



## Grants & Regulations news

Protecting, expanding and improving England's woodlands

We have lots of information on claims in this issue, so check all the sections to see if you have any claims to make. Make sure you update your land use (for CS Woodland Creation customers) and understand what to do if you have a land data change to make with the RPA. Read about the new template available for Woodland Creation Planning Grant and check out our series of European Protected Species training events.

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## Countryside Stewardship Woodland Creation – updating your land use

When the agreement starts, Countryside Stewardship Woodland Creation Agreement Holders are reminded to update the land use for the land area included in the agreement. Agreement Holders should refer to the Forestry Commission's [Operations Note 042](#) for information on how to do this. It also explains the relationship between Countryside Stewardship woodland schemes and the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS). Guidance on [key dates and scheme rules](#) for BPS in 2018 is now available on GOV.UK along with updated [RLE1 form guidance](#). Remember to declare your existing woodland on your BPS return.

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## RPA Land Mapping - Proactive Land Change Detection (PLCD)

### How customers can challenge changes

The RPA have published a new [web page](#) with more information about this work and opened a phone line (03000 200 301) to provide help to land managers who want to check or query these changes. In certain instances RPA may be able to make changes to your land data over the phone. For more information please see the RPA's [check and change mapping updates page](#).

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## Claims

We have lots on information on claims in this issue:

## **Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Woodland Agreement Holders (WD2)**

### **New monitoring tool coming soon**

Countryside Stewardship Agreement Holders with the woodland improvement option (WD2) are required to keep records of all management activity, complete Operational Site Assessments (where relevant) and also provide monitoring reports with their revenue claims in years 3 and 5.

We have created a monitoring tool that may be useful for creating the monitoring reports required in years 3 and 5. An associated Operations Note provides useful guidance for using the monitoring spreadsheet tool and explains how to create reports. You do not need to use this monitoring tool but there is a requirement to submit a monitoring report with your third year revenue (WD2) claim so you may find this monitoring tool useful if you are coming up to your third revenue claim for WD2. The monitoring tool will be made available on our [Countryside Stewardship webpage](#) and the associated Operations Note will be [here](#). These will be made available on the 19 March 2018.

## **EWGS and FWPS Annual Claims 2018**

### **Claim forms were sent out on the 14 March**

#### **If you have an annual claim associated with any of the following grants we have sent 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 form has been 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.

## **Countryside Stewardship Annual Claims**

### **How to make your claim**

Natural England expects to start writing out to Countryside Stewardship agreement holders about their revenue claims during week commencing 19 March. We will provide an update as soon as it is available.

## EWGS Capital Claims 2018

### How to make your claim

Claims must be received by us no later than 31 March 2018 to guarantee payment. EWGS capital claims are for:

- 1st instalment of Woodland Creation Grant (WCG)
- One off (capital) payment under Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG)
- Woodland Regeneration Grant (WRG)

To make your capital claims please use the [EWGS8 form](#).

### What to do if you can't make the 31 March deadline?

If you think that you will have any trouble meeting the 31 March 2018 for receipt of claims, please contact your [Forestry Commission Admin Hub](#) as soon as possible and they will try to assist you, where reasonably practicable.

Claims must be supported by photographic evidence, demonstrating that the work for which payment is being sought, has been completed. [Operations Note 39](#) contains information to help you with this.

## Countryside Stewardship - Capital Claims

### How to make your claim

Remember if you have a Countryside Stewardship agreement to undertake capital works you have two years to complete the work and from the date the agreement was approved. You then have another three months after this to make your claim. So if you have a capital agreement do check it, especially if the work involves tree planting, you may need to complete your tree planting over the coming weeks if your deadline for work doesn't run in to next winter's planting season.

Each claim must be for a minimum of £500. For information on how to claim please see:

- For [CS Capital Grant grants administered by the Forestry Commission](#) (agreements before 2017).

Or,

- For [CS Capital Grant grants administered by Natural England's CS Delivery Services](#) read how to claim your grant online or request a claim form.

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## Woodland Creation Planning Grant

### New template available

The [Woodland Creation Planning Grant](#) has been updated to include a template for producing a Woodland Creation Design Plan, which is required when completing the

second stage of the grant. The template is available [online](#) and replaces the Stage 2 checklist. The information requirements remain the same but the new template provides additional guidance and structure to help applicants work through the design process.

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## European Protected Species (EPS) Training Events

### Booking essential - £50 per person (including refreshments and lunch)

We are holding a series of EPS training events. Aimed at updating woodland agents, contractors and owners in changes to the legislation and good practice guidance, the training will help ensure woodland work can continue whilst keeping within the legislation. The training will be delivered by FC staff and species experts, and will comprise of both indoor and outdoor sessions. Events are planned to be held on:

- 25 April - Forestry Commission Visitor Centre, Fineshade, Northants;
- 1 May - Forestry Commission Visitor Centre, Hamsterley, Co Durham
- 9 May - Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Preston, Lancashire
- 16 May - Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Coventry, Warwickshire;
- 17 May - Woodland Enterprise Centre, Flimwell, East Sussex – (awaiting final confirmation);
- 22 May - Westonbirt Arboretum, Gloucestershire
- 23 May - Fingle Bridge Inn, Drewsteignton, Devon

You will shortly be able to view further details and to book a place at your chosen event on the [FC Box Office](#). Booking is essential. Please note that numbers will be limited at each event.

**If you have any questions, please contact us:**

Email: [GRNationalTeam@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:GRNationalTeam@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

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

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