

# Management of fen (WT8)

## How much will be paid

£39 per hectare (ha)

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- priority fen habitat in good condition
- priority reedbed habitat in good condition and less than 2 ha
- a mosaic of priority fen and reedbed habitat in good condition where total reedbed area does not exceed 2ha
- fen and reedbed habitat (alone or combined) in poor condition where there is adequate water supply to restore appropriate water levels and the total reedbed area does not exceed 2ha

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, drains or dykes that are less than 4m wide
- a pond or standing water that's under 1ha
- rivers and streams that are less than 4m wide for the majority of their length in the parcel
- bracken beds if control of these are included in the agreement
- scrub or woodland if there's less than 5% cover or if control of these are included in the agreement

## When this option can't be used

It can't be used on:

- areas of open water that are 1 ha or more
- areas of reedbed greater than 2 ha

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will help maintain and restore priority fen habitat and small areas of reedbed.

If successful there will be predominantly open fen vegetation, with occasional scrub. There may also be small open water features along ditch lines, water tracks and ponded areas. High water levels will be sustained by a natural, unpolluted water supply which will support a diverse range of target fen species.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

### On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- manage water levels and water supply
- maintain any culverts, sluices, tidal flaps or bunds
- manage scrub and vegetation to maintain a predominantly open habitat
- dispose of cut material appropriately

### Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

### What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- use pesticides and herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe to control injurious weeds, invasive non-natives, nettles or bracken

### How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

Fen is a diverse habitat type with different fen types depending on factors such as water chemistry, soil type, fertility, position in the landscape and historical management.

To maintain or restore fen appropriately consider the location and landscape setting. Identify the type of fen the option is aiming to conserve and enhance and set objectives and management appropriately.

Decide how best to manage and restore fens by taking into account:

- how and where it sits in the wider landscape
- how past modification and management have influenced the fen and the wildlife it supports
- how the fen is supplied with water and how it drains
- other landscape and management constraints such as flood risk, historic environment and landscape impact

Small fen sites are usually fragments of much larger wetlands and semi-natural landscapes so look for opportunities to extend and buffer existing fens by:

- re-wetting areas with drained peat next to them
- blocking or in-filling pipes or ditches that intercept springs or drain the fen

Account for the surroundings and neighbouring habitats to plan more coherent wetland units.

Habitats can include lowland raised bog, wet grassland or wet woodland. The character and condition of a fen is largely determined by water that comes from its catchment.

Therefore it's important that surrounding land is managed sympathetically and in ways that won't damage the fen through pollution by nutrients or sediment runoff.

If the proposed management involves raising water levels, applicants should contact the Environment Agency before applying for this item.

### **Related options**

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>
- [SP4 - Control of invasive plant species supplement](#)<sup>171</sup>
- [SP9 - Threatened species supplement](#)<sup>176</sup>
- [WT11 - Wetland cutting supplement](#)<sup>244</sup>
- [WT12 - Wetland grazing supplement](#)<sup>245</sup>

# Creation of fen (WT9)

## How much will be paid

£446 per hectare (ha).

## How long the option lasts

This option lasts for 10 years, instead of the standard 5 years for the grant scheme.

## Where the option is available

This is a whole or part-parcel option. This option is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- arable land, temporary grassland, improved permanent grassland
- other wetland habitat that's in poor condition if approved by a specialist
- land with an suitable and adequate water supply - suitable sites are usually underlain by peat but can also be on slopes with a groundwater outflow

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- areas of open water up to 1 ha

## When this option can't be used

It can't be used:

- on existing wetland habitat, unless existing wetland is in poor condition and the work is agreed by a specialist
- on areas of open water 1ha or more in area

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will help create new areas of fen priority habitat on land with low wildlife value, particularly around existing wetland habitats.

If successful this option will create predominantly open fen vegetation, with occasional scrub.

There may be small open water features along ditch lines, water tracks and ponded areas. High water levels will be sustained by a natural, unpolluted water supply which will support a diverse range of target fen species.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## Applications

Applicants will need to send the following with their application:

- a recommendation from a specialist if using this option for existing wetland habitat that's in poor condition
- a feasibility study or implementation plan agreed with Natural England, if applicable.
- photographs of areas proposed for land forming or earth works and vegetation establishment

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- undertake any ground works in accordance with an agreed plan
- manage water levels and water supply
- establish fen vegetation
- maintain any culverts, sluices or bunds
- manage scrub and vegetation to maintain a predominantly open habitat
- manage scrub and opportunistic species to assist fen establishment.
- dispose of cut material appropriately

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- receipted invoices, consents or permissions connected with the work
- the agreed implementation plan or feasibility study
- records of all management activity on the option area for each parcel
- before and after photographs of the site

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- apply fertilisers or manures
- use pesticides or herbicides, except to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control injurious weeds and invasive non-native species

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

Fen is a diverse habitat type with different fen types depending on factors such as water chemistry, soil type, fertility, position in the landscape and historical management.

To create fen appropriately consider the location and landscape setting. Identify the type of fen the option is aiming to create and set objectives and management appropriately.



Decide how best to create fens by taking into account:

- how and where it sits in the wider landscape
- how past modification and management have influenced the fen and the wildlife it supports
- how the fen is supplied with water and how it drains.
- other landscape and management constraints such as flood risk, historic environment and landscape impact

Small fen sites are usually fragments of much larger wetlands and semi-natural landscapes so look for opportunities to extend and buffer existing fens by:

- re-wetting areas with drained peat next to them
- blocking or in-filling pipes or ditches that intercept springs or drain the fen

Account for the surroundings and neighbouring habitats to plan more coherent wetland units.

Habitats can include lowland raised bog, wet grassland or wet woodland.

The character and condition of a fen is largely determined by water that comes from its catchment. Therefore it's important that surrounding land is managed sympathetically and in ways that won't damage the fen through pollution by nutrients or sediment runoff.

Feasibility and impact should be fully assessed in advance and all appropriate advice and permissions obtained. A detailed implementation plan or feasibility study for the works should be agreed with Natural England.

If the proposed management involves raising water levels, applicants should contact the Environment Agency before applying for this item.

### **Related options**

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [SP2 - Raised water level supplement](#)<sup>169</sup>
- [WT11 - Wetland cutting supplement](#)<sup>244</sup>
- [WT12 - Wetland grazing supplement](#)<sup>245</sup>

This option cannot be used on the same area as the following supplements:

- [SP5 - Shepherding supplement](#)<sup>172</sup>
- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>

# Management of lowland raised bog (WT10)

## How much will be paid

£164 per hectare (ha).

## Where the option is available

This is a whole and part-parcel option and is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used on:

- priority lowland raised bog habitat which can be kept wet enough for peat to form

## Features that can be included in this option

The following features can be included if they're part of the land, even if they're ineligible for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS):

- ditches, drains or dykes that are less than 4m wide
- a pond or standing water that's less than 1ha in total
- rivers and streams that are less than 4m wide in most of the parcel
- bracken beds if control is in the agreement
- 5% cover of scrub or woodland, or if control is included in the agreement

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#)<sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## How this option will benefit the environment

This option will help to manage and restore priority lowland raised bog habitat.

If successful there will be:

- a rain-fed water table kept close to the surface of the peat
- a cover of characteristic bog vegetation such as Sphagnum moss and cotton grass maintained or expanded
- reduced amounts of invasive bracken, scrub or non-native species

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this option will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- maintain water levels at the surface of the bog fed only by rainfall
- control scrub and other undesirable species
- dispose of cut material appropriately
- maintain structures that help to control water levels

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- field operations at the parcel level, including associated invoices

## What must not be done

The agreement will set out what must not be done. It is likely successful applicants will not be allowed to:

- apply any fertilisers or manures
- use pesticides or herbicides, except for spot-treating or weed-wiping to control injurious weeds, invasive non-native species, nettles or bracken

## How to carry out this option

The following section gives advice on carrying out this option successfully but does not form part of the requirements for this option.

### Pick a location

This option should only be available for raised bog habitat where:

- a substrate of bog peat remains in place
- the area has a surface irrigated only by rainfall
- high water levels sustained by rainfall can be maintained or restored

### Maintain and restore raised bog

Get expert advice if using this option to pen rain water to raise water levels (smaller sites may only need internal drain blocking).

Drains or streams in adjacent areas may draw water away. Check what other wetland options might help reduce these effects.

If blocking off or diverting water flow associated with neighbouring drains and streams check what impact this might have on adjacent farm owners or occupiers. The Environment Agency should be consulted along with other relevant bodies eg Internal Drainage Boards. It may be necessary to obtain consent.

### Pick a suitable penning structure

Pick water penning structures to suit the size of the drains. Use simple plastic pile or peat plug dams to block small grips and drains or more complex, engineered structures for larger drains. Try extended pile or peat bunds where the surface is either complex or very open and featureless, eg after peat milling. Large scale earthworks for rewetting will need careful feasibility study and planning.

### Manage vegetation and water levels

Relatively undisturbed raised bog surfaces are usually more self-sustaining and should require less intervention.

Where sites may have dried out and colonised by trees and scrub, aim to:

- remove up to 95% of native trees, and all invasive non-native species
- keep water levels raised to reduce re-colonisation as birch, conifers and rhododendrons can exacerbate drying out

Control bracken by bruising, cutting or applying herbicides. A longer term solution would be to maintain raised water levels.

### **Related options**

These options and supplements can be located on the same area as this option:

- [WT11 - Wetland cutting supplement](#)<sup>244</sup>
- [WT12 - Wetland grazing supplement](#)<sup>245</sup>

This option can't be used on the same area as the following supplements:

- [SP1 - Difficult sites supplement](#)<sup>168</sup>
- [SP3 - Bracken control supplement](#)<sup>170</sup>

# Wetland cutting supplement (WT11)

## How much will be paid

£440 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used with one of the following options:

- WT6 - Management of reedbed <sup>239</sup>
- WT7 - Creation of reedbed <sup>240</sup>
- WT8 - Management of fen <sup>241</sup>
- WT9 - Creation of fen <sup>242</sup>
- WT10 - Management of lowland raised bog <sup>243</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#) <sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#) <sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement supports the appropriate cutting management of wetland habitats.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- cut particular areas by an agreed method
- cut at specific times
- dispose of cuttings in an agreed way
- produce a simple map of the areas cut and the dates of cutting

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request. You will also need to be aware that at the start of each claim year, a percentage of agreement holders will also be asked to take and submit the following photographic records:

- map of the areas cut
- photographs or geo-tagged photographs of the management taken

## Related supplements

This supplement can be used all other supplements appropriate to the underlying option, except [WT12 - Wetland grazing supplement](#) <sup>245</sup>.

# Wetland grazing supplement (WT12)

## How much will be paid

£304 per hectare (ha).

## Where the supplement is available

This supplement is available for:

- Higher Tier

It can only be used with one of the following options:

- [WT6 - Management of reedbed](#) <sup>239</sup>
- [WT7 - Creation of reedbed](#) <sup>240</sup>
- [WT8 - Management of fen](#) <sup>241</sup>
- [WT9 - Creation of fen](#) <sup>242</sup>
- [WT10 - Management of lowland raised bog](#) <sup>243</sup>

## How to apply

Applicants can read the [Countryside Stewardship guidance](#) <sup>3</sup> for more on eligibility and [how to apply](#) <sup>4</sup>.

## How this supplement will benefit the environment

This supplement supports the appropriate grazing management of wetland habitats.

## Requirements

The detailed requirements for this supplement will be tailored to the Higher Tier site. Applicants should discuss and agree these requirements with their adviser.

## On the land

Successful applicants are likely to need to:

- graze specific areas by an agreed method
- graze at specific times
- achieve a particular vegetation condition by grazing

## Keeping records

Successful applicants will need to keep the following records and supply them on request:

- stock records to show grazing activity on parcels

## Related supplements

This supplement can be used all other supplements appropriate to the underlying option, except [WT11 - Wetland cutting supplement](#) <sup>244</sup>.

# Further Information

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-manual-print-version>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-manual-print-version>
3. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/countryside-stewardship>
4. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/countryside-stewardship/how-to-apply>
5. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/nectar-flower-mix-ab1>
6. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/basic-overwinter-stubble-ab2>
7. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/beetle-banks-ab3>
8. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/skylark-plots-ab4>
9. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/nesting-plots-for-lapwing-and-stone-curlew-ab5>
10. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/enhanced-overwinter-stubble-ab6>
11. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/whole-crop-cereals-ab7>
12. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/flower-rich-margins-and-plots-ab8>
13. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/winter-bird-food-ab9>
14. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/unharvested-cereal-headland-ab10>
15. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/cultivated-areas-for-arable-plants-ab11>
16. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/supplementary-winter-feeding-for-farm-land-birds-ab12>
17. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/brassica-fodder-crop-ab13>
18. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/harvested-low-input-cereal-ab14>
19. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/two-year-sown-legume-fallow-ab15>
20. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/autumn-sown-bumblebird-mix-ab16>
21. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/access-capital-items-ac1>
22. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/countryside-educational-access-visits-accreditation-ac2>
23. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/protection-of-in-field-trees-on-arable-land-be1>
24. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/protection-of-in-field-trees-on-intensive-grassland-be2>
25. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-hedgerows-be3>
26. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-traditional-orchards-be4>
27. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-traditional-orchards-be5>
28. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/veteran-tree-surgery-be6>
29. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/supplement-for-restorative-pruning-of-fruit-trees-be7>
30. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/stone-faced-bank-repair-bn1>
31. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/stone-faced-bank-restoration-bn2>
32. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/earth-bank-creation-bn3>
33. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/earth-bank-restoration-bn4>
34. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hedgerow-laying-bn5>
35. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hedgerow-coppicing-bn6>
36. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hedgerow-gapping-up-bn7>
37. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hedgerow-supplement-casting-up-bn8>
38. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hedgerow-supplement-substantial-pre-work-bn9>
39. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hedgerow-supplement-top-binding-and-staking-bn10>
40. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/planting-new-hedges-bn11>
41. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/stone-wall-restoration-bn12>
42. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/stone-wall-supplement-top-wiring-bn13>
43. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/stone-wall-supplement-stone-from-quarry-bn14>
44. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/stone-wall-supplement-difficult-sites-bn15>
45. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-coastal-sand-dunes-and-vegetated-shingle-ct1>
46. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-coastal-sand-dunes-and-vegetated-shingle-on-arable-land-and-improved-grassland-ct2>



47. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-coastal-saltmarsh-ct3>
48. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-inter-tidal-and-saline-habitat-on-arable-land-ct4>
49. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-inter-tidal-and-saline-habitat-by-non-intervention-ct5>
50. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/coastal-vegetation-management-supplement-ct6>
51. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-inter-tidal-and-saline-habitat-on-intensive-grassland-ct7>
52. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/educational-access-ed1>
53. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/fencing-fg1>
54. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/sheep-netting-fg2>
55. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/permanent-electric-fencing-fg3>
56. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/rabbit-fencing-supplement-fg4>
57. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/fencing-supplement-difficult-sites-fg5>
58. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/invisible-fencing-system-fg6>
59. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/anti-predator-combination-fencing-fg7>
60. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/anti-predator-temporary-electric-fencing-fg8>
61. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/deer-fencing-fg9>
62. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/temporary-deer-fencing-fg10>
63. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/deer-exclosure-plot-fg11>
64. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/wooden-field-gate-fg12>
65. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/stone-gate-post-fg13>
66. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/badger-gate-fg14>
67. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/water-gates-fg15>
68. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-geodiversity-features-fm1>
69. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/major-preparatory-works-for-priority-habitats-creation-and-restoration-and-priority-species-fm2>
70. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/deer-high-seat-fy1>
71. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/woodland-infrastructure-fy2>
72. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/take-field-corners-out-of-management-gs1>
73. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/permanent-grassland-with-very-low-inputs-outside-sdas-gs2>
74. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/ryegrass-seed-set-as-winter-food-for-birds-gs3>
75. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/legume-and-herb-rich-swards-gs4>
76. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/permanent-grassland-with-very-low-inputs-in-sdas-gs5>
77. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-species-rich-grassland-gs6>
78. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/restoration-towards-species-rich-grassland-gs7>
79. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-species-rich-grassland-gs8>
80. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-wet-grassland-for-breeding-waders-gs9>
81. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-wet-grassland-for-wintering-waders-and-wildfowl-gs10>
82. GS11 <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-wet-grassland-for-breeding-waders-gs11>
83. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-wet-grassland-for-wintering-waders-and-wildfowl-gs12>
84. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-grassland-for-target-features-gs13>
85. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-grassland-for-target-features-gs14>
86. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/haymaking-supplement-gs15>
87. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/rush-infestation-control-supplement-gs16>
88. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/lenient-grazing-supplement-gs17>
89. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/historic-and-archaeological-feature-protection-he1>
90. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/historic-building-restoration-he2>
91. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/removal-of-eyesore-he3>
92. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/maintenance-of-weatherproof-traditional-farm-buildings-hs1>



93. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/take-historic-and-archaeological-features-out-of-cultivation-hs2>
94. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/reduced-depth-non-inversion-cultivation-on-historic-and-archaeological-features-hs3>
95. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/scrub-control-on-historic-and-archaeological-features-hs4>
96. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-historic-and-archaeological-features-on-grassland-hs5>
97. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/maintenance-of-designed-engineered-water-bodies-hs6>
98. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-historic-water-meadows-through-traditional-irrigation-hs7>
99. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/maintenance-of-weatherproof-traditional-farm-buildings-in-remote-areas-hs8>
100. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/restricted-depth-crop-establishment-to-protect-archaeology-under-an-arable-rotation-hs9>
101. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-lowland-heathland-lh1>
102. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/restoration-of-forestry-and-woodland-to-lowland-heathland-lh2>
103. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-heathland-from-arable-or-improved-grassland-lh3>
104. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/cattle-grid-lv1>
105. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/livestock-handling-facilities-lv2>
106. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hard-bases-for-livestock-drinkers-lv3>
107. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hard-bases-for-livestock-feeders-lv4>
108. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/pasture-pumps-and-associated-pipework-lv5>
109. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/ram-pumps-and-associated-pipework-lv6>
110. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/livestock-troughs-lv7>
111. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/pipework-associated-with-livestock-troughs-lv8>
112. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/overwintered-stubble-op1>
113. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/wild-bird-seed-mixture-op2>
114. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/supplementary-feeding-for-farmland-birds-op3>
115. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/multi-species-ley-op4>
116. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/undersown-cereal-op5>
117. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-conversion-improved-permanent-grassland-or1>
118. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-conversion-unimproved-permanent-grassland-or2>
119. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-conversion-rotational-land-or3>
120. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-conversion-horticulture-or4>
121. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-conversion-top-fruit-or5>
122. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-land-management-improved-permanent-grassland-ot1>
123. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-land-management-unimproved-permanent-grassland-ot2>
124. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-land-management-rotational-land-ot3>
125. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-land-management-horticulture-ot4>
126. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-land-management-top-fruit-ot5>
127. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/organic-land-management-enclosed-rough-grazing-ot6>
128. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/implementation-plan-pa1>
129. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/feasibility-study-pa2>
130. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/woodland-management-plan-pa3>
131. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/resurfacing-of-gateways-rp1>
132. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/gateway-relocation-rp2>
133. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/watercourse-crossings-rp3>

134. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/livestock-and-machinery-hardcore-tracks-rp4>
135. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/cross-drains-rp5>
136. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/installation-of-piped-culverts-in-ditches-rp6>
137. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/sediment-ponds-and-traps-rp7>
138. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/constructed-wetlands-for-the-treatment-of-pollution-rp8>
139. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/earth-banks-and-soil-bunds-rp9>
140. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/silt-filtration-dams-or-seepage-barriers-rp10>
141. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/swales-rp11>
142. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/check-dams-rp12>
143. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/yard-underground-drainage-pipework-rp13>
144. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/yard-inspection-pit-rp14>
145. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/concrete-yard-renewal-rp15>
146. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/rainwater-goods-rp16>
147. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/storage-tanks-underground-rp17>
148. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/above-ground-tanks-rp18>
149. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/first-flush-rainwater-diverters-and-down-pipe-filters-rp19>
150. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/relocation-of-sheep-dips-and-pens-rp20>
151. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/relocation-of-sheep-pens-only-rp21>
152. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/sheep-dip-drainage-aprons-and-sumps-rp22>
153. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/installation-of-livestock-drinking-troughs-in-draining-pens-for-freshly-dipped-sheep-rp23>
154. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/lined-biobed-plus-pesticide-loading-and-washdown-area-rp24>
155. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/lined-biobed-with-existing-washdown-area-rp25>
156. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/biofilters-rp26>
157. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/sprayer-or-applicator-load-and-washdown-area-rp27>
158. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/roofing-sprayer-washdown-area-manure-storage-area-livestock-gathering-area-slurry-stores-silage-stores-rp28>
159. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/self-supporting-covers-for-slurry-stores-rp29>
160. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/floating-covers-for-slurry-stores-and-lagoons-rp30>
161. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/equipment-to-disrupt-tramlines-in-arable-areas-rp31>
162. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/scrub-control-and-felling-diseased-trees-sb1>
163. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/scrub-control-difficult-sites-sb2>
164. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/tree-removal-sb3>
165. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/chemical-bracken-control-sb4>
166. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/mechanical-bracken-control-sb5>
167. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/rhododendron-control-sb6>
168. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/difficult-sites-supplement-sp1>
169. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/raised-water-level-supplement-sp2>
170. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/bracken-control-supplement-sp3>
171. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/control-of-invasive-plant-species-supplement-sp4>
172. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/shepherding-supplement-sp5>
173. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/cattle-grazing-supplement-sp6>
174. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/introduction-of-cattle-grazing-on-the-isles-of-scilly-sp7>
175. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/native-breeds-at-risk-supplement-sp8>
176. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/threatened-species-supplement-sp9>
177. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/administration-of-group-managed-agreements-supplement-sp10>
178. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/4m-to-6m-buffer-strip-on-cultivated-land-sw1>
179. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/4m-to-6m-buffer-strip-on-intensive-grassland-sw2>
180. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/in-field-grass-strips-sw3>
181. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/12m-to-24m-watercourse-buffer-strip-on-cultivated-land-sw4>

182. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/enhanced-management-of-maize-crops-sw5>
183. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/winter-cover-crops-sw6>
184. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/arable-reversion-to-grassland-with-low-fertiliser-input-sw7>
185. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-intensive-grassland-adjacent-to-a-watercourse-sw8>
186. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/seasonal-livestock-removal-on-intensive-grassland-sw9>
187. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/seasonal-livestock-removal-on-grassland-in-sdas-next-to-streams-rivers-and-lakes-sw10>
188. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/riparian-management-strip-sw11>
189. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/making-space-for-water-sw12>
190. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/very-low-nitrogen-inputs-to-groundwaters-sw13>
191. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/nil-fertiliser-supplement-sw14>
192. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/planting-standard-hedgerow-tree-te1>
193. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/planting-standard-parkland-tree-te2>
194. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/planting-fruit-trees-te3>
195. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/supply-and-plant-tree-te4>
196. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/supplement-for-use-of-individual-tree-shelters-te5>
197. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/tree-guard-tube-and-mesh-te6>
198. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/tree-guard-wood-post-and-rail-te7>
199. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/tree-guard-wood-post-and-wire-te8>
200. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/parkland-tree-guard-welded-steel-te9>
201. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/coppicing-bankside-trees-te10>
202. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/tree-surgery-te11>
203. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/stump-grinding-te12>
204. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-dead-wood-habitat-on-trees-te13>
205. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/identification-of-orchard-fruit-tree-varieties-te14>
206. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/enclosed-rough-grazing-up1>
207. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-rough-grazing-for-birds-up2>
208. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-moorland-up3>
209. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-moorland-vegetation-supplement-up4>
210. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/moorland-re-wetting-supplement-up5>
211. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/upland-livestock-exclusion-supplement-up6>
212. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/small-wildlife-box-wb1>
213. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/medium-wildlife-box-wb2>
214. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/large-wildlife-box-wb3>
215. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/woodland-creation-maintenance-payments-wd1>
216. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/woodland-improvement-wd2>
217. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/woodland-edges-on-arable-land-wd3>
218. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-wood-pasture-and-parkland-wd4>
219. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/restoration-of-wood-pasture-and-parkland-wd5>
220. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-wood-pasture-wd6>
221. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-successional-areas-and-scrub-wd7>
222. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-successional-areas-and-scrub-wd8>
223. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/livestock-exclusion-supplement-scrub-and-successional-areas-wd9>
224. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/grip-blocking-drainage-channels-wn1>
225. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-scrapes-and-gutters-wn2>
226. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/ditch-dyke-and-rhine-restoration-wn3>
227. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/ditch-dyke-and-rhine-creation-wn4>
228. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/pond-management-first-100-sq-m-wn5>
229. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/pond-management-areas-more-than-100-sq-m-wn6>



230. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/restoration-of-large-water-bodies-wn7>
231. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/timber-sluice-wn8>
232. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/brick-stone-or-concrete-sluice-wn9>
233. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/construction-of-water-penning-structures-wn10>
234. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/buffering-in-field-ponds-and-ditches-in-improved-grassland-wt1>
235. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/buffering-in-field-ponds-and-ditches-on-arable-land-wt2>
236. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-ditches-of-high-environmental-value-wt3>
237. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/pond-management-first-100-sq-m-wt4>
238. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/pond-management-areas-more-than-100-sq-m-wt5>
239. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-reedbed-wt6>
240. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-reedbed-wt7>
241. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-fen-wt8>
242. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/creation-of-fen-wt9>
243. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/management-of-lowland-raised-bog-wt10>
244. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/wetland-cutting-supplement-wt11>
245. <https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/wetland-grazing-supplement-wt12>
246. [http://www.hedgelinek.org.uk/assets/docs/Hedgelinek\\_A5\\_12pp\\_leaflet\\_7.pdf](http://www.hedgelinek.org.uk/assets/docs/Hedgelinek_A5_12pp_leaflet_7.pdf)
247. [http://www.hedgelinek.org.uk/files/ne\\_hedgecutting.pdf](http://www.hedgelinek.org.uk/files/ne_hedgecutting.pdf)
248. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/safetreemanagement>
249. <http://www.ancient-tree-forum.org.uk/ancient-tree-forum/atfnews/newso4/guides.htm>
250. <http://www.buglife.org.uk/advice-and-publications/advice-on-managing-bap-habitats/coastal-sand-dunes>
251. <http://www.buglife.org.uk/advice-and-publications/advice-on-managing-bap-habitats/coastal-vegetated-shingle>
252. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1994/2716/contents/made>
253. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flood-and-coastal-risk-management-strategy-for-england>
254. <http://www.buglife.org.uk/advice-and-publications/advice-on-managing-bap-habitats/coastal-saltmarsh>
255. [http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/NE-GVSSFFL\\_tcm6-8547.pdf](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/NE-GVSSFFL_tcm6-8547.pdf)
256. <http://www.visitmyfarm.org/>
257. <http://www.carefarminguk.org/>
258. <http://www.face-online.org.uk/>
259. <http://www.leafuk.org/leaf/home.eb>
260. <https://www.gov.uk/hill-farming>
261. <http://www.helm.org.uk/guidance-library/farming-the-historic-landscape-grassland/>
262. <https://www.gov.uk/bats-protection-surveys-and-licences>
263. <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/farming-the-historic-landscape-farm-buildings/caring-for-farm-buildings2004.pdf>
264. <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-at-risk/>
265. <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>
266. <http://www.myshinedata.org.uk/>
267. <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/>
268. <http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/farming-the-historic-landscape-arable/>
269. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1975/23>
270. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>
271. <https://www.gov.uk/reservoirs-a-guide-for-owners-and-operators>
272. <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/moats-ponds-ornamental-lakes-historic-environ/>
273. <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/lan-hpg-changes-reservoir-safety-legislation/>
274. <http://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conserving-historic-water-meadows/>

275. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCPGo22.pdf/%24FILE/FCPGo22.pdf>
276. <http://www.arc-trust.org/advice/habitat-management/reptiles>
277. <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/31015>
278. <https://www.gov.uk/browse/business/farming/organic-farming>
279. <http://www.efrc.com/?i=tabhomepages.php&go=IOTA&cat=IOTA>
280. <http://www.organicresearchcentre.com/>
281. <http://www.soilassociation.org/farmersgrowers>
282. <http://www.organicfarmers.org.uk/>
283. <http://www.agricology.co.uk>
284. [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FC\\_Biosecurity\\_Guidance.pdf/%24FILE/FC\\_Biosecurity\\_Guidance.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf/%24FILE/FC_Biosecurity_Guidance.pdf)
285. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9BMJWE>
286. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wpg>
287. <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35013>
288. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-to-use-herbicides-in-or-near-water>
289. <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/72034?category=30009>
290. <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/33016?category=30009>
291. <https://www.gov.uk/wild-plants-dangerous-invasive-and-protected-species>
292. <https://www.gov.uk/japanese-knotweed-giant-hogweed-and-other-invasive-plants#your-legal-responsibilities-for-invasive-plants-and-injurious-weeds>
293. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69205/wildlife-countryside-act.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69205/wildlife-countryside-act.pdf)
294. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-native-animal-breeds-at-risk-list>
295. <http://www.grazinganimalsproject.org.uk/>
296. <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4958719460769792>
297. <https://www.gov.uk/register-with-the-rural-payments-agency>
298. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/406452/BPS\\_Handbook\\_-\\_final\\_v1.o.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/406452/BPS_Handbook_-_final_v1.o.pdf)
299. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/291508/schoo612buwh-e-e.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/291508/schoo612buwh-e-e.pdf)
300. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/397044/Cross\\_compliance\\_handbook\\_v2\\_web.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/397044/Cross_compliance_handbook_v2_web.pdf)
301. <http://www.ahdb.org.uk/projects/CropNutrition.aspx>
302. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans>
303. [http://www.therrc.co.uk/rrc\\_designated.php](http://www.therrc.co.uk/rrc_designated.php)
304. <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/research-curation/scientific-resources/biodiversity/uk-biodiversity/uk-species/checklists/NHMSYS0020515439/index.html>
305. <https://www.gov.uk/heather-and-grass-burning-apply-for-a-licence>
306. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/safetreemanagement>
307. <http://www.ancient-tree-forum.org.uk/ancient-tree-forum/atfnews/newso4/guides.htm>
308. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/basic-payment-scheme-guidance-for-2015>
309. <https://www.gov.uk/wildlife-licences>
310. <http://www.freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/pond-hap/priority-pond-criteria/>
311. [http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/bringing\\_reedbeds\\_to\\_life\\_tcm9-385799.pdf](http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/bringing_reedbeds_to_life_tcm9-385799.pdf)
312. <http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/guidance/industries/pesticides/user-areas/farmers-and-growers>





Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Rural Payments  
Agency



The European  
Agricultural Fund for  
Rural Development:  
Europe investing in  
rural areas



**Natural England is here to secure a healthy natural environment for people to enjoy, where wildlife is protected and England's traditional landscapes are safeguarded for future generations.**

ISBN 978-1-84754-201-1

Catalogue Code: NE606

[www.gov.uk/natural-england](http://www.gov.uk/natural-england)

Natural England publications are available as accessible pdfs from [www.gov.uk/natural-england](http://www.gov.uk/natural-england). Should an alternative format of this publication be required, please contact our enquiries line for more information: 0845 600 3078 or email [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk).

This publication is published by Natural England under the Open Government Licence v3.0 for public sector information. You are encouraged to use, and reuse, information subject to certain conditions. For details of the licence visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3).

Please note: Natural England photographs are only available for non-commercial purposes. For information regarding the use of maps or data visit [www.gov.uk/how-to-access-natural-englands-maps-and-data](http://www.gov.uk/how-to-access-natural-englands-maps-and-data).

© Natural England 2015