



Grants & Regulations news

Protecting, expanding and improving England's woodlands

This month, we have produced updated information on managing ash in light of ash dieback, we are at the APF 2018 show talking about this and other important topics. Plus a reminder on the deadlines you must comply with to inform us of force majeure.

New guidance on managing ash in woodland in light of ash dieback

Read our new guidance on responding to ash dieback to help you manage your woodland for the future.

To support our customers in the management of ash in woodlands (in light of ash dieback) we have published [new guidance – Responding to ash dieback operations note 46](#) which provides practical advice to those with responsibility for the management of ash in woodlands in England.

We have also produced a [YouTube video - Updated guidance for managing woodland with ash dieback](#) describing how to maintain the benefits of woodland whilst managing the impact of the disease using our updated guidance.

This guidance has been informed by UK researchers and practitioners, and draws on evidence from Europe, where the disease has a 25-year history.

Managing ash on your land

Individual landowners are responsible for the care and management of trees on their land and should take a strategic approach to the management of ash. We strongly recommend that all owners of woodland containing ash prepare or amend existing management plans to describe how ash will be managed. This guidance should not be considered proscriptive, and the choice of action will depend on owners' and managers' objectives, the woodland setting, and the level of ash dieback infection, including any immediate health and safety concerns. Use the ash dieback management decision tool at the end of the guidance to help with this.

The [Woodland tree health grant](#) is available year round to support the restocking of

those woodlands that have been felled due to a confirmed tree health issue. Please see our [Woodland Support page on GOV.UK](#) for more information on eligibility criteria.

How does this affect felling permissions?

Unless trees are dead or pose a danger to the public, felling of diseased ash currently requires a [felling licence](#) from the Forestry Commission. Landowners should ensure that they have long term felling permissions in place, including across open land use environments e.g. farms, to allow outbreaks of ash dieback to be managed without delay. Such a felling licence application should consider all the trees on the property, including those outside of woodlands e.g. on roadsides, hedgerows and public rights of way, and not just those in woodland settings.

Separate advice on managing non-woodland ash will be published later in the year.



Visit our stand at the APF 2018 (20-22 September)

If you are at the show today, come along to a seminar about our guidance on ash at 3:00pm.

For more information on other seminars see our [news story](#). Or follow the story on twitter [#apf2018](#)

A reminder of when and how to claim force majeure

What to do if you need to notify us of a problem

In our most recent eAlerts ([2 August](#) and [10 September](#)) we have reminded you that if you believe you are not able to comply with your Agreement obligations due to exceptional circumstances outside of your control (including this summer's drought), this may be considered as a case of 'force majeure' and you must notify the relevant grant administrator in writing within a fixed time period.

When does the fixed time period start and how long is it?

You have a fixed number of days to make a force majeure claim in writing to the your grant Administrator from the point at which you are in a position to do so. We can now clarify that if you have conducted a "beat-up" survey of your Agreement Area to determine the scale and location of tree deaths, then you are in a position to claim

force majeure and must do so within 10 or 15 working days of the beat-up survey. This time period depends on the type of agreement:

- for Farm Woodland Premium Scheme (FWPS) or English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) (including the Farm Woodland Payment (FWP)) Agreements you must claim 'force majeure' within 10 working days
- for Countryside Stewardship (CS) or Woodland Carbon Fund (WCF) schemes, you must claim 'force majeure' within 15 working days

Who is my grant Administrator?

- for legacy woodland schemes (FWPS, EWGS and FWP), the relevant grant administrator is your FC Administrative Hub (adminhub.bullershill@forestrycommission.gov.uk for Agreements in the West or adminhub.se@forestrycommission.gov.uk for Agreements in the East)
- for CS schemes, the relevant grant administrator is your local Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services office
- for the Woodland Carbon Fund, the relevant grant administrator is FC National Office (wcf@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

We strongly recommend that beat-up surveys are undertaken as soon as possible if you have any concerns, and that you ensure you comply with the fixed time period for force majeure claims, where necessary, as described above.

If you have any questions, please contact us:

Email: GRNationalTeam@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-grants>

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