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Grants & Regulations news

Protecting, expanding and improving England's woodlands

We are resending this eAlert as an important item (Operations Note 043) was missed from the text. Please see the article below.

This month, make sure you request your Higher Tier application packs, understand the changes to the CS Woodland Management Plan grant manual, read the new Operations Note on afforestation on or near priority habitat. Read and respond to the Agriculture consultation.

New Operations Note 043 – Principles for afforestation on or near priority habitat

This item was missed from the original eAlert

This new [Operations Note](#) clarifies the principles to be adopted when considering developing an afforestation proposal on or near priority habitats (as defined by Section 41 of NERC Act 2006). This is a restatement of existing principles, and does not present a change in policy.

CS Woodland Management Plan Grant – Updated Manual for 2018

The [CS Woodland Management Plan Grant manual](#) has now been updated and will apply to all agreements commencing from 1 April 2018.

This edition of the manual makes a number of [small changes](#). These are mainly updates and clarifications to bring it in line with the CS manuals for other grants. Annex 2 – Woodland Management Plan Technical Guidance – has been updated to reflect the changes to the UK Forestry Standard in 2017. The grant's terms and conditions have not changed.

Countryside Stewardship Woodland Improvement via Higher Tier pack request deadline

You can apply for Woodland Improvement via Higher Tier until 13 April 2018. You must [request an application pack](#) by **9 March** to be able to apply so please do so now. Packs can be requested from Natural England's Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services, their contact details can be found in Annex 9 of the [Higher Tier grant manual](#).

Woodland Creation Maintenance Webinar Recording

An applicant webinar was held on Thursday 1 March on the Woodland Creation Maintenance grant.

To watch the recording, please visit the Countryside Stewardship page on the Forestry Commission website [here](#) for more information on the application process and grant requirements.

Agriculture Consultation launches

Health and Harmony: The future for food, farming and the environment in a green Brexit

You may have seen the launch of the Future Farming and Environment consultation '[Health and Harmony: The future for food, farming and the environment in a green Brexit](#)' in the news, the consultation is live now, it is open for 10 weeks closing on the 10 May 2018.

We would like as many of our stakeholders to contribute to this conversation as possible – please encourage others, to read and contribute to the consultation via [Citizen Space](#).

HS2 Woodland Fund funds committed – express your interest in the reserve list

The full £1 million of funding for native woodland creation and PAWS restoration under the HS2 Woodland Fund have been provisionally committed. A reserve list of applications is now in operation, and we are pleased to accept further expressions of interest that will be invited to apply should further funding become available. This saves you the time of submitting a full application. Please send a completed [expression of interest](#) to hs2woodlandfund@forestry.gsi.gov.uk to be contacted in the event that funding becomes available.

Annual Claims 2018

If you have an annual claim associated with any of the following grants we will soon be sending out your claim forms:

- Woodland Management Grant (WMG) from an EWGS contract
- Farm Woodland Premium Scheme (FWPS)
- Farm Woodland Payment (FWP)

The letter and claim will be sent by recorded delivery to the scheme's main applicant, as they are the beneficiary of the funding. We will also contact the primary contact (which may be your agent) to make them aware of the annual claim and to contact their client.

Completed annual claim forms must be received by the Forestry Commission no later than the 15 May 2018 in order to avoid a penalty being applied to the claim. Claims returned after the 9 June 2018 will not receive a payment for 2018. Payments are normally made at the beginning of December.

If you have any questions, please contact us:

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Email: GRNationalTeam@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

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