



Rural Payments
Agency

Countryside Stewardship 2021: How to apply by email or post for Mid Tier

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Version 2.0

24 June 2021 – Page 4 – the deadline to request a Mid Tier application pack in the Rural Payments service has been extended to 16 July 2021.

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 for Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier

Important dates for Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier

Date	Details
9 February 2021	CS application period opens for agreements that will start on 1 January 2022
28 May (midnight) 2021	Last date to request a CS Mid Tier paper application pack by email or phone
28 May 2021	Last date to request approval to use the following management options for priority habitats and species in your Mid Tier application: BE4, BE7, GS6, GS9, GS10, SP9, WD4 and WT3 (read section 4.7.2 in the MT manual)
31 May 2021	Last date to request approval for management options for priority habitats and species
6 weeks before submitting your application	The minimum period you need to allow to request a visit for our endorsement, for Catchment Sensitive Farming officer approval, if you are considering applying for grants for management of priority habitat or priority water catchments or air quality.
30 June extended to 16 July (midnight) 2021	Last date to request application pack online (for the Wildlife Offers you do not need to request an application pack to apply online).

Date	Details
30 July 2021	Last date to submit online application for the Wildlife Offers with required supporting information
30 July 2021	Application period closes. Valid application and any required supporting information returned to us
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 CS Mid Tier 2022 agreements applied for in 2021

Introduction

This guidance explains how to complete your Countryside Stewardship (CS) Mid Tier application and supporting documents, after you've received them by email or post

Important

Mid Tier applications can no longer consist of capital items only. For more information read 'Scheme Changes for Countryside Stewardship agreements that commence on 1 January 2022' in the [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers Manual](#) on GOV.UK

If you want to apply for capital items only, you can do this by applying for the new extended Capital Grants offer by 30 April 2021. Read more about the new Capital Grants offer in the [Countryside Stewardship Capital Grants manual](#) on GOV.UK.

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

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 '[How to request a Mid Tier or Higher Tier application pack](#)' 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.

When to apply

The deadline for the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) to receive your application (including any supporting documents and evidence that needs to be submitted) is 30 July 2021.

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

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:

Before you request a Mid Tier application pack – read ['How to request a Mid Tier or Higher Tier application pack'](#) and use this guidance to follow 1 to 3 below; then

After you receive the application pack follow 4 and 5 below.

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 before requesting your pack. You may find the [RLE1 guidance](#) useful, which is on GOV.UK.

3. Request a Mid Tier application pack

You can download an application pack or request one to be emailed to you from 9 February to 28 May 2021 using the Rural Payments service.

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.

4. Read the scheme manual and other guidance

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

- search for the [Countryside Stewardship \(CS\) Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#)
- 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.

How to apply

This section gives the information needed to apply for Mid Tier Countryside Stewardship

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 Mid Tier 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 an 'X' or a tick in the correct box.

You must sign your application at Section 4 if you are submitting a paper application by post.

Front Page

Proposed agreement title

Enter the title that you want the proposed agreement to be known by, for example the land or farm name.

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) Confirm whether or not you are acting on behalf of the business. If 'Yes', you must make sure that you have the correct permission level in the

Rural Payments service. Anyone with 'Business Details: Full permission' for the business can give you 'CS (Applications) Submit' permission.

3. 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. If it isn't pre-populated, fill in the Business name.

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.

Section 2: Farm business details

4. (a) Confirm whether you have management control of all of the land in the application for the entire length of the proposed agreement and can meet the Declaration and Undertakings in Section 4. If 'Yes' go to Question 5. If 'No' go to Question 4 (b).

4. (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 this with your application then go to Question 4 (c).

Get a copy of the [Countryside Stewardship Land Ownership and Control form](#) on GOV.UK. Or call us to ask for a paper copy if you cannot get online.

4. (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 4 (d). If 'No' go to Question 5.

4. (d) Tick 'Yes' to confirm you have supplied a copy of your tenancy agreement with the application.

Read Section 3.2 'Management control, eligibility and scheme rules' in the [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#). Go to Question 5.

5. 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.

6. Confirm whether or not you're applying for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) on any of the land parcels in this Mid Tier application in the current calendar year.

If 'No' you must give compatible land use codes in Annex 1, as described in Step 3 of this guidance. After you've done this confirm by ticking 'Yes'.

7. 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 for the parcels being claimed by someone else at (b). Read section 3.3 in the [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) on GOV.UK.

Otherwise tick 'No' and go to Question 8.

8. Confirm whether or not you are a member of a Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund (CSFF) facilitated group.

If 'Yes' you must keep evidence of endorsement from the CSFF coordinator, and you should send this to RPA with your application.

For more information read Section 4.7.3 'Advice from a Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund Coordinated Group' in the [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) on GOV.UK.

Also read '[Guide to Countryside Stewardship: facilitation fund](#)' on GOV.UK.

9. If your application includes capital items or options to improve water quality you need to discuss these with your Catchment Sensitive Farming officer (CSFO) as their approval may increase your overall score.

To confirm that you've done this, tick 'Yes' and then give the name of your CSFO and the Catchment/River Basin. If your application doesn't include any of these, tick 'No'.

For more information search for '[Catchment Sensitive Farming: reduce water and air pollution](#)' on GOV.UK.

Section 3: Organic Support (if relevant)

If you are not applying for organic support go to Step 2.

Fill in this section if you're applying for organic support, conversion and maintenance.

10. If your non-organic application for Mid Tier is not successful, confirm whether or not you want to continue with your application for organic support? Tick 'Yes' or 'No'.

For more information read Section 4.3.7 'Organic conversion and management' in the [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) on GOV.UK.

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)

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.

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 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Scheduled Monuments (SM) within your control under your SBI.

If you have an 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 an 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. Therefore, 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), (which is 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 will be clear and easy to understand. 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 breast 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 an 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 and capital items annexes

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

Before you start:

- Options and capital items – choose these using the guidance in Section 2.2 ‘Grants available in Mid Tier’ and Section 4.3 ‘How to choose options and capital items’ in the [Mid Tier manual](#) on GOV.UK. Read more information about individual options in [Countryside Stewardship grants](#) also on GOV.UK’
- 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 or capital items to the data sheet table in an annex, create continuation sheets by photocopying the relevant annex before you use it. Where you have used continuation sheet(s), please indicate this on the relevant data sheet and enter the total number of continuation sheets used. For example, Sheet 1 / Total 3; Sheet 2 / Total 3; Sheet 3 / Total 3
- 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 options and capital items

For each CS non-rotational option (including capital items) 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).

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 boundaries land parcels 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 the other annexes where relevant.

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

You must fill in the first 4 tabs in the Annex:

- '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 3a on the application form.
- Annex 1 – Land summary
- Annex 2 – Options
- Annex 3 – Capital items

If you're applying for Mid Tier water quality capital items only you do not need to fill in Annex 2.

(The detail in the red 'Grant totals' and 'Application summary' tabs is for information only. Read Step 5 for more information.)

Annex 1: Land summary

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. Or on a paper annex cross through the row.)

Important: make sure you include any land parcels that:

- you're using for rotational arable options during the whole period of the agreement
- contain Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or 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.

Does this parcel contain an SSSI?

For each land parcel, confirm whether there is a site of special scientific interest (SSSI) on the land parcel. Click into the box in this column, then click the small dropdown arrow that appears. Then confirm either 'Yes', or 'No'. Do not delete any land parcels that are in an SSSI.

Does this parcel contain a Scheduled Monument?

For each land parcel, confirm whether there is a scheduled monument on the land parcel. Click into the box in this column, then click the small dropdown arrow that appears. Then confirm either 'Yes', or 'No'. Do not delete any land parcels that contain a scheduled monument.

LFA Status

For each land parcel, click into the box in this column, click the dropdown arrow, then choose the code for the relevant 'less favoured area' from the list. Read the key at the top of the annex.

Will rotational options be included on this parcel?

For each land parcel confirm whether there will be rotational options on the land parcel at any point during the 5 year 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 Mid Tier 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 Mid Tier 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 Mid Tier application.

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

Annex 2: Options

You require prior endorsement for the use of some Mid Tier options. Read more information in the [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#), search for [Countryside Stewardship](#) on GOV.UK.

For organic options, make sure that you have also completed Step 1, Section 3 of the application form and read Section 4.3.7 'Organic conversion and management' in the [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) 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.

On a paper annex there is no pre-populated information, therefore you must write all of the information into the relevant boxes for the land parcels you're including in your application.

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 5 year period of the agreement.

Option Group

For each land parcel tell us which group you want to choose an option from.

For example, arable, grassland, soil and water, supplements, organic. Click into the box in this column, click the small drop-down arrow, then choose the group from the list. If the group you want is not in the list check that you have chosen correctly in the 'Rotational or Non-rotational' column.

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. For example, 'AB8 Flower-rich margins and plots'. 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.

Annex 3: Capital Items

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.

On a paper annex there is no pre-populated information, therefore you must write all of the information into the relevant boxes for the land parcels you're including in your application.

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'.

Capital item details

Capital item group

For each land parcel tell us which group (type of work) you want to carry out. For example, boundaries, livestock, grassland, wetlands. Click into the box in this column, click the small dropdown arrow, then choose the group from the list.

Capital item

For each land parcel choose the capital item you want to apply for. For example, 'LV7 Livestock troughs. Click into the box in this column, click the small dropdown arrow, then choose the item from the list. The list of items is based on the group (type of work) you chose in the previous column.

Unit

The unit the item is measured in will appear automatically when you choose an item in the previous column. For example, metres, gate, trough, tree.

Quantity

Enter the number of units you're applying for.

Payment details

Payment rate

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

Value

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

The 'Application summary' and 'Grant totals' tabs give useful information about the options and items that you have chosen and the financial value of your application. The information in them appears automatically as you fill in annexes 1 to 3.

Step 4 – Continue your application form

Section 4: Declaration and undertakings

Complete this section to confirm that you have read and understood the requirements of the Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier scheme 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, 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 and Grant totals annexes

The 'Application summary' and 'Grant totals' tabs give useful information about the options and items that you have chosen and the financial value of your application. The information in them appears automatically as you fill in annexes 1 to 3. 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 [CS 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 [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#).
- 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 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or 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 have your County Parish Holding (CPH) number to hand if you are contacting a Catchment Sensitive Farming officer. Read '[Get a permanent CPH number](#)' on GOV.UK, search for Register land you use to keep livestock.

6) You have a valid Historic Environment Farm Record (HEFER) if required. For more information read section 4.9.2 in the [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#). Unless you told us that you already have a valid HEFER Consultation Response, we will have requested one from Historic England when you requested your application pack. If you have not received it within 20 working days, please contact us.

A valid HEFER must be less than 3 years old and there must have been no changes or new archaeological features identified to your holding since it was created.

Use the HEFER to help you choose your Historic Environment (HE) options and prevent the use of damaging options on HE features.

7) You've completed Annexes 1 to 3 (if appropriate)

8) You've given the following details in Annex 1 – Land summary:

- all land parcels containing SSSIs
 - all land parcels containing Scheduled Monuments
 - 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 Mid Tier 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 Mid Tier application that are not in the BPS application.

9) 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 containing SSSIs
 - all land parcels at moderate to high risk from runoff or soil erosion
- an Options map for the multi-year and capital items in your application
- for water quality capital items only, a sketch map showing the location of the farmyard and all farmyard water quality options.

10) You've filled in Section 4: 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.)

11) 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 4
- a copy of your tenancy agreement (if you have a public body landlord) – read Question 4
- written support from your Catchment Sensitive Farming officer – read Question 9
- the required evidence if someone else applies for BPS on any land in your Mid Tier application – read Question 7. Read about dual use under 'Management control: eligibility and scheme rules' in the [CS Mid Tier and Wildlife Offers manual](#) on GOV.UK.

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

This may include for example, a valid organic schedule and certificate, Natural England approval to use specific options or necessary permission (such as planning permission).

For more information about evidence read the 'How to apply' section and section 6.4 in the [CS 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.

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

14) 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

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) and option/capital items annexes'. Or read the [Mid Tier manual](#) on GOV.UK.

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 RPA. 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 RPA before the application deadline (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. Put 'Application – CS – Mid Tier' in the email subject heading.

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'.

Submit 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 before you submit it.

Post your application in time for us to receive it by 30 July 2021.

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

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 these checks, we will contact you to explain what is wrong and how you can correct it (if relevant).

CS Mid Tier is competitive, which means that not everyone who applies will be successful. We use a scoring process based on environmental benefits to select successful applicants.

If your application has been unsuccessful

You can submit a written representation to us and we will review your case.

If your application has been successful

You'll be offered an agreement. If you want to accept it, you must return the signed acceptance declaration to reach RPA by the date stated in the agreement offer letter. If you do not accept it in time, we will withdraw the offer. The agreement 'start date' will be given in the agreement documents you receive with 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'.