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# Countryside Stewardship

Livestock record-keeping guidance on arable  
and grassland

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## Document updated October 2016 to reflect a number of changes

This guidance affects agreements starting on or after 1st January 2017 with changes being made to the number of options where livestock record keeping is required.

Reference	Amendment
Annex A, Table 1A/1B	Addition of GS11 Removal of GS17 Removal of WT12
Annex A, Table 2A/2B	Removal of GS11 Addition of GS17 Removal of OP1 Removal of WD3 Addition of WT12
Annex B, Table 3A/3B	Addition of OP1

## Background

This guidance clarifies the livestock record keeping requirement that applies to your Countryside Stewardship agreement and will help you demonstrate that you are managing your land in accordance with your agreement.

For agreements starting on 1st January 2016 the general requirement to keep records is set out in section 8.3 of the Countryside Stewardship Manual [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/498287/cs-manual-1-january-2016-version.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/498287/cs-manual-1-january-2016-version.pdf) and section 3.12 of Countryside Stewardship: record keeping and inspection requirements [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/505935/cs-record-keeping-1-january-2016-version.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/505935/cs-record-keeping-1-january-2016-version.pdf).

For agreements starting on or after 1st January 2017 the requirement is set out in the Mid Tier and Higher Tier Manuals:

- Mid Tier Manual section 6.4: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/507602/cs-mid-tier-manual.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/507602/cs-mid-tier-manual.pdf)
- Higher Tier Manual section 6.4: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/507600/cs-higher-tier-manual.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/507600/cs-higher-tier-manual.pdf)

If you have a Countryside Stewardship (CS) agreement that has options with prescriptions relating to grazing management (including prescriptions that say “do not graze” or “exclude livestock”) the prescriptions for these options might require that you keep livestock records. The individual option requirements are in your agreement document, or if you are an applicant they can be found at [www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants](http://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants).

## Non-compliance

If you do not keep the required livestock records, it will be a breach of the option management rules and may result in reductions and penalties being applied.

For agreements starting on 1st January 2016 see section 8.6 of the 2016 Countryside Stewardship Manual. For agreements that will start on 1st January 2017 see section 7.3 of the Mid Tier and Higher Manuals.

## How should livestock records be kept?

### At parcel level

Livestock records must be kept for each land parcel that includes at least one of the options in tables 1A or 2A of Annex A. You don't need to keep parcel specific records for parcels that don't contain these options.

If you run several adjacent parcels together as one grassland unit, you may keep one record for that grassland unit provided that the total number of livestock is never more than the lowest number allowed on any individual parcels that make up that unit. For example: if you

ran two parcels together and your agreement allowed a maximum of 3 cows on one parcel and 4 on the other, you could record them as one unit provided that the total for the two parcels never exceeded 3 cows. In effect you would be managing the land less intensively than the maximum allowed in your agreement. You should also keep farm level livestock records unless that grassland unit represents your whole farm (see definition of farm below).

### At farm level

EU rules include a requirement to ensure there is no over or undergrazing, or intensification of grazing, occurring as a result of implementing the option management requirements. This requirement is described in the CS manuals. Livestock records should be kept as evidence that you have kept to the maximum stocking density required on your farm if your agreement contains at least one of the options in tables 1B or 2B of Annex A or table 3B of Annex B. The maximum stocking density is:

- Mid Tier: do not stock more than 2.5 livestock units (LU) / ha on non-Severely Disadvantaged Area (SDA) land and 2.0 LU / ha on SDA land on average over the year across all agricultural land on the farm or production unit where the agreement is located; or
- Higher Tier: do not stock at more than the rates specified in the agreement document on average over the year across all agricultural land on the farm or production unit where the agreement is located

You can keep livestock records in a way that best suits you – for example on paper or electronically. However, your records should include all the required information (see below) as you may be asked to produce these when inspected.

Whilst you might already routinely collect and record this data you might prefer to consolidate your records by using the livestock tables and spreadsheets provided at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-livestock-record-keeping](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-livestock-record-keeping). These tables and spreadsheets will (when filled out completely) provide the necessary information to help you explain how you have met your agreement requirements at both the **parcel level** and **farm level**.

It is important that your records are kept up-to-date, so that you can produce them if required.

You should retain these records for the period of your agreement and for 7 years after it expires. If a problem occurs you will be able to show evidence of when the problem started, and its extent, which may limit any penalties.

Your records should include:

- **the agreement reference number, agreement holder's name and the calendar year**  
*to ensure that the data can be linked to a particular agreement and the correct year*
- **the name of the person who entered the record**  
*to make it easier to check against primary data if there is an anomaly*

- **the date of the record**

*to confirm that these data have been recorded in a timely way*

Your **parcel** level records should clearly indicate:

- **The parcel number(s)**

*to ensure that the data is linked to the relevant parcel (or parcels - when adjacent parcels are managed as one unit)*

- **The option code that applies to the parcel(s)**

*to ensure that the data is compared with the relevant requirement*

- **The area of the relevant option within that parcel(s)**

*to ensure that livestock density calculations are carried out correctly*

- **The dates when grazing takes place and (where appropriate) the livestock present on the option parcel** *to show that grazing has taken place within the prescribed periods and (where appropriate) that the livestock density has been calculated correctly. You will only need to record the species, age bracket and number of livestock on each option parcel if your agreement includes a minimum or maximum livestock density or a livestock calendar. If you have the native breeds supplement (SP8) you will also need to record the breed. Records need only be kept for the livestock types set out in Annex C. Your records will need to take into consideration the age of the livestock to allow livestock numbers to be converted into Livestock Units. For this purpose you can make a visual assessment of the age of the animals concerned or use any other records available.*

Your **farm level records** should include:

- **livestock present on farm on the 15th of each month** *to show that livestock density calculations are carried out correctly you will need to record the species, age bracket and number of all the livestock on your farm. Recording each month will enable you to calculate an annual stocking density. Records need only be kept for the livestock types set out in Annex C. Your records will need to take into consideration the age of the livestock to allow livestock numbers to be converted into Livestock Units. For this purpose you can make a visual assessment of the age of the animals concerned or use any other records available.*

- **area of farm** *to ensure that livestock density calculations are carried out correctly, the area of your "farm" is the agricultural area (the area of arable land, permanent grassland and permanent pasture, or permanent crops) of all agricultural land on the farm or production unit where the agreement is located (temporary grazing/ summer grass keep does not count towards the 'area of the farm').*

## **Options with restrictions that only apply at certain times of year**

Parcel level Livestock Records only need to be kept for the period when the restrictions on grazing, within the option, apply. You will find these periods in your option management prescriptions.

## How often agreement holders should update their records

Each time you move animals on or off a land parcel covered by an option listed in Annex A table 1A, the livestock records should be updated for that land parcel to show the new total number, species and age bracket of the animals present. If you have an option listed in Annex A table 2A you should update your records to show when grazing periods start and stop. This will provide evidence that you are meeting the required numbers in the option prescription.

Temporary changes in numbers, when removal and return of livestock happen on the same day, need not be recorded – for example cows at daily milking time – but agreement holders should ensure that they otherwise **never exceed any maximum livestock density** on a land parcel covered by an option.

If you have land under an option in Annex B (an option that requires exclusion of livestock) you will make an annual declaration on your CS claim form that you have complied with the provisions of your agreement, which will be evidence that the exclusion has taken place.

When a farm level record is required it should be updated monthly.

## Agreements on common land

If you are the agreement holder on a common (i.e. the signatory to the CS agreement) you will need to ensure the livestock records are kept for the whole common. It is up to you how you obtain the necessary information from individual graziers on the common. In most cases there will already be a requirement on graziers to keep their own records. The number of animals on the common, at different times of the year, will be set out in the individual agreement. Records on commons should treat the common as a single grazing unit and records do not need to be broken down to the level of the individual land parcel.

If your CS agreement requires a minimum stocking level on the common, and stock are moved off the common, you will need to make sure that there is no breach of the required minimum stocking density.

## Annex A: CS livestock record keeping requirements

**Table 1: CS options with a livestock calendar; and/or a livestock density requirement (use the Parcel level record-keeping template at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-livestock-record-keeping](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-livestock-record-keeping));**

### Table 1A – Parcel level records

A limited number of CS options may require you to keep a stocking record to show how you have complied with the stocking rate requirements of an option (e.g. minimum and maximum stocking rates by grazing animal type by month). For those options that include this requirement you will need to keep records that are detailed enough to identify the stocking density on the relevant parcels during these periods. If your option prescriptions do not include this requirement then your records should follow the conditions set out in tables 2 or 3 (whichever applies).

GS9, GS11, SP5, SP6, SP7, SP8, UP2, UP3, UP6

Your records should include the agreement reference number, agreement start date, agreement holder's name, the calendar year and the date of each record.

For each parcel, your records should link together the parcel number with the CS option code, the area of the CS option within the parcel, the number, species and age bracket of livestock present, and the dates when they are present. These data will allow you to calculate the livestock density on each parcel and thereby determine how you have met your stocking requirements. For SP6,7 and 8 these data will allow you to determine the ratio of cattle to sheep.

Your records will need to take into consideration the age of the livestock to allow livestock numbers to be converted into Livestock Units. For this purpose you can make a visual assessment of the age of the animals concerned or use any other records available.

Parcel level livestock records only need to be kept for the period when the restrictions on grazing, within the option, apply. You will find these periods in your option management prescriptions.

If you are managing parts of a parcel differently – for example by using temporary fencing to exclude grazing from a buffer strip - your records need to reflect the relevant requirements for each part parcel.

You can record adjacent parcels as a single unit provided that you are managing them as one unit, and the total number of livestock is never more than the lowest number allowed on any individual parcels that make up that unit. The livestock should have free access to all the agricultural area in those parcels. Internal gates should therefore be kept open during grazing periods but may be closed for a short time to assist with collecting stock for removal or animal husbandry.

If an option also has a stock exclusion period then your annual declaration on your CS claim form (that you have complied with the provisions of your agreement) will be evidence that the exclusion has taken place (see table 3A).

If you have an option and a supplement(s) such as SP6 (cattle grazing supplement) on an area of GS10 (Management of wet grassland for wintering waders and wildfowl) you will need to keep records that are relevant to both the underpinning option and the supplement on each parcel (or parcels if managed as a single unit).

**Table 1B - Farm level records** (use the **Farm level record-keeping** template at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-livestock-record-keeping](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-livestock-record-keeping))

GS9, GS11, SP7, SP8, UP2, UP3, UP6

Section 3.4 of the CS manual explains the maximum stocking density requirement for your farm. The maximum livestock density for your farm will be included in your agreement document.

Your records should demonstrate that you have kept within that limit. The methodology for calculating a farm livestock density is:

- The maximum livestock density is an annual average figure and should be calculated by adding together the density for each month of the calendar year and dividing by twelve.
- The monthly density should be calculated on the basis of the livestock present on your farm on the 15th of each month. Effectively each month will contribute one twelfth towards the annual figure. This means that you could exceed the maximum at times during the calendar year as long as there are other times when you are sufficiently below the maximum.
- Your records will need to include the age of the livestock on the farm or production unit where the agreement is located. You can then convert these livestock numbers into Livestock Units to calculate the livestock density. For this purpose you should make a visual assessment of the age of the animals concerned but you might find it easier to use other records that are available.
- For calculating the livestock density on your farm the area of your farm is the agricultural area (the area of arable land, permanent grassland and permanent pasture, or permanent crops) of all agricultural land on the farm or production unit where the agreement is located.

**Table 2: CS options with simple grazing requirements**

**Table 2A – Parcel level records**

Some CS options have simple grazing requirements that are not density specific. For example AB8 includes: *“cut (and remove if dense) or graze, 90% of the area between 15 August and 31 October”* or GS6 which includes: *“manage the grassland by grazing, hay cutting, or a mixture of both”* – if you choose to graze then your records need to show evidence of when this took place. If you choose to manage the land without grazing then there is no need to keep a grazing record for the parcel (but you will need to meet the relevant control requirements which might apply).

AB8, BE4, BE5, CT1, CT2, CT6, CT7, GS1, GS4, GS6, GS16, GS17, HS7, LH1, LH2, OP4, SP1, SP3, SW13, UP1, WD7, WD8, WT12

If you have managed the option land by grazing then you need to keep parcel level livestock records. These should include the agreement reference number, agreement start date, agreement holder’s name, the calendar year and the date of each record. For each parcel the dates, between which grazing took place, should be recorded. The actual number of livestock that are grazing need not be recorded but you might find it helpful to keep a record of numbers for other reasons.

If an option has a stock exclusion period then your annual declaration on your CS claim form (that you have complied with the provisions of your agreement) will be evidence that the exclusion has taken place (see table 3).

Parcel level Livestock Records only need to be kept for the period when the restrictions on grazing, within the option, apply. You will find these periods in your option management prescriptions.

**Table 2B – Farm level records**

If your agreement allows you to graze at some point in the year and you choose to graze you will need to keep a livestock record for your farm, as set out in table 1B. This will show evidence of that you have complied with the maximum stocking density for your farm and that you therefore have not intensified livestock production.

If you don’t graze this land at all during the calendar year you don’t need to keep farm level records unless another option in your agreement requires that these records should be kept.

If you use grazing in some years to manage your options, but not in others, your requirement to keep farm level records might change from year to year.

BE4, BE5, CT1, CT2, CT6, CT7, GS1, GS4, GS6, GS17, HS7, LH1, LH2, SP1, SW13, UP1, WD7, WD8, WT12

## Annex B

**Table 3: CS Livestock exclusion options**

### Table 3A – Parcel level records

There is a group of options which require the exclusion of livestock for a part or the whole of the year.

AB1, AB6, AB7, AB13, CT3, CT4, CT5, GS3, GS7, GS8, GS10, GS12, GS13, GS14, GS15, LH3, SW3, SW4, SW7, OP1, SW8, SW9, SW10, SW11, SW12, WD4, WD5, WD6, WD9, WT7, WT9

If you have complied with the exclusion requirements then you do not have to keep parcel level livestock records. Instead, the annual declaration on your CS claim form (that you have complied with the provisions of your agreement) will be evidence that the exclusion has taken place. Whilst you don't need to keep detailed livestock records at the parcel level you might wish to keep a fuller record as additional evidence that you have complied with the option requirements.

### Table 3B – Farm level records

There is a group of options which require the exclusion of livestock for a part or the whole of the year.

If your agreement allows you to graze at some point in the year and you choose to graze you will need to keep a livestock record for your farm, as set out in table 1B. This will show evidence that you have complied with the maximum stocking density for your farm and that you therefore have not intensified livestock production.

If you don't graze this land at all during the calendar year you don't need to keep farm level records unless another option in your agreement requires that these records should be kept.

If you use grazing in some years to manage your options, but not in others, your requirement to keep farm level records might change from year to year.

AB1, AB6, AB7, AB13, CT3, CT4, CT5, GS3, GS7, GS8, GS10, GS12, GS13, GS14, GS15, LH3, OP1, SW3, SW4, SW7, SW8, SW9, SW10, SW12, WD4, WD5, WD6, WD9, WT7, WT9

## Annex C

<b>Animal numbers are converted into livestock units as follows:</b>	<b>LUs</b>
Cattle over 2 years	1.0
Cattle over 6 months to 2 years	0.6
Lowland ewe and lamb; ram	0.12
Store lamb, hill ewe and lamb; hogg; teg	0.08
Horse	1.0
Pony / Donkey	0.8
Goat	0.12



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