



Grants & Regulations news

Protecting, expanding and improving England's woodlands

This month we announce the year round opening of the Countryside Stewardship woodland creation grant in our rolling application window (see our [press release](#)). Find out more about our seminars at the APF show later this month and a reminder about tree loss in the dry weather, what to do if you've suffered drought-related deaths this summer.

Great News for Woodland Creation Applicants

You can now apply for Countryside Stewardship (CS) woodland creation capital grant year round in our new rolling window which opens for applications today (Monday 10 September 2018).

We have been listening to customers' requests and are pleased to announce these changes which will remove the restriction on when you can apply for your woodland creation capital grant. We are keen to make improvements to the scheme where we can and hope that the removal of the 6 week application window and the flexibility it provides will help land managers when making their applications.

So what is changing?

Actually not much. You can from today (Monday 10 September) apply for your CS woodland creation grant year round, there is no longer an application window, so you can apply when it suits you best.

We have updated the [woodland creation manual](#). The main change that we have made, is to scoring. Initial applications will still need to score 12 points to be accepted, but rather than setting a score final applications must meet to be offered an agreement in a single round each year, we will do this each month. This approach allows us to open the grant to applications at any time of year and continually process applications.

To maximise the period of the planting seasons and provide time to order planting stock within your agreement period, you can now ask to defer the start date of your

woodland creation grant agreement by up to 6 months after the final application is submitted.

Don't worry, the funding offer isn't changing

You can still apply for up to £6,800 per hectare for woodland creation and, once tree planting is completed, eligible applicants will be invited to apply for the 10 year maintenance payments. The Government has confirmed that it will guarantee funding for Countryside Stewardship grants agreed and signed before the UK's departure from the EU, even if the grant agreements continue after we have left the EU where they are good value for money and are in line with domestic strategic priorities.

When will I get my agreement in the new rolling window?

We will process applications as quickly as possible but our advice is that applicants should anticipate it will take at least 5 months from submitting their application to receiving an agreement. This could be longer if it's a complex case, the land is in Environmental Stewardship, woodland infrastructure (item code FY2) is being applied for, or the application is submitted at a time of peak work for our field teams (between May and September when we are also processing Higher Tier Woodland Improvement applications).

Where do I send my application?

Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services have three processing offices for the woodland creation grant – see the information below to find out where you should send your completed application:

East of England

(Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk)
Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services, PO Box 2423, Reading RG1 6WY
Tel: 0208 026 7254 Email: ts.reading@naturalengland.org.uk

East Midlands

(Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland)
Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services, PO Box 10276, Nottingham NG2 9PD
Tel: 0208 026 2018 Email: ts.nottingham@naturalengland.org.uk

North East

(Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham, former county of Cleveland)
Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services, PO Box 380, Crewe CW1 6YH
Tel: 0208 026 1806 Email: ts.crewe@naturalengland.org.uk

North West

(Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside)

Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services, PO Box 380, Crewe CW1 6YH
Tel: 0208 026 1806 Email: ts.crewe@naturalengland.org.uk

South East

(Greater London, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey, West Sussex)
Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services, PO Box 2423, Reading RG1 6WY
Tel: 0208 026 7254 Email: ts.reading@naturalengland.org.uk

South West

(Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset, The Scilly Isles, Wiltshire, former county of Avon)
Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services, PO Box 380, Crewe CW1 6YH
Tel: 0208 026 1806 Email: ts.crewe@naturalengland.org.uk

West Midlands

(Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Midlands, Worcestershire)
Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services, PO Box 380, Crewe CW1 6YH
Tel: 0208 026 1806 Email: ts.crewe@naturalengland.org.uk

Yorkshire and the Humber

(East Riding of Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire)
Countryside Stewardship Delivery Services, PO Box 10276, Nottingham NG2 9PD
Tel: 0208 026 2018 Email: ts.nottingham@naturalengland.org.uk

I've already applied for CS Woodland Creation grant, does this affect me?

No, if your application is already in progress we will continue to process it under the arrangements that applied at the time your application was made. Agreements for these applications are now being issued. The terms and conditions are not changing with the new rolling window.



Where can I find out more?

Join our customer webinar on Tuesday 2 October at 12:30pm to find out more. To join please dial in on 0800 528 5280 (access code: 3725110) and [login online](#).

APF Show
20-22 September 2018

Forestry Commission England and Forest Research have joined forces to celebrate 100 years of the Forestry Act and the Forestry Commission at the 2018 APF show which takes place between 20-22 September 2018 at the Ragley Estate in Warwickshire. Experts will be on hand to answer questions and provide advice, and there is also a seminar programme running over the 3 days covering topics such as future incentives, woodland creation and tree health. Read more and find out about the seminars in our [press release](#).

Large-scale loss of young trees due to drought Reminder

We reminded you in our [previous eAlert](#) that, if you believe you are not able to comply with your Agreement obligations due to force majeure (including due to this summer's prolonged hot and dry weather), you must notify the relevant administrator in writing within a set number of working days. For example, CS Agreement Holders must notify Natural England (CS Delivery Services) within 15 days. If you conduct a beat up survey of your woodland, you should treat the date of the survey as the start of the 15 (or for some Agreement types, 10) day countdown.

If you are unsure of whether force majeure applies to you or you have concerns, please contact your administrator. We recommend that, if in doubt, you should notify the grant Administrator of a force majeure claim in writing within the specified time period, just in case.

In the meantime, we are continuing to work with the RPA, Defra, Natural England and CS Delivery Services on other ways of supporting Agreement Holders who have suffered drought-related tree deaths on an exceptional scale this summer. Look out for further eAlerts and for direct contact from your grant Administrator.

If you have any questions, please contact us:

Email: GRNationalTeam@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

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

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