



The European Agricultural Fund
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Countryside Stewardship Manual:

Woodland Management Plan Grant

Applies to Woodland Management Plan agreements
commencing from 1 April 2018

Revised June 2018

List of revisions since first publication

Section	Page	Revision	Revision date
2.4	10	Clarification of the guidance on the inclusion of newly planted woodland in the Woodland Management Plan.	June 2018
4.4.3	20	New first bullet inserted in the <i>Minimum Mapping Standards</i> section setting out the requirement to show whole land parcels with land parcel references and a clear boundary.	June 2018

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Introduction

This Manual provides the information needed to apply for the Woodland Management Plan capital item PA3 (“the Woodland Management Plan Grant”): www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/woodland-management-plan-pa3) and any additional requirements and processes which must be followed. This is a capital grant which is part of Countryside Stewardship (CS) (“the Scheme”). Eligible applicants who apply for a Woodland Management Plan using capital item PA3 will be offered a CS capital agreement.

Mandatory elements of the Woodland Management Plan Grant Manual

A Countryside Stewardship capital agreement will comprise:

1. the Scheme Terms and Conditions at Annex 1; and
2. the Agreement Document (which sets out details specific to the individual Agreement Holder)

The Terms and Conditions refer to, amongst other things; the mandatory elements of this Manual that Agreement Holders must comply with. The chapters of this Manual that contain mandatory text are:

- Chapter 3: Who can apply;
- Chapter 5: Scheme requirements, procedures and agreement management.

See the main Countryside Stewardship page at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-get-paid-for-environmental-land-management

For Countryside Stewardship forms see:

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1. Scheme overview

Woodland Management Plan Grants are available under Countryside Stewardship. For guidance and information on other woodland capital grants available as part of Countryside Stewardship (Woodland Creation and Woodland Tree Health), please see the separate guidance at www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-woodland-support.

The Government has confirmed that it will guarantee funding for Countryside Stewardship grants if these are agreed and signed before the UK's departure from the EU, even if the grant agreements continue after we have left the EU, subject to meeting the following conditions:

- they are good value for money; and
- they are in line with domestic strategic priorities.

Countryside Stewardship is closely aligned to Defra's strategic priorities. It is one of the main mechanisms for delivery of Defra's Strategic Objective of 'a cleaner, healthier environment, benefiting people and the economy'. It also supports the strategic vision for the 25 year Environment Plan "For our country to be the healthiest, most beautiful place in the world to live, work and bring up a family".

Countryside Stewardship also contributes to the Defra Single Departmental Plan, through delivering the following objectives:

- increased biodiversity, improved habitat and expanded woodland areas;
- cleaner water and sustainable usage;
- productive land and soils; and
- UK better protected against flooding and coastal erosion.

1.1 Organisations delivering and funding the scheme

The scheme is jointly delivered by Natural England, Forestry Commission England and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) on behalf of Defra. All supporting scheme guidance material can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-get-paid-for-environmental-land-management.

Countryside Stewardship supersedes the following schemes which are now closed to new applications:

- Environmental Stewardship (ES) including organic and upland strands;
- the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS); and
- Capital Grant Scheme (CGS) from the Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) programme.

1.2 Countryside Stewardship elements

There are four main elements within Countryside Stewardship:

- **Mid Tier:** multi-year agreements for environmental improvements in the wider countryside, that include multi-year options and capital items;

There are four **new CS Offers for Wildlife:** to provide funding to help farmers improve the wildlife on their farm, increasing year round habitats and helping pollinators to thrive. The Offers have been designed to help farmers choose the right options for their farmland and make it easier and simpler to apply for a Countryside Stewardship agreement:

- Arable Offer;
 - Lowland Grazing Offer;
 - Upland Offer; and the
 - Mixed Farming Offer.
- **Higher Tier:** multi-year agreements for environmentally significant sites, commons and woodlands where more complex management requires support from Natural England or the Forestry Commission, that include multi-year options and capital items;
 - **Capital Grants:** a range of 2 year grants specific to outcomes for hedgerows and boundaries, developing implementation plans, feasibility studies, woodland management plans, woodland creation (establishment), and tree health; and
 - a **Facilitation Fund**, which supports groups of land managers to collectively deliver landscape scale objectives.

This Manual covers the Woodland Management Plan Grant element of Countryside Stewardship.

Land managers interested in other elements of the Scheme should refer to www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-get-paid-for-environmental-land-management for access to the following information:

- CS: Higher Tier Manual
- CS: Hedgerows and Boundaries Grant Manual
- Facilitation Fund at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-countryside-stewardship-facilitation-fund

There is a dedicated woodland support page on GOV.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-woodland-support> where you can find more information specific on woodland support and the following grants:

- CS: Woodland Creation Grant
- CS: Woodland Tree Health

2. How it works

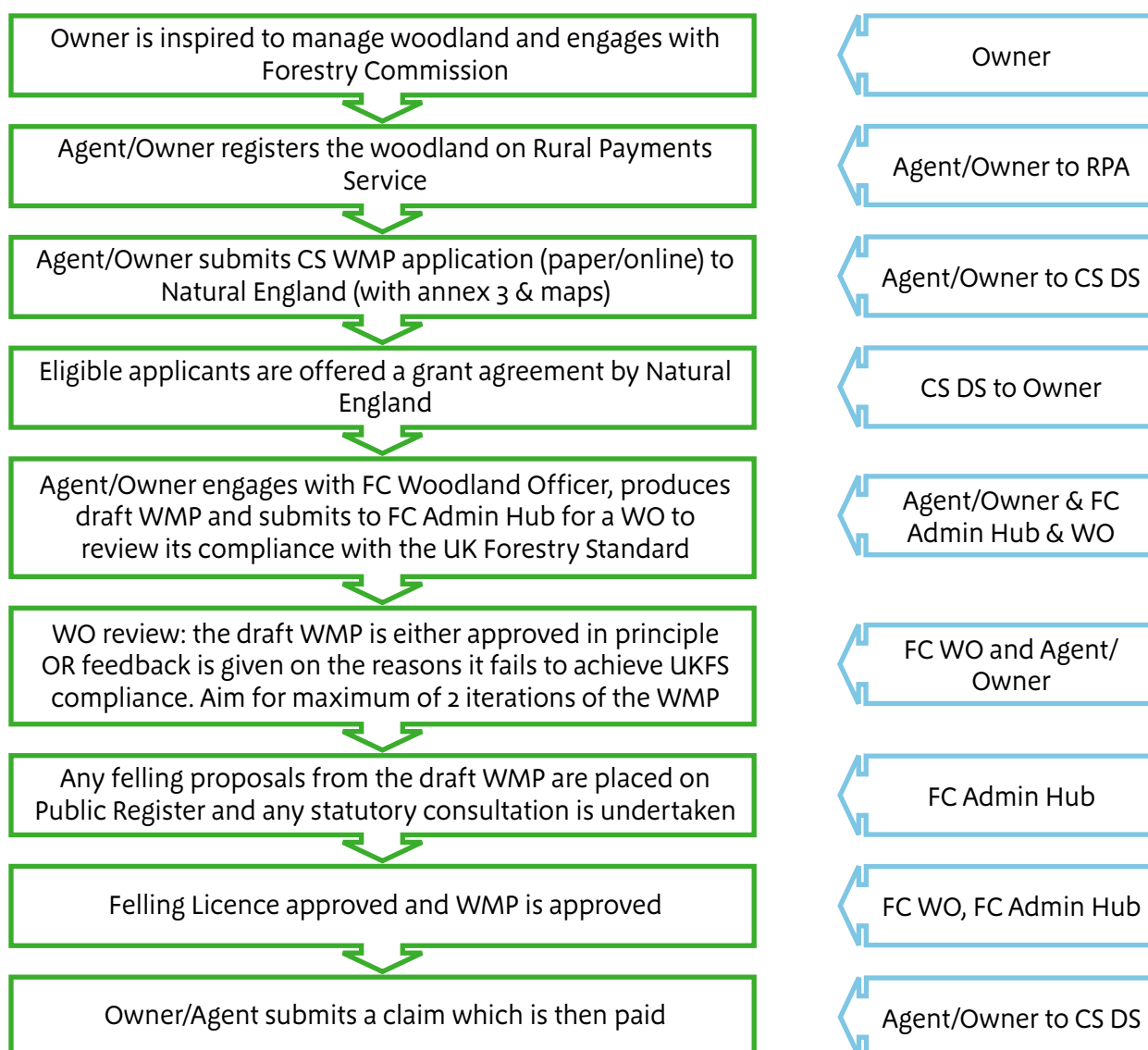
The CS Woodland Management Plan Grant is a capital grant through which applicants can apply for a one-off payment to create a UK Forestry Standard compliant (UKFS) 10 year Woodland Management Plan.

This chapter details how support for the production of a Woodland Management Plan through Countryside Stewardship works.

The Countryside Stewardship agreement must be applied for and accepted before work on the Woodland Management Plan can start. The Countryside Stewardship agreement is processed through Natural England, and the subsequent Woodland Management Plan is agreed and approved through the Forestry Commission.

2.1 Woodland Management Plan (WMP) application process (through capital item PA3)

The flowchart below shows the process from application to payment claim.



Acronym	Explanation
RPA	Rural Payments Agency - manages land and customer registration and paying claims.
CS DS	Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services – processes and offers grant agreements and payment claims
FC WO	Forestry Commission Woodland Officer – works with the Agreement Holder or their agent to develop a Woodland Management Plan that complies with the UK Forestry Standard and approves it
FC Admin Hub	Forestry Commission Admin Hub – processes felling licence and Woodland Management Plan approvals
UK FS	UK Forestry Standard – The Standard for sustainable forest management in the UK. The Woodland Management Plan must meet the relevant requirements and guidelines in the Standard to be approved by a Woodland Officer

Applicants can apply for a Woodland Management Plan Grant using the Countryside Stewardship capital item PA3 (www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/woodland-management-plan-pa3).

The Woodland Management Plan must cover all woodland on the applicant’s holding (see section 4.3 for more information) and be created on the Forestry Commission Woodland Management Plan template (www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-9bmqjwe) to be eligible for support, and to ensure value for money.

2.2 What are Woodland Management Plans?

In order to be approved, a Woodland Management Plan will need to be fully UK Forestry Standard compliant (<https://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs>) and must set out management intentions for a minimum of 10 years. Technical guidance on the production and content of a Woodland Management Plan is covered in Annex 2.

A Woodland Management Plan approved by the Forestry Commission is a mandatory requirement prior to applying for woodland support under the Higher Tier element of Countryside Stewardship and more information on this can be found in section 4.7.

2.3 Scoring

Grant applications for the creation of Woodland Management Plans are non-competitive and not subject to scoring. As long as the applicant is eligible to apply for this grant (see chapter 3) and subject to the budget approval, they will be offered an agreement.

2.4 Payment rates

The payment rate for the capital item Woodland Management Plan (PA3) is as follows:

Total area of woodland	Payment
3 – 50 hectares	Flat rate of £1,000
51 – 100 hectares	£20 per hectare
Over 100 hectares	£2,000 + £10 per additional hectares over 100 hectares

The amount paid will be calculated on the entire eligible area of woodland on the holding. This calculation can include up to an additional 20% of newly planted woodland (this means woodland that is under ten years old at the time of application). However, the Woodland Management Plan must cover all the woodland on the holding, including all newly planted woodland even when this accounts for more than 20% of the holding's woodland.

Applicants cannot apply for payment for a Woodland Management Plan on land which is already subject to a Forestry Commission approved Woodland Management Plan.

If any land has a pre-existing Forestry Commission approved Woodland Management Plan but a change in circumstances requires a new one to be written the applicant should contact their Forestry Commission Area office to discuss their eligibility prior to application with a Woodland Officer (contact details can be found at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-areas).

These payment rates and conditions are to ensure value for money.

2.5 When to apply

Applicants can submit Woodland Management Plan Grant applications to Natural England's CS Delivery Services at any time of the year. See section 4.4 for details on how to submit an application. Once eligible applicants have been offered and accepted their Woodland Management Plan agreement, a draft plan will need to be produced by the Agreement Holder or their agent. This plan must adhere to the standards and procedures set out in Annex 2.

2.6 Agreement duration

Once the capital agreement has been accepted, the Agreement Holder will have two years from the start of the agreement to create the Woodland Management Plan and secure Forestry Commission approval (including any associated felling approval). Agreement Holders have a further three months to submit their payment claim. For example, an agreement that starts on 1 June 2018 will have an agreement end date of 31 May 2020 by which time the plan must be complete and approved by the Forestry Commission. The Agreement Holder will then have until 31 August 2020 to submit their payment claim.

Applicants are recommended to submit their draft Woodland Management Plan to the Forestry Commission within the first year of their agreement. Woodland Management Plans received after this time cannot be guaranteed to gain approval within the two year period. More information will be outlined in the agreement offer letter.

Please note that this agreement duration is for the submission and approval of a Woodland Management Plan and subsequent payment claim; not for the duration of the work detailed in the Woodland Management Plan itself.

2.7 Payment claims

Payment for a Woodland Management Plan must be claimed in a single payment claim, submitted within three months following the Agreement End Date. Therefore, in the example given above (Agreement Start Date of 1 June 2018), the payment claim would have to be received by Natural England by 31 August 2020.

Further information on payment claims is given in chapter 5.

2.8 What the grant cannot pay for

To ensure value for money, the Woodland Management Plan Grant cannot be used to pay for the cost of:

- a Woodland Management Plan on land that already has a plan approved by the Forestry Commission (except if circumstances have changed that require a new one to be written – please speak with the Forestry Commission to ensure eligibility)
- planning application fees or other transactional fees; or
- meeting legal requirements, including planning conditions.

3 Who can apply

The Countryside Stewardship Terms and Conditions require Agreement Holders to comply with the mandatory elements set out in this Manual. These mandatory elements are set out in this Chapter and Chapter 5.

Countryside Stewardship capital grants are open to all of the following land managers:

- owner occupiers;
- tenants (including farmers who may have an agreement with the land owner labelled as a licence but who in practice have wider land management responsibilities);
- landlords; and
- licensors.

3.1 Eligible land

3.1.1 What land can be entered into the scheme

Support to create a Woodland Management Plan through Countryside Stewardship is only available on woodlands that have a total area larger than 3 hectares, with a minimum woodland block size of 0.5 hectares.

The following eligibility criteria apply to applications for Woodland Management Plan support:

- All woodland on an applicant's holding must be included in the Woodland Management Plan to be eligible for support (see section 4.3).
- To be eligible for payment for a Woodland Management Plan the land must be woodland, defined as an area of land being a minimum of 0.5 hectares and minimum width of 20 metres under stands of trees with, or with the potential to achieve, a height of 5 metres and crown cover of more than 20% of the ground.
- Internal open space shall be limited to 20% of the total woodland area (in exceptional and fully justified cases this may be increased to 30%). Open space may include forest tracks, rides, wayleaves and other permanent open areas but should be managed as an integral part of the woodland environment.
- The amount paid will be calculated on the entire area of woodland on the property and can include up to 20% newly planted woodland (under ten years old at the time of application). Anything over 20% will be deducted from the total area for payment but must still be covered in the Woodland Management Plan.

Land which is used to claim Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) is not eligible to claim payment for CS Woodland Management Plan (capital item PA3), but may be included in the plan. For example, an

area of short rotation coppice that is used to claim for BPS may be included in the plan but the area cannot be used for the payment claim under the CS Woodland Management Plan Grant.

However, any land that is used to claim for BPS that is also subject to the obligation period under Countryside Stewardship Woodland Creation (5 years following the agreement end date) or that is currently in a Woodland Creation Maintenance grant agreement (10 years) will be accepted as part of the 20% allowance for newly planted woodland.

3.1.2 Ineligible land

The following land is ineligible for a Woodland Management Plan Grant application and must be excluded from an application:

- land that does not meet the definition of a woodland, as set out in 3.1.1.
- developed land and hard standing (including permanent caravan sites and areas used for permanent storage).
- land that is already subject to another obligation which is incompatible with Countryside Stewardship.
- any land parcels which are not entirely within England. Parcels that are either partly or entirely within Scotland or Wales are not eligible for Countryside Stewardship.
- land where the applicant does not have management control for the period of the agreement and is unable to have an application countersigned by the landowner (see section 3.2).

3.2 Management control: eligibility and Scheme rules

Applicants must have control of all the land and all the activities needed to meet the requirements of the options and/or capital items they select for the full period of the agreement.

If an applicant does not have full control of the land and all such activities they must obtain the written consent of all other parties who have management control of the land and activities for the entire period of the capital agreement.

3.2.1 Tenants

Tenants applying for an agreement must have:

- control of all the activities needed to meet the Scheme requirements for the chosen Countryside Stewardship multi-year and capital items;
- management control of all the agreement land for the duration of any commitments (which may extend beyond the agreement period); and

- security of tenure for the full period of the agreement. If that is not possible, they must obtain the countersignature of their landlord as part of the application. If a countersigned application is not possible on a part of the tenant's land, that particular area of land must be omitted from the application.

Tenants must have the agreement of their landlord or the landowner before they apply. The applicant must ensure that entering into an Agreement will not breach the conditions of their tenancy.

If an applicant is a tenant under the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986, Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995 (a Farm Business Tenancy) or equivalent, it is their responsibility to check that joining Countryside Stewardship they do not breach the terms of their tenancy.

If a landlord undertakes to take over a Countryside Stewardship agreement from a tenant once the tenancy has ended, the landlord must be eligible to do so; for example, they must not be an ineligible public body.

3.2.2 Landlords

Provided landlords can demonstrate that they have sufficient management control over the land, they can apply for an agreement on land that has been let to a tenant.

As the Agreement Holder, landlords must give their tenant a copy of the Countryside Stewardship agreement. Landlords may be required to provide evidence, if requested, that they have given the tenant a copy of the agreement. It is the landlord's responsibility to make sure that any tenant does not breach the terms of the agreement.

3.2.3 Partnerships

Business partnerships can apply for Countryside Stewardship. All partners in the farm business, or their agents, must sign the application form. One person can be authorised to act as their representative if they have the appropriate permission levels within the Rural Payments service at www.gov.uk/claim-rural-payments (see section 4.5 for more information).

3.2.4 Licensors

If a licensor applies for a Countryside Stewardship agreement, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the licensee does not breach the terms of the Countryside Stewardship agreement.

Applicants must ensure that the licensee is aware of the requirements of the Woodland Management Plan, as relevant to the licence, and include these in the licence agreement.

3.2.5 Land owned by public bodies

Land owned or run by a public body would in general not be eligible for Countryside Stewardship. Any tenant applying will need to check with their landlord if the land is eligible for Countryside Stewardship.

Countryside Stewardship cannot pay for any environmental management that is already required through:

- payment from Exchequer funds;
- grant aid from any other public body; or
- any other form of legally binding obligation including tenancies.

This means that Crown bodies and non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) are not eligible for the Scheme. This includes those that are Trading Funds or that otherwise do not receive funding direct from the Exchequer. Crown bodies include all government departments and their executive agencies. These include, for example, the:

- the Ministry of Defence;
- the Forestry Commission.

NDPBs are public bodies that have a role in the processes of national government but are not a government department, nor part of one. These include:

- the Environment Agency;
- Natural England;
- Historic England; and
- the National Forest Company.

Parish councils and former college farms are not considered to be public bodies and so are eligible to apply for Countryside Stewardship.

The following table provides more detailed eligibility criteria for public bodies:

Applicant	Eligibility	Comments
Government departments, executive agencies and NDPBs (e.g. Ministry of Defence, Forestry Commission)	Ineligible	
Other public bodies (e.g. local authorities, National Park authorities and public corporations)	Eligible	Provided the work does not form part of their obligations as a public body
Parish Councils and former college farms	Eligible	
Tenants of eligible public bodies	Eligible	Ineligible where the work is already a requirement of the tenancy agreement. The public body must countersign the application if the tenant does not have security of tenure.

Applicant	Eligibility	Comments
Tenants of ineligible public bodies	Eligible	Ineligible where the work is already a requirement of the tenancy agreement. Tenants must have security of tenure for the full term of the agreement, as the public body cannot countersign the application.

3.3 Land receiving other funding

The Woodland Management Plan Grant cannot be combined with other sources of public funding to provide the same plan on the same land. The grant cannot be used to produce a Woodland Management Plan which an applicant is required to carry out under other agreements, such as work which is already a requirement of the tenancy agreement or other grant schemes such as:

- Environmental Stewardship;
- Other grants within Countryside Stewardship;
- Farming and Forestry Improvement Scheme;
- Woodland Grant Schemes;
- Farming Recovery Fund;
- Heritage Lottery Fund; or
- Inheritance Tax Exemption.

Applicants must ensure that any work proposed for this grant does not breach the conditions of any other agreement. Natural England may carry out checks to make sure that capital works are not funded twice from public funds.

4 How to apply

This chapter provides applicants with the information required to apply for support to create a Woodland Management Plan through Countryside Stewardship.

4.1 Register with Rural Payments service

All applicants must register on Rural Payments service (<https://www.gov.uk/claim-rural-payments>) before applying for Countryside Stewardship. They will receive a customer registration number (CRN) once registered.

Applicants who are new to Schemes being paid through RPA will also be given a 'single business identifier' (SBI) and a vendor number.

Agents who are completing capital applications on behalf of applicants also need to be registered on Rural Payments service. See section 4.5 on authorising an agent.

All land to be applied for under Countryside Stewardship must be registered on the Rural Payments service, and have been given a parcel reference number (in the format AA12345678). Applicants will be asked to provide their parcel reference numbers during the application process. To register land, applicants must complete a Rural Land and Entitlements (RLE1) form and provide accompanying annotated maps to clearly illustrate where land parcels are on the holding. This must be submitted to the RPA. More information on this can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-payments-registering-and-updating-your-details/rural-payments-registering-and-updating-your-details#register-land-and-making-mapping-changes-including-rle1>.

4.2 Getting consent

No consents are required to be provided when making the application for a Woodland Management Plan grant.

However, after the agreement has been accepted and Agreement Holders are working on creating a draft Woodland Management Plan, consents are likely to be required before the Woodland Management Plan can be approved if the work proposed affects certain designated sites (such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or Scheduled Monuments). See Annex 2 for more details.

4.3 Ensure the proposed Woodland Management Plan covers all woodland present on the holding

Applications for a Woodland Management Plan should include all woodland under the applicant's holding. However, if a business manages a number of woodlands in different locations, it may not be appropriate to produce a single Woodland Management Plan that covers all of them. In this situation an applicant can apply to create a plan that covers part of their holding. This nearly always means a single farm or a single estate where all the land is or has been managed as one unit, whether or not it is owned by a single individual or jointly or severally

by many. Because public funds are involved, the Forestry Commission will have the final say on what constitutes a holding in a given case. See chapter 3.1 for more information.

4.4 Submitting an application

There are two ways to submit an application for Woodland Management Plan support through Countryside Stewardship:

- online application (via the Rural Payments service); or
- paper application (using the application form at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-capital-grant-application-form).

An excel spreadsheet of the Woodland Management Plan Annex 3 and a map must also be submitted with the application – see section 4.4.3 for guidance on mapping requirements.

After submission, eligible applicants who accept an agreement offer will have a capital agreement with Natural England, which will be subject to the Countryside Stewardship Terms and Conditions as set out in Annex 1.

Please note that the draft Woodland Management Plan must not be submitted with the Countryside Stewardship application. Work on producing the Woodland Management Plan should only start once the Countryside Stewardship agreement has been accepted.

4.4.1 Online application

Applications for a Woodland Management Plan grant can be made online. This is done through the Rural Payments service at www.ruralpayments.service.gov.uk/. The online system already includes the following information, so there is no need for applicants to re-enter these details:

- personal details of the applicant (name, address, etc)
- CRN and SBI; and
- land parcels registered to the SBI.

As well as answering initial eligibility questions, applicants will be required to select the land parcels they would like to include in their Woodland Management Plan application and enter the total area of the woodland requiring support.

Applicants can then click a 'submit' button which is the equivalent of signing an application form. After submitting your application, download the covering letter available from your online account and follow the instructions to submit supporting information.

Applicants are required to submit the following documents to support their online application before an application will be considered:

- a completed Woodland Management Plan Annex 3b (part of annex 3), available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-capital-grant-application-form; (you do not need to complete worksheet Annex 3a when applying online).
- a map of the land to be included in the application, this must meet the Minimum Mapping Standards outlined in Section 4.4.3

Natural England must receive any supporting documents **within 30 days** of the date of the cover letter. Your application will be rejected if supporting information is not received in this time.

Further details on applying online can be seen in the CS Woodland Management Plan apply online document. For a step by step guide on how to apply there is also an onscreen instructions document available.

4.4.2 Paper-based system

If the applicant is unable to apply online, or would prefer to use a paper-based system, this is available through application forms hosted online. All application documents must be downloaded, completed and submitted to Natural England by post or email.

A complete Woodland Management Plan Grant application consists of the following documents:

- The Countryside Stewardship capital application form, available online at www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-capital-grant-application-form
- The Woodland Management Plan Annex 3 (incorporating all information required to apply for the Woodland Management Plan), available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-capital-grant-application-form
- An application map, created according to the standards set out in section 4.4.3.

Submit the completed application electronically or by post to Natural England. To send electronically, attach all application documents to an email and send to the CS Delivery Services team in Crewe, these details can be found in Annex 3 of this manual. Please put 'CS Woodland Management Plan Grant – SBI' as the email subject, e.g. 'CS Woodland Management Plan Grant – SX12345678'.

Please note when sending in an application via email there is a 10mb upload limit for file attachments. Emails will not be received by the CS Delivery Services if they exceed this limit.

If applicants are unable to send their application electronically, they will be accepted via post sent to CS Delivery Services at Crewe (see Annex 3 of this manual for address details). It is recommended that applicants obtain proof of postage for any postal applications and any other documents sent to Natural England. Applicants are advised to retain a copy of their completed application form.

Please note, if an applicant chooses to apply by post, it is strongly recommended that they also email an electronic version of their Woodland Management Plan Annex 3 to the CS Delivery Services office in Crewe (email address can be found in Annex 3 of this manual) so that Natural England has a self-calculating version of this document.

4.4.3 Prepare a map for your application

A map or maps showing the full area of the woodland upon which the proposed Woodland Management Plan is to be applied for must be provided with a Woodland Management Plan Grant application. The map supplied with the application needs to be clear, legible and meet the standards set out below.

How to create a map

The map associated with a Woodland Management Plan application can either be created by the applicant (as long as it meets the standards set out below), or be requested through the Forestry Commission map request service, found at www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d6d8hxr.

Maps supplied by the applicant should be based on OS based maps and/or Geographical Information System (GIS)-generated digital maps. Maps must be based on a scale of 1:2500 or 1:5000 or for large Schemes 1:10000. The land parcel references and the SBI should be clearly marked on the map.

Please submit your map as a PDF file.

Minimum mapping standards

When creating their own agreement map, or when marking up the map received from the Forestry Commission Map Request service, applicants must ensure the following rules are complied with:

- the map or maps must show whole land parcels with land parcel references and a clear boundary for the extent of the woodland management plan;
- map number (1, 2, 3, etc). Include this map number and also the total number of maps e.g. 1 of 3
- Single Business Identifier (SBI) – consisting of 9 digits; application year; and agreement title (as detailed on the application form), to be written on the top right.
- name of business or applicant – this should be the name (beneficiary) that is registered with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) for the SBI, to be written on the right hand side
- if there are no numbered OS grid lines a 6 figure OS grid reference for the centre of the map, to be written on the bottom left.
- if a mistake is made do not use correction fluid, strike through the mistake instead.

4.5 Authorising an agent

Applicants can complete the application and payment claim forms themselves, or they can authorise an agent to do so on their behalf. If an agent will be acting on behalf of the business they must be given the appropriate permission levels within the Rural Payments Service. Applicants who have previously authorised an agent using the paper agent authorisation form must now use the on-line Rural Payments service to set the appropriate permission levels for the agent at www.gov.uk/claim-rural-payments.

4.6 After applying

4.6.1 Missing information and rejection

Once an application is received, CS Delivery Services will carry out eligibility and completeness checks on the application. If there is any missing information, CS Delivery Services will contact the applicant to request this missing information. If this information is within the applicants control and the applicant does not respond within the timescales stated by Natural England, the application may be rejected and removed from the application process.

If an applicant still wishes to apply for a CS Woodland Management Plan Grant agreement they will be required to resubmit their application. The applicant should ensure the application contains all information required and that all eligibility requirements are met. The applicant must not have started to create a Woodland Management Plan until they have an agreement.

4.6.2 Eligible applicants being offered an agreement/agreement acceptance

If applying online (outlined in section 4.4.1), applicants will only be able to submit the application successfully if all eligibility requirements have been met. If any eligibility issues are found, the online system will reject the application immediately and give onscreen feedback as to why this is the case. Applicants can edit their application and resubmit.

If applying on a paper form (outlined in section 4.4.2), Natural England will need to manually carry out eligibility checks. If an application fails any of the checks Natural England will contact the applicant to explain what is wrong and how the failed check(s) can be corrected (if applicable). See section 4.6.1 for more information.

Eligible applicants will be offered an agreement by post.

An applicant who has entered into a Woodland Management Plan Agreement by accepting the offer (an “**Agreement Holder**”) cannot modify, extend or amend the Woodland Management Plan Agreement. The offer must be either accepted or declined by the applicant.

The Agreement Start Date will be the first of the month following the agreement offer being accepted.

4.6.3 Creating a draft Woodland Management Plan

Work on the creation of the Woodland Management Plan can start after the Agreement Start Date. This must be created in line with the technical guidance outlined in Annex 2 and submitted to the Forestry Commission directly. Agreement Holders should use the contact details for the Forestry Commission Admin Hub that covers the area that their land is in, detailed in annex 3.

Please note when sending in a draft Woodland Management Plan via email there is a 10mb upload limit for file attachments. Emails will not be received by the Forestry Commission if they exceed this limit.

Agreement Holders should ensure that they submit their draft Woodland Management Plans to the Forestry Commission and not Natural England.

A Forestry Commission Woodland Officer will liaise with the Agreement Holder to develop the plan for final approval. The final Woodland Management Plan including any associated felling permissions needs to be approved by the Forestry Commission before the Agreement End Date (see section 2.6 for agreement duration).

4.7 Woodland Management Plan agreements and Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier

To be eligible to apply for a CS Higher Tier agreement on woodland, applicants must have a Woodland Management Plan approved by the Forestry Commission. This is a requirement whether the CS Higher Tier application is for woodland only or woodland in a 'mixed' agreement (an agreement that includes woodland and agri-environment land).

The Woodland Management Plan must be either approved or approved in principle on or before the deadline for initial CS Higher Tier applications. 'Approved in principle' means that approval of the plan is subject to any accompanying felling licence permission being in place, which can often take longer than approval of the Woodland Management Plan because of the requirement to publish felling proposals on a public register for 28 days. If the Woodland Management Plan is only approved in principle at the time the initial CS Higher Tier application is made, the plan must be fully approved (felling licence in place) by the deadline for final CS Higher Tier applications.

To ensure there is opportunity for a Woodland Management Plan to be at least approved in principle in time for an initial Higher Tier application, applicants are strongly recommended to submit their draft Woodland Management Plan to the Forestry Commission no later than the 31 December of the year before the Higher Tier application will be made.

Land in Environmental Stewardship agreements

A Countryside Stewardship Woodland Management Plan Grant agreement can be made on land subject to existing Environmental Stewardship agreements as long as preparation of a Woodland Management Plan is not a requirement of the Environmental Stewardship agreement. However, land in an existing Environmental Stewardship agreement cannot be entered into a CS Higher Tier agreement.

5 Scheme requirements, procedures and agreement management

The Countryside Stewardship Terms and Conditions require Agreement Holders to comply with the mandatory elements set out in this Manual. These mandatory elements are set out in this Chapter and Chapter 3.

5.1 General Scheme requirements

'Agreement Holder' means the person (whether an individual, a company or other entity) who has entered into the Countryside Stewardship Agreement as identified in the Agreement Document (as per clause 1 of the Terms and Conditions – see Annex 1).

'Agreement Land' is defined in clause 1 of the Terms and Conditions (Annex 1).

5.2 Agreement Management

A Countryside Stewardship Agreement comprises the Countryside Stewardship Terms and Conditions (Annex 1) and the Agreement Document (which sets out Agreement Holder-specific details).

5.3 Claiming for the Woodland Management Plan

Agreement Holders can submit a payment claim for their Forestry Commission approved Woodland Management Plan at any time of the year, provided the following terms are met:

- the capital work (i.e. the Woodland Management Plan) was completed to the standards set out in Annex 2 of this manual within 2 years from the Agreement Start Date (see section 2.6).
- the Woodland Management Plan and associated felling permissions have been approved by a Forestry Commission Woodland Officer; and
- the single payment claim is received by no later than three months following the Agreement End Date.

Only one payment claim can be made for the Woodland Management Plan Grant, for the full amount. Valid claims will be paid within two months of receipt. Late payment claims will be rejected.

Once the capital works are completed and have been paid for, Agreement Holders should log into the Rural Payments service and submit a payment claim online.

For guidance on submitting a payment claim online please see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-how-to-submit-claims-online

For Agreement Holders unable to claim on-line they should contact CS Delivery Services - see

Annex 3 of this manual, to request a claim form.

Payments will be made directly into the Agreement Holder's bank account by the RPA.

Applicants are not required to submit any evidence of Forestry Commission approval for the Woodland Management Plan with the payment claim. The Forestry Commission will provide evidence to Natural England that the plan has been approved. Once CS Delivery Services has received this confirmation, valid payment claims will be paid.

5.4 Amendments

Agreement Holders can't change or amend their agreement after they've been offered a grant.

5.5 Reductions and penalties

If Natural England becomes aware that an Agreement Holder has breached the terms of their agreement or that they do not meet the relevant eligibility criteria on all or part of their Agreement Land, future grant payments may be reduced or withheld, and sums previously paid to the Agreement Holder may be recovered. In some circumstances, additional penalties may be applied.

5.5.1 Late payment claims for capital works

In order for payments to be made payment claims must be received no later than the 3 months following the Agreement end date otherwise no payment will be made.

5.5.2 Cross compliance

Any breach by the Agreement Holder (or by others acting under their control, or anyone with access to the holding under the terms of an agreement including contractors, employees or family members) of cross compliance rules anywhere on the Holding (including associated common land) may result in a penalty being applied. In most cases, the penalty would be applied to all BPS, Countryside Stewardship and earlier agri-environment scheme area payments claimed by the Agreement Holder.

See 'The Guide to Cross Compliance in England' at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/579836/Cross_Compliance_2017_rules_FINAL.pdf to find out about cross compliance penalties. These are applied after Countryside Stewardship penalties.

5.5.3 Breaches of Agreement

If Natural England identifies during agreement processing, claim processing, or at inspection that the agreement holder has not met the terms of the agreement, then reclaims or penalties may apply.

If a breach on capital works is more than 10% of the eligible amount claimed (by value), Natural England will apply a penalty equal to the amount of the breach.

In a case of fraud or severe non-compliance by the agreement holder, Natural England can withhold all RDP support and bar someone from new Countryside Stewardship applications for up to 2 years.

5.5.4 Refusal or withdrawal of support claimed

In certain scenarios the support claimed will be refused or withdrawn in full. These are when Natural England determines that:

- a serious non-compliance by the applicant / Agreement Holder has occurred.
- the applicant / Agreement Holder has provided false evidence for the purpose of receiving the support.
- the applicant / Agreement Holder has negligently failed to provide the necessary information (for instance, where Natural England has asked for it repeatedly and there is no reasonable justification as to why it has not been provided). Natural England cannot impose this penalty on this ground in the absence of negligence.

The withdrawal of support will be applied for the calendar year of notification plus the following calendar year. In addition support may be refused for other Rural Development schemes. The applicant / Agreement Holder will be notified and will have the right of appeal against such a decision.

5.5.5 Over-declaration of expenditure

If the Agreement Holder submits a claim which exceeds the value of the costs which are eligible to be claimed, a penalty may be applied. Where the excess amount claimed is 10% or less of the value of the eligible costs, the payment will be reduced to the correct amount but no additional penalty will be applied. Where the excess amount claimed is more than 10%, the payment will be reduced to the correct amount and a penalty equal to the difference between the eligible costs and the amount claimed will be applied, up to a maximum of the entire value of the claim.

5.5.6 Interest charges

When Natural England or the RPA act to recover payments already made to the Agreement Holder, interest will be applied. Interest will begin to accrue from 60 days after the date of Natural England's notification of the breach to the Agreement Holder and will continue to accrue until the time of reimbursement of the payments from the Agreement Holder to Natural England or the RPA. This will include any period when the recovery or penalty is being appealed or is otherwise under review.

5.6 Disputes, appeals and complaints

If an applicant for Countryside Stewardship, or an Agreement Holder, is unhappy with a decision taken by Natural England or the Forestry Commission in respect of an application or an agreement, the applicant or Agreement Holder can appeal.

5.6.1 Appeals process – disagreeing with a decision by Natural England

To appeal against a decision that has already been taken, applicants or Agreement Holders should write to CS Delivery Services (contact details are at Annex 3), advising of their wish to appeal and providing details of the reasons. Appeals must be received within 60 days of notification of the decision. The permitted reasons are limited:

- that the decision was based on an error of fact;
- that the decision was wrong in law; or
- that the delivery body made a procedural error.

For more information on the appeals process read section 7.9.1 of the Mid Tier Manual at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-mid-tier-including-water-quality-capital-items-manual

5.6.2 Complaints about service

If an applicant for Countryside Stewardship, or an Agreement Holder, is unhappy about the way a member of staff has dealt with them, or with the level of service they have received, they should use the appropriate organisation's complaints procedure:

- for Natural England: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/complaints-procedure
- for the Rural Payments Agency: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/rural-payments-agency/about/complaints-procedure
- for the Forestry Commission: www.forestry.gov.uk/complaints

Annex 1

Countryside Stewardship

Terms and Conditions (Version 2)

PARTIES

- (1) Natural England of Foss House, Kings Pool, 1-2 Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PX (Natural England) (the **Authority**).
- (2) The Agreement Holder identified in the Agreement Document (the **Agreement Holder**)

BACKGROUND

- (A) The Authority has agreed to pay the Grant to the Agreement Holder on the terms and conditions set out below and in the Agreement Document.
- (B) The Authority is a delivery body responsible for managing Countryside Stewardship, the scheme under which the Grant is paid, which forms part of the wider RDPE. The Managing Authority has overall responsibility for the RDPE and may, acting itself or through the Paying Agency, directly enforce any terms of the Agreement against the Agreement Holder in accordance with clause 28.2.
- (C) Grants made under Countryside Stewardship are paid for Capital Items and/or Multi-Year Options (as defined below). Details of the individual Agreement Holder's Capital Items and/or Multi-Year Options are set out in the Agreement Document.
- (D) These terms and conditions apply to Countryside Stewardship and should be read in conjunction with the details of the Grant set out in the Agreement Document, which are individual to the Agreement Holder. These terms and conditions and the Agreement Document (including the supporting documents specified therein) together form the agreement between the Authority and the Agreement Holder ("the **Agreement**").
- (E) Additional Scheme requirements and more detailed information and guidance are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual. The Agreement Holder must familiarise itself with this document and ensure that it complies with all mandatory elements of the Countryside Stewardship Manual as a condition of receiving the Grant.
- (F) In the event of any conflict between these terms and conditions and the documents referred to in paragraphs o and o above, these terms and conditions shall prevail, followed by the Agreement Document, the supporting documents referred to in the Agreement Document, and then the Countryside Stewardship Manual.

1 DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

In the Agreement the following terms shall have the following meanings:

Agreement Document: the document accompanying these terms and conditions, which describes the Grant to be paid to the Agreement Holder and the Capital Items and/or Multi-Year Options to be undertaken

Agreement End Date: the date on which the Agreement comes to an end, as set out in the Agreement Document

Agreement Land: the land described in the Agreement Document and identified on the Agreement Map(s)

Agreement Map(s): the map(s) accompanying the Agreement Document (or otherwise provided to the Agreement Holder by the Authority), showing the Agreement Land and the agreed location of any Multi-Year Options or Capital Items

Agreement Start Date: the date on which the Agreement commences, as set out in the Agreement Document

Break Point Date: the fifth (5th), tenth (10th) or fifteenth (15th) anniversary of the Agreement Start Date

Capital Item(s): the capital works the Agreement Holder is required to deliver, as set out in the Agreement Document (and shown for illustrative purposes on the Agreement Map)

Countryside Stewardship Scheme or the Scheme: Countryside Stewardship, a scheme which is run jointly by Natural England, Forestry Commission England and the Rural Payments Agency on behalf of the Managing Authority, implementing measures under Title III of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 to achieve the priorities for rural development set out in that regulation

Countryside Stewardship Manual: the documents which set out additional Scheme requirements and further information and guidance for Agreement Holders, which is available on www.gov.uk and as further described in clause 5

Cross Compliance Requirements: the requirements on cross compliance referred to in the Countryside Stewardship Manual and as set out in “The guide to cross compliance in England” (as both may be re-issued, updated or amended from time to time), which are published on www.gov.uk and available from the Authority upon request.

EAFRD: the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, which funds rural development under the Common Agricultural Policy (and jointly funds the RDPE, together with the Managing Authority)

Grant: the sum to be paid to the Agreement Holder under the Agreement, which may include payment to reimburse expenditure on Capital Items and/or payment in respect of income foregone and additional costs under Multi-Year Options

Holding: all units of land managed by the Agreement Holder (including the Agreement Land) which are situated in the UK and (a) used for agricultural activities or (b) forestry land and other non-agricultural land for which rural development payments are claimed

Intellectual Property Rights: all patents, copyrights and design rights (whether registered or not) and all applications for any of the foregoing and all rights of confidence and know-how however arising for their full term and any renewals and extensions

Managing Authority: the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), which has overall responsibility for the RDPE pursuant to Article 65(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

Multi-Year Option(s): the land management the Agreement Holder is required to undertake, as set out in the Agreement Document **(and shown for illustrative purposes on the Agreement Map)**

Option End Date: the date on which the relevant Multi-Year Option comes to an end, as set out in the Agreement Document

Option Start Date: the date on which the relevant Multi-Year Option commences, as set out in the Agreement Document

Paying Agency: the Rural Payments Agency (RPA), which is the accredited paying agency for the RDPE pursuant to Article 65(2)(b) of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013

Payment Claim: the claim submitted by the Agreement Holder for payment of the Grant

RDPE: the Rural Development Programme for England (2014-2020), which is jointly funded by the EAFRD and the Managing Authority

Working Day: any day other than a Saturday, a Sunday or a public holiday in England

- 1.1 References to **clauses** are to the clauses of these terms and conditions. Clause headings shall not affect the interpretation of these terms and conditions.
- 1.2 A person includes a natural person, corporate or unincorporated body (whether or not having separate legal personality).
- 1.3 Unless the context otherwise requires, words in the singular shall include the plural and in the plural shall include the singular and a reference to one gender shall include a reference to the other gender.
- 1.4 A reference to a statute or statutory provision is a reference to it as amended, extended or re-enacted from time to time and shall include all subordinate legislation made from time to time under that statute or statutory provision.
- 1.5 A reference to a public organisation includes a reference to any successor to that public organisation.
- 1.6 Any words following the terms **including, include, in particular** or **for example** or any similar phrase shall be construed as illustrative and shall not limit the generality of the related general words.

2 AGREEMENT HOLDER'S DECLARATIONS

2.1 The Agreement Holder confirms that:

- (a) the declarations made in its application for the Grant remain true and accurate to the best of its knowledge and belief;
- (b) it has full capacity and authority to enter into the Agreement;
- (c) it is not aware of any circumstances which would prevent it from fulfilling its obligations under the Agreement;
- (d) if there are any changes to the Agreement Holder's circumstances which could affect its eligibility or suitability for the Grant or its ability to fulfil its obligations under the Agreement, it will notify the Authority in writing without delay;
- (e) it has read and understood and will comply with all mandatory elements of the Countryside Stewardship Manual;
- (f) it has not received and will not receive any duplicate funding or allowances from other public sources in respect of the same obligations it is required to undertake under the Agreement;
- (g) its obligations under the Agreement do not duplicate and will not duplicate any other legal obligations it would otherwise be required to undertake;
- (h) its obligations under the Agreement do not and will not conflict in whole or in part with any other legal or contractual obligations on the Agreement Holder; and
- (i) it will at all times comply with all relevant domestic and EU legislation in the performance of its obligations under the Agreement.

2.2 The Agreement Holder confirms that it has obtained and will maintain and comply with any permits, licences, permissions, consents, approvals, certificates and authorisations (whether statutory or otherwise) which are required for the performance of its obligations under the Agreement, including those set out at paragraph 13 of the Agreement Document. The Agreement Holder understands that the Agreement does not operate as a SSSI consent and that if such consent is required it must apply separately in accordance with any instructions provided by the Authority.

2.3 The Agreement Holder understands that the giving of any approval, consent or acknowledgement, or the review of any document or course of action by or on behalf of the Authority does not relieve the Agreement Holder of any of its obligations under the Agreement unless expressly permitted in writing by the Authority.

2.4 The Agreement Holder understands that it is an offence to knowingly or recklessly provide false or misleading information or intentionally obstruct or fail to assist any person carrying out public functions in connection with the Agreement, and that such conduct by the Agreement Holder may attract criminal penalties.

2.5 The Agreement Holder shall make its own enquiries as to the accuracy and adequacy of any information on which it relies in connection with the Agreement.

3 AGREEMENT HOLDER OBLIGATIONS

3.1 In applying for and receiving the Grant, the Agreement Holder agrees to comply with these terms and conditions and the mandatory elements of the Countryside Stewardship Manual.

3.2 The Agreement Holder shall deliver the Capital Item(s) and/or the Multi-Year Option(s) in accordance with the standards and requirements set out in the Agreement Document and Countryside Stewardship Manual (including any relevant time limits) and in the agreed location(s) as identified on the Agreement Map(s).

3.3 The Agreement Holder shall comply with any requirements set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual to maintain the Capital Item(s) for a minimum duration.

3.4 The Agreement Holder shall comply with the Cross Compliance Requirements where applicable on its Holding for the duration of the Agreement. Any failure by the Agreement Holder to comply with the Cross Compliance Requirements may result in a penalty being applied to certain payments due to the Agreement Holder under the Common Agricultural Policy including payments under the RDPE as well as other schemes and programmes. Further details of when penalties may be applied and how they are calculated are set out in the **Countryside Stewardship Manual and “The guide to cross compliance in England” (as re-issued, updated or amended from time to time)**.

3.5 Where applicable, the Agreement Holder shall declare all parcels of land within its Holding in accordance with Article 72(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1306/2013. Any failure to do so may result in a penalty being applied to certain payments due to the Agreement Holder under the Common Agricultural Policy including payments under the RDPE as well as other schemes and programmes. Further details of the requirements of Article 72 (including the procedure for declaring parcels of land) and the penalties for non-compliance are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.

4 TERM

4.1 The Agreement shall commence on the Agreement Start Date and, subject to any extension in accordance with clause 4.3 or earlier termination in accordance with clause 19, it shall continue in force until the Agreement End Date.

4.2 Where the Agreement Document specifies Multi-Year Options of varying lengths, the terms of the Agreement shall apply in respect of the relevant Multi-Year Option from the Option Start Date until the Option End Date. After the Option End Date, the Multi-Year Option will expire and the relevant parcel of land shall no longer form part of the Agreement Land (although it will still remain part of the Holding).

4.3 Where the term of the Agreement is five years and includes Multi-Year Options, the parties may agree to extend the Agreement in one year increments, up to a maximum of seven years from the original Agreement Start Date. The party requesting the extension must make their request in writing, no less than one month before the expiry of the Agreement. Neither party shall be under

any obligation to agree to an extension requested by the other party. The extension shall take effect once it has been confirmed in writing by the Authority.

5 THE COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP MANUAL

- 5.1 The Agreement Holder shall comply with the applicable mandatory elements of the Countryside Stewardship Manual as a condition of receiving the Grant.
- 5.2 The Authority may produce new versions of the Countryside Stewardship Manual throughout the lifetime of the Scheme. However, subject to clause 5.3, the version applicable to the Agreement Holder shall be the version which was current at the Agreement Start Date.
- 5.3 In some circumstances the Authority may consider it necessary to amend or update the current or previous versions of the Countryside Stewardship Manual. The Authority will notify the Agreement Holder in writing of any amendments to the version which is applicable to the Agreement and the date on which such amendment shall take effect.

6 TRANSFERS OR ACQUISITIONS OF LAND

- 6.1 The Agreement Holder must notify the Authority without delay if there is a change in management control affecting any part of its Holding, including (without limitation) sale or transfer to a new owner, changes to any lease or tenancy, permanent boundary changes or acquisition of any new land.
- 6.2 The Agreement Holder acknowledges and accepts that any change in management control affecting its Holding may have consequences for the Agreement. In some circumstances the Authority may be required to recover all or part of the Grant. Further details are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.

7 AMENDMENTS

- 7.1 No amendments to the Capital Items or Multi-Year Options to be undertaken by the Agreement Holder shall be permitted unless expressly agreed in writing by the Authority.
- 7.2 Further details of the circumstances in which amendments may be permitted and the process to be followed are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.

8 PAYMENT CLAIMS

- 8.1 The Agreement Holder shall submit Payment Claims and supporting documents to the Authority in accordance with the instructions provided in the Agreement Document, the Countryside Stewardship Manual and on the claim form.
- 8.2 The Grant will be paid directly to the Agreement Holder's nominated business bank account via BACS transfer by the Paying Agency, subject to the necessary funds being available when the

payment falls due. The Agreement Holder agrees and accepts that payment of the Grant can only be made to the extent that the funds are available.

- 8.3 Any failure by the Agreement Holder to submit a Payment Claim in accordance with the instructions and by the specified deadline (including the provision of any supporting documents necessary to enable the claim to be processed) may result in payment of the Grant being delayed, reduced or withheld.
- 8.4 If the Agreement Holder fails to submit a valid Payment Claim by the specified deadline, the Grant may be subject to a penalty. In the case of severe delays, the Payment Claim may be rejected in its entirety. Further details of when penalties may be applied and how they are calculated are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.
- 8.5 All Payment Claims will be checked and verified before any sum is paid. If there is any discrepancy between the amount claimed by the Agreement Holder and the amount the Agreement Holder is entitled to claim, the Grant may be subject to a penalty. In the most severe cases, the Payment Claim may be rejected in its entirety. Further details of when penalties may be applied and how they are calculated are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.
- 8.6 The Authority reserves the right to adjust the payment rate for Multi-Year Options where necessary to prevent the Agreement Holder from receiving double-funding for the same activity on the Agreement Land.
- 8.7 The amount of the Grant shall not be increased in the event of any overspend by the Agreement Holder in the delivery of its obligations under the Agreement.
- 8.8 Unless otherwise explicitly permitted in writing by the Authority, the Grant may not be used to reimburse any expenditure incurred by the Agreement Holder prior to the Agreement Start Date.

9 REPAYMENT

- 9.1 If the Agreement Holder breaches the terms of the Agreement or if there is a change in circumstances affecting its eligibility to receive the Grant, the Authority reserves the right to withhold or require repayment of the Grant. In addition, where the Agreement Holder has breached the terms of the Agreement, penalties may be applied. Further details of when penalties may be applied and how they are calculated are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.
- 9.2 If the Agreement Holder receives any overpayment or any payment to which it is not entitled (including in the event of an administrative error), the undue amount must be repaid. It is the Agreement Holder's responsibility to check all payments it receives from the Paying Agency and notify the Paying Agency immediately if it has any reason to believe that an error has occurred.
- 9.3 If any sum becomes repayable under the Agreement, it shall be treated as a debt owing by the Agreement Holder to the Paying Agency until such time as the outstanding amount is repaid. A recovery order will be issued to the Agreement Holder specifying the amount to be repaid and the date by which repayment must be made.

- 9.4 If the Agreement Holder fails to make a repayment within 60 days of the date of the relevant recovery order, the Paying Agency reserves the right to charge interest on the outstanding debt at a daily rate equivalent to the Bank of England base rate plus 1%.
- 9.5 Where any sum is repayable under the Agreement, the Paying Agency reserves the right to withhold future payments due to the Agreement Holder under this Agreement, any other RDPE grant agreement, or any other sum due to the Agreement Holder under the Common Agricultural Policy pending repayment by the Agreement Holder of the outstanding amount.
- 9.6 Where any sum is repayable under the Agreement and the Agreement Holder has failed to repay the outstanding amount within the period specified in the recovery order, the Paying Agency reserves the right to deduct the outstanding debt from future payments due to the Agreement Holder under this Agreement, any other RDPE grant agreement, or any other sum due to the Agreement Holder under the Common Agricultural Policy.

10 ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

The Agreement Holder shall, upon request, supply any documents, information, data, reports or written or verbal explanations which may be required by any UK or EU public authority (or their authorised representatives or auditors) in connection with the Agreement or the Scheme.

11 SITE VISITS

- 11.1 The Agreement Holder shall allow any UK or EU public authority (or their authorised representatives or auditors) to access its land and/or premises in connection with the Agreement. Such access may be required with or without notice. The Agreement Holder agrees to assist and cooperate with any person authorised to carry out any site visits (including controls and spot-checks) and shall provide access to any land, premises, plant, equipment or documents which may be required.
- 11.2 In addition to any consequences arising as a result of a breach by the Agreement Holder of these terms and conditions, the Agreement Holder understands that it is a criminal offence to intentionally obstruct, or fail to assist or provide information to any person exercising powers under this clause and performing other tasks in connection with the Agreement.

12 Maintenance of Accounts and Records

- 12.1 The Agreement Holder shall keep accurate and up-to-date accounts and records of the receipt and expenditure of the Grant monies received by it and evidence of its compliance with its obligations under the Agreement which shall comply with any applicable standards and requirements set out in the Agreement Document, the Countryside Stewardship Manual and in any separate instructions issued to the Agreement Holder.
- 12.2 The Agreement Holder shall keep all invoices, receipts, and accounts and any other relevant documents relating to the expenditure of the Grant for a period of at least seven years from termination or expiry of the Agreement. The Authority shall have the right to review the

Agreement Holder's accounts and records relating to the Grant and shall have the right to take copies of such accounts and records.

- 12.3 The Agreement Holder shall comply with and facilitate the Authority's compliance with all statutory requirements as regards accounts, audit or examination of accounts, annual reports and annual returns applicable to itself and the Authority.
- 12.4 In addition to its obligations to provide information to the Authority, the Agreement Holder shall provide any of the information referred to in this clause to any other UK or EU public authority (or their authorised representatives or auditors) upon request.

13 EVALUATION

- 13.1 The Agreement Holder acknowledges that as a condition of receiving the Grant funding it may be required to participate in a Scheme evaluation, which may take place during the Agreement or after its expiry or termination.
- 13.2 The Agreement Holder understands that its contact details may be disclosed to third parties for evaluation purposes and agrees to assist and cooperate with any person authorised by any UK or EU public authority to carry out such an evaluation.

14 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PUBLICITY

- 14.1 The Agreement Holder shall comply with all instructions and guidance from the Authority in relation to acknowledgement and publicity of the Grant, including using any materials or templates which are provided to it for this purpose. Such acknowledgement and publicity may include, where appropriate, a statement on any website operated by the Agreement Holder for business purposes, and/or a poster, plaque or billboard displayed on the Agreement Holder's land or premises. Further details of the publicity requirements applicable to the Scheme are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.
- 14.2 In using the Authority's name and logo, the Agreement Holder shall comply with all reasonable branding guidelines issued by the Authority from time to time.
- 14.3 The Agreement Holder agrees to participate in and co-operate with promotional activities relating to the Scheme if required to do so by the Authority.
- 14.4 The Authority may acknowledge the Agreement Holder's involvement in the Scheme as appropriate without prior notice.
- 14.5 The Agreement Holder shall comply with all reasonable requests from the Authority to facilitate visits, provide reports, statistics, photographs and case studies that will assist the Authority in its promotional and publicity activities relating to RDPE.

15 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

- 15.1 The Authority and the Agreement Holder agree that all rights, title and interest in or to any information, data, reports, documents, procedures, forecasts, technology, know-how and any other Intellectual Property Rights whatsoever owned by or licensed to either the Authority or the Agreement Holder before the Agreement Start Date or developed by either party under the Agreement, shall remain the property of that party.
- 15.2 Where the Authority has allowed the Agreement Holder to use any of its Intellectual Property Rights in connection with the Agreement (including without limitation its name and logo), the Agreement Holder shall, on termination of the Agreement, cease to use such Intellectual Property Rights immediately (subject to any ongoing requirement to use Intellectual Property Rights in compliance with the publicity requirements in clause 14).
- 15.3 The Authority shall have a perpetual, non-exclusive, royalty-free, sub-licensable licence to use any Intellectual Property Rights created by the Agreement Holder in connection with the Agreement.

16 DATA AND INFORMATION

- 16.1 The parties shall comply with all relevant UK and EU data protection legislation in delivering their obligations under the Agreement.
- 16.2 The Authority may use any information or data provided by the Agreement Holder or collected during the course of the Agreement for the purposes of management, control and evaluation and may share this with other government departments and agencies and European Union institutions and bodies for the purposes of monitoring and administering the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) further to Article 117 of EU Regulation No 1306/2013.
- 16.3 Information and data about the Agreement (including details about the Agreement Holder, the Grant and the Capital Items and/or Multi-Year Options) may be published on public websites.
- 16.4 The Agreement Holder consents to its contact details being disclosed to any UK or EU public authority (or their authorised representatives or auditors) for monitoring, inspection or evaluation purposes.
- 16.5 The Agreement Holder acknowledges that the Authority is subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).
- 16.6 The Agreement Holder shall provide all necessary assistance and cooperation which is reasonably requested by the Authority for the purposes of complying with its obligations under the FOIA and EIRs. If the Authority requires the Agreement Holder to supply information pursuant to a FOIA/EIR request, the Agreement Holder shall supply all such information which is within its possession or control within 5 Working Days (or such other period as the Authority shall reasonably require).
- 16.7 If the Agreement Holder receives a FOIA/EIR request from a member of the public, it shall not respond to the request but shall forward the request to the Authority within 2 Working Days of receipt.
- 16.8 The Authority shall determine in its absolute discretion whether any information is exempt from disclosure in accordance with the provisions of FOIA and/or the EIRs.
- 16.9 Further details about how information about the Agreement Holder and the Agreement will be used and shared are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.

17 LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

- 17.1 Neither party excludes or limits its liability for death or personal injury caused by its negligence, fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation, or any other liability which cannot be limited or excluded by law.
- 17.2 The Authority accepts no liability for any consequences, whether direct or indirect, arising from the Agreement, the use of the Grant by the Agreement Holder or the Authority exercising its rights under the Agreement.
- 17.3 Subject to clause 17.1 and 17.2, the Authority's total aggregate liability in connection with the Agreement shall not exceed the amount of the Grant.
- 17.4 The Agreement Holder shall indemnify the Authority and any persons acting on the Authority's behalf against all claims, demands, actions, costs, expenses, losses, damages and all other liabilities arising as a result of the actions or omissions of the Agreement Holder in connection with the Agreement.
- 17.5 The Agreement Holder acknowledges and accepts that if it suffers any losses which prevent it from fulfilling its obligations under the Agreement, the Authority may require the Grant to be repaid or the losses to be made good at the Agreement Holder's own expense, regardless of whether the Agreement Holder is insured against such losses.

18 FORCE MAJEURE

- 18.1 If the Agreement Holder is prevented from complying with its obligations under the Agreement due to force majeure or exceptional circumstances, the Authority must be notified in writing within 15 Working Days from the date on which the Agreement Holder (or any person authorised to act on the Agreement Holder's behalf) is in a position to do so.
- 18.2 Force majeure or exceptional circumstances may include:
- (a) the death or long-term professional incapacity of the Agreement Holder;
 - (b) a severe natural disaster gravely affecting the Holding;
 - (c) the accidental destruction of livestock buildings on the Holding;
 - (d) an epizootic or a plant disease affecting part or all of the Agreement Holder's crops, trees or livestock; or
 - (e) expropriation of all or a large part of the Holding (provided that the expropriation could not have been anticipated at the time the application for funding was made).
- 18.3 The Authority will consider the facts on a case-by-case basis in deciding whether or not the Agreement Holder is relieved of all or part of its obligations under the Agreement and whether all or part of the Grant should be suspended or repaid.

19. TERMINATION

- 19.1 The Authority reserves the right to terminate the Agreement on written notice to the Agreement Holder if:
- (a) the Agreement Holder has breached the terms of the Agreement or there is a change in circumstances affecting its eligibility to receive the Grant (whether or not the Authority or the Paying Agency have taken steps to recover the Grant in accordance with clause 9); or
 - (b) the Agreement Holder has failed to repay any sum which has become recoverable by the Paying Agency in accordance with clause 9.
- 19.2 In addition to its right to terminate under clause 19.1 above, the Authority may terminate the Agreement and any future Grant payments on giving the Agreement Holder six months' written notice at any time. Provided that the Agreement Holder is not in breach of the Agreement, Grant payments already paid will not be recoverable.
- 19.3 Subject to clause 19.4 below, where the term of the Agreement is ten years or more, either party may terminate the Agreement at the Break Point Date by giving not less than one month's prior written notice to the other party. If notice is validly served under this clause, the Agreement will terminate on the Break Point Date, and subject to the Authority's other rights and remedies under the Agreement, Grant payments already paid at the Break Point Date will not be recoverable.
- 19.4 Where the Agreement includes the Multi-Year Option WD1, the Agreement may not be terminated pursuant to clause 19.3 above before the Option End Date for the WD1 option.
- 19.5 The Agreement Holder may terminate the Agreement at any time by giving written notice to the Authority. The Agreement Holder understands that in such circumstances it may be required to repay all or part of the Grant and that its obligations under the Agreement shall not cease until such repayment has been made.
- 19.6 If a third party acquires management control of any part of the Agreement Land and is not able or willing to take on the Agreement Holder's obligations under the Agreement, the Authority may terminate the Agreement. In such circumstances the Agreement Holder will not be required to repay the Grant and its obligations under the Agreement will cease as at the date of termination. Further details are set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.

20. CONSEQUENCES OF EXPIRY OR TERMINATION

- 20.1 Expiry or termination of the Agreement shall not affect any rights, remedies, obligations or liabilities of the parties that have accrued up to the date of expiry or termination which existed at or before the date of expiry or termination.
- 20.2 Expiry or termination of the Agreement shall not affect the continuing rights and obligations of the parties under clauses 9 (Repayment), 10 (Access to Documents and Information), 11 (Site Visits), 12 (Maintenance of Accounts and Records), 13 (Evaluation), 14 (Acknowledgement and Publicity), 15 (Intellectual Property Rights), 16 (Data and Information), 17 (Limitation of Liability), 20 (Consequences of Expiry or Termination), 22 (Severability), 23 (Waiver), 24 (Notices), 25 (Dispute

Resolution), 27 (Joint and Several Liability), 28 (Third Party Rights), 29 (Governing Law) or any other provision in the Agreement or mandatory requirement in the Countryside Stewardship Manual which is expressly stated to survive expiry or termination of the Agreement or which is required to give effect to such termination or expiry or the consequences of such termination or expiry.

21 VARIATION

The Authority reserves the right to vary these terms and conditions or the Agreement Document. Any variation will be effected in writing and notified to the Agreement Holder in advance. The Authority shall endeavour to give such notice as is reasonable and proportionate, having regard to the nature of the variation and its consequences for the Agreement Holder.

22 SEVERABILITY

If any term, condition or provision of the Agreement is held to be invalid, unlawful or unenforceable to any extent, such term, condition or provision will not affect the validity, legality and enforceability of the other provisions of or any other documents referred to in the Agreement.

23 WAIVER

No failure or delay by either party to exercise any right or remedy under the Agreement shall be construed as a waiver of any other right or remedy.

24 NOTICES

- 24.1 All notices in relation to the Agreement shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been duly given if personally delivered, e-mailed, or mailed (first class postage prepaid) using the contact details set out in the Agreement Document (or any updated address which is subsequently notified by one party to the other). It is the Agreement Holder's responsibility to notify the Authority of any change to its contact details.
- 24.2 If personally delivered or if e-mailed all such notices shall be deemed to have been given when received (except that if received on a non-Working Day or after 5.00 pm on any Working Day they shall be deemed received on the next Working Day) and if mailed all such notices shall be deemed to have been given and received on the second Working Day following such mailing.

25 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Any dispute arising between the parties or any complaint or appeal by the Agreement Holder concerning the Authority's actions in connection with the Agreement shall be resolved according to the procedure set out in the Countryside Stewardship Manual.

26 NO PARTNERSHIP OR AGENCY

The Agreement shall not create any partnership or joint venture between the Authority and the Agreement Holder, nor any relationship of principal and agent, nor authorise any party to make or enter into any commitments for or on behalf of the other party.

27 JOINT AND SEVERAL LIABILITY

Where the Agreement Holder is not a company nor an incorporated entity with a distinct legal personality of its own, the individuals who enter into the Agreement on behalf of the Agreement Holder shall be jointly and severally liable for the Agreement Holder's obligations and liabilities arising under the Agreement.

28 THIRD PARTY RIGHTS

28.1 Subject to clause 28.2 below, the Agreement does not and is not intended to confer any contractual benefit on any person who is not a party to the Agreement.

28.2 The terms of the Agreement may be enforced and recovery of any Grant may be sought by the Paying Agency and/or the Managing Authority, both of which shall be entitled to receive the benefit of the Agreement as if they were the Authority.

29 GOVERNING LAW

The Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the law of England and the parties irrevocably submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts.

December 2016

Annex 2:

Woodland Management Plan Technical Guidance

Contents:

- Introduction
- Overview
- Steps in securing Forestry Commission Approval
- Completing the plan template
- Plan of operations spreadsheet
- Maps
- Amendments to plans after approval

Introduction:

This guidance is for the preparation of a UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) compliant management plan using the Forestry Commission (FC) template. **The template MUST be used for any grant-aided plans.**

A Woodland Management Plan (WMP) helps woodland owners to review their aspirations alongside the physical characteristics of their wood and identify woodland management operations for the next 10 years or more.

A Woodland Management Plan approved by the Forestry Commission:

- helps demonstrate that woodland products harvested from your woodland are legally and sustainably sourced (as required by biomass heating systems supported by the Government's Renewable Heat Incentive);
- is mandatory if you wish to apply for any other woodland related grants under Countryside Stewardship (apart from Woodland Creation and Tree Health);
- ensures consideration is given to legal requirements associated with designated sites (e.g. SSSIs, Scheduled Monuments, Tree Preservation Orders, Registered Parks and Gardens), protected species etc.
- includes a 10 year felling licence.

Overview:

If your holding includes 3 hectares or more of woodland, Countryside Stewardship includes a grant to help you produce a UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) compliant Woodland Management Plan (WMP).

All woodland on your holding should be included in your draft plan including recently planted new woodland and small and/or narrow blocks. (NOTE: some smaller areas may not be eligible for grant but for completeness they should be included in the draft plan).

WMPs supported by Countryside Stewardship MUST include:

1. A plan written on the Forestry Commission WMP template (or the My Forest version which corresponds);
2. A Plan of Operations excel spreadsheet; and
3. Annotated maps (see map section of this guidance).

The following guidance details the essential information needed in a UK Forestry Standard compliant WMP. If this information is not included, the FC will be unable to approve your draft WMP.

In many cases woodland owners or agents may wish to provide additional detail. This can be provided in supporting appendices.

The WMP should be a working document that summarises the current woodland resource and details the broad management intentions for a minimum 10 year period. It should include details of felling and restocking and identify any work for which you may be seeking further Countryside Stewardship grants (e.g. rhododendron eradication or deer management).

It is not expected that fine operational detail will be included in this plan but, if you choose not to, this information should be contained in Operational Site Assessments (OSAs) produced separately prior to undertaking any work in the wood. See section 4.2 of the technical guidance in this annex for more information.

If the woodland contains areas that are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) a 'Supplementary Notice of Operations' may also be required to advise Natural England of how woodland operations will be undertaken and seek its consent for the work. You should check this requirement with your FC Woodland Officer or Natural England Advisor while drafting your plan. Details of your Woodland Officer can be found here: (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-areas>).

The UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) outlines the context for forestry in the UK, sets out the approach of the UK Government to sustainable forest management, defines standards and provides a basis for regulation and monitoring. Owners and agents should refer to the UKFS when formulating their objectives and writing the plan (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ukfs>).

Steps in Securing Forestry Commission Approval

There are several steps in the process of securing approval of your draft WMP. This guidance has been prepared to help you present a draft plan which is UKFS compliant and which the Forestry Commission can review and approve quickly.

Please note it can take time for a WMP to be approved – especially for sites where statutory consultations are required. Engaging with Forestry Commission Woodland Officers and other stakeholders early in the preparation of the WMP will help to facilitate a quicker approval.

To help speed up approval please ensure you read this guidance and include all necessary information in your draft WMP.

There are a number of processes that have to be completed during or after production of a plan before a grant claim can be made:

1. **Site visits.** Site visits are crucial in preparing good WMPs. A joint site meeting between the owner and/or agent, any key stakeholders (e.g. Natural England on SSSI sites or Local Planning Authority where a Tree Preservation Order/Conservation Area is present) and the Forestry Commission Woodland Officer is likely to be required. This should take place prior to submission of the draft WMP because it allows open discussion of challenges and opportunities. Effective site meetings benefit from the provision of a simple introduction to the woodland, including location maps and background information for all those attending the meeting. Production and submission of the draft WMP shortly after the meeting should avoid the need for a further site visit. Alternatively the Woodland Officer will arrange a site visit after they have received and read the draft WMP.
2. **Stakeholder engagement.** Land managers are encouraged to discuss proposals with local stakeholders such as statutory bodies, gamekeepers and neighbours at an early stage in drafting their WMP because they may be able to provide useful information which will improve your plan. Such engagement also helps avoid misunderstandings about woodland management. Further advice is available in FC Operations Note 35 [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ONo35V2.oISSUED14o227.pdf/\\$FILE/ONo35V2.oISSUED14o227.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/ONo35V2.oISSUED14o227.pdf/$FILE/ONo35V2.oISSUED14o227.pdf)
3. **Formal consents.** Owners and agents are advised to identify and engage with statutory consultees and interested parties early in the process. The Forestry Commission will then formally consult statutory consultees to ensure they endorse the proposals in the WMP. In sensitive cases Forestry Commission may recommend that representatives are included in the site meeting:
 - Natural England where the site includes, or is adjacent to, a SSSI;
 - Historic England where the site includes a Scheduled Monument or Registered Parks and/or Gardens; and
 - The Local Planning Authority if the site is covered by a Tree Preservation Order or is within a Conservation Area.

NB: Land managers must **always** obtain written consent from Natural England for any operations on SSSI land even when the work will take place as part of an approved woodland management plan. Formal

consent is not required for work adjacent to a SSSI but Natural England may wish to advise the land manager to ensure the work does not cause damage to the features of interest.

Owners/agents should also consider the need for consents or licences from the Local Planning Authority, Environment Agency, or others, in respect of infrastructure developments e.g. entrances, loading areas, roads, stream crossings. You must seek these consents directly with the relevant authority (please note: in some cases a fee may be charged).

4. **Draft plan and felling licence.** A draft WMP including maps and the plan of operations which details the felling and restocking proposals must be submitted to the Forestry Commission Admin Hub (contact details can be found in annex 3). Your Woodland Officer will review the WMP to ensure it adheres to the principles of the UKFS. If documents or details are missing, your Woodland Officer may request additional information or amendments and for a new draft to be submitted for review. It is desirable that no more than two iterations of a WMP draft are submitted for review due to restrictive timescales of the 2 year capital grant agreement length.

When your Woodland Officer is satisfied that the felling and restocking proposals broadly adhere to the UKFS, the Forestry Commission will provide approval in principle for the WMP and place details of any proposed tree felling (except thinning) on the Public Register for one month prior to processing the felling licence. If the WMP has no felling then approval will be given straight away (rather than approval in principle).

5. **Plan approval.** The WMP will be approved on the basis of the criteria detailed in the table below, and only when felling permissions have been approved. Your Woodland Officer will inform you when the plan has been approved.

This checklist is included on page 2 of the WMP template to help you review your draft and ensure that you have met the criteria.

No.	UKFS Management Plan Criteria	Minimum Approval Requirements
1	<p>Plan Objectives</p> <p>Forest management plans should state the objectives of management and set out how the appropriate balance between social, economic and environmental objectives will be achieved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Management plan objectives stated. ■ Consideration is given to environmental, economic and social objectives relevant to the vision for the woodland.
2	<p>Forest context and important features in management strategy</p> <p>Forest management plans should address the forest context and the forest potential and demonstrate how the relevant interests and issues have been considered and addressed.</p>	<p>Management intentions communicated in Section 6 of the management plan are in line with stated objective(s) section 2.</p> <p>Management Intentions should take account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant features and issues identified within the woodland survey (section 4); Any potential threats to and opportunities for the woodland identified under woodland protection (section 5). ■ Relevant comments received through stakeholder engagement documented in section 7.

No.	UKFS Management Plan Criteria	Minimum Approval Requirements
3	<p>Identification of designations within and surrounding the site</p> <p>In designated areas, for example national parks or SSSI, particular account should be taken of landscape and other sensitivities in the design of forests and forest infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey information (section 4) identifies any designations that impact on woodland management. Management intentions (section 6) have taken account of any designations.
4	<p>Felling and restocking to improve forest structure and diversity</p> <p>When planning felling and restocking, the design of existing forests should be re-assessed and any necessary changes made so that they meet UKFS Requirements.</p> <p>Forests should be designed to achieve a diverse structure of habitat, species and ages of trees, appropriate to the scale and context.</p> <p>Forests characterised by a lack of diversity due to extensive areas of even-aged trees should be progressively restructured to achieve age class range.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Felling and restocking is consistent with UKFS design principles (for example scale and adjacency). Current diversity (structure, species, age structure) of the woodland has been identified through the survey (section 4). Management intentions aim to improve/maintain current diversity (structure, species, and ages of trees).
5	<p>Consultation</p> <p>Consultation on forest management plans and proposals should be carried out according to forestry authority procedures and, where required, the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder engagement is in line with current FC guidance and recorded in section 7. The minimum requirement is for statutory consultation to take place and this will be carried out by the Forestry Commission. Plan authors are encouraged to undertake stakeholder engagement (FC Operations Note 35) relevant to the context and setting of the woodland.
6	<p>Plan Update and Review</p> <p>Management of the forest should conform to the plan, and the plan should be updated to ensure it is current and relevant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 5 year review period stated on the 1st page of the plan. Section 8 completed with 1 indicator of success per management objective.

Completing the Woodland Management Plan (WMP) template

The WMP template and plan of operations spreadsheet can be found here (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-9bmjwe>). There are two versions of the full management plan template:

1. **Macro enabled** – suitable for use in Word 2007 onwards but is not suitable for Mac users. This version of the template includes added functionality such as help boxes and drop down lists to assist with completing the template.

Please note some users find the drop down lists and functionality in this version a limitation when completing their plans and prefer the macro disabled version for flexibility.

2. **Macro disabled** – suitable for all versions of MS Word and Mac users. This version has no drop down lists of functionality but is more flexible for the user. The template includes several sections that guide owners to consider all the necessary details. If the author of the plan wishes to include

additional information that cannot be put into the template sections – or wants to include photographs – these should be submitted as appendices and cross referenced in the plan.

The WMP should be a coherent description through a suite of documents which should flow from vision, to objectives and work plan as follows:



The **Vision** is what the owner would like the woodland to be like in the future.

The **Objectives** are how the Vision will be achieved taking account of any economic, environmental and social factors.

The **Management Strategy** is how you will apply the Objectives to meet the Vision

The **Plan of Operations** sets out the work plan for the next 10 years or more, and anything else that is needed to achieve the Management Strategy, particularly any works that require licences from the Forestry Commission.

Section 1. Property Details

This section is for basic personal and property details and should be completed with the relevant information. In this section you will be asked to list the maps you are submitting with the plan. Much of the information required in a WMP can be presented on a map and these should be used wherever possible and labelled/named appropriately.

Section 2. Vision and Objectives

2.1 Vision

This section is used to briefly describe your long-term vision for the woodland. For instance, how you want the woodland to look or be used in the future. The vision should be achievable and specific to your woodland and personal objectives. It should be expressed in one or two brief paragraphs only.

2.2 Management Objectives

Based on your vision you will need to determine key objectives for woodland management. These should be what you hope to achieve or change within the woodland over a minimum of the next 10 years. Some objectives may reach well beyond the term of the plan.

Objectives are a set of specific, quantifiable statements that represent what needs to happen to achieve the long-term vision. For instance they might detail intentions to improve access, biodiversity, recreation or timber sales e.g. *'enhance biodiversity through ride management, glade creation and retention of deadwood'* or *'improve resilience to climate change through a programme of thinning and increasing species diversity with enrichment planting'* etc.

Each objective should be a brief separate statement of management intent. Basic operational and

practical details of how these objectives will be met will be included in later sections of the plan.

Objectives will need to take into account any constraints (including site designations) or threats to the woodland to ensure that they are achievable.

Objectives should not conflict with each other.

Section 3. Plan Review – Achievements

The WMP is a working document covering a minimum period of 10 years. Work undertaken during that period should be monitored and the plan may be subject to review or revision. This section should be used to identify achievements made against previous plan objectives. Work undertaken during that period should be monitored, and the plan may be subject to review or revision.

A five year review of the plan should take place and relevant findings put into this section. Record your achievements as they occur so that there is a clear demonstration of sustainable woodland management through the life of the approved WMP. This is likely to be required if being audited against UKFS, independent certification of sustainable forestry management against the UK Woodland Assurance Standard or the sustainability criteria for Renewable Heat Incentive or Grown in Britain compliance.

Section 4. Woodland Survey

4.1 Description

Use this section to provide a brief description of your woodland as it is now, but not to detail your objectives for the wood, or management intentions as these are covered later in their own sections of the management plan template.

Completing this information will require knowledge of the woodland and its context in the landscape. You will need to walk the woodlands extensively and note the risk and opportunities for its future management, what these are and where these are located. Maps, photographs and graphs can provide a useful supplement to this section – if used please cross reference them. Photographs should be submitted on a separate annex and not put into the main plan template.

As a minimum requirement the description should consider the following but may have additional detail:

- Geographical location and elevation of the wood.
- Woodland context in the landscape – e.g. is it one woodland block within a larger forest or is it several small woodlands surrounded by agricultural land etc.
- Are there any designations on the woodland – SSSI, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, AONB, TPOs etc.
- What are the principal soil types. What are the characteristics of the wood itself – e.g. is it

single species plantation or neglected hazel coppice with oak standards etc.;

- Are there any notable features – ponds, veteran trees, wood banks, wayleaves, escarpments etc.

- Are there any protected or rare species.

- What is the management history if known.

- Is there public access.

- Is there any recreational activity in the woodland.

4.2 Information

This section is to identify specific features in, and adjacent to, your woodland. Please ensure you specify 'yes' or 'no' on every row of the table. Where you respond 'yes' to any feature please provide details in the notes section or refer to appendices where applicable – for instance you should specify where the feature is found, when it was surveyed etc.

These features may be things that make your woodland unique or special. Identifying and mapping them can ensure their enhancement or preservation and they should be considered in the later management strategy of the plan (section 6).

Designations. You must declare designations as some may require consent by law to undertake your proposed plans. Failure to disclose the designations may result in illegal activity. Designations should be indicated on one of the annotated maps with your plan. If a designation is applicable please provide details in the notes field. Many designations can be checked on line using the Magic Maps service (<http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>) or the Forestry Commission's Advanced Land Information Search (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-529h8t>). To check for Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) you must contact your Local Planning Authority.

European protected species (EPS). These species are protected by law. You should survey your woodland to assess the presence of any suitable habitat for protected species. If you specify 'no' to the presence of any of these species but there is suitable habitat on your site you may be asked to outline your reasoning. E.g. bats are assumed to use all woodlands in England and there may be suitable habitat for other protected species even if the species is not known to be present.

If you have not surveyed for these species, you may be able to get data from your local biodiversity record centre. Otherwise surveys should be completed or, if habitat is suitable, the species should be assumed to be present and good practice guidance must be followed at all times. Good practice guides can be found here: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-genc24>. Details of how management for these species will be considered should be summarised in the subsequent management strategy of the plan (section 6).

Priority Species. Other priority species may be present in your woods. You can consult target maps - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-statements-of-priorities> to get an idea of the priority species known to be in your area and which may need

bespoke management. If the wood is within a target area for a Section 41 species or woodland bird assemblages then appropriate management must be considered. This could be the starting point for further discussions with the relevant body that is responsible for protection of those species.

Historic Environment. Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and/or Gardens and Listed Buildings can be viewed on Magic Maps (<http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>) or the Forestry Commission's Advanced Land Information Search (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-5z9h8t>).

Unscheduled archaeological records might include features such as wood banks or earthworks. If you identify these in your woodland they should be mapped and considered in the management strategy and Operational Site Assessments so as to minimise disruption or damage to them.

Veteran Trees. Where veteran or future veteran trees are present, they should be mapped or a commitment should be made to map these during the lifetime of the plan (at least before work is undertaken which could adversely affect them).

Landscape, People and Water. Landscape features should be considered and mapped where possible.

CROW Access, PRow and permissive access should be mapped as there are regulations that apply to these features.

Water features should be mapped. Always consider how you will work within riparian zones and on slopes adjacent to water courses. Good management will avoid penalties and will help meet Environment Agency (EA) targets for water improvements in your area. Buffers around water courses may exist prohibiting certain management activities and EA guidance should be sought.

Planning Operations. There is an example template of an Operations Site Assessment (OSA) form available from the FC website under 'related documents' on (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-9bmjwe>) which you can use to ensure the features of interest in the woodland are considered when planning operations. You can also use this as a checklist to make sure archaeology and other features are correctly considered and recorded in the WMP.

If your management plan includes areas of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) you can complete a Supplementary Notice of Operations (SNO) available from the FC website here <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-sssi>.

4.3 Habitat types

Please specify 'yes' or 'no' in each row of the table. Where a habitat type is present please provide location of the habitat. Maps can be used to supplement this section.

4.4 Structure

Ensuring woodland has a varied structure in terms of age, species, origin and open space will provide a range of benefits for the biodiversity and resilience of the woodland.

Please complete the table to identify the different structural components in your woodland.

Example:

Woodland Type (Broadleaf, Conifer, Coppice, Intimate Mix)	Percentage of Mgt Plan Area	Age Structure (even/uneven)	Notes (i.e. understory or natural regeneration present)
Conifer	30	even	Compartments of Norway spruce plantation
Native Broadleaf	20	uneven	Areas of ancient woodland principally Oak and Beech high forest
Coppice with standards	40	uneven	Compartments 1-3. Mostly hazel with oak canopy. Hazel in 12 year rotation.
Open space	10	uneven	Managed woodland glades in compartments 4 and 5.

NB: Please ensure that percentages add up to 100!

Section 5. Woodland Protection

This section is used to identify the current and potential future threats to your woodland. You must not only consider the threats at the time of planning but also any that may become an issue during the lifetime of the plan.

5.1 Establishing Risk

To assist with the management of these threats this section of the plan template provides a system for establishing risk, which helps to inform and prioritise control measures. Woodland protection is split into a number of individually headed sections (plant health, environment, climate change etc). Some of the sections contain a list of potential threats, from which you are expected to assess only those which are relevant to your woodland.

For each potential threat that you have identified, you need to establish both the likelihood that the threat is present and also the impact this would have on the woodland. These can then be cross referenced against the risk matrix provided in the management plan template, helping to indicate the overall level of risk and necessity for action. The response to each risk although informed by the risk matrix, should not solely state the advised level of action (i.e. monitor, plan for action, action) but instead, should elaborate on and describe what you intend to do.

For each threat identified you should specify:

- Its extent or distribution;
- What impact it is likely to have, when and why (for instance if a tree disease is present but not many of the affected species are in the wood then the impact is likely to be low but this reason should be specified); and
- A response to the threat that provides achievable, time bound and practical measures to protect the woodland or facilitate adaptation to impacts.

Simply monitoring a threat is not a sufficient response strategy – you must detail how you will monitor, and what measures will be taken if the threat is found to be compromising your objectives, protected features or the UKFS.

There are suggestions provided for each box of potential threats that need to be considered, but you should concentrate on those most relevant to your woodland and circumstances – this includes identifying and listing any others not suggested in the template. NB: Additional boxes can be added if required.

5.2 Tree health

Tree diseases are an increasing threat to our woodlands. Ash dieback, Phytophthora species, red band needle blight, acute oak decline, chestnut blight and others have all been found to varying extents in England.

You should identify species or areas in your woods that are most likely to be susceptible and consider your management options should these stands be infected now or in the future. Planning for the future with consideration for species and structural diversity can improve the resilience of your wood to cope with tree health impacts. Information on diseases can be found here: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pestsanddiseases>. These pages also contain information about distribution which may help to inform your assessment of the likelihood of presence.

5.3 Deer

Deer can be the main reason why woods in England fail to reach good condition, so robust information should be included in this section. You should specify if deer are currently present in the woods, and if so, which species. If not, are they found locally and are they likely to impact in the future? Where is the impact and what is the evidence?

What mitigation measures will be taken, including culling, fencing, individual tree protection etc.

Impact assessments and ongoing monitoring should be undertaken regularly which might include the use of exclosure plots. Information of this sort should be included in this section but can be expanded in the management strategy.

A deer management plan is highly recommended and it is mandatory for some woodland management grants. Advice on assessments, monitoring and plans can be found through the Deer Initiative website here http://www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk/best_practice/associated_information.php. Game managers should be engaged with the objectives for the woodland and preparation of the WMP.

5.4 Grey Squirrels

The grey squirrel is a common threat to the production of quality timber, and negatively impacts biodiversity and tree safety. Even if you do not wish to produce high quality timber you may still need to manage the impacts of grey squirrel. You should specify the current levels of damage and the likely impact on your objectives, protected features or the UKFS.

5.5 Livestock and other mammals

Consider the impacts of any grazing livestock within or adjacent to the woodland, and whether browsing levels are sustainable, or whether livestock need to be excluded. Other mammals such as rabbits, hares or wild boar may be impacting and, if so, should also be included.

5.6 Water and Soil

The soil and water section should cover soil erosion, compaction, pollution and potential acidification of water and, where appropriate, how your woodland could play a role in flood flow management. Waste disposal must meet relevant legal requirements (including removal of planting bags, tree shelters and chemical containers).

Pollution must be avoided. If you are considering operations that run a risk of a pollution incident you should detail here how you intend to minimise the risks. Broad assessment here should be refined in a detailed Operational Site Assessments prior to operational works.

Consider the risks of damage to soils when working in wet conditions or on steep slopes. Check for past damage: erosion on tracks, wet areas on rides, impeded drainage and waterlogged soils.

Be aware of topography when assessing the affects that erosion and run off may have on water courses that may not be on your land.

5.7 Environmental

Existing knowledge of your site should inform your assessment of the risk posed by environmental factors. You should also consider impacts of your proposals to the surrounding environment and properties – some mitigation might require collaborating with neighbours.

Some of the environmental risks to be considered in this section are listed below but others may be relevant. Those with the greatest likely relevance to your wood should be addressed including measures to be taken.

- Invasive species – (rhododendron, laurel, Himalayan balsam etc.).
- Fire – (woodland structure including open space and adjacent open habitats, recreational risk etc.).
- Flood – (history of flooding, proximity to water courses etc.).
- Anti-social behaviour – (fly tipping, trespass etc.).

5.8 Climate change

Further information about the potential impact of climate change and how this can be considered through woodland management can be found on the FC website here <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8M6E9E>. This includes details about likely impacts and potential mitigation/control measures that can improve woodland resilience. Please consider structure, species diversity and site suitability, provenance of new planting stock, threats to small woodlands and specify any measures that will inform your planning. The Ecological Site Classification system (ESC) provides guidance on projected climate change and suitable species under climate change scenarios <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/esc>.

Section 6. Management Strategy

This section should detail how you intend to achieve the management objectives that you have identified and listed in section 2.2. Each one of the objectives you named should be listed in a new row in the table. The 'Management Intention' column should specify in more detail the processes to be undertaken to achieve the corresponding objective. Refined operational detail is not required here but it is expected that this will be included in an Operational Site Assessment prior to work being started.

Any features identified in earlier sections and any threats listed in section 5 should be taken into account and considered in the management strategy. If you are quoting the use of best practice guidance, please specify which guidance you are referring to.

Your strategy should consider and detail the areas of felling, methods of restocking, time scales, constraints and economics and should be accompanied by maps where possible. Appendices may also be used to supplement this section if required – please cross reference where applicable.

An example of a management strategy is below:

Management Objective / Feature	Management Intention
Objective 1: Enhance biodiversity through ride management, glade creation and retention of deadwood.	The ride network as shown on Map 1 will be managed on an annual basis to create/maintain a 2-zone structure throughout. Ride widths will vary between 12 and 16 metres to ensure sufficient light can reach the ride floor. The central strip will be mowed annually in late summer and the shrubby edges will be cut on a three year cycle to enhance habitat for butterflies and ground flora. Glades in compartment 3 and 4 marked in red on Map 1 will be cleared of existing scrub encroachment and maintained as open space with annual mowing in late summer. An additional glade of approximately 0.4 ha (see Map 1) will be created in compartment 2 following removal of rhododendron.

Section 7. Stakeholder Engagement

For any woodland management plan there will be additional stakeholders who should be notified about your proposals. Some of these will require formal consultation and others will be informal. Please use this section to identify people and organisations with an interest in the woodland, record any engagement undertaken and the details of any responses received. Early discussions provide an opportunity to resolve any potential conflicts, identify possibilities for collaboration and avoid misunderstanding.

Some likely stakeholders include:

- Statutory bodies for designated sites: Natural England, Historic England, Local Planning Authority.
- Neighbours.
- Recreational users: horse riding groups, shoot organisers, public rights of way officers etc.
- Interest groups if relevant: conservation bodies etc.
- Tenants of the land or adjacent land.
- Local Planning Authority/Environment Agency for permitted/full development proposals.

Statutory consultees

You should seek advice on designated or protected features as early as possible. This might involve inviting representatives of statutory bodies to a site visit which could be also attended by the FC Woodland Officer. Statutory bodies will want to see draft copies of plans and may request additional information or amendments. **The owner is responsible for ensuring that any work proposed and undertaken is not in breach of regulations pertaining to designated sites.**

If your management plan includes areas of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) you can complete a Supplementary Notice of Operations (SNO). This collects details of specific operations to help ensure the designated area is suitably protected and enables FC to work with Natural England to provide consent for the works on the SSSI. This is completed through consultation with Natural England on any tree felling or other forestry proposals detailed within the WMP.

You should discuss proposals with your Natural England Advisor at an early stage of planning and with the FC Woodland Officer and / or Natural England Advisor when drafting your plan.

For other licences or consents, e.g. for development proposals or for work on Scheduled Monuments, where additional approval will be needed, this must come directly from the relevant authority.

Section 8. Monitoring

Regular monitoring of work and analysis of the results is critical in establishing whether objectives are being met and helps to identify issues.

Use this section to establish a method of monitoring each of your objectives listed in section 2.2. Each objective should be copied into a row in the first column of the table. Indicators of success should be carefully considered and methods of assessments established and specified. These are likely to include a variety of techniques depending on the objective such as walk over surveys, fixed point photography, habitat assessments, deer enclosure plots, examination of balance sheets etc.

NOTE: Monitoring and reporting is a mandatory requirement of some woodland grants.

The management plan should be periodically reviewed and updated to remain current. This should happen every 5 years and the review should be informed by results of the monitoring programme. The more information contained in this section the easier it is to review and update plans.

Plan of operations spreadsheet

The plan of operations Excel spreadsheet provides a summary of sub-compartment information. It provides the details required if you wish to gain felling licence approval through the management plan.

There are two versions of the Plan of Operations, one coded to ensure that you only enter the correct information required by the Forestry Commission, and an alternative version that is un-coded, for applicants experienced in writing plans.

Completing the spreadsheet

The Excel spreadsheet contains different tabs used for the sub-compartment record, felling and restocking information and the work programme. Some fields are mandatory and some are optional – to be completed at the author's discretion.

Tab 1 Guidance

A guidance note detailing how to use the Excel spreadsheet which also includes abbreviations to be used.

There is also guidance provided for the coded spreadsheet, which provides information on how to resolve the error flags that may be generated as you use subsequent tabs the spreadsheet.

Tab 2 Customer Details

This tab captures property, customer and/or agent information required for generating a felling permission. All personal information will be handled in line with data protection legislation.

Tab 3 Sub-compartment Record

This tab enables you to set out detailed information for each sub-compartment. The compartment and sub-compartment numbers can be established by you during your survey and MUST be shown on a sub-compartment map. How you chose to subdivide your woodland is up to you on the basis of management needs.

The first eleven columns (A-K) are mandatory. Information put into these fields will automatically populate on the subsequent tabs in the spreadsheet. The rest of the fields in this tab are optional, so can be used for additional planning information if required.

The gross area of each sub-compartment is its whole area. The net area is the area that can be managed so would exclude waterbodies or surfaced roads etc.

The species columns should identify the principal species in the sub-compartment. Species codes can be found as a drop down menu or on the final tab of the spreadsheet.

Any statutory designations in each sub-compartment must be included in column K to ensure the correct consultation procedures are followed. Failure to disclose designations could invalidate your felling licence and result in illegal activity.

Tab 4 Felling and Restocking

This tab sets the details required for a felling licence application.

Sub-compartment Record – Columns A-F

The first six columns (A-F) will have automatically populated based on the information provided in the first tab - the sub-compartment record.

Felling information – Columns G-R

These columns include proposed felling activity within each sub-compartment for a ten year period. These must be completed accurately and in full if you require a felling licence.

All restocking information should be provided in columns S to AJ explained below.

Column G: Specify the area within the sub compartment that is to be felled.

Column H: Specify the felling type. Only one type of felling should be specified per row.

If a sub compartment will contain more than one type of felling, you will need to create a new row for that sub compartment in the Sub-Cpt Record tab. For instance a compartment may have Oak thinning and broadleaf coppice – this will require two rows.

If you are proposing to fell an area and not replant it, you should select the Deforestation (DF) option.

NB: Abbreviations for the type of felling can be found in the Tab 1 'Guidance'.

Columns I-N: All species to be felled that account for more than 20% of the volume of timber that will be felled must be listed. Individual species at or below 20% can be grouped as mixed broadleaf (MB) or mixed conifer (MC).

Columns O-P: You MUST estimate the volume of timber you will be felling for each row, split into broadleaves and conifer. This is an estimate only.

A simple PDF timber volume calculator can be found on the FC felling licence pages if you are unsure (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-fellinglicences>).

The plan of operations covers a 10 year period, so if over this timeframe you intend to carry out two thinning operations within the same sub-compartment you can show this by simply increasing the volume of timber to be removed. You must add a comment in the 'notes' column if this is proposed.

Column Q: Please identify the preferred year in which the felling operations is proposed to take place.

Restocking – Columns S-AI

These columns include information about how the felled compartments will be restocked by planting, natural regeneration and/or coppice regrowth.

Column S: The first column of this section is the restock area will normally be the same as the column G 'Area to be felled'. Enter the correct area (ha) you plan to restock in that sub compartment.

If you are planting an alternative area, you can use the same sub-compartment ref on the sheet, but will have to show the different restock area on your map.

If your project involves deforestation, you do not need to provide restock details, but your plan should detail the reason for deforestation.

Column T: You need to state the percentage of open space you will be creating (if any).

Columns U-AG: The restocking information that you provide needs to be split by species and you need to show the percentage of the restock area each species accounts for. Column AG totals up the percentage of open ground and species to ensure you account for all the area being replanted.

Column AH: You are also asked to state the stocking density of the restock. You can advise us of different stocking densities if you have differences in stocking requirements e.g. using the format *Con 2250 / BL 1600*.

Column AI: Estimate the proportion of the area which will be restocked by natural regeneration (which includes coppice regrowth). The management strategy (section 6) of your Woodland Management Plan should outline your broad strategy for restocking i.e. where planting, natural regeneration or coppice regrowth will be used.

Col AJ: Clearly select the Restock type for the sub compartment from the drop down list.

Tab 5 Work Programme

This tab allows you to communicate your planned activities in each sub compartment to support achievement of your objectives. Information might include an outline of any major operation planned, PAWS restoration, new access routes or restructuring of the woodland. This information can also be supplied on maps.

Maps

Required maps

There are certain maps that must accompany every plan. Use sensible judgement to determine how much information can be clearly shown on each map and combine information onto fewer maps only if it is visibly clear (for instance in small woods, one map may be sufficient).

Required maps are as follows:

1. Location Map(s): showing all the woods within your plan within the wider landscape, with their access points shown. This is best presented on an appropriately scaled map that can incorporate such things as public access routes, vistas, utilities, watercourses and other landscape scale detail that will impact a plan's execution.
2. Compartment Map(s): using an appropriate scale to clearly show all the numbered compartments/ sub-compartments and their boundaries in your woodland. This map will need to be signed and dated as it will form part of your felling licence.
3. Operations Map(s): using an appropriately scaled map to clearly show where key woodland management work will be undertaken e.g. ride management, clear felling, veteran trees etc.
4. Constraints Map(s): on an appropriate scale to clearly show all the designated land e.g. SSSI, AONB etc and any other major constraints.

It is likely that other maps will demonstrate the management intentions and woodland features. If you are considering applying for further woodland grants under Countryside Stewardship you will need maps (perhaps based on your operations map) indicating the location of management prescriptions. Features that could be mapped are:

- Rides and open space
- Invasive species or other threats
- Water bodies or features
- Ancient woodland
- Veteran and notable trees
- Archaeological features
- Recreational areas
- Locations for proposed capital items such as fencing, new infrastructure etc

Map quality

Maps need to be of sufficient quality for clear interpretation by the Forestry Commission or any other stakeholder. You may use your own GIS or web-based packages to produce these maps. A map request service providing suitable base maps is available from the Forestry Commission. You can access this service here <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-6d8hxr>.

For all maps please note the following requirements:

- All features shown on the map must be included in a key;
- All maps must be produced with an Ordnance Survey (OS) backdrop or with features that enable the user to easily locate the detail on the ground;
- Maps need to be located with an OS Grid reference (usually the access point to the wood) and a north arrow;
- Use sensible judgement to determine how much information can be clearly shown on each map and combine information onto maps if it is clearly visible; and
- When using colours or effects please ensure they are sufficiently distinct for interpretation

Amendments to Woodland Management Plans after Approval

The Woodland Management Plan is intended as a working document and you may want to amend it during its lifetime. If you wish to make changes your plan must still be UKFS compliant. You can discuss this with your Woodland Officer (WO) if necessary and amended copies of the plan should be sent to your WO.

Amending tree felling proposals

If you wish to amend the felling programme (after approval of your WMP) by adding new components of felling then you will need to submit an application for a stand-alone felling licence. The new felling licence application should only contain the new felling proposals not any felling already approved through the original WMP's plan of operations.

New applications should be fully UKFS compliant (taking account of existing approved felling areas) and will be subject to any necessary consultations. If you wish to only amend the restocking conditions on your approved licence this may be possible without the need for an application as long as the felling has not yet taken place and you should discuss this with your Woodland Officer.

Annex 3

Contact details for Woodland Management Plan Grant CS Delivery Services offices

Natural England offices are open from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays.

Completed Woodland Management Plan Grant application forms:

Please send your completed Woodland Management Plan Grant application form to CS Delivery Services in Crewe

If applying on-line, supporting evidence should be sent to the Crewe office:

Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services
Natural England,
PO Box 380,
Crewe
CW1 6YH

T: 020 802 61805
E: ts.crewe@naturalengland.org.uk

Forestry Commission contacts for Woodland Management Plan Grant

Forestry Commission Woodland Officers provide technical advice on the creation of the Woodland Management Plan after the agreement has been accepted. Agreement Holders should send draft Woodland Management Plans to the Forestry Commission Admin Hub dealing with plans in their area.

For Woodland Management Plans in the North West & West Midlands and the South West

Forestry Commission
Bullers Hill Office,
Kennford,
Exeter, EX6 7XR

Tel: 0300 067 4960
Email: adminhub.bullershill@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

For Woodland Management Plans in Yorkshire & North East, East & East Midlands and South East & London

Forestry Commission
Bucks Horn Oak, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 4LS
Tel: 0300 067 4420
Email: adminhub.se@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

To find contact details for Forestry Commission Woodland Officers in your area, please see www.forestry.gov.uk/england-areas.

Claim Forms or Agreement Management queries:

To request a claim form or to inform Natural England of a change of circumstances, please contact the Enquiries Team:

telephone: 0208 026 1089

email: enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

Submit a paper based claim form and any supporting evidence

If agreement holders wish to send in a paper based claim form rather than use the claim online function they should send in paper based claim forms to:

Newcastle
Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services
Natural England,
PO Box 1316,
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE99 4PB

T: 020 822 56663

E: ts.newcastle@naturalengland.org.uk

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Lancashire, Merseyside, North Yorkshire,
Northumberland, Somerset, South Yorkshire,
Tyne & Wear, West Yorkshire, Wiltshire

Worcester
Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services
Natural England,
PO Box 530,
Worcester
WR5 2WZ

T: 020 802 61090

E: ts.worcester@naturalengland.org.uk

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