



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

How to check and change your hedge information

2018

How to check and change your hedge information

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) must meet with European Union (EU) regulations by keeping mapping information up to date. Updates are based on information received from Ordnance Survey (OS).

From March 2018, farmers have been able to see the OS data which shows information about hedges in their digital maps in the Rural Payments service.

How your hedge information is created

Ordnance Survey (OS) provides hedge information. They use an automatic computer process that identifies hedges from aerial photos and height information, which creates the features that you can see in your digital maps. The process gives consistent results across the country. However, there are cases where:

- hedges are not identified – for example, where they are not visible on aerial photos because the hedgerow is underneath tree branches and leaves
- hedges are identified by mistake – for example, where a wall or fence is covered with brambles or there is an area of dense scrub growing along a field boundary.

You need to check your hedge information in your digital maps using the Rural Payments service. This guidance explains how to check the information, what to do if you need to make any changes and how to fill in an RLE1 form.

How to check your hedge information

If you intend to use hedges to form part of your application or claim it's important that you check your hedge information. You should do this before you apply or claim for payment under the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) or Countryside Stewardship (CS), excluding Environmental Stewardship. The information held will be used to check against what you have claimed for.

The EFA hedges option now includes trees in a line, but trees in a line are not shown in your digital maps. This is because the change to the rules that widened the definition of a hedge to include trees in a line (for BPS only) came into effect after hedges information had been received from OS.

In some cases, you may not be able to see any hedge information - the hedge icon is missing. This is because hedges on your land were not captured. If this is the case and you want to apply for CS, or claim for payment on hedges as part of BPS or CS, continue to read the information to find out what you need to do.

To view information about hedges that are shown in your digital maps, from the 'Business overview' screen click 'Land', then 'View land', then choose the relevant land parcel.

Land covers

These are the land covers that we currently have mapped.

Land covers	Total area (ha)
Arable Land	4.18
Total area	4.18

Hedges

These are the hedges that we currently have mapped for this parcel.

Number	Length(m)	EFA Eligible
1	315	Yes
2	229	Yes
3	163	Yes
4	135	Yes

Land actions

[Download a print-friendly version of this page. \(PDF\)](#)

For hedges that are shown in your maps, you can see:

- the hedges in the map or photo at the top of the screen by clicking the hedges icon in the map or photo. The hedges will appear in light blue/light green.
- a list of details about the hedges:
 - the length of the hedge in metres will show as a number of separate lengths, for instance if there are gaps of more than 20 metres
 - whether or not the hedge is eligible as an ecological focus area (EFA) by 'Yes' or 'No'. (A hedge will show as eligible if it is shown in the Rural Payments service as being on or within 5 metres of a land parcel with arable land cover.)

What is the definition of a hedge?

In line with cross compliance rules, hedges (or trees in a line) must have either:

- a continuous length of at least 20 metres (measured canopy edge to canopy edge for trees in a line) or is part of any such length, or
- a continuous length less than 20 metres where they meet (at an intersection or junction) hedge or trees in a line at each end.

Trees in a line must be a single row of at least 3 trees situated on the boundary line of the parcel. For further information on EFA hedges or trees in a line, see page 55 of the [‘Basic Payment Scheme: rules for 2018’](#).

Hedges or trees in a line can include gaps. There is no limit on how many gaps these can have – as long as each individual gap is not more than 20 metres (measured from canopy edge to canopy edge for trees in line).

Hedges may be shown in the digital map as a series of separate lengths within a land parcel. Lengths of hedge with gaps 20 metres or less between them will show as a single run of hedge, including the gap.

Hedges with gaps more than 20 metres between them will show separately.

Lengths of hedges less than 20 metres including any gaps are not eligible for EFA and won't be shown in the digital map. However, a hedge that is less than 20 metres can be eligible for EFA if it is part of a hedge network that is more than 20 metres in length.

Therefore, in some cases hedges will look different in your digital maps.

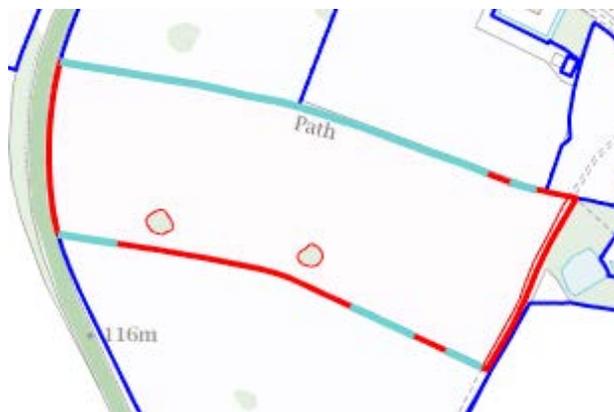
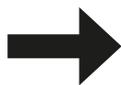
Example – hedges with gaps less than 20 metres



Aerial Photography



Ordnance Survey Map
Small red lines denote gaps of less than 20 metres



Digital map
The field shows light blue lines as hedges and RPA has joined up the many gaps less than 20 metres

How and when to change your hedge information

RPA's priority is to make sure that the hedge information is correct for those who are using hedges for:

- their EFA greening requirement for BPS (for BPS, hedges also include trees in a line)
- applying to join the CS scheme
- submitting a claim against an existing CS agreement.

If you use a hedge feature to claim for payment and you declare hedges that exist on the ground, but are not shown accurately in the Rural Payments service, penalties will not be applicable. However, to make sure your payment is right first time, we will work with you to make sure that the mapping information we hold is accurate.

You may disagree with a length of hedge or hedge feature shown in your digital maps. If you are not using the hedge to meet your EFA greening requirement for BPS and / or as part of a CS application or submitting a claim against an existing CS agreement, you do not need to send an RLE1 form to update your maps before you claim. If you wish to do so, then please tell RPA later in the year.

RPA is aware that in some instances some features may have been mistaken for hedges, for example, walls and fences which had brambles growing over them. You do not need to send an RLE1 form and sketch map to make corrections to features like these before you claim, you should do so later in the year. You must not however claim them as EFA hedges or include them in a CS application or claim.

All CS agreements have general requirements about maintaining and managing hedgerows. These general requirements will not be checked against the hedge information RPA holds in the digital maps.

If you made an application or claim in 2017, it will not be checked against the hedge information RPA holds in the digital maps. You do not need to update your 2017 application or claim.

If you have already submitted a 2018 CS application or claim that you feel needs to be updated, you can write to Natural England to update your 2018 application or claim before the appropriate deadline.

What to do when you apply for a Countryside Stewardship (CS) agreement

Only CS applications made in 2018 will be checked against the hedge information RPA holds in the digital maps.

For 2018 applications, the following CS items are checked against the hedge information in the digital maps:

- BE3 (Management of hedgerows)
- BN5 (Hedgerow laying)
- BN6 (Hedgerow coppicing).

The following items will not be checked against the hedge information.

- BN11 (Planting new hedges)
- BN7 (Hedgerow gapping-up)
- TE1 (Planting standard hedgerow tree)
- BN10 (Hedgerow supplement)

If you disagree with a length of hedge or hedge feature shown in your digital maps (or it is not shown) which you intend to include in your CS application, you should:

- fill in and send RPA an RLE1 form and sketch map for the hedge lengths you have entered in your application that you disagree with or are not shown in your digital maps – see page 10.
- check your application to make sure that the measurements are correct and match with the hedges on the ground
- if necessary, update your application before submitting it



The RLE1 form does not form part of your CS application. Therefore, submit your application first and on time. Make sure it is accurate and reflects what is on the ground. Then, send your RLE1 form and sketch map as soon as you can. RPA will check for outstanding RLE1 forms before processing your CS application.

What to do when you claim online for Countryside Stewardship (CS)

Only CS claims submitted in 2018 will be checked against hedge information.

For CS claims, only option BE3 is checked against the hedge information shown in the digital maps. Capital items are checked against other information held by Natural England.

Information in the hedges options shown on CS claims is taken from what is included in your CS agreement – not the hedge information shown in the digital maps.

If you disagree with the length of hedge shown in your digital maps (or it is not shown):

- fill in and send RPA an RLE1 form and sketch map for the hedge lengths you have entered in your claim that you disagree with or are not shown in your digital maps – see page 10
- check your claim to make sure that the measurements are correct and match with the hedges on the ground
- if necessary, update your claim before submitting it. You do this by:
 - opening your CS revenue claim
 - opening parcel based options to be claimed
 - open option BE3
 - updating the length of hedge claimed on each parcel
 - include a brief explanation of the changes in the ‘Changes to your claim’ section.

Option Code	Option Title	Total Approved	Claimed	EFA Area	
BE3	BE3 - Management of hedgerows	2000 Metres	2000 Metres	0 Metres	Open
GS2	GS2 - Permanent grassland with very low inputs (outside SDAs)	3.7907 HA	3.7907 HA	0.0000 HA	Open
GS5	GS5 - Permanent grassland with very low inputs in SDA	10.0303 HA	10.0303 HA	0.0000 HA	Open

Parcel Based Options to be claimed				
BE3 - Management of hedgerows				
Sheet Number	Parcel Number	Total Approved (Metres)		Claimed (Metres)
SD		500		500
SD		200		200
SD		1000		1000
SD		300		300

[Save](#) [Back](#)

The ‘Total Approved’ length of the hedge will match the length in the CS agreement.

The claimed length will default to ‘Total Approved’ length. You won’t be able to claim more than the approved length, but you can claim for less.

No warning message is displayed if you claim more than is shown in the hedge information in your digital maps.



The RLE1 form does not form part of your CS claim. Therefore, submit your claim first and on time. Make sure it is accurate and reflects what is on the ground. Then, send your RLE1 form and sketch map as soon as you can. RPA will check for outstanding RLE1 forms before processing your CS claim.

What to do when you claim on paper for Countryside Stewardship (CS)

Only CS claims submitted in 2018 will be checked against hedge information.

For CS claims, only option BE3 is checked against hedge information in digital maps. Capital items are checked against other information held by Natural England.

Information in the hedges options shown on CS claims is taken from what is included in your CS agreement – not the hedge information shown in the digital maps.

If you disagree with the length of hedge or hedge feature shown in your digital maps (or it is not shown) that you want to claim for:

- fill in and send RPA an RLE1 form and sketch map for the hedge lengths you have entered in your claim that you disagree with or are not shown in your digital maps– see page 10
- check your claim to make sure that the measurements are correct and match with the hedges on the ground
- if necessary, update the lengths of BE3 in section 2 of your paper claim before submitting it, including a brief explanation in the 'Changes to your claim' in section 6



Environmental Stewardship claims are not checked against hedge information shown in the digital maps.



The RLE1 form does not form part of your CS claim. Therefore, submit your claim first and on time. Make sure it is accurate and reflects what is on the ground. Then, send your RLE1 form and sketch map as soon as you can. RPA will check for outstanding RLE1 forms before processing your CS claim.

What to do when you apply for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS)

A hedge will be pre-populated in the 'Land use' screen in the Rural Payments service, or at Part D of a paper application, if you declared it as part of your EFA greening requirement for BPS in 2017. If it is pre-populated it will show the length you declared in 2017 unless the eligible hedges information shown in your digital maps has a lower length. It will then use the information RPA holds for the individual hedge lengths in the parcel and will show on multiple lines. Trees in a line are not shown.

You can update the 'land use' screen to show the total length of a hedge for the land parcel by deleting the existing individual entries and including a single entry giving the land use and total length.

 After you've made your changes, you should generate a new application summary as this will update the information it shows – read page 43 of the 'How to claim BPS online in 2018'.

If you disagree with a length of hedge or hedge feature shown in your digital maps (or it is not shown) that you intend to use towards meeting your EFA greening requirement, you should:

- update the hedge length you want to declare as part of your EFA requirement - make sure that the measurements are correct and match with the hedges on the ground
- submit your BPS application
- fill in and send RPA an RLE1 form and sketch map for the hedge lengths you have entered in your application that you disagree with or are not shown in your digital maps – see page 10.

 The RLE1 form does not form part of your BPS application. Therefore, submit your application first and on time. Make sure it is accurate and reflects what is on the ground. Then, send your RLE1 form and sketch map as soon as you can. RPA will check for outstanding RLE1 forms before processing your BPS application.

If you're using trees in a line to meet your EFA requirement, those are not shown in your digital maps. You should fill in an RLE1 form and sketch map and send to RPA to request the information is added to your digital maps.

If you're submitting your BPS application using the **Rural Payments service**:

- enter the total length of the hedge in the 'Land Use' screen:
 - this includes the actual feature and the total length of the hedge (see '[How to claim BPS online in 2018](#)' guidance for details)
 - the 'Land Use' screen will allow you to enter the total length you believe is correct even if this is greater than what is shown in your digital maps

Land Uses	NG	National Grid NY	Undeclared	Overdeclared
Sheet NY0728, parcel 5168			4 parcels	1 parcels
<div><p>First land use —</p><p>Land use: <input type="text" value="BF11 - HALF HEDGE"/></p><p>ha <input type="text"/> m <input type="text" value="100"/></p><p>Rotations +</p><p><input type="button" value="Save"/> <input type="button" value="Back"/></p></div>				

- in the 'Use less EFA than available' screen
 - check the length of hedge recorded
 - make sure the length claimed for is correct
- continue to make and submit your application.

Use less EFA than available

Apply for scheme

Year: 2018

Scheme: [dropdown]

Filter by NG: [dropdown] Map sheet reference: [text] NG field number: [text]

Eligibility profile: All Eligible Ineligible

Scheme	Eligible	Applied for	Units	Has docs.	Land	Document
C - EFA Hedges (DI and ADJACENT TO arable)	2919	2919	Metres	No	Open	

Filter

For more information, read the '[How to claim BPS online in 2018](#)' guidance.

If you're submitting your BPS application using the **BP5 application form**:

- check the lengths of hedge shown in Part D
- update Part D of the BP5 form to what you believe the hedge length to be even if this is greater than the length shown
- submit your BP5 application.

For more information, read the '[How to apply using a paper form](#)'.

How to fill in the RLE1 form

If you disagree with a length of hedge or hedge feature shown in your digital maps (or it is not shown) you only need to submit an RLE1 form and sketch map to RPA if you're using hedges for any of the following:

- as part of your EFA greening requirement for BPS
- applying to join the CS scheme
- submitting a claim against an existing CS agreement



The RLE1 form does not form part of your BPS or CS application, or CS claim. Therefore, submit your application or claim first and on time. Make sure it is accurate and reflects what is on the ground. Then, send your RLE1 form and sketch map as soon as you can. RPA will check for outstanding RLE1 forms before processing your BPS or CS application, or CS claim. Checks will be made to make sure that an RLE1 form and sketch map have been received, and your hedges information has been updated before your claim or agreement is finalised or your payment is made. Therefore, it's important that you send your RLE1 form and sketch map to RPA as soon as you can, so that it does not delay your payment.

If you do not submit an RLE1 form and sketch map at all, it may delay your payment, or mean that the information does not form part of your application or claim and may lead to an over-declaration in some cases.

When you fill in your RLE1 form and sketch map:

- enter information about the hedge at Part D
- show the breakdown of the hedge or the trees in a line, including individual strips or lengths within the land parcel, on the sketch map – see example below. If a gap between 2 hedges is less than 20m show the hedge as a continual length – see example on page 11.

See pages 43 and 44 of the [RLE1 guidance](#) for details on how to add hedges or trees in a line.



The 'Download a print-friendly version of this page' function in your digital maps, in the 'Parcel details' screen, will not show any hedge information. You should tick 'Hedges' so the hedge detail is showing, view on full screen and take a screen shot to print.

Land covers

These are the land covers that we currently have mapped.

Land covers	Total area (ha)
Arable Land	4.18
Total area	4.18

Hedges

These are the hedges that we currently have mapped for this parcel.

Number	Length(m)	EFA Eligible
1	315	Yes
2	229	Yes
3	163	Yes
4	135	Yes



Land actions

[Download a print-friendly version of this page. \(PDF\)](#)

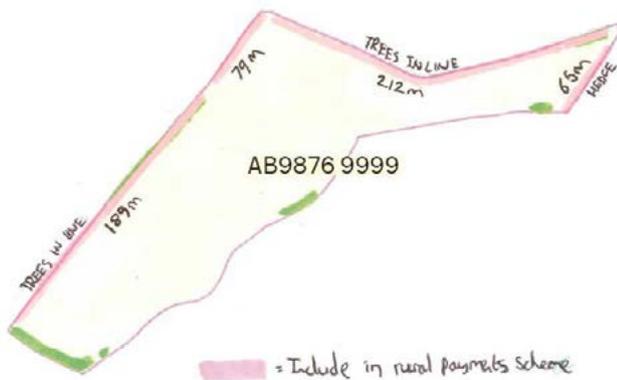
Example

How to fill in the RLE1 form

Line	Existing field data		Action group		
	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
	OS Map sheet reference	National Grid number	Total field size in hectares	Group	Effective date of change
1	A B 9 8 7 6 9 9 9 9			1+	0 1 0 1 2 0 1 8

What to show on the sketch map

The example below shows how sections of hedge and trees in a line are marked on the sketch map. The total length is shown.



Adding trees in a line

The example below shows a digital map containing hedges (shown in green).



There are some trees in a line (circled in red) that could be included in the hedge.



The example below shows how trees in a line (shown in blue) have been marked and included. The total length is also shown (in yellow)



Send the completed RLE1 form and sketch map to:

Rural Payments Agency
PO Box 352
Worksop
S80 9FG

© Crown copyright 2018

You may re-use this document (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0.

To view this licence visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/opengovernment-licence>; or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This document is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/rpa/bps2018

www.gov.uk/rpa

Produced by the Rural Payments Agency

Version 3.0

September 2018