



Rural Payments
Agency

Countryside Stewardship 2021: How to apply by email or post for Wildlife Offers

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Be aware of fraud

How to avoid fraud and what to do if you suspect an attempted fraud

Fraudsters may target farmers who receive subsidy payments and we're aware that in the past some customers have received emails, texts and telephone calls claiming to be from RPA or Defra. Links to a fake website designed to look like an authentic RPA or Defra online service are sometimes included in the message. We do not send emails or text messages with links to websites asking you to confirm your personal details or payment information. We strongly advise anyone who receives such a request not to open the link and delete the item.

As fraudsters may target farmers who receive subsidy payments, remember:

- never discuss your bank account details with someone you don't know
- we will not ask you to make a payment over the phone
- delete any emails or texts you do not believe are genuine, and do not open any links – our main email addresses are:
 - ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk
 - rpa@notifications.service.gov.uk
- 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.

Key dates Countryside Stewardship Wildlife Offers

Important dates for Countryside Stewardship Wildlife Offers

Date	Details
9 February 2021	Wildlife Offers application period opens for agreements that will start on 1 January 2022
28 May 2021 (midnight)	Last date to request a Wildlife Offers application pack by email or phone
30 July 2021 (midnight)	Wildlife Offers application period closes. Last date for RPA to receive your application and supporting documents
by 31 December 2021	Agreement offer and declaration sent to customer for agreements that will start on 1 January 2022
1 January 2022	Start date for Wildlife Offer 2022 agreements applied for in 2021

Introduction

This guidance explains how to apply for the Countryside Stewardship (CS) Wildlife Offers after you've received them by email or post.

You can request an application pack using the Rural Payments service. The pack will be emailed to you and will contain the information we hold for your business in the Rural Payments service. Check your junk folder if you have not received the application pack in your inbox following your request. The pack is emailed only once, so it's important that all your information is up to date in the Rural Payments service before you request the pack.

If you cannot access the internet to request an application pack call us on 03000 200 301 and we'll try to help.

To find out what you need to do read ['Countryside Stewardship \(CS\) Mid Tier \(MT\) and Wildlife Offers manual'](#) on GOV.UK.

If you send your completed application by email you do not need to sign the application form. (However, if you're sending a paper application form to us by post, you do still need to sign that.) Before you submit an application, you must have both of the following in the Rural Payments service:

- the correct permission level to submit an application
- the business email address must be registered against the SBI

We'll only accept documents such as forms, if they are either printed and sent by post or scanned and attached to an email (maximum size of emails we can accept is 32MB). For security reasons, we cannot accept discs, USB pen drives or other external storage media. For more information read Step 8 – Submit your application.

You may need to keep evidence until we ask for it. For more information read 'Countryside Stewardship grants' on GOV.UK. When you receive an offer from RPA, you will need to sign the acceptance declaration and return it.

When to apply

The deadline for the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) to receive your completed application and supporting documents is midnight on 30 July 2021.

We recommend that you submit your application as early as possible and well before the deadline to allow time to resolve any queries. This will help us make decisions and recommendations about your application. Read 'Key dates' for more information.

For further advice please contact us using the details in 'More information and contacts' in this guidance. More contact details are in Annex 7 of the [Countryside Stewardship \(CS\) Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#).

Getting started

This section gives you the details of how to begin applying for Mid Tier.

To get started it's important that you do the following in the order we've listed them:

1. Register or sign in to the Rural Payments service – to receive CS payments you must be registered in the Rural Payments service. To find out how to do this read 'Register or sign into the Rural Payments service' below.

If you do not have access to the internet, call us on 03000 200 301 and we'll try to help.

2. Check and change – you must check that your personal details, business details, permission levels and digital maps are up to date, and update them if needed. To find out how to do this read the 'Check and change anything that needs to be updated' section. (You may also find the [RLE1 guidance](#) useful, which is also on GOV.UK.)

It's important that your bank account details are up to date and valid or we will not be able to pay you for CS and any other schemes you are claiming payment for. To amend your bank account details, call us on 03000 200 301. You cannot change them online or by email.

To help prevent fraud, after payments start from 1 December 2021 until the end of December, there are restrictions on updating bank account details. We can only update details if we have asked you for them or if your bank has rejected payment.

3. Apply for Countryside Stewardship Wildlife Offers – you can download an application pack or request one to be emailed to you using the Rural Payments service from 9 February to 28 May.

If you do not have access to the internet, you can call us on 03000 200 301 until 28 May 2021 to request an application pack.

4. Read the scheme manual and other guidance

All the guidance and information you need for Countryside Stewardship (CS) Wildlife Offers in 2021 is on GOV.UK:

- search for the [Countryside Stewardship \(CS\) Mid Tier \(MT\) and Wildlife Offers manual](#) and read the Wildlife Offers section.
- for information about options and items available, the evidence you need for your application, and whether you need to submit it with your application or keep it until you're asked for it, search for [Countryside Stewardship grants](#).

If you cannot access GOV.UK you can email or call us to request a paper copy of the manual.

You can read guidance about Agri-environment agreements and BPS on GOV.UK, search for [Agri-environment schemes \(CS and ES\) and BPS](#).

Remember, it's your responsibility to make sure that:

- you meet the scheme rules
- all the eligible land included in your application is correct, to the best of your knowledge.

Register or sign into the Rural Payments service

If you're new to the Rural Payments service or already a customer this information will help you sign in.

If you're a new customer

You must verify your identity before you can register with the Rural Payments service. You can do this in one of 2 ways.

1. Online with GOV.UK Verify – this gives you simple, trusted and secure access to an increasing number of public services on GOV.UK.

If you have difficulty verifying your identity with GOV.UK Verify or you are having problems with the Verify service, you should contact your identity provider.

2. Call the Rural Payments helpline on 03000 200 301 and we will help you – this will only give you access to the Rural Payments service, not other government services.

After you've verified your identity, you can sign in to the Rural Payments service and start to register. You will need to create a password. For security do not share your password with anyone.

If you're an existing customer

Sign in to the Rural Payments service at www.ruralpayments.service.gov.uk.

Or you can sign in using the link on the RPA page on GOV.UK and click 'Sign in to the Rural Payments service'.

Depending how you registered for the service you'll need your:

- 'Verify' login details if you registered through GOV.UK 'Verify'. Click the 'Sign in if you registered online with GOV.UK Verify' link and follow the onscreen instructions
- customer reference number (CRN) and password, if you registered through RPA. Click 'Sign in with your customer reference number and password'. For security do not share your password with anyone.

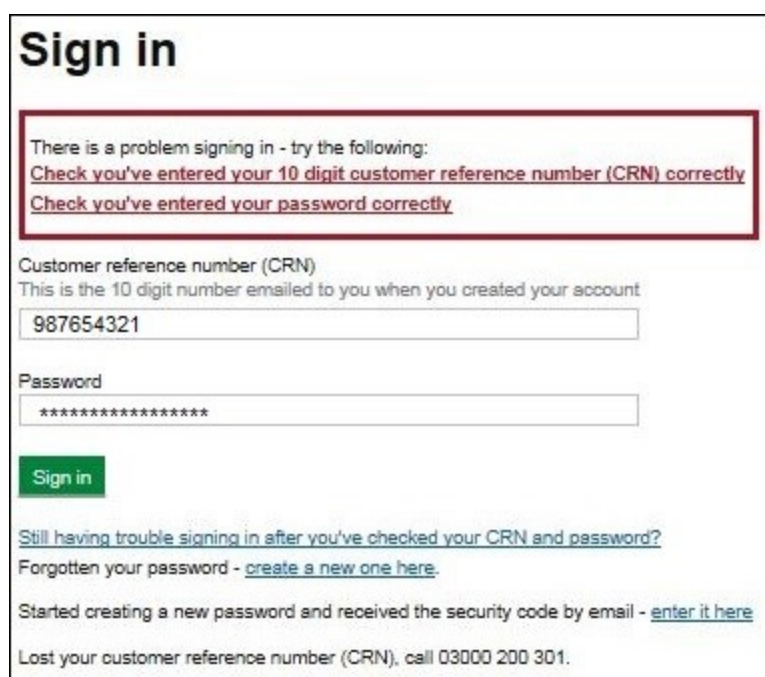
To open the service, we recommend you use the latest version of Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox or Safari.

The best screen resolution to view the service is 1024 x 768.

To view PDF files from the service (such as a claim summary), we recommend you download the latest version of Adobe Acrobat.

Problems signing in to the Rural Payments service

If you make a mistake when signing in to the service you'll see this message:



The screenshot shows a sign-in page with the following content:

- Sign in**
- A red-bordered box containing the message: "There is a problem signing in - try the following:
[Check you've entered your 10 digit customer reference number \(CRN\) correctly](#)
[Check you've entered your password correctly](#)
- Customer reference number (CRN)
This is the 10 digit number emailed to you when you created your account
Input field containing: 987654321
- Password
Input field containing: *****
- Sign in** button
- [Still having trouble signing in after you've checked your CRN and password?](#)
- Forgotten your password - [create a new one here](#).
- Started creating a new password and received the security code by email - [enter it here](#)
- Lost your customer reference number (CRN), call 03000 200 301.

- Check that you've entered your CRN correctly.
- Then make sure you're using the correct password.

You have 3 attempts to sign in to the service. If you make a mistake at each attempt, you will not be able to access your account. You'll need to change your password, read the 'Problems signing in to the Rural Payments service' section for more information.

If someone else makes a mistake when signing in to their account by accidentally using your customer reference number (CRN), they'll also see this message but it will count towards failed attempts to access your account. If this happens, then the next time you try to sign in to your

account you may not get 3 attempts and may need to follow the same instructions above to get access.

What to do if you still cannot access the Rural Payments service

Registered through GOV.UK Verify

If you registered through GOV.UK Verify and cannot access your account, you need to contact your chosen provider.

You can leave feedback on the issue using the link on the GOV.UK Verify page.

The Government Digital Services (GDS) team will investigate your issue and reply to you if you requested a response.

Registered through RPA

You'll need your CRN and the password you created when you activated your account. If you have forgotten your CRN, call us on 03000 200 301.

If you've forgotten your password or need to change it, click the 'create a new one here' link on the Sign in screen.

Sign in

Customer reference number (CRN)
This is the 10 digit number emailed to you when you created your account

Password

[Sign in](#)

[Forgotten your password - create a new one here.](#)

[Started creating a new password and received the security code by email - enter it here](#)

Lost your customer reference number (CRN), call 03000 200 301.

Enter your CRN and email address, then click 'Request security code'.

Create new password

First we need to email a security code to you

Customer reference number (CRN)

Email address

(Must be held in the Rural Payments service for your CRN)

[Request security code](#)

You'll receive a security code by email. You'll need to enter the code on the next screen.

You must use the security code within 12 hours. If you have not used it by then, you'll have to request another one.

IMPORTANT - Keep the 'Create new password' screen open while you access your emails so that you can enter the security code.

The easiest way to do this is either:

- open a 'new tab' by clicking the right button on your mouse or pad with the cursor over the existing tab at the top of your screen, and access your emails in the new tab
- access your emails from another device, for example, your mobile phone.

Create new password

Your security code has been emailed to you
(You must use it within 12 hours)

Enter security code

[Continue](#)

If you close this screen before you enter your security code, you can enter it from the 'Sign in' screen.

If you close the 'Create new password' screen before you enter the security code, you can enter it from the Sign in screen. Click the 'Started creating a new password and received the security code by email - enter it here' link near the bottom of the screen. We've shown this link in the 'Sign in' screenshot in the 'Registered through RPA' section above. Then at the 'Create new password' screen you'll need to enter your CRN, email address and the security code, then click 'Continue'.

Create new password

Enter your details and security code below

Customer reference number (CRN)

Email address
(Must be held in the Rural Payments service for your CRN)

Security code

After you've entered your security code you can create a new password. You must not use your email address as your password as it will not be accepted.

Use the new password when you want to Sign in to the Rural Payments service.

After you've successfully changed your password, if you still cannot sign in, call us on 03000 200 301.

Check and change anything that needs to be updated

This section tells you how to check your details are correct and how to change them if needed.

Check – your details are up to date

Before you start to create your application, you must check that the personal and business details you've already registered are still correct. We'll use them to contact you about your application so please make sure they are up to date.

Check – your personal details

As soon as you sign in to the Rural Payments service you'll see a screen called 'Your businesses and messages'. To check and change your personal details, click 'View and amend personal details' on the right side of the screen. Click 'Amend your details', then after you make any changes, click 'Submit changes'.

Check that your address, email address and phone numbers are up to date.

IMPORTANT - if you apply online, we'll contact you by email whenever possible, so it's important that your email address is up to date.

Check – your business details

To check your business details, choose the business from the 'Your businesses' screen. On the 'Business overview' screen, click 'View full business details' on the right side of the screen. To make any changes, click the appropriate 'Amend' link.

The main business address that we have in the Rural Payments service is the address that we'll use to send certain types of information to you, such as the remittance advice after a payment is made.

Check – your bank account details

It's important that your bank account details are up to date and valid or we will not be able to pay you for CS and any other schemes you are claiming payment for. To amend your bank account details, call us on 03000 200 301. You cannot change them online or by email.

We'll make payments in sterling only.

To help prevent fraud, after payments start from 1 December 2021 until the end of December, there are restrictions on updating bank account details. We can only update details if we have asked you for them or if your bank has rejected payment.

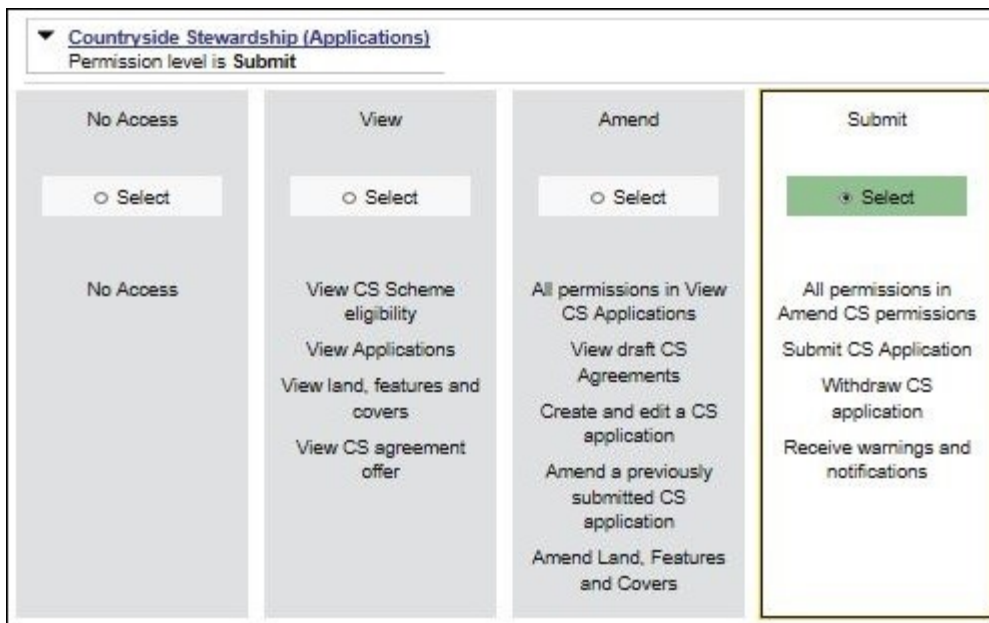
Check – your permission levels

If the 'Countryside Stewardship Applications' link is not visible on the Countryside Stewardship screen, or you're not able to do something in the application screens, check you've got the correct permission level.

To check your permission levels, click 'Give access to this business' on the 'Business overview' screen. If you do not have the right permission level in the service, you'll need to get someone with 'Business Details: Full Permission' level for the business to change your permission level.

There are 4 different permission levels. To submit an application, you must have Countryside Stewardship (Applications) 'Submit'.

If you still cannot see what you need to see or the link after your permission level has been updated in the Rural Payments service, you should 'sign out' then 'sign in' again, to refresh your account.



Check – any permission levels you’ve given to other people

If you want someone else to have access to your business so they can help you apply online, you need to check that you’ve given them the right permission level. You must have ‘Business Details: Full Permission’ level for the business to be able to change their permission level.

Click ‘Give access to this business’ from the ‘Business overview’ screen. They’ll need Countryside Stewardship (Applications) ‘Submit’ permission if you want them to apply for you. They must be registered in the Rural Payments service before you can give them access, and you will need their customer reference number (CRN).

If you prefer you can arrange for someone else to receive payments on your behalf.

After you’ve updated the permission level, remember to scroll to the bottom of the page and click ‘Save and return’.

Check – your land parcel maps

You can look at digital maps of the individual land parcels which are linked to your SBI in the Rural Payments service. You can see them as either an OS map or as an aerial photo - you can print the OS map view too (with or

without your hedges showing on it). For more information about how to do this, click the 'Help' link on the screen.

From the 'Business overview' screen, click the 'Land' link, and then 'View land'.

Check - your land parcel maps online

It's important that you check your maps online because we've reviewed and updated our mapping information, where necessary, since applications were made for 2020. We've updated our digital land maps using the latest available data sources, such as aerial photography and Ordnance Survey updates. If we've updated your land parcels, you will have received notifications in the 'All messages' tab in the Rural Payments service identifying which land parcels have been updated. If you do not read your messages, we will send you an email reminding you to sign in to the service and check your notifications.

How to use the 'Land summary' screen

You'll see a summary of your land parcels giving the number of parcels, their total area, and the total areas of your land covers. You'll also see a list of all the individual land parcels and the total area, land cover and eligible area for each of them. Click on the individual land parcel details to see more information about that land parcel. If your business has 50 land parcels or more and land in more than one Ordnance Survey (OS) tile (for example, ZZ3, ZZ4, ZT3, this is the National Grid reference and first digit of the OS number), you may see a slightly different map. Click the 'Help' link on the screen to find out more about any of these screens or maps.

The 'Land summary' screen will highlight if there are any changes 'pending' on any of the land parcels - if there are, you will see an '!' icon (exclamation mark). This means we're still working on changes to that land parcel, so you should take account of any outstanding RLE1 forms that you've sent to us - or any outstanding inspection reports. You do not need to send us another RLE1 form.

Land summary

A Farmer

[Help](#)


This is a summary of the information we currently hold for this land.



Summary


Number of parcels	22
Total area (ha)	87.06
Permanent Grassland (ha)	86.46

Land parcels

This is how the land parcels for this business are distributed. Click on the Parcel ID to view it or tell us about any changes.

An  icon denotes there are changes pending for the parcel.

Parcel ID	Total area (ha)	Eligible covers	BPS eligible area (ha)
FT1234 5678 	0.30	Permanent Grassland	0.30
FT1234 0781 	11.62	Permanent Grassland	11.10



Is this information up to date?
If you have already asked us to make changes to information about your land, they might not show here yet.

If there are no changes ‘pending’, but you need to make changes to the land parcel, send us an RLE1 form and sketch map to tell us about the changes.

If you cannot see a particular land parcel, this could be because it is not linked to your SBI – or is not registered on our database at all. Read the ‘Add a land parcel to your business (SBI)’ section.

Land cover and how to change it

From the ‘Land summary’ screen, click the details for an individual land parcel and you can see the ‘land cover’ and its total area for that land parcel in the ‘Parcel details’ screen. The land cover will be either arable, permanent pasture, permanent crops or ‘other’ (non-agricultural area, with the type of non-agricultural area if that has been mapped, such as ungrazeable scrub). It is important that this information is correct, for example, all Ecological Focus Area (EFA) features and areas must be on or within 5 metres of land mapped as arable cover.

Parcel details

A Farmer

Parcel ID: FT1234 6781

Help

This is a summary of the information we currently hold for this land parcel.

i There are changes pending for this land parcel.

Summary

BPS eligible area (ha)	11.1
Total area (ha)	11.62

Land covers

These are the land covers that we currently have mapped.

Land covers	Total area (ha)
Woodland	0.53
Permanent Grassland	11.10
Total area	11.62



Land actions

[Download a print-friendly version of this page. \(PDF\)](#)

Is this information up to date?

If you have already asked us to make changes to information about your land, they might not show here yet.

To change the land cover for a land parcel, read the information in the 'Other changes you may want to make' section.

IMPORTANT - before you change the land cover for an individual land parcel, check that this will not affect any Countryside Stewardship or Environmental Stewardship agreement or BPS application that the land parcel has been included in.

Hedge layer information

You can view the hedge information we have for your land in the 'Parcel details' screen by selecting a parcel within the 'Land summary' screen. If the parcel contains any hedge information, it will display in a table at the bottom left of the screen. If you want to see where your hedges are in the map, click the 'Hedges' icon. You can also print the land parcel map either with or without the hedges showing on it. For more information, click the 'Help' link on the screen.

Land covers

These are the land covers that we currently have mapped.

Land covers	Total area (ha)
Arable Land	4.18
Total area	4.18

Hedges

These are the hedges that we currently have mapped for this parcel.

Number	Length(m)
1	315
2	229
3	163
4	135

Land actions

[Download a print-friendly version of this page. \(PDF\)](#)

Other things you may need to know

This section explains the additional information you may find useful when checking your land information.

If you have an exclamation mark (!) icon next to a land parcel in the Land summary screen

You need to make your application and ensure that the information in your 'Land use' screen is up to date. The exclamation mark in your digital map shows that we're still mapping changes but you do not need to wait for us to finish before you apply.

If you sent us an RLE1 and sketch map to tell us about a change to your land – but the change is not on your maps and you cannot see an exclamation mark (!) icon

You need to do one of the following:

- email us at ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk
- call us on 03000 200 301, giving your SBI.

Give your SBI and use 'Mapping Query' as the subject heading of an email or letter and give details of the change that you've requested.

You should still submit your application based on the information you have to the best of your knowledge and send an email to us to explain what you've done.

If you think we have mapped a non-agricultural feature or area, or land parcel boundary incorrectly

You need to send us an email or a letter to let us know, if you have already told us about the change. If you have them, include a copy of any RLE1 forms and maps you have sent to us (if applicable) about the non agricultural area or feature (read the RLE guidance for more information).

Print a copy of the land parcel from the 'Parcel details' screen and mark the change required on it (include any measurements if you have them and if it is a feature, what the feature is).

Make sure the feature has the correct area/land use code in your land use screen.

If you have land cover shown on your maps which is incorrect

You need to do one of the following:

- if there is one land cover type for the whole land parcel, call us.
- if there is more than one land cover for a land parcel, you must fill in an RLE1 form and send it to us with a sketch map clearly marked with the land cover and areas.

If you see a change to your maps and are not sure why we have made it (for example it is not a change you told us about)

You need to check 'All messages' tab in the Rural Payments service for any new notifications.

We use all available data sources, including aerial photos and Ordnance Survey map updates, to keep our land information up to date, and to check any claims you make.

We will not write to you anymore to tell you when we make a change to your maps based on these data sources but you will receive a notification when we make these changes – check 'All messages' tab regularly in the Rural Payments service.

If you do not agree with the map changes

If it's a change to land cover, see the query above.

If you disagree with a split or merger of parcels, providing you are the sole applicant and there is no overall change to the eligible area you are applying for, there is no need to update your maps before you apply. If you want us to do so, then please tell us later in the year.

If the changes do affect the eligible area of the land parcel, you need to fill in an RLE1 form and submit this along with a sketch map. Then, continue to make your application using the information you've given us on the RLE1 form.

When you submit your RLE1 form and sketch map, write the heading 'Mapping change query' on both of them.

For more information read the RLE1 guidance. You can find the [RLE1 form and guidance](#) on GOV.UK.

If you notice a mapping change made by RPA after you've submitted your 2021 application – and need to update your application

You need to call RPA on 03000 200 301.

However, you cannot make these changes if:

- you have already been told about any non-compliance affecting the agricultural parcel you want to amend
- an inspection has revealed a non-compliance affecting the agricultural parcel you want to amend
- you have received advance warning of an inspection

If you have a small area of land at least 0.01 of a hectare in size that has been wrongly mapped as ineligible land

You need to change the land use and send us an RLE1 form to ask us to change it to eligible land.

If you want to know if you should send us an RLE1 form and sketch map to tell us about changes to your land

You need to send us an RLE1 form and sketch map if you are:

- registering new land parcels
- transferring parcels and cannot make the transfer using the Rural Payments service
- dividing or merging parcels
- making permanent boundary changes
- adding or deleting non-agricultural areas and features that are not already shown on your maps
- changing land cover – where there is more than one land cover for a land parcel

You do not need to send us an RLE1 form if you've already sent one telling us about a change, and an exclamation mark (!) icon is showing against your land parcel on the 'Land summary' screens in the Rural Payments service.

If you have a land parcel that has been incorrectly merged with someone else's land parcel

You need to apply on the eligible land area within the parcel and then send us an RLE1 form and sketch map to correct the land parcel boundaries.

If you need to send us a map showing any changes

You need to print the individual land parcel from the Rural Payments service – 'Land summary' screen – mark it up and send it to us with your RLE1 form.

The RLE1 form and guidance are available at on GOV.UK, search for [RLE1](#).

Checking your land areas

All the land information needs to be to 4 decimal places (that is, x.xxxx ha). If you have any problems doing this, we recommend you round down rather than using normal rounding rules.

For example, if the parcel is 2.47725 ha, record as 2.4 772 ha, rather than 2.4773 ha.

Check and change – your ‘Land use’

If you do not need to make a change to your land use, go to the ‘How to apply’ section.

From the ‘Business overview’ screen, click Land, then Land use.

IMPORTANT - if you are changing the land use for a land parcel that is already included in a CS agreement or BPS application, make sure that the land use is compatible for BPS and with the CS management option or it may affect your CS agreement and payment. For more information, read the relevant CS manual – search for [Countryside Stewardship](#) on GOV.UK.

Help is available

There’s a ‘Help’ link on the screens that will take you through each process step by step. You can print a copy of the onscreen Help from inside each Help window or you can call us on 03000 200 301 if you get stuck.

Land use

A FARMER

Tell us about changes to your land use.

Help

Land Uses NG National Grid ST

Filters +

Edit	Add	Del.	Sheet	Parcel	Parcel size (ha)	BPS area (ha)	Land use	Rot.
			ST5855	4716	0.3417	0.3417	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1 0.3
			ST5855	4813	0.0776	0.0000	WO12 - MIXED WOODLAND	1 0.0
			ST5855	5008	0.5725	0.0000	WO12 - MIXED WOODLAND	1 0.5
			ST5855	5518	1.1017	1.1017	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1 1.1
			ST5855	5625	1.3569	1.3569	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1 1.3

3 - How to make changes to land use

Use the 'Edit', 'Add' or 'Delete' icons to make changes to your land use information as described below:

A1 - Edit land use

For the land parcel you want to edit, click the **Edit** icon. Before you do this make a note of the area you are planning to change it to. For example, the field size or BPS area.

Edit	Add	Del.	Sheet	Parcel	Parcel size (ha)	BPS area (ha)	Land use	Rot.	ha	m
			ST4269	7114	3.8820	3.8820	AG01 - WHEAT - WINTER	1	3.8820	
			ST4269	7134	3.4677	3.4677	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1	3.4677	
			ST4269	7770	3.7510	3.7510	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1	3.7510	

(To leave this screen at any time without saving the new information click **Back**.)

To change the land use, click in the **Land use** box, start to type the land use description or code, for example, 'Maize' or 'AC17', a list of land use descriptions and codes will appear. You can then choose the code you want. Make sure you click the correct one from the list. A full list of codes is on GOV.UK.

Searching for a land parcel

If you have a large number of land parcels, the easiest way to find the parcel you're looking for is to use the 'Filters'. When you use a filter, you can update your land use and you'll return to the filtered view (rather than the top of the land use table). This means you can make a number of changes to a land parcel without having to search for it each time.

To see the filters, click Filters heading.



You can filter by:

- sheet reference (for example, '2435' or 'AB1234')
- parcel ID (for example, '1145')
- land use – using this filter will show all the instances of a single land use (for example, if you search for permanent grassland it will show you all the land uses for 'PG01 – Permanent Grassland' for each National Grid reference)

- ‘Undeclared’ or ‘Overdeclared’ to see all the parcels and land use areas which have these warnings.

To filter, type the information you want to search for into one of the white boxes, then click the Search button. To filter for ‘Undeclared’ or ‘Overdeclared’ warnings, click the arrow next to ‘All’, and choose the warning you want to search for.

The screenshot shows the 'Land Uses' interface. At the top, there is a header with 'Land Uses' on the left, 'NG' in the center, and a dropdown menu for 'National Grid SD'. To the right of the header, there are two columns: 'Undeclared' with '20 parcels' and 'Overdeclared' with '0 parcels'. Below the header is a 'Filters' section with three input boxes: 'Sheet', 'Parcel', and 'Land use'. A green 'Search' button is located below these boxes. To the right of the 'Land use' box is a dropdown menu with 'All' selected, and options for 'Undeclared' and 'Overdeclared'. Below the filters is a table with the following data:

Sheet	Parcel	Parcel size (ha)	MEA BPS (ha)	Land use	Rot.	ha m
SD3145	3780	1.8024	1.8024	Undeclared		1.8024

To remove a filter:

- delete the text you’ve typed into one of the white boxes, then click Search
- click the arrow next to the box showing ‘Undeclared’ or ‘Overdeclared’, then click All.

If you use the filter to search by OS Sheet number, you will rarely have more than 10 land parcels to look through and generally all are displayed on the screen.

Make changes to land use

To make changes to land use, use the icons on the left of the screen.

Edit – change a land use area (and add a catch or cover crop if you need to)

Add – include another land use in the land parcel, and tell us area/measurement

Del – remove a land use from a land parcel

Land Uses										NG	National Grid ST	Undeclared	Overdeclared
Filters												11 parcels	0 parcels
Edit	Add	Del.	Sheet	Parcel	Parcel size (ha)	BPS area (ha)	Land use	Rot.	ha	m			
			ST3865	2561	11.8063	11.8063	TG01 - TEMPORARY GRASS	1	11.8063				
			ST3865	2627	1.8729	1.8729	TG01 - TEMPORARY GRASS	1	1.8729				
			ST3865	2640	0.2125	0.2125	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1	0.2125				
			ST3865	2688	0.5316	0.4870	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1	0.4870				
			ST3865	2688	0.5316	0.4870	Undeclared		0.0446				

When you are changing your land use there are checks built into the Rural Payments service. They will highlight if the land uses you have declared for a parcel add up to more or less than the total field size that we currently have mapped.

The total field size is the area of the parcel which is linked to your holding. This may be different from the size shown in your land maps as they show the total parcel size. For example, if the land parcel is 10.0000ha in size and 50% is linked to you, the total field size will show as 5.0000ha in the land use screen but 10.0000ha in your land maps.

If you see an amber 'undeclared' warning, this means you have not declared the land use for the area of the land parcel that is linked to your holding and we currently have mapped. To add a land use for this area, click the 'Add icon' for the row shown as undeclared.

Undeclared

If you see a red 'overdeclared' warning, this means you have declared land use that is larger than the total size of the land parcel we currently have mapped and linked to your holding (SBI). Use the 'Edit' icons on the land use screen to reduce the size of one or more of the land uses in the land parcel.

Overdeclared

You can update your land use to remove the 'Undeclared' and / or 'Overdeclared' warnings, but you may not need to if:

- you need to tell us about a change to the total size of the field – fill in and send us an RLE1 form and sketch map to tell us about the changes and make sure the land use you've entered is correct

- you have already sent us an RLE1 to tell us about changes, but we have not updated your maps yet. You need to make sure the land uses for the parcel and their areas are correct
- only part of the land parcel is yours, then you should only declare the land use(s) and area for your part of the parcel.

If any of these apply, you can still submit your application if the 'undeclared' or 'overdeclared' warnings are showing.

If you have a land parcel in the 'land use' table showing an area of 0.0000 and an amber 'undeclared' warning next to it. You need to do one of the following:

- if the parcel should not be linked to your SBI because, for example, you do not have control of the parcel or have sold it, and you want to transfer it to the new owner or remove it from your holding, read the 'Other changes you may want to make' section
- if you cannot remove or transfer the parcel online in the Transfer Land screens, fill in and send us an RLE1 form to make the transfer
- if you want to use it in your application, add the land uses to the land use table using the information you have before you add the land parcel to your application
- if you do not want to use this land parcel in your application then leave the parcel as undeclared with an area of 0.0000 when you submit your application.

Note that the land use table will still show as an 'undeclared' area and warning against the 0.0000 and reference number.

Adding or editing a land use

Use the screen below to enter a new land use (after clicking the 'Add' icon) or edit an existing one (after clicking the 'Edit' icon). If you get stuck, click the 'Help' link.

Edit	Add	Del.	Sheet	Parcel	Parcel size (ha)	BPS area (ha)	Land use	Rot.	ha	m
	+	⊗	ST4668	9653	1.1516	1.1439	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1	1.1439	
	+	⊗	ST4767	1769	5.2691	5.2691	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1	5.2691	
	+	⊗	ST4767	2388	3.7210	3.7210	WO12 - MIXED WOODLAND	1	3.7210	
	+	⊗	ST4767	4279	0.6631	0.6631	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1	0.6631	
	+	⊗	ST4767	5899	0.1174	0.0998	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1	0.0219	
	+	⊗	ST4767	5899	0.1174	0.0998	PG01 - PERMANENT GRASSLAND	1	0.0779	
	+		ST4767	5899	0.1174	0.0998	Undeclared		0.0176	

When you add or edit a land use, the screen will let you choose 'Rotations' on the land use. You only need to use this to add an EFA catch or cover crop to your land use. These should be entered as rotation 2.

When you have made your changes on this screen, click 'Save', then 'Back'.

IMPORTANT - if the changes you make mean that the total size of the field ('Parcel size' in the land use screen) has changed, you need to fill in and send us an RLE1 form and sketch map and ask us to change the permanent field boundaries (if you have not already done so). You can download an RLE1 form from GOV.UK, search for [RLE1](#).

If you have already sent us an RLE1 form, you can check your land parcel digital map to see if the change still shows as 'pending' – shown by an (!) icon.

Add a land parcel to your business (SBI)

If you want to add a land parcel to your business (SBI) before you submit your application, you need to:

1.If the land parcel is not registered with us

Fill in and send us an RLE1 form and sketch map to register the land parcel (if you have not already done so).

2.If the land parcel is already registered with us

You need to do one of the following:

- ask the previous owner or applicant to transfer the land parcel to you in the Rural Payments service (this will link the parcel to your SBI). We recommend online transfers are made as early as possible so

they appear in your online application before you submit it. If the business transferring the land owns less than 100% of the land parcel or is a tenant, they need to fill in and send us an RLE1 form to request the transfer.

- Add land by email – You can now add land to your holding by sending an email request to ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk with the details of the parcel(s) you wish to add. The subject heading of the email should include the wording 'CS 2021 Add Land' or use the relevant year if after 2021.

Include the following information:

- the SBI and name of the business the land should be linked to
- the land parcel reference numbers for the parcels you want to add, including sheet reference numbers and parcel IDs.
- your name and contact number in case of any issues.

When we have completed your request, we will send you a confirmation email. You should make sure that requests are sent to us before 30 June.

You can now edit land use in the [Rural Payments service](#). You can also now transfer land parcels until 15 May 2021 using the [Rural Payments service](#).

Transfer or remove a land parcel from your business (SBI)

IMPORTANT - this is not removing a land parcel from your CS application.

If you want to transfer or remove a land parcel from your business (SBI) using the Transfer Land screens, you need to do one of the following:

1. transfer the land parcel to the right business on the Rural Payments service (this will remove it from your business (SBI)). Read the Important note below for more information.

2. 'Remove' the land parcel from your business (SBI) if you no longer have control of it - for example, you do not farm it any longer. Read the Important note below for more information.

IMPORTANT - if you transfer the land parcel from your SBI, or use the 'Remove' land option in the 'Transfer land' screens, this will completely remove the land parcel from your record (SBI), you will not be able to use it in your application for either Countryside Stewardship or any of the following schemes.

- Basic Payment Scheme
- Environmental Stewardship
- Habitat Scheme
- English Woodland Grant Scheme
- Farm Woodland Premium Scheme
- National Forest Changing Landscape Scheme

Do not use the 'Remove land' option in the 'Transfer land' screens if you still control the land parcel for one of these schemes. If you remove a land parcel that is under an existing Rural Development Programme agreement, it will be removed from your land record and from your agreement. It may also mean that any payments already made to you are reclaimed.

For these cases you should use the correct 'land use' for the scheme you are claiming under. To update your land use, from 'land use' screen, use the 'Edit land use' option.

Other changes you may want to make

This section explains the additional information you may find useful when you make changes to your land information.

If you want to change the size of a land parcel (because the permanent boundary has changed)

You need to increase or reduce the total size of your land parcel.

To increase the size of the land parcel, you must do all of the following:

- increase the area of land use for the corresponding land use code(s). Use the 'Edit' and/or 'Add' icons in the land use screen to make the

changes. The total area of land use will now be larger than the total parcel size and will show as 'overdeclared'.

- fill in an RLE1 and sketch map to tell us about the change to the land parcel (if you have not already done so).

To reduce the size of the land parcel you must:

- reduce the area of land use for the corresponding code(s). Use the 'Edit' icon in the land use screen to make the changes. The total area of land uses will now be smaller than the total parcel size and will show as 'undeclared'.
- fill in an RLE1 form and sketch map to tell us about the change (if you have not already done so).

If you want to split or merge parcels (permanent splits, not crop splits)

You need to do either of the following:

- Merge - fill in the land use for each parcel and leave as 2 separate parcels. Use the 'Edit', 'Delete' or 'Add' icons in the land use screen to do this.
- Split - fill in the land use for each parcel in the existing parcel (and do not split it other than providing different land use where needed). Use the 'Edit', 'Delete' or 'Add' icons in the land use screen to do this.

Then fill in and send us an RLE1 form and sketch map to tell us about the change (if you have not already done so).

If you want to submit an RLE1 to tell us about changes to your land

You need to fill in an RLE1 form and sketch map to tell us about permanent changes to your land.

When submitting an RLE1 form for land changes, make sure that the changes are also shown in your online application.

If land changes occur later in the year and these affect your current application, tell us about the change using an RLE1 form and sketch map, and write to us explaining the changes needed to your application.

If you want to claim for land that is in dual use

You need to agree the land-use code for the land parcel with the other claimant – make sure it is compatible with both CS/ES agreements and BPS. Once this is agreed, this is the land use you should both declare in your land use screen and should not be changed unless you both agree with the change.

Then, you need to do one of the following if you are:

- claiming for Countryside Stewardship or Environmental Stewardship and someone else is claiming for BPS on the same area. Do not activate the land parcel for payment on your BPS application if you are applying for BPS on other land parcels, use the 'activate less BPS area' screen. Do not amend the land use code or eligible area on the 'Land use' screen.
- claiming for BPS on the land parcel. Claim for the land parcel but do not amend the land use code. The person who is not claiming for BPS on the land parcel should use the 'activate less BPS area' screen to show the 'eligible area' as 0.0000 so that the land parcel is not activated for payment, if they are applying for BPS on other land parcels.

If you want to have a land parcel in your 'Land use' screen in the Rural Payments service and a single land use is shown over a number of lines (for example, permanent grassland is shown 3 times in one land parcel)

You need to do one of the following:

- leave it so it shows as more than one line in the 'Land use' screen, or;
- delete and edit the information so the land use only shows on one line for that land parcel.

If you want to change the land cover for a land parcel

You need to do one of the following:

- where there is one land cover (arable, permanent grassland, permanent crops or non-agricultural use) for the whole land parcel, call us on 03000 200 301 or;
- where there is more than one land cover for a land parcel, you must fill in and send us an RLE1 form and sketch map clearly marked with the land covers and areas.

For more information about land cover, read the RLE1 guidance.

How to apply

This section gives the information needed to apply for Countryside Stewardship Wildlife Offers.

Before you apply, you must check and update any of your information in the Rural Payments service, and then request your application pack as explained above.

Before you start, check that your pack contains the following:

- Mid Tier (MT) application form for 2021
- annexes
- Farm Environment Record (FER) map/Options map
- Environmental Information (EIM) map.

If you've downloaded the pack or received it by email save it to your computer, fill in the form and annexes on your screen. Print 2 copies of the Options/FER map and mark the options and environment features on them, scan them into your computer. Then email your completed form, annexes and maps to us. Read Step 8 for more information.

If you've received your pack by post fill in the application form, annexes and maps and either post them to us; or you can scan them into your computer and send them to us by email. Read step 8 for more information.

To apply for Countryside Stewardship (CS) Mid Tier in England in 2021, follow the sections below:

- complete your application; then
- confirm your information and apply.

Complete your application form, annexes and maps

This section tells you how to fill in your CS Wildlife Offers application form, annexes and supporting maps.

Step 1 – Start your application form

If you've received the pack by email – after you've saved it to your computer, fill in the form on your screen.

If you've received the pack by post:

- use black ink and CAPITAL LETTERS. Do not use pencil or felt-tip pen
- do not cross through whole pages or remove pages
- do not use correction fluid. Correct mistakes and initial and date them.

Completely fill any checkbox containing a mistake and put a cross or a tick in the correct box.

You must sign your application if you are submitting a paper application by post.

Front Page

Confirm which type of agreement you are applying for:

- Arable Offer
- Lowland Grazing Offer
- Mixed Farming Offer
- Upland Offer.

Enter an Agreement title, for example, the farm name or what the land is commonly known as.

Your application ID is pre-populated. If this is blank, contact us for help.

Section 1: Application details

Fill in this section with your details.

1. Your SBI is already pre-populated.

2.(a) Fill in (a) with the name of the applicant. This should be the same as the name on the 'Start Here' tab in the Annex.

If (b) 'Business name' is pre-populated, check that the Business name and SBI are for the correct business.

Fill in (c) and (d) with the main contact name and business name if these are different to the applicant at a) and the printed business name at b).

Please contact us immediately with any changes to your contact information at (c) and (d). Please make any other change in the Rural Payments service.

Fill in (e) (f) and (g) with the main contact landline number, mobile number and email address.

Section 2: Farm business details

Read Section 3.2 'Management control, eligibility and scheme rules' in the [Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#).

3.(a) Confirm whether you have management control of all the land in the application for the entire length of the proposed agreement and can meet the Declaration and Undertakings in Section 3. If 'Yes' go to Question 4. If 'No' go to Question 3 (b).

(b) Fill in a 'Countryside Stewardship Land Ownership and Control' form with each person who would take over your responsibilities if you cease to have management control over any of the land. This would normally be the landlord or another person with management control. Confirm you're including them with your application then go to Question 3(c).

Get a copy of the [Countryside Stewardship Land Ownership and Control](#) form on GOV.UK.

If you cannot get online, call us to ask for a paper copy.

(c) Confirm if any of the counter signatories are a Public Body, for example, local authorities, National Park authorities, public corporations. If 'Yes' go to Question 3 (d). If 'No' go to Question 4.

(d) Include a copy of your tenancy agreement with your application, so that we can make sure your application is valid. Confirm you have done this.

4. Obligations of your tenancy agreement to carry out environment management cannot be funded by Countryside Stewardship. Tick 'Yes' to confirm that this application is not seeking funding for these activities.

5.(a) Read section 3.3.1 in the [Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) on GOV.UK.

Tick 'Yes' at (a) if someone else is claiming for BPS on any land parcels in this application. Then tell us if you are the landlord or tenant at (b).

IMPORTANT - if you're also applying for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) – check whether any land parcels you've added to your application are also in your BPS application.

Continue your application through Steps 2 and 3 before you complete the declaration on your application form at Step 4.

Step 2 – Your Farm Environment Record (FER) map(s), Hide this section

If you received a combined FER/Options map, you should photocopy it or print 2 copies. Use one copy to show your farm environment features and areas, as explained in this section (and the other copy to show your options, as explained at Step 3.)

Your FER map must show all the land parcels you're including in your application. The FER map does not need to cover the whole holding but it must include any land parcels that have proposed multi-year options (permanent or rotational) and any proposed capital items.

You must mark on the FER map:

- any land parcels in your application that are at moderate to high risk of runoff or soil erosion
- all environmental features and areas in the land parcels in your application
- all land parcels under your SBI that will be used for rotational options during the whole 5 year period of the agreement
- all Scheduled Monuments (SM) within your control under your SBI.

There is an obligation to retain features mapped in the FER map and protect them from damage or removal for the duration of the agreement.

If you have a FER map from a previous Environmental Stewardship agreement and there has been little or no change to the environmental features on your land, you may be able to use that map (updated as necessary, as explained under ‘Mark your environmental features and areas on your map’).

If you do not have a FER map from a previous Environmental Stewardship agreement or there have been changes to the environmental features on your land, mark them on a copy of the FER map included in the application pack.

Remember that cross compliance requirements apply across the whole holding.

Land parcels with ‘moderate to high runoff and soil erosion risk’

Before you complete the FER, you should consider whether any of your land is at risk from surface runoff and soil erosion. You must do this for all of the land parcels on the holding. The risk assessment should be based on inherent risk, proximity and connection to a waterbody, such as a pond, lake, ditch, stream or river and on managed risk.

To do this use the assessment form on GOV.UK, search for [Runoff and soil erosion assessment: Countryside Stewardship](#). Or use the guidance below.

Inherent Risk

Focuses on the risk of pollution associated with the topography, soils and naturally occurring land conditions. Inherent risk can be greatly reduced if the management and use of that land is done in a way sympathetic to the natural limitations. For example, a field of great inherent risk due to slope and soil texture might be of only moderate importance if that field were to be under woodland or extensive grassland management.

Factors to consider when defining the inherent risk include:

- soil texture (risk of detachment or poor infiltration)
- steepness of slope angles and slope length should be assessed to determine the relative overall risk of an area of land
- flooding frequency: land that floods is susceptible to erosion and runoff, particularly when under cultivation.

This runoff may carry very fine soil particles, soluble pollutants such as plant nutrients and pesticides or manures to watercourses. The observed water runoff is usually, but not always, discoloured. The following detail is a guide to field classification for risk of runoff based on slope.

Soil type – all soils

Steep slopes greater than 7° (greater than 12.3% gradient) – High runoff risk

Moderate slopes 3° to 7° (5.25 to 12.3% gradient) – Moderate runoff risk

Gentle slopes 2° to 3° (3.5 to 5.25% gradient) – Lower runoff risk

Slope length, soil texture and flooding frequency must then be considered, and risk class adjusted accordingly. For example, lighter soils on moderate slopes may be at high risk of runoff leading to soil erosion. Land that floods regularly (inundated at least 1 year in 3) must be regarded as being at high risk of erosion and runoff (even at less than 2° slope).

Proximity and connection to a waterbody

Must be considered. Fields that pose a relatively high inherent risk for producing pollution may actually be less significant if those fields are not well connected to a watercourse or waterbody. This means, the risk may

need to be increased or decreased depending on the closeness or connection to a waterbody.

For example:

- fields directly adjacent to a watercourse or waterbody are likely to increase the risk and likelihood of pollution. Also, there may be increased risk where drains, ditches, tracks or other flow paths directly connect a field to a watercourse, waterbody or sensitive aquatic habitat.
- where there is at least one field between this field and a watercourse or waterbody and there are no flow pathways, the risk is unlikely to be higher than moderate.

Little connection between this field and the waterbody decreases the risk of pollution and this is likely to lower the risk class.

Managed risk

Is primarily defined by land use and history of runoff and pollution problems on that field.

Signs of surface water runoff that may be associated with each of the risk classes are described below:

- high Risk Areas – runoff or ponding seen in most years during wet periods
- moderate Risk Areas – runoff seen in some years during wet periods and in most years during very wet periods
- lower Risk Areas – runoff seen in some years during very wet periods.

The criteria given for the risk assessment are guidelines and professional judgement should be used to upgrade or downgrade a site, taking into account additional factors such as:

- soil structure (sensitivity to compaction, detachment and transport)
- organic matter content (higher organic matter content usually increased infiltration)

- valley features which tend to concentrate runoff water
- long unbroken slopes (150m or longer)
- rainfall (intensity relative to infiltration)
- land use.

Using the risk assessment you must now mark on the FER, in brown hatching, all fields that have been identified as at moderate or higher risk of surface runoff and soil erosion.

Mark your environmental features and areas on your map

You need to mark all of your environmental features and areas on the FER map(s) (as shown in the map key). Walking your holding will help you see which land parcels are suited to Countryside Stewardship options. This may also help you to identify where to mark the environmental features on your FER map(s). Your Environmental Information map (EIM), also included in your application pack, may indicate features that you need to mark on your FER map(s).

Make sure your FER map(s) are clear and accurate.

If you want to use a previous Environmental Stewardship (ES) FER map, consider the need for any updates (see below) and decide whether the updated map would be clear and understandable. For former ELS/HLS agreements the combined FER/FEP map may contain significant information not required for CS. If this is the case, you may prefer to complete a new CS FER map.

Use the colours on the FER map's key. Confirm that you have a feature by marking the corresponding blank symbol on the right side of the map key with the coloured pencil you have used to mark that feature.

You must submit the completed map(s) as part of your application.

Please read the specific information below for the following features.

Marking 'boundaries with trees'

Only boundaries with, on average, one or more eligible trees for every 100 metres need to be marked as 'boundaries with trees'.

For example, a hedgerow of 400 metres would need to have at least four eligible trees along its length. Eligible trees are those that are native species, standing within 1 metre of a hedgerow and over 30 centimetres diameter at chest height.

These boundaries should be marked with a green cross over the boundary line, as shown in the FER map's assigned colour key (in-field trees still need to be counted and marked as shown in the key).

If you are using a FER map from an earlier ES agreement and it shows the number of hedgerow trees, you do not need to change it.

Marking hedges

On accepting a CS agreement you will be agreeing that you will not cut more than 50% of hedges in any one year. This is a scheme baseline requirement that covers all hedges in Mid Tier and Higher Tier agreements. It covers all hedges marked on the FER map which meet the following CS hedge definition:

'Any planted boundary lines of shrubs (a woody plant where the distance between the ground and the base of the leafy layer is less than 2 metres) which are over 20 metres long and less than 5 metres wide (between major woody stems at the base) and are composed of at least 80% native shrubs'.

This does not apply to road and trackside hedges that need to be cut annually or more frequently for public safety.

To mark the cutting regime of the hedges on the FER map you will need to use two different types of marking as indicated in the FER map's assigned colour key, as detailed below:

Hedgerow (meets 50% annual cutting limitation). These hedges are managed as the baseline requirement of the scheme – no more than 50% of these hedges are cut in any one year. This includes hedges that are included in CS capital or revenue options and therefore have specific management prescriptions. These specific prescriptions should be followed by the Agreement Holder and checked on inspection, rather than the baseline requirement.

Hedgerow (exempt from the cutting limitation). For hedges that need more regular cutting to maintain public safety.

Updating an Environmental Stewardship (ES) FER map

If you are using a FER map from an earlier ES agreement, you must check that it is up to date before submitting it with your CS application. If the ES FER map does not include all the land parcels in your application, you must update your CS FER map for those new land parcels as explained at 3) below.

Please check and update it as follows:

1. On the ES FER map:

- strike out any land on the ES FER map that is not to be included in the CS application
- add any new features not showing on the ES FER map (for example, a new pond)
- identify any hedgerows that are exempt from the 50% annual cutting limitation, by marking them using the symbols indicated on the CS FER map key.

2. Compare the new CS FER map key with your existing ES FER map key:

- if there are any features listed on the CS FER map key that are not on the ES FER map key mark them on the ES FER map, using the symbols given in the CS FER map key. (Some earlier ES FER maps did not include earth banks, scrub, bracken, boulders and rocky outcrops).

3. On the CS FER map, mark the environmental features and soil erosion risk on any new land parcels not included in the ES FER map.

4. Sign and date the updated ES FER map, to confirm it is complete and accurate. If you have made any annotations to the CS FER map, you will need to include both the ES FER and CS FER maps with the application.

The updated map(s) must be clear and understandable. If we find that a FER map is not clear and understandable, we will not be able to accept it.

Step 3 – Your options map(s) and your options annexes

We suggest you complete the annexes and the options maps alongside each other. This means you can add your option in the annex then immediately mark it on the map as you go along.

Before you start

- Options – choose these using the guidance in Section 5 ‘The Wildlife Offers’ in the [Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) on GOV.UK. Read more information about individual options in [Countryside Stewardship grants](#) also on GOV.UK’.

If you have any land parcels containing Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), you are not eligible to apply for a CS Wildlife Offer. Contact us to request a Mid Tier application pack instead. For contact details read ‘More information and contacts’ in this guide.

- Options map – if you receive one combined FER/Options map, you should photocopy it or print 2 copies. Use one to show your options as explained in this section (and the other to show your farm environment features and areas, as explained in the previous section.
- Options annex – if you receive your application pack by post and do not have enough space to add all of your options to the data sheet table in an annex, create continuation sheets by photocopying the relevant annex before you use it.
- If you cannot print or photocopy, please use your own continuation sheet(s), and make sure you include all of the information required in the related data sheet.

Please call us if you have any issues printing or photocopying.

Complete the CS options map

For each CS non-rotational option you want to include, complete the CS Options map(s) as follows:

- mark every instance of the option using the appropriate colour in the Options map key

- write the option code, using a black pen, on or against the option in each place where you have marked it on your Options map(s)
- Do not use correction fluid on the maps as this will make them invalid.

Take care to measure option lengths or areas and then calculate values accurately as errors may lead to your payment being reduced and penalties being applied.

Double-sided hedges – add the hedge twice, mark it on both sides of the boundary. This is only allowed where both sides of the boundary are mapped in the Rural Payments service. If one side has not been mapped, you are only allowed a single sided hedge.

Complete the application annexes

IMPORTANT - if you've received your application pack by email, the annexes are an excel spreadsheet. The land parcel information is pre-populated in Annex 1. The information you choose at Annex 1 pre-populates again for you to choose from in Annex 2 where relevant.

Click on the tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet.

If you've received your application pack by post, the annexes are paper. The information should be pre-populated in Annex 1. However, you must write all other information relating to your application onto the annexes.

Before adding the options to the application, the land selected must meet the basic requirements for the offer. For example, for an Arable offer, the land use for each land parcel must be arable or temporary grassland.

When adding the options you must meet the requirement outlined for each offer in the Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual, Section 5. For example, for an Arable offer, you must choose at least 3 options.

Add all of the options you want to apply for under this application. For information about options read 'Countryside Stewardship grants' on GOV.UK.

You can also read the scheme manual on GOV.UK, search for 'Wildlife Offers'.

You must fill in the first 3 tabs in the Annex.

You must begin with the 'START HERE' tab and then complete Annex 1 tab. When you have completed Annex 1 you need to complete the Annex 2 tab. This is important because the land parcel information you choose at Annex 1a pre populates again for you to choose from in Annex 2 where relevant, to save you time. The tabs are:

- 'START HERE' – The SBI and Application ID are pre-populated. Fill in the name of the applicant. This should be the same as the name at question 2a on the application form
- Annex 1 – Land summary
- Annex 2 – Options.

(The detail in the Application summary' tab is for information only. Read Step 5 for more information.)

Annex 1: Land summary

Complete Annex 1 with your land parcel details for all applications.

You must check that this annex has been pre-populated with all of the land parcels registered to your SBI.

If you find that some of your eligible land parcels are not shown in this annex, check whether they are shown on the map(s) in your application pack. If they are shown on the map(s), add the details of the land parcel to this annex. If they are not shown on the map(s) contact us.

Delete any land parcels that you do not want to include in your application. (Highlight the row of information for that land parcel and press delete.)

IMPORTANT - make sure you include any land parcels that:

- you're using for rotational arable options during the whole period of the agreement
- contain Scheduled Monuments (SM) within your control under your SBI, even if you are not applying for options on them.

The SBI and the first 3 columns are pre-populated.

You must fill in the annex as explained below.

OS Map Sheet Ref/National Grid no.

This is pre-populated. It is the Ordnance Survey (OS) Map sheet reference and National Grid field number. It must contain a 10-character reference, made up of 2 letters, 4 numbers and the final 4 numbers indicating the centre of the land parcel (for example, LP12345678). We need the whole reference to identify the land parcel.

Parcel name

This is pre-populated, but you can amend it. This is the name of the land parcel (if it is known by one) to help you identify it. If you do not have a name for your parcel, repeat the field parcel reference. There must be either a name for each land parcel or a parcel reference in every row under 'Parcel name'.

Total land parcel size (ha)

This is pre-populated with the total area of the land parcel, based on the area registered in the Rural Payments service.

LFA Status

This is pre-populated. Use the key at the top of the annex to check the information in this column. If the information in a box is wrong, click into the box, click the dropdown arrow, then choose the code for the relevant 'less favoured area' from the list.

Will rotational options be included on this parcel?

For each land parcel confirm whether there are rotational options on the land parcel at any point during the period of the agreement. Click into the box in this column, then click the small dropdown arrow that appears to confirm 'Yes' or 'No'. If you do not confirm 'yes' in this annex then you will not be able to choose a rotational option for this land parcel in the Options tab. Do not delete any land parcels that support rotational options during the period of the agreement.

Runoff/soil erosion risk?

For each land parcel confirm whether or not there is a moderate to high risk of run off or soil erosion. Click into the box in the column, click the dropdown arrow, then confirm either 'Yes', or 'No'.

For more information about runoff/soil erosion read Step 2 – Your Farm Environment Record (FER) map(s).

Land use code for land not declared or claimed for BPS (if applicable)

You do not need to fill in the land use code for every land parcel in your Wildlife Offers application if you are applying for BPS in the same year. However, you must fill in the land use code for any land parcel in your Wildlife Offers application that is not included in your BPS application. The land use codes for the land parcel must be compatible with the options you are applying for in your Wildlife Offers application.

A list of land use codes is on GOV.UK, search for [Rural Payments: land guidance](#).

Annex 2: Options

Use Annex 2 to add any options to your application.

You require pre-approval for the use of some options. Read more information in the Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual, search for Countryside Stewardship on GOV.UK.

Important: if you've received your application pack by post, the annexes are paper. You will need to write in all required information onto the annexes.

If you received an application pack by email Annex 2 is an excel spreadsheet.

Land Parcel details

Parcel name

For each land parcel, click into the box in this column, click the dropdown arrow, then choose the relevant 'Parcel name' from the list. The relevant information will appear in the 'Field Parcel' and 'Total land parcel size (ha)' columns.

Field parcel

The information in this column comes from Annex 1 and appears automatically when you choose the 'Parcel name'.

Total land parcel size (ha)

The information in this column comes from Annex 1 and appears automatically when you choose the 'Parcel name'.

Option details

Rotational or Non-rotational option?

For each land parcel confirm whether the option is rotational or non-rotational. Click into the box in this column, then click the small dropdown arrow that appears to confirm either 'Rotational' or 'Non-rotational'.

Do not delete any land parcels that support rotational options during the period of the agreement.

Option

For each land parcel choose the option you want to apply for. Click into the box in this column, click the small dropdown arrow, then choose the option from the list.

Unit

The unit the option is measured in will appear automatically when you choose an option in the previous column. For example, tonne, metres or hectares 'ha'.

Quantity

Enter the number of units you're applying for. Do this to 4 decimal places for tonnes and hectares 'ha', and whole numbers for metres.

Payment details

Payment rate

This is the value of each unit for the option you've chosen. It appears automatically when you fill in the 'Option' column.

Value

This is the value for the number of units you've entered. It appears automatically when you fill in the 'Quantity' column.

Step 4 – Continue your application form

Section 3: Declaration and undertakings

Complete this section to confirm that you have read and understood the requirements of the Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier scheme, which includes the Wildlife Offers, and the undertakings that you are making when submitting your application.

- Read the declaration, undertakings and warning carefully.
- Sign in the box and enter your name in block letters, your capacity (for example, sole trader, company director, agent) and the date you're signing the application.
- If you're submitting your application by email you do not need to sign the application in this section.
- Before you submit your application, make sure you have the correct permission levels in the Rural Payments service.

For information about permission levels in the Rural Payments service search for [Rural Payments: registering and updating your details](#) on GOV.UK.

Confirm your information and apply

This section tells you what you need to check before you submit your application.

Step 5 – Application summary

The ‘Grant totals’ and ‘Application summary’ gives useful information about the options that you have chosen and the financial value of your application. This information appears automatically as you fill in annexes 1 and 2. If you have completed paper annexes, this information will not appear unless you manually fill it in.

Application summary tab

Use this tab to confirm for yourself that you have added all the correct options into your application.

Grant totals tab

Use this tab to confirm for yourself the value of your application.

Step 6 – Checklist – use this to confirm that you have read and completed everything needed

Before you submit your application you can use this checklist to help you make sure that you have done everything you need to do.

1. You've read and understood the CS scheme rules and requirements including the terms and conditions in the [Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#).
2. You and the land that you are including in your application are eligible for CS – read Section 3 ‘Who can apply’ in the [Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual and Section 5 ‘The Wildlife Offers](#).

Your land is not eligible for the Wildlife Offers if one or more of the following reasons apply to you, but you may be able to apply for Mid Tier.

- the business is very large (classified as more than two hundred land parcels registered to the SBI)

- the business already has land parcels in an Environmental Stewardship Agreement that will be under agreement at the planned start date of the Wildlife Offer Agreement
- the land under the business includes a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- the business has an Inheritance tax exemption (IHT) agreement with HM Revenue and Customs.

3. You've registered all of the land in your application in the Rural Payments service. Checked all the details are correct and submitted an RLE1 form for any land that is not already registered.

This includes farmyards on which you apply for capital works or maintenance of weatherproof traditional farm buildings.

The application does not have to cover the whole holding but it must include all land parcels that will support rotational options for the whole period of the agreement and all Scheduled Monuments (SM) within your control.

Cross compliance requirements apply across the whole holding.

4. You have the correct permission levels in the Rural Payments service to complete and submit this application.

To authorise an agent to act on behalf of this business, anyone with 'Business Details – Full permission' for the business can give an agent 'CS Applications – Submit' permission.

5. You've completed Annexes 1 and 2

6. You've given the following details in Annex 1 – Land summary:

- all land parcels that will support rotational options
- all land parcels at moderate to high risk from runoff or soil erosion
- land use codes for all the land parcels in this Wildlife Offers application. Unless you are applying for BPS this year, then you only need to give the land use codes for any land parcels in this Wildlife Offers application that are not in the BPS application.

7. You've completed the following maps:

- a Farm Environment Record (FER) map including:
 - all features and area on the land parcels included in your application
 - all land parcels containing Scheduled Monuments
 - all land parcels at moderate to high risk from runoff or soil erosion
- a completed Options map.

8. You've filled in Section 3: Declaration and undertakings of the application form. (You only need to sign in the box if you are submitting a paper application form by post.) You know what supporting documents you must submit with your application.

You've completed and attached them where necessary:

- CS Land Ownership and Control form(s) – read Question 3
- a copy of your tenancy agreement (if you have a public body landlord) – read Question 3

the required evidence if someone else applies for BPS on any land in your Wildlife Offers application. Read about dual use under 'Management control: eligibility and scheme rules' in the [Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) on GOV.UK.

9. You understand what evidence is needed for your application. This depends on the options you choose.

For more information about evidence read the 'How to apply' section and section 6.4 in the [Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) on GOV.UK. Or for information about evidence for each option and capital item read [Countryside Stewardship grants](#) on GOV.UK.

10. You've attached any other required supporting documents, and evidence that must be submitted with your application.

11. You've told us the number of continuation sheets you've used (if applicable).

Step 7 – Supporting documents and evidence

We must receive your application and supporting documents by midnight on 30 July 2021. We may also need to receive some evidence by this date – read below.

Supporting documents:

For example:

- Options map
- FER map
- A Land Ownership Consent form (if required).

Maps – for more information about what to include in your maps, read ‘Step 2 – Your Farm Environment Record (FER) map(s)’ and ‘Step 3 – Your options map(s)’. Or read the [Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) on GOV.UK, search for ‘Wildlife Offers’.

Evidence

Some evidence we must receive by midnight on 30 July 2021, and some evidence you should keep until we ask for it. Read about the requirements for each option or item in [Countryside Stewardship grants](#) on GOV.UK.

How to submit your supporting documents or evidence

You can scan and email all the documents to us. You must put your SBI and Application ID on all documents.

The maximum size of emails we can accept is 32MB. If the email exceeds this limit, please send a further email and use the same subject heading. Add the number of emails at the end of the subject heading, for example, 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3.

For security reasons, we cannot accept discs, USB pen drives or other external storage media.

You can submit digital photos by email, but do not scan printed photos as the quality is not good enough.

Or you can post the documents to us using the address in 'More information and contacts'.

Step 8 – Submit your application

All of the following must reach us before the application deadline (midnight on 30 July 2021):

- all sections of the completed application form
- all relevant completed annexes
- all completed maps and any other supporting documents
- any evidence that [Countryside Stewardship grants](#) shows must be submitted.

For all applications you must:

- put your SBI and Application ID on everything you send to us
- have the correct permission level (at least 'CS Applications – Submit') in the Rural Payments service.

Submit your application by email

If you received your application pack by email 'reply' to that email, attaching your completed documents to it. You'll need to scan the completed maps and supporting documents first. By 'replying' to the email we sent to you, rather than sending us a new email, your application will be automatically forwarded to the correct team, and not have to wait in a queue to be sorted manually.

If you received your application pack by post you can submit it by email. Scan all the documents, attach them to an email and send the email to ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk. The subject of your email must include:

'CS – Wildlife Offers' application 2021.

You must put your SBI and Application ID number in your email as well as on everything you attach to the email.

Make sure that the email address you're sending your application from is registered for your business in the Rural Payments service. You don't need

to sign your application if submitting by email, but the email address must be registered to someone with 'CS applications submit permissions'.

Send your application by post

If you received your application pack by post and cannot submit it by email, you can post it to:

Rural Payments Agency (CS)
PO Box 324
Worksop
S95 1DF

Remember to sign your paper application form at Section 3 before you submit it.

We recommend that you get proof of posting for any documents you send to us by post. You should keep a copy of everything you send to us.

What happens next?

Find out what happens next with your application

After we have received your application, we will check that:

- you meet the eligibility requirements
- all the necessary details have been given in your application form and annexes
- all of your maps have been completed.

If your application fails any of the above checks, we will contact you to explain what is wrong, and how you can correct it (if relevant).

If your application has been unsuccessful you can submit a written representation to us, and we will review your case.

If your application meets the eligibility criteria, you will be offered an agreement.

You'll receive confirmation regardless of whether or not your application has been successful. If it's successful, you'll receive an agreement offer letter. The Agreement Start Date will be set out in the agreement documents contained with the agreement offer letter.

If you want to accept the agreement offer you must return the signed acceptance declaration to RPA within 20 working days of receiving it. If you do not accept the offer in time, it will be withdrawn.

If you enter into a wildlife offer by accepting the offer (an 'Agreement Holder') you cannot modify, extend or amend the wildlife offer. You must either accept or decline the offer. The person signing the acceptance declaration must have either 'submit' level of authorisation for CS agreements, or full permissions under Business Details in the Rural Payments service.

More information and contacts

This section provides the contact details for the Countryside Stewardship Wildlife Offers

Contacts

Rural Payments Agency (Countryside Stewardship)
PO Box 324
WORKSOP
S95 1DF

Email: ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk

Rural Payments helpline: 03000 200 301

Website: www.rpa.gov.uk

Open - Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm, (closed at weekends and on public holidays)

Give your Single Business Identifier (SBI) for all enquiries.

If you do not have access to the internet, you can call us on 03000 200 301 until 28 May, to request an application pack.

Complaints about service

If you are an applicant for Countryside Stewardship, or an Agreement Holder, and you want to complain about the level of service you have received or the way that you have been treated, you should use the appropriate organisation's complaints procedure.

For more information search for the Rural Payments Agency on GOV.UK, then scroll down the page to '[Complaints procedure](#)' under 'Corporate information'.