



Grants & Regulations news

Protecting, expanding and improving England's woodlands

This month, keep up-to-date with the changes that have been made to the Felling Licence application form, Agent Authority form, Woodland Creation Planning Grant and Woodland Carbon Fund, and find out how you can spot, report and manage Ash dieback.

Changes to your Felling Licence application form

We have recently updated the system that we use to process your felling licence applications.

Our staff are using this new system and although the only change you should see is a slightly different looking licence at the end, we need to make some changes to the way you complete your application form.

What if you have recently submitted a Felling Licence Application?

- For applicants who have already submitted felling licence applications, this may mean a temporary delay whilst we work with you to amend the application details.

What are the changes?

- Each sub compartment of proposed felling must now be entered on a separate row on the application form (you can no longer group compartments by felling type)
- Each sub compartment must have a corresponding referenced area shown on the application map. You can use the same sub compartment reference more than once if you are going to propose more than one felling type on that area of woodland. If this applies each felling type must be clearly mapped within the cpt map to show its location.
- Felling Licence applications for thinning only now also need the [EC Agent Authority form](#) to be completed and submitted – more on this below.
- Applicants and Agents are asked to provide their email address

[FC Agent Authority form \(for supporting FL applications,](#)

legacy grant claims and legacy grant agreement amendments)

We have made some changes to the [FC Agent Authority form](#). This is to help us provide a better service using our new Felling Licence System and to include authority to apply for thinning only operations.

- For those properties / customers which the FC already has an Agent Authority form that allows the Agent to sign the Conditions for a Felling Licence, the FC will continue to accept those for thinning only applications.
- However, we ask that you please replace existing FC Agent Authority forms when it is possible for you to do so, and to let your [Admin Hub](#) have the replacement once signed by your client.

For all other new relationships involving applying for a felling licence, an updated [FC Agent Authority form](#) is available.

WCPG and WCF improvements made permanent

The Woodland Creation Planning Grant and Woodland Carbon Fund support large-scale, productive woodland creation. In 2017, a number of changes were introduced on a temporary basis:

- In July 2017, the minimum gross size threshold for Woodland Creation Planning Grant and Woodland Carbon Fund applications was reduced from 30 hectares to 10 hectares (single standalone block, or multiple blocks adjoined by existing woodland).
- In October 2017, a second stage payment at year 5 of £1,000 per gross hectare was added to the Woodland Carbon Fund offer, along with support (at 40% of actual costs) for forest roads and tracks.

We can now confirm that these changes are permanent. You can apply by submitting a WCPG application to wcp@forestry.gsi.gov.uk or a WCF application or expression of interest to wcf@forestry.gsi.gov.uk. See our [woodland creation webpages](#) or ask your Woodland Officer for more details.

Update: Ash dieback

Last year we started to see more significant impacts of the disease in some parts of the UK. Foresters and landowners are asked to continue to be vigilant for signs of infection, and to regularly inspect their ash trees. In particular, they should consider any safety concerns from the risk of falling branches from infected trees.

The [Forestry Commission website](#) provides advice and guidance on how to spot, report and manage the disease.

The Government does not encourage the felling of non-infected ash trees or infected

trees which do not pose a danger to the public, other than during normal woodland management activities.

Guidance for felling dangerous, infected trees from the Forest Industry Safety Accord is summarised below and [restoration grants](#) are available to support replanting.

Defra and the Forestry Commission continue to work with landowners and local councils to share experiences, identify solutions and develop action plans which will help them deal with the impacts of ash dieback, both in woodland and non-woodland settings.

Forest Industry Safety Accord (FISA) advice for felling dead ash

Chalara weakens the natural defence of an ash tree, which can allow Honey fungus (*Armillaria mellea*) to attack. As a result, industry professionals may have to harvest trees which have a very high proportion of deadwood in the crown, with no significant fibre strength at felling height. Careful planning is essential to help ensure the safety of chainsaw operators working in these areas.

The primary consideration must be whether the job can be done by other means. The best control measure is to use mechanical harvesting equipment, where the operator is in a protective cab. Where this is not possible, it's very important that a chainsaw operator is both competent and properly equipped.

Additional considerations:

1. It is essential that operators retreat fully into their escape route when the tree begins to fall, and that the use of traditional wedge techniques is minimised. Helmets and felling jackets will offer only limited protection from falling deadwood.
2. In dead or dying trees, particularly where honey fungus is present, fibre length will be reduced dramatically and the risk of a tree hinge and falling in an uncontrolled manner is very high. It's essential that an operator recognises where this timber exists and maintains a stronger hinge than normal. It is also not recommended that an operator bores the centre of the hinge as this will reduce the amount of effective hinge.
3. It is very likely that when felling in a crop which has suffered from an attack of honey fungus that neighbouring trees will be knocked or dragged down as a result of felling the intended tree. This can put the operator at considerable risk, especially where trees with very weak root systems are relying on support from other trees in the crop. In these situations, every effort must be made to mechanise the felling operations.

Visit the [FISA website](#) for a full list of considerations, case studies as well as competence and equipment guidelines.

If you have any questions, please contact us:

Email: GRNationalTeam@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

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

Forestry Commission 620 Bristol Business
Coldharbour Lane Bristol, BS16 1EJ United
Kingdom

You are receiving this email because you
previously subscribed to our e-alert.

[Subscribe to this newsletter](#)

[Unsubscribe from this list](#)

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Forestry Commission · 620 Bristol Business · Coldharbour Lane · Bristol, BS16 1EJ · United Kingdom