



Rural Payments  
Agency

Spring 2019

# An update from the Rural Payments Agency



Including:

- Applying for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS)
- Submitting your claims for: Countryside Stewardship (CS) and Environmental Stewardship (ES)
- Applying for Woodland Support Grants

*This publication was withdrawn on 11 June 2020*

For scheme information go to [www.gov.uk/rpa](http://www.gov.uk/rpa)



## Apply for BPS

Everything you need to apply for BPS is now available at [www.gov.uk/rpa/bps2019](http://www.gov.uk/rpa/bps2019), including the 'Basic Payment Scheme: rules for 2019', 'How to apply online for BPS in 2019', and more.

If you applied online last year (2018), you should have received an email from us – 'You can now apply for BPS' – containing a link to the information on GOV.UK. If you used a paper form to apply last year, you should have now received a paper form for 2019. If you haven't received one yet, let us know. But you don't need to wait for it to arrive to start your application. Call us on 03000 200 301 and we can help you apply online.

**We must receive your application, and any supporting documents, by midnight on 15 May 2019.**

### Tips for applying

- Double check your online application, especially the claimed areas, before and after you've submitted it.
- Keep a copy of your online application as soon as you've submitted it.
- If you apply on paper, keep a copy of all your paperwork.
- Make sure you keep receipts for your online BPS application or BP5 application form and, if applicable, an RLE1 form.

## Submit your claim for CS payments

Submit your payment claims online using the Rural Payments service at [www.gov.uk/claim-rural-payments](http://www.gov.uk/claim-rural-payments).

You'll only receive a paper form for 2019 if you're unable to submit a claim online or you've requested a paper form from us. If you've received a paper form but you would prefer to claim online for 2019, please call us on 03000 200 301 and we'll will arrange this for you.

The 'How to submit a revenue claim online' document gives useful information about claiming online. You can download this at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-how-to-submit-claims-online](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-how-to-submit-claims-online).

**We must receive your revenue claim, and any supporting documents, by midnight on 15 May 2019.**

If your agreement includes capital items, you can also claim for these online. Check the capital claim submission deadline date for these in the relevant scheme manual for your agreement at [www.gov.uk/rpa/cs](http://www.gov.uk/rpa/cs).

**Countryside Stewardship agreements under a single SBI** – if you've more than one multi-annual CS agreement, we'll ask you to complete a Whole Business Claim Declaration. You'll need to list all your CS agreements by reference, title and revenue claim method. It's important that you complete this and return it to us promptly or your payment may be reduced.

**Countryside Stewardship evidence requirements for 2019 have changed** – we've reduced the amount of evidence you need to submit with your application or revenue claim. You still need to keep all evidence as we may ask to see it at any point during your agreement.

For more information, read the relevant options at [www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants](http://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants) or read the relevant Countryside Stewardship manual which are available at [www.gov.uk/rpa/cs](http://www.gov.uk/rpa/cs).

## Submit your claim for ES payments

To claim for ES payments, you must complete a paper claim form, you cannot apply online. We've sent out the majority of ES claim forms. If you haven't received yours by the end of April, call us on 03000 200 301 to request another copy.

If you're claiming for capital works under Higher Level Stewardship, call us for a capital works claim form.

**We must receive your revenue payment claim, and any supporting documents, by midnight on 15 May 2019.**

## Key dates for Basic Payment Scheme applications; Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship revenue payment claims

2019  
**15  
May**  
(Midnight)

Deadline to avoid late application or late claim penalties

2019  
**31  
May**  
(Midnight)

Deadline to make certain changes without penalties to an application or claim received by 15 May

2019  
**10  
June**  
(Midnight)

Deadline for late applications, claims or amendments, with penalties. No applications, claims or supporting evidence accepted after this date

## Countryside Stewardship applications

### Higher Tier



Deadline to request an application pack



Initial application deadline

### Hedgerows and Boundaries



Application deadline

### Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers



Deadline to request an application pack



Application deadline

# Ecological Focus Areas and Countryside Stewardship or extended Higher Level Stewardship agreements : double funding

You can no longer overlap the following Countryside Stewardship (CS) options or certain options in 2019 extended Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreements with land declared as Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs) on your Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) application.

- **AB1 Nectar flower mix**
- **AB3 Beetle banks**
- **AB4 Skylark plots**
- **AB5 Nesting plots for lapwing and stone curlew**
- **AB6 Enhanced overwinter stubble**
- **AB8 Flower rich margins and plots**
- **AB9 Winter bird food**
- **AB11 Cultivated areas for arable plants**
- **AB15 Two year sown legume fallow**
- **AB16 Autumn sown bumblebird mix**
- **HS2 Take historic and archaeological features out of cultivation**
- **OP2 Organic wild bird seed mixture**
- **SW1 4 to 6 metre buffer strip on cultivated land**
- **SW3 In-field grass strips**
- **SW4 12 to 24 metre watercourse buffer strips on cultivated land**
- **SW6 Winter cover crops**
- **SW12 Making space for water**
- **WD3 Woodland edges on arable land**
- **WT2 Buffering in-field ponds and ditches on arable land**

This is to avoid funding the same activity on the same land parcel for CS or extended HLS and BPS, known as 'double funding'.

You can continue to locate the affected CS or extended HLS options and EFAs (listed above) in the same land parcel but they cannot overlap. This means the affected CS or extended HLS options cannot overlap with EFAs declared on a BPS application for the duration of the agreement.

If you're an existing CS or HLS Extension agreement holder, you should carefully consider the location of EFAs declared on your BPS 2019 application, and make sure they don't overlap with the affected CS or extended HLS options. For new applications you intend to make for a CS agreement starting on 1 January 2020, this will affect the EFAs declared on your BPS 2020 application.

Hedgerows can be used for EFA and CS options as there is no overlap in the management requirements.



**Land in Entry Level Stewardship (ELS), Organic ELS, Upland ELS and HLS agreements not extended in 2019 are unaffected by this change and can continue to overlap EFAs where both the agreement and BPS requirements can be met.**

## Woodland Support Grants

**Are you thinking of creating a new woodland or extending an existing woodland?**

Apply for a Countryside Stewardship Woodland Creation Grant. Apply at any time during the year but allow at least 5 months for your application to be processed.

**Applying for the Countryside Stewardship Woodland Improvement Grant (WD2)?**

If you're applying for this grant as part of Higher Tier, you must have a Forestry Commission approved Woodland Management Plan. Your application must also include your woodland annex and agreement map. Email your completed application by 3 May 2019 to [ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk](mailto:ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk).

For more information about woodland support grants, go to [www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-woodland-support](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/countryside-stewardship-woodland-support).

If you have any queries, please call us on 03000 200 301.

**The UK government has guaranteed that any agreements where funding has been agreed before the end of 2020 will be funded for their full lifetime (even in a no-deal scenario).**



## Apply for Woodland Support Grants

The following grants are available.

**Woodland Creation Grant** – a 2 year capital grant to plant and protect young trees.

**Woodland Management Plan** – a one-off payment to support the production of a UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) compliant 10 year plan to manage woodland. You can apply for the plan online using the Rural Payments service.

**Woodland Tree Health** – a one-off payment to restock or improve woodland due to tree health problems.

Applications are open all year round.

**Countryside Stewardship**

Woodland Support Grants

## @btinternet.com emails

We're aware that some customers with an @btinternet.com email address are not receiving our emails. Please check that our email addresses – ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk, rpa@notifications.service.gov.uk and ruralpayments@rpa-emails.com - appear in your list of allowed senders. If they don't, please add them to your list.



## Be aware of fraud

We won't call you or send you emails or texts asking you to confirm your personal details or payment information.

Never discuss your bank account details with someone you don't know.

We won't ask you to make a payment over the phone.

Delete any emails or texts you don't believe are genuine.

Don't open any links.

Be cautious about what information you share externally, particularly on social media.

If you suspect an attempted fraud or feel you have been the subject of fraud, you can contact:

RPA's Fraud Referral Team on 0800 347 347 or FraudInConfidence@rpa.gov.uk

Action Fraud (the UK's national reporting centre for fraud and cyber-crime) on 0300 123 2040.

## Single point of contact for CS and ES

Contact details for CS and ES customers have changed. If you need to contact us, please use the following contact details.

**Please quote your single business identifier (SBI) for all enquiries**

### Email

ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk

### Call us

03000 200 301 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm, except bank holidays)

### Write to us (CS customers)

Rural Payments Agency, PO Box 324, Worksop, S95 1DF

For ES customers, address details are split by county – for more information, go to [www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-stewardship](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-stewardship).

For scheme information go to [www.gov.uk/rpa](http://www.gov.uk/rpa)