



Forestry Commission
England

Grants & Regulations news

Protecting, expanding and improving England's woodlands

This month, book training, find out important information about claims, update your details on Rural Payments and understand changes to Cross Compliance.

News and Events

European Protected Species Training

Book your place now

We have been running European Protected Species (EPS) training events, and we still have a number left in May that you could attend. They are aimed at updating woodland agents, contractors and owners in changes to the legislation and good practice guidance, and 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 can be booked via the [Forestry Commission box office](#), they are £50 and start at 9:30am. Booking is essential and places will be limited so please [book now](#).

Woodland Creation Design Workshops

Tickets available for our events in June

This joint series of events between the Forestry Commission and Institute of Chartered Foresters will provide practical information and advice on how to design new woodlands that fit within the landscape and accommodate features of interest. Each workshop will go through the different stages of the design process based on the principles set out in the [UK Forestry Standard \(UKFS\)](#). Don't miss out on this valuable CPD event.

- 5 June - The Cullompton Centre, Cullompton
- 6 June - High Ashurst, Dorking
- 11 June - The Cedar Centre, Dorking
- 12 June - Green Woods Centre, Telford
- 27 June - Myerscough College, Preston
- 28 June - Scotch Corner Hotel, Darlington

Tickets are available from ICF at £49, further information and booking available on the [Chartered Foresters website](#).

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Updates

EWGS and FWPS Annual Claims 2018 – submit your claims by 15 May

Your claim forms were sent out on 14 March

If you have an annual claim associated with any of the following grants you should have received your claim forms:

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

The scheme's main applicant should have received the claim form, 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 15 May 2018 in order to avoid a penalty being applied to the claim. Claims returned after 9 June 2018 will not receive a payment for 2018. Payments are normally made at the beginning of December.

Countryside stewardship annual claim deadline for 2018 is being extended to the 15 June

This year the claim deadline is being extended by one month to 15 June. This extension is for all existing Higher Tier and Mid Tier Countryside Stewardship agreements holders with an annual claim and 2017 applicants who are still waiting to receive an offer of an agreement to start from 1 January 2018.

The extension will not apply to Environmental Stewardship claims; woodland legacy claims or Basic Payment Scheme 2018 claims, and the deadline for these remains 15 May 2018.

Payment of Countryside Stewardship Annual claim payments

In previous Countryside Stewardship claim years, the payment split has been 50/50. For the 2017 agreement year, payments are split 75/25. This means that you will now receive 75% of your total annual grant as an advance payment and the remaining 25% as the final payment (subject to any reductions or penalties).

Further information on claims is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk). For woodland legacy annual payments we continue to make one payment of 100%.

Mapping changes and 2018 annual revenue claims

Your annual revenue claim should reflect the correct position of your land on the ground as of 15 May 2018.

If the parcel information shown is incorrect and is being challenged with a 'Mapping change query' RLE1 form, you should do the following:

- CS agreement holders using a paper claim form should provide an explanation of what information is incorrect on the claim in 'Section 6: Changes to Your Claim' or if claiming online in the 'Changes to your claim' section.
- EWGS/FWPS agreement holders should annotate the claim form if the parcel information is incorrect. Forestry Commission have been updating land parcels for legacy schemes with the mapping changes as part of its routine business but you should still check that your claim is correct.

The RLE1 form and guidance is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Check your address on Rural Payments – make sure it is correct under your SBI and CRN

Did you know that your address is recorded in two places on Rural Payments?

For agreement holders of legacy grants (EWGS, FWPS and FWS) it is important that you check the correct address is linked to both your SBI and your CRN. If you have recently changed your address on [Rural Payments](https://www.gov.uk/rural-payments) please ensure that you did this in both places. We are keen to make sure that these address details are correct as our grant systems synchronize with the CRN address meaning that correspondence and claim forms will be sent to this contact.

Cross Compliance and Woodland Management Updates to guidance but no changes to the regulations

The full 2018 Cross Compliance Guidance for landowners has recently been released. There have been some minor changes to the wording used which has

raised concerns with some woodland owners and agents, especially in relation to GAEC 7(c), the ban on the cutting of trees during the bird nesting season (1 March to 31 August inclusive). This is to confirm that there have been no changes to the underlying Regulations and that the current guidance (drafted in 2015) identifying any impact on an owner's ability to fell trees during this period, remains in force.

It is our intention however to review the current FC guidance, and to make any minor changes where we think this is necessary to clarify the position and also to ensure that any impact on Countryside Stewardship agreements is also identified. We will confirm when this review has been completed and where to find the revised guidance. Meanwhile the current guidance can be found on our [website](#).

Hear more about our new Service Standard for Woodland Management Plan's at our Webinar

Did you join us for our woodland management plan service standard webinar last month? If not you can watch the [webinar](#) on our website which details the new service standard in which we will aim to review 80% of first draft management plans and either approve or return with comments within 7 weeks.

Please visit the [Management Plan page](#) of our website to find detailed guidance on writing a management plan as well as 3 example management plans, plus our updated Woodland Management Plan template and [Inventory and Plan of Operations](#).

Woodland Creation Planning Grant and Woodland Carbon Fund – Open Year Round

Why not apply today?

The [Woodland Creation Planning Grant \(WCPG\)](#) remains open year round. Applicants need to meet some basic eligibility criteria (at least 10ha in area) to receive up to £30,000 towards the cost of producing a Woodland Creation Design Plan. This ensures that the design of new woodland takes account of any impact on biodiversity, landscape, water, the historic environment and local stakeholders. There is no formal commitment to plant the woodland and applications can be speculative, for example from a prospective land purchase as long as the land owner provides written consent.

The [Woodland Carbon Fund](#) also remains open year round offering capital funding to plant new, productive woodland. Although not essential, the application process can be facilitated by producing a Woodland Creation Design Plan via the Woodland Creation Planning Grant. The Woodland Carbon Fund offers up to £6,800 per ha (£8,500 in priority places) plus a further £1,000 per ha payment in year 5. Additional payments are also available for recreational infrastructure and forest roads.

For Information

Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems (GWDTE)

We wanted to highlight a practice guide on [Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystems](#) that has been developed by Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Confor to help forest managers in identifying these ecosystems and assessing the risk of woodland creation operations to them. The guide is available on the Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme [Rural Payments website](#).

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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