Countryside Stewardship 2022: How to apply by email or post for Higher Tier

Contents

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Use this manual to find out how to apply for Countryside Stewardship 2022 Higher Tier by email or post.

Be aware of 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 is 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 do not 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
- FETFEnquiries@rpa.gov.uk
- FETFClaims@rpa.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

Data Protection

- For information on how we handle personal data go to www.gov.uk and search Rural Payments Agency personal information charter.

Key dates for Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier

Important dates for Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier.

Date	Information
8 February 2022	Start of CS 2022 application period for agreements that will start on 1 January 2023.
31 March 2022 (midnight)	Deadline for requesting a CS 2022 Higher Tier application pack (online, email or post)
29 April 2022 (midnight)	Deadline for submitting Higher Tier 2022 initial application. If woodland is included in CS application, Woodland Management Plan must be approved or approved in principle before Higher Tier initial application is submitted.
By early June 2022	Customer notified of Higher Tier 2022 initial application decision.
June to August 2022	Higher Tier 2022 final application development with customer.

Date	Information
31 August 2022	Deadline for submitting Higher Tier final application to FC or NE. All necessary consents, permissions and evidence must be arranged by this date. Woodland Management Plans must be fully approved with any associated felling licence in place by this date.
31 August 2022	Deadline for RPA to receive any requested 'baseline' (BEHTA) evidence. Deadline for RPA to receive any changes to the Higher Tier woodland only 2022 final application. Woodland Management Plans where needed for woodland only applications, must be fully approved with any associated felling licence in place by this date.
End October 2022	Final scoring for woodland only applications and the woodland element of a mixed application.
By 31 December 2022	2022 Agreement offer and declaration sent to customer for agreements that will start on 1 January 2023.
1 January 2023	Start date for CS Higher Tier agreements applied for in 2022.

Introduction

This guidance explains how to apply for a Countryside Stewardship (CS) Higher Tier grant by email or post, including how to complete any maps and annexes.

Read 'How to request a Mid Tier or Higher Tier application pack' on GOV.UK. then request an application pack using the Rural Payments service. The pack will be emailed or posted to you and will contain the information we hold for your business in the Rural Payments service.

It's important that all your information is up to date in the Rural Payments

If you have requested an email copy, check your junk folder if you have not received the application pack in your inbox, as the pack is emailed once.

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

When to apply

The deadline for The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) to receive your completed application and supporting documents is midnight on 29 April 2022.

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, the Forestry Commission, and Natural England make decisions and recommendations about your application. Read 'Key dates' above for more information.

Getting started

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

Read 'How to request a Mid Tier or Higher Tier application pack' and use this guidance to follow 1 to 3 below;

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.

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 Countryside Stewardship mapping guidance for applicants and RLE1 guidance useful, which is on GOV.UK.

Request a Higher Tier application pack

You can download an application pack, or request one to be emailed to you, using the Rural Payments service from 9 February to 31 March.

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

Read the Higher Tier scheme manual and other guidance

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

- Countryside Stewardship (CS) Higher Tier (HT) 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 read Countryside Stewardship grants on GOV.UK
- for information about other schemes read Agri-environment schemes (CS and ES) and BPS On GOV.UK

If you cannot access GOV.UK you can email or call us to request a paper copy of the manual. You can call us on 03000 200 301.

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 Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier.

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:

- Higher Tier (HT) application form for 2022
- Annexes 1 and 2:
    - for Agri-environment with Woodland Support – fill in Annex 1 and Annex 2
    - for Agri-environment – only fill in Annex 1
    - for Woodland Support – only fill in Annex 2
- Combined Options and Farm Environment Record (FER) map
- Environmental Information Map (EIM)
- Guidance leaflet titled Understanding your Historic Environment Farm Environment Record (HEFER).

Complete your application form, annexes and maps

This section tells you how to fill in your CS Higher 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 5 if you are submitting a paper application by post.

Front page

Confirm which type of Higher Tier agreement you are applying for: Tick one box.

Confirm the land cover of any Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Scheduled Monuments on your holding: If there are any Sites of Special Scientific interest or Scheduled Monuments within your holding, tick the box(es) to confirm they are in woodland or non-woodland areas. This affects the type of agreement you can apply for.

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: Applicant Details

1 Your SBI is already pre-populated

2 Fill in (a) and (b) with the name and business name of the applicant (unless already pre-populated). Fill in (c) and (d) with details of the main contact for this application if these are different to the applicant at a) and the printed business name at b). This could be the applicant or a submission agent. Please contact us immediately with any changes to the contact information at c) and d). Please make any other changes in the Rural Payments service.

3 If you are not VAT registered and want to include VAT for any actual cost items you're claiming for, you must submit confirmation from an accountant confirming that you're not VAT registered. Tick 'Yes' or 'No' as applicable.

4a Confirm whether you have management control of all the land in the application for the entire length of the scheme commitments and can meet the Declaration and Undertakings in Section 5. If 'Yes', go to Question 5. If 'No', read about management control in the 'Who can apply and what land is eligible' section in the Higher Tier manual for 2022 and complete Questions 4(b) and 4(c).

4b Confirm that you have completed a copy of the CS Land Ownership and Control form with the person who will take over the agreement responsibilities if the applicant ceases to have management control over any of the land. This would normally be the landlord or another person who has management control. Get a copy of the CS Land Ownership and Control form on GOV.UK. Or call us to ask for a paper copy if you cannot get online.

4c Confirm whether anyone named in the CS Land Ownership and Control form(s) is a Public Body, for example, local authorities, National Park authorities, public corporations. If 'Yes', submit a copy of your tenancy agreement with your application.

Section 2 – Land details

5 If you are a tenant and there are obligations in your tenancy agreement to carry out environmental management, you may not seek funding for the same activities in your CS application. Tick to confirm that you will not seek funding for these activities.

If you are not a tenant or if your tenancy agreement does not include obligations to carry out environment management, do not tick the box.

6 Leave this box blank if none of the land in your application is common or shared grazing land and go to Question 7. If any of the land in your application is common and/or shared grazing land, you must:

- read about common land and shared grazing in the 'Who can apply and what land is eligible' section of the Higher Tier manual for 2022 and 'Annex 6 Common land and shared grazing: additional requirements'
- read the Countryside Stewardship: common land and shared grazing supplement and complete a CS common land and shared grazing supplementary application form both are on GOV.UK. Or call us to ask for a copy if you cannot access the internet. Submit this with your application
- tick to confirm that you have read the Common land and shared grazing: supplement to the CS manual on GOV.UK.

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 3.2 in the Higher Tier manual on GOV.UK. Otherwise, tick 'No' and go to Question 8.

8 If this application is linked to a CS facilitation fund enter the name of a CS facilitation fund project. If this does not apply to the land in your application leave the box blank.

Read more information about the CS facilitation fund on GOV.UK.

9 If any of the land in your application is in a protected landscape, (for example, a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or World Heritage Site), tell us the name, for example, Peak District National Park. If this does not apply to the land in your application, leave the box blank.

10 Enter the name(s) of the Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on your holding.

You must include in your application, all SSSI land on your holding. If the SSSI is woodland, Natural England will be able to confirm whether there are any suitable options to manage the woodland under CS. If this does not apply to the land in your application leave the box blank.

11 If you intend to manage any Historic Environment features in your application, enter their details in the table.

Historic features may include:

- designated historic and archaeological features including Scheduled Monuments, battlefields or registered parks and gardens
- undesignated historic and archaeological features including those identified on the Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England (SHINE), those not identified on SHINE and priority undesignated historic parklands - these features may not show on the MAGIC website
- designated and undesignated traditional farm buildings in need of maintenance (see options HS1 and HS8)

You must include all Scheduled Monuments on your holding in your application. Discuss the management of any Schedule Monuments on your holding with Historic England before you apply for CS.

You can identify historic environment features on your holding using your Environment Information map, a previous Historic Environment Farm Record (HEFER) response, the maps on the MAGIC website or your own records.

If you do not already have a HEFER, we will automatically send you one after you request an application pack.

For more information read 'Historic Environment Farm Environment Record (HEFER)' in the 'How to Apply' section of the Higher Tier manual 2022 on GOV.UK.

Section 3: Organic support (if relevant)

If you are not applying for organic support, go to Section 4.

If you're applying for organic options (OR1-5 or OT1-6), read 4.7.8 'Organic conversion and management' in the 'How to Apply' section of the Higher Tier manual 2022 on GOV.UK.

If your non-organic application for Mid Tier is not successful, confirm whether or not you want to continue with your application for just the organic options by ticking 'Yes' or 'No'.

Section 4: Environmental benefits

Section 4 identifies the environmental benefits of your proposed agreement, we will use this information to score your application and rank it against others.

Refer to the HEFER leaflet enclosed within your application for more information. You can find which environmental features and issues are a high priority for CS in your local area, using the CS Statements of Priorities on GOV.UK. Detail of features on your holding's maps, can be found on the MAGIC website.

13 Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife Package (WPFWP)

Tick 'Yes' or 'No' to confirm whether you are applying for WPFWP. If you are applying for the WPFWP, you must be willing to deliver WPFWP options on at least 5% of the farmed land in the application. The area of farmed land is the area of arable land, temporary grassland and improved permanent grassland, minus the area of priority habitats that may go under an option designed for them.

Read 'Applying for the Higher Tier Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife Packages' in the Higher Tier manual 2022 on GOV.UK.

14 Priority Species

(a) Tick 'Yes' or 'No' to confirm whether there are known species or groups (assemblages) of species on your land or near to it, that require particular management and advice.

Use the CS statements of priorities on GOV.UK and the maps at on the MAGIC website to find out.

If 'No' go to Question 15.

If 'Yes' complete Question 14 (b) to (d).

(b) Priority species – if any are present on your holding give details of the species in the box. If not, leave the box blank.

(c) Assemblages of priority species – if any are present on your holding, give details in the box. If not, leave the box blank.

(d) Tick 'Yes' or 'No' to confirm whether you will need to carry out land management practices and capital works that meet the specific needs of the priority species and the species assemblages you have listed at (b) and (c).

If you need advice about options to manage priority species talk to your local Natural England adviser.

15 Priority Habitat

(a) Tick 'Yes' or 'No' to confirm whether you are applying for options to manage existing priority habitats. If 'Yes' complete Question 15 (b). If 'No' go to Question 16.

(b) Enter the relevant areas, length or number of existing priority habitats that you intend to manage under CS.

Use the table 2 'Priority Habitat – summary descriptions' guidance, in Annex 3 of the Higher Tier manual on GOV.UK, to identify the existing habitats on your holding that meet the priority habitat summary descriptions.

16 Habitat creation

You can create new priority habitat to extend, link and buffer existing habitats and/or improve water quality. CS includes options to create habitat on arable, intensive grassland and forestry areas. The land must have high potential to be successful in creating habitat.

If you intend to apply for habitat creation in this application, enter details in the box. If not, leave the box blank.

17 Soil and Water

(a) Tick 'Yes' or 'No' to confirm whether there are any areas of moderate to high risk from runoff or soil erosion on your land parcels in your application.

Use the information at Step 3 to Identify land parcels where runoff or soil erosion may occur. If this is an issue on your land, mark these on the FER maps and tick next to the relevant parcels on your Annex 1a data sheet under the 'Runoff/soil erosion risk' column heading.

(b) If a Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer (CSFO) has given advice for the land in the application, enter their name and the name of catchment in the box. If not, leave the box empty.

Find water quality information for your land on the maps on the [MAGIC website]. Find your land on the maps, then look under 'CS Targeting & Scoring Layers' - 'Water' - 'CS Water Quality Priority Areas.' The areas in red have been identified as overall High Priority for water quality (medium shown as yellow). This layer can be made transparent using the slider under 'CS Targeting & Scoring Layers.' Use the 'Identify' tool to check the specific pollutant details on your land parcels.

Consider if you can change the land management practices on those fields and yards, and if you intend to apply an option or capital item to those fields.

If you do not intend to apply for water quality and resource protection options and/or capital items, go to Question 18. If you do, complete 17 (c).

For more information read your local [CS Statements of Priority] and read 'Options and capital items to address water quality issues in the [Higher Tier manual] on GOV.UK.

(c) Enter the areas of land for water quality options/capital items, relevant to **each** local pollutant pressure identified. Only the land parcels identified on Annex 1a with the potential to improve water quality should be included in this table.

Then tick 'Yes' or 'No' to confirm whether you intend to apply for constructed wetlands or a largescale sediment trap.

18 Native Breeds at Risk

Tick 'Yes' or 'No' to confirm whether you're applying for support to manage native breeds at risk. Read option SP8 on [Countryside Stewardship grants] on GOV.UK.

19 Educational Access

Tick 'Yes' or 'No' to confirm whether you're including an option for educational access in your application. Read option ED1 on [Countryside Stewardship grants](#) on GOV.UK.

Continue your application through Steps 2 and 3 before you complete the declaration on your application form at Step 6.

Step 2 – Your Farm Environment Record (FER) map(s)

If you are applying for a CS Higher Tier Woodland Support only agreement, you do not need to complete Step 2. Go to Step 4.

You'll receive one combined Options/FER map in your application pack.

Before you start to complete your maps, you need to photocopy or print the Options/FER map enough times to create the required FER map(s) (explained below), Agri-environment options and/or Woodland Support agreement maps (explained at Step 5).

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 duration of the agreement
- all Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Scheduled Monuments (SM) within your control under your SBI.

The application does not have to cover the whole holding, but it is a requirement of Countryside Stewardship that you identify, map, and retain these features and areas.

Remember that cross compliance requirements apply across the whole holding.

Mark your environmental features and areas on your map

You need to mark all 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 show features that you need to mark on your FER map(s).

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

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 on the map.

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 100m 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.)

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 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.

Land parcels with 'moderate to high runoff and soil erosion risk'

Before you complete the FER, you should consider whether any of the land parcels on your holding are at risk from surface runoff and soil erosion. If they are, you should consider including them in the application with an appropriate management option or item. Controlling the problem could protect the environment and improve the productivity of your land.

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 was 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 have 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

This 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 is 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 decrease 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 (150 metres or longer)
- rainfall (intensity relative to infiltration)
- land use.

Using the above 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.

Step 3 – Annex 1: Agri-environment

If you're applying for a Woodland Support only agreement, go to Step 4.

If you are applying for an Agri-environment agreement we suggest you complete Annex 1 and the options map(s) alongside each other. Read Step 5 for more information about your options map(s).

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've received your application pack by email, Annex 1 is an excel spreadsheet.

Click on the tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet.

You must begin with the 'START HERE' tab and complete Annexes 1a to 1e in order. This is important because the land parcel information is pre-populated in Annex 1a, and the information you choose at Annex 1a pre-populates again for you to choose from in the other annexes where relevant, to save you time.

The purple Grant totals and Application summary tabs and the red tabs calculate automatically from the information in Annexes 1a to 1e and are for information only.

START HERE worksheet

Complete this for all applications.

Name of lead applicant

Enter the lead applicant's full name. This must match a named applicant on the application form.

Single Business Identifier

Pre-populated, this is the unique identifier for the business.

Application ID

Pre-populated, this is a unique identifier generated automatically for each application.

Annex 1a: Land summary

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

Important - make sure you include any land parcels that:

- you are 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, the first 4 columns and the Parcel name column are pre-populated.

You must fill in the annex as explained below.

ID

Unique identifier which is generated automatically for each land parcel in Annex 1a. If the land parcel is added to the application at Annex 1a, the ID number carries through to the other annexes as you complete them. You can use it to cross reference land parcels easily between all of the annexes.

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.

Total land parcel size

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.

Are you including this parcel in your application?

For each land parcel you want to include in your application click into the box and confirm 'Yes'. The land parcel will then appear in Annex 1b. Confirm 'No' if you do not want to include 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'.

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). Application form Question 17a relates.

Land use code

You do not need to fill in the land use code for every land parcel in your Higher 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 Higher 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 Higher Tier application.

A list of land use codes is on GOV.UK, search for 'Rural Payments: land guidance'.

Will Soil and Water/Resource protection options/capital items be used on this parcel?

Click into the box in the column and confirm 'Yes' for any land parcels (including those with yards and tracks), that you want to consider for soil and water (water quality) and resource protection options/capital items. Otherwise choose 'No'.

Application form Question 17b relates.

Do you wish to include this parcel in the Wild Pollinator & Farm Wildlife Package?

Click into the box in the column and confirm 'Yes' for any land parcels you want to be considered for the Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife Package. Otherwise choose 'No'.

Application form Question 13 relates.

Does this parcel contain an SSSI?

This is pre-populated. Check that this information is correct. You must include all land parcels in your application that are a site special scientific interest (SSSI). If you need to change the information in this column, click into the box, then click the small dropdown arrow that appears. Confirm either 'Yes', or 'No'.

Does this parcel contain a Scheduled Monument?

This is pre-populated. Check that this information is correct. You must include all land parcels in your application that contain a scheduled monument. If you need to change the information in this column, click into the box, then click the small dropdown arrow that appears. Confirm either 'Yes', or 'No'.

Is this parcel organic?

Click into the box and choose 'Yes' or 'No' to confirm whether the land parcel is organic.

Annex 1b: Non-rotational options

Complete this if you are including non-rotational options in your application.

ID

Unique identifier which is generated automatically for each land parcel in Annex 1a. If the land parcel is added to the application at Annex 1a, the ID number carries through to the other annexes as you complete them. You can use it to cross reference land parcels easily between all of the annexes.

Land parcel details

Land parcel

Click into these boxes to choose the land parcels from the dropdown list that you want to add non-rotational options to.

If the parcel you need is not shown in the dropdown list, check Annex 1a and make sure that you selected 'Yes' in the 'Do you wish to include this parcel in your application' column.

Total land parcel size

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

Options details

Remember, if you are filling in a paper annex, the option details will not be available via dropdown lists. Refer to the Higher Tier manual and Countryside Stewardship grants on GOV.UK.

Option group

Click into the boxes and choose the option group from the dropdown list. This allows the dropdown list in the next column to only show the options relevant to that group. If you do not know the group leave this column blank.

Option

Click into the boxes to choose the relevant non-rotational option from the dropdown list. If you selected a group in the previous column, the dropdown list will only show the options relevant to that group. If you did not select a group, the dropdown list will show all options.

Important: for Option BE3 on both sides of a hedge you must allocate each side of the hedge to the land parcel that it is directly adjacent to and enter individual quantities for each length of hedging on those land parcels. You must also use the 'Option group' dropdown to select 'Boundaries, Trees and Orchards' prior to selecting BE3.

Unit

This is pre-populated automatically when you choose the option. It shows the unit the option is measured in, for example, hectares (ha), metres, tonnes.

Quantity

Enter the quantity of the option to four decimal places for hectares, metres and tonnes and as a whole number for all other units.

Payment details

Payment rate

This pre-populates automatically when you choose an option. This is the value of each unit of the option you've chosen.

Value

This is the value of the number of units you've entered for the option and pre-populates automatically. It will not populate until the parcel's size, option and quantity columns are complete.

Annex 1c: Rotational land

Complete this if you are including rotational options in your application.

Remember, if you are filling in a paper annex, you will need to write in all details by hand as these will not be pre-populated.

ID

Unique identifier which is generated automatically for each land parcel in Annex 1a. If the land parcel is added to the application at Annex 1a, the ID number carries through to the other annexes as you complete them. You can use it to cross reference land parcels easily between all of the annexes.

Land parcels that you will be using for your rotational options

Click into the boxes and choose the land parcels you will use for rotational options.

If the parcel you need is not shown in the dropdown list, check Annex 1a and make sure that you added it to the application by choosing 'Yes' in the 'Are you including this parcel in your application?' column. If you have not added it to the application at Annex 1a, the parcel will not appear in the dropdown list in Annex 1c.

You must choose all the land parcels that you will be using for rotational options for the whole duration of the agreement. You can only be paid for rotational options on land, in your agreement.

If you remove a land parcel from your application in Annex 1a, you must also remove it from this annex, this will not happen automatically.

Annex 1d: Rotational options

Complete this if you are including rotational options in your application.

Land Parcel details

ID

Unique identifier which is generated automatically for each land parcel in Annex 1a. If the land parcel is added to the application at Annex 1a, the ID number carries through to the other annexes as you complete them. You can use it to cross reference land parcels easily between all of the annexes.

First year location

Click into the boxes and choose from the dropdown list the land parcel that the rotational option will be on in the first year.

If the land parcel you need is not shown in the dropdown list, make sure it appears at Annex 1c.

If you are unsure where you will locate the rotational option, please select a parcel from 1c which is large enough to accommodate the option area and also has a compatible land use code. For a list of land use codes search for Rural Payments: land use codes 2022 on GOV.UK. You will be asked to confirm actual option locations when you complete your claim.

If you remove a land parcel from your application in Annex 1a, you must also remove it from this annex, this will not happen automatically.

Total land parcel size

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

Option details

Option group

Click into the boxes and choose the option group from the dropdown list. This allows the dropdown list in the next column to only show the options relevant to that group. If you do not know the group leave this column blank.

Option

Click into the boxes to choose the relevant rotational option from the dropdown list. If you selected a group in the previous column, this dropdown list will only show the options relevant to that group. If you did not select a group, the dropdown list will show all options.

For information about options read Countryside Stewardship grants on GOV.UK.

Unit

This is pre-populated automatically when you choose the option. It shows the unit the option is measured in, for example, hectares (ha), metres, tonnes.

Quantity

Enter the quantity of the option to 4 decimal places for hectares, metres and tonnes and as a whole number for all other units.

Payment details

Payment rate

This pre-populates automatically when you choose an option. This is the value of each unit of the option you've chosen.

Value

This is the value of the number of units you've entered for the option and pre-populates automatically. It will not populate until the parcel's size, option and quantity columns are complete.

Annex 1e: Capital items

Complete this if you are including capital items in your application.

Remember, if you are filling in a paper annex, you will need to write in the details by hand as these will not be pre-populated.

Land Parcel details

ID

Unique identifier which is generated automatically for each land parcel in Annex 1a. If the land parcel is added to the application at Annex 1a, the ID number carries through to the other annexes as you complete them. You can use it to cross reference land parcels easily between all of the annexes.

Land parcel

Click into the boxes to choose the land parcels from the dropdown list that you want to add a capital item to.

If the parcel you need is not shown in the dropdown list, check Annex 1a and make sure that you selected 'Yes' in the 'Do you wish to include this parcel in your application' column.

If you remove a land parcel from your application in Annex 1a, you must also remove it from this annex, this will not happen automatically.

Total land parcel size

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

Capital item details

Capital item group

Click into the boxes and choose the capital item group from the dropdown list. This allows the dropdown list in the next column to only show the capital items relevant to that group. If you do not know the group leave this column blank.

Capital item

Click into the boxes to choose the relevant capital item from the dropdown list. If you selected a group in the previous column, this dropdown list will only show the capital items relevant to that group. If you did not select a group, the dropdown list will show all capital items.

For information about capital items read [Countryside Stewardship grants](#) on GOV.UK.

Unit

This is pre-populated automatically when you choose the capital item. It shows the unit the item is measured in, for example, hectares (ha), metres, tonnes.

Quantity

Enter the quantity of the capital item to 4 decimal places for hectares, metres and tonnes and as a whole number for all other units. For capital items that are paid as a percentage of actual costs enter a 1.

Payment details

Payment rate

This pre-populates automatically when you choose a capital item. This is the value of each unit of the item you've chosen.

Value

This is the value of the number of units you've entered for the capital item and pre-populates automatically. It will not populate until the parcel's size, capital item, and quantity columns are complete.

Grant totals

This shows a list of all of the options and capital items in your application and the total quantity and value of each option/capital item.

Application summary

This shows the total values of non-rotational options, rotational options and capital items in your application and the overall value of your application (excluding any capital items which are paid as a percentage of actual costs).

Red tabs

These are for information only. You can use them to check you've entered the correct information in Annexes 1a to 1e and go back to the relevant annex to change it if needed.

This is not your agreement.

Step 4 – Annex 2: Woodland Support

If you are applying for an Agri-environment only agreement you do not need to complete this step – go to Step 5.

If you are applying for a Woodland Support agreement, we suggest you complete

Annex 2 and an agreement map alongside each other. Read Step 5 for more information about the agreement map.

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.

Click on the tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet.

You must begin with the 'START HERE' tab and complete Annexes 2a to 2f in order. This is important because the land parcel information is pre-populated in Annex 2, and the information you choose at Annex 2a pre-populates again where relevant for you to choose form in the other annexes, to save you time. The Summary tab and the red tabs calculate automatically from the information in Annexes 2a to 2f and are for information only.

START HERE

Complete this annex for all Woodland Support applications.

Application version

Enter either 'initial' or 'final' to tell us whether this is your initial application or your final application.

CPH

Enter the Country Parish Holding (CPH) number for the holding.

Name of lead applicant

Enter the lead applicant's full name. This must match a named applicant on the application form.

Single Business Identifier

This is pre-populated. It is the unique identifier for the business. It must match the SBI your application form.

Agreement title

Enter the agreement title, for example the land or farm name. This must match the agreement title entered on the application form (20 characters max).

In which county is the majority of the land in your application?

Enter the county where the woodland in your application is located. If your woodland crosses a boundary give the county where the greater proportion is found.

Which Forestry Commission area team will be advising you?

For information about Forestry Commission areas and contacts read Office access and opening hours on GOV.UK.

Enter the name of the Forestry Commission area in which the woodland in your application is located. If your woodland crosses a boundary, select the area in which the greater proportion is found.

What is the grid reference of the centre of your woodland?

Enter a 6 figure, OS grid reference for the central point of the woodland, formatted as 2 letters followed by a space, 3 digits, a space and then the final 3 digits, for example, GR 123 456.

Approved Woodland Management Plan reference number

Enter the Forestry Commission reference number for your approved Woodland Management Plan. This is usually a 5-digit number.

You must have a Woodland Management Plan approved or approved in principle by the Forestry Commission before you submit your initial application for Higher Tier.

The requirements for Forestry Commission approval and a valid reference number also applies to Woodland Management Plans that have not been funded through the Forestry Commission (for example, via UKWAS certification). If you do not have your reference number, please contact your local Forestry Commission Woodland Officer.

Read about the Requirements for a Woodland Management Plan in Annex 5 a) in the Higher Tier manual on GOV.UK.

Woodland Support you are applying for

Confirm which type of Woodland Support you're applying for by clicking into each box and choosing 'Yes' or 'No' from the dropdown list.

Special Area of Conservation/Tree Preservation Order

Confirm whether any of the land in your application contains a Special Area of Conservation and/or a Tree Preservation Order.

To do this click into the box and choose 'Yes' or 'No' from the dropdown lists.

Annex 2a: Land summary

Complete this annex for all Woodland Support applications.

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

Note: any land parcels in Environmental Stewardship beyond 31/12/2022 will not be added.

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.

Important - add all land parcels that 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. Read section 3.1.5 in the Higher Tier manual.

The SBI and the first 3 columns are pre-populated. The Application version and Lead Applicant name will populate from the information you entered at the Start Here tab.

ID

This is a unique identifier which is generated automatically for each land parcel in Annex 2a. If using excel the land parcel is added to the application at Annex 2a, the ID number carries through to the other annexes as you complete them. You can use it to cross reference land parcels easily between all annexes.

Land Parcel details

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.

Total area of this parcel

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

SSSI or SM Designation

Click into the box and choose from the dropdown list to confirm whether the land parcel contains a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and/or a Scheduled Monument.

If you have a Woodland Management Plan (WMP) that will expire before your Higher Tier agreement ends, you will need to apply for a CS funded or unfunded WMP for the remaining time. You can apply for a CS funded WMP within the last year of your existing WMP but to avoid double funding there must be no overlapping of plans.

Where the CS application relates to woodland SSSI, Natural England (NE) must also give consent to a new WMP. Having a WMP in place for the duration of your woodland CS agreement will let you submit a SSSI management notice for NE consent, allowing the CS agreement to go live.

1. Are you including this parcel in your application?

For each land parcel you want to include in your application click into the box and confirm 'Yes'. If using excel the land parcel will then appear in Annexes 2b and 2c.

Confirm 'No' if you do not want to include the land parcel.

If you only want to apply WD2, for example, on part of a parcel, choose 'Yes'. You will have an opportunity in Annex 2b to choose 'Hectares of WD2', which may be less than the total area of the parcel.

2. Compartments and sub compartments in this parcel

If required, use this column to enter the woodland compartments and sub compartments for the land parcel.

If a parcel covers multiple woodland compartments you may list multiple compartments in one row against a single land parcel.

If using excel, compartment references you enter on Annex 2a will automatically populate the corresponding columns in Annex 2b and 2c.

3. Land use code for land not declared or claimed for BPS

If you apply for BPS in the same year, you do not need to fill in the land use code for every land parcel in your Higher Tier application. However, you must if it is not included in your BPS application. Land use codes must be compatible with the options in your Higher Tier application.

If no land use code is available for the parcel you must update the land use to 'Woodland' in the Rural Payments service as soon as possible. We cannot offer any agreements without the land use code.

For information about land use codes read 'Rural Payments service: land guidance' on GOV.UK.

Annex 2b: WD2 Woodland Improvement option

Complete this annex if you are including option WD2 in your application.

For more information to help you complete this annex, read Annex 5, Section e): Works required under WD2 (Objectives and Prescriptions) on GOV.UK.

Land parcel details

ID

This ID number was generated automatically and carries through from Annex 2a to the other annexes as you complete them. You can use it to cross reference land parcels easily between all annexes.

Land parcel

Click into the boxes in this column to choose the land parcels from the dropdown list that you want to use to apply for WD2: Woodland Improvement.

If a parcel you need is not shown in the dropdown list, check Annex 2a to make sure that you selected 'Yes' in the 'Do you wish to include this parcel in your application' column.

If you remove a land parcel from your application in Annex 2a, **for mixed applications**, you must also remove it from this annex, this will not happen automatically.

If you choose the same land parcel twice, the ID numbers of the duplicated parcels will be highlighted in red.

Total area of this parcel (ha)

If using excel this pre-populates from Annex 2a with the total area of the land parcel based on the area registered in the Rural Payments service.

Compartments(s) or sub compartments(s)

If using excel this pre-populates from the information you entered in Annex 2a.

Optional Prescriptions

Hectares of WD2

Enter the number of hectares of WD2 that you want to apply for on the land parcel, to 4 decimal places.

P2000 to P2018

The WD2 option requires a number of work requirements (prescriptions) to be undertaken.

Each of the columns headed P2000 to P2018 relates to that individual prescription. See Annex 5e of Higher Tier manual on GOV.UK

All prescriptions apply unless there is a justifiable reason why they do not.

Complete all of the columns as follows:

- if the prescription applies, select or enter 'Yes' or a quantity (relevant to the column)
- if the prescription does not apply, select or enter 'N/A' or a zero (relevant to the column).

For example, if you will be coppicing 3 hectares of sweet chestnut within a land parcel, you must specify the area (to 4 decimal places) and the species to be coppiced in the P2009 columns.

All prescriptions that you need to indicate, either on your Agreement Map or on supplementary maps, will be highlighted in blue as a reminder.

For P2006, if you want to do both Zone 2 and Zone 3 cutting regimes in a single land parcel, please indicate metrics (in metres) for each cutting regime type and make sure that this is shown on your map(s). For example, '40m Zone 2, 20.5m Zone 3'.

Annex 2c: Capital items excluding FY2

Complete this annex if you are including capital items in your application. Do not include capital items for FY2 Woodland Infrastructure here.

Land Parcel details

ID

If using excel this ID number was generated automatically and carries through from Annex 2a to the other annexes as you complete them. You can use it to cross reference land parcels easily between all of the annexes.

Land parcel

Click into the boxes to choose the land parcels from the dropdown list that you want to add a capital item to.

If the parcel you need is not shown in the dropdown list, check Annex 2a and make sure that you selected 'Yes' in the 'Do you wish to include this parcel in your application' column.

You can choose the same land parcel more than once if you want to apply for more than one capital items on that parcel.

Total area of this parcel (ha)

This pre-populates from the information in Annex 2a with the total area of the land parcel based on the area registered in the Rural Payments service.

You cannot edit this column. If the land parcel area is missing, the cell will be highlighted in red. To add or change the area you must edit the corresponding cell in Annex 2a.

Compartment(s) or sub compartment(s)

This column pre-populates from the information you entered in Annex 2a.

1 Capital item

Enter the relevant capital item.

Where an item has a split payment rate there will be corresponding options so that the right payment rate can be chosen. For example, there are 3 options in the dropdown list for rhododendron control (SB6) reflecting 3 possible payment rates and you must choose the one that applies to you.

For information about capital items read Countryside Stewardship grants on GOV.UK.

Important: if a fence goes across 2 or more land parcels you must choose the capital item on each land parcel the fence applies to and enter individual quantities for each length of fencing on those land parcels.

2 Unit

This is pre-populated automatically when you choose the capital item. It shows the unit the item is measured in, for example, hectares (ha), metres, tonnes.

3 Quantity

Enter the quantity of the capital item to 4 decimal places for hectares, metres and tonnes and as a whole number for all other units. For capital items that are paid as a percentage of actual costs enter a 1.

Note: for item SB2 Scrub control – difficult sites, enter the full (estimated) actual cost of the item to 2 decimal places. For example, for a cost of £2,000, enter 2,000.00. This must match the Total actual costs field in Annex 2e. You must complete all of Annex 2e if you intend to apply for SB2 on any land parcel.

4 For fencing and gate items, state the species threat

Using the list of species at the top of Annex 2c, enter the species threat that the fencing or gate item is required to protect against.

5 Payment rate per unit

This pre-populates automatically when you choose a capital item. This is the value of each unit of the item you've chosen.

6 Total payment

This is the value of the number of units you've entered for the capital item and pre-populates automatically.

It will not populate until the parcel's size, capital item, and quantity columns are complete.

Annex 2d: Capital item Woodland Infrastructure FY2

Complete this annex by the time you submit your final application if you are including capital item Woodland Infrastructure (FY2) in your application. The deadline for all final applications to reach the Forestry Commission (FC) is 31 August 2022.

Read more information about Woodland Infrastructure (FY2) in 'Countryside Stewardship grants' (known as grant finder) on GOV.UK.

Annex 2e: Capital item Scrub Control – Difficult Sites (SB2)

Complete this annex by the time you submit your final application if you are including capital item Scrub Control – Difficult Sites (SB2) in your application. The deadline for

Woodland Support only applications, and Agri-environment and Woodland Support applications is 31 August 2022.

Read more information about [Scrub Control – Difficult Sites (SB2)](#) in 'Countryside Stewardship grants' on GOV.UK.

Are you VAT registered?

Click into the box and choose 'Yes' or 'No' to answer the question 'Are you VAT registered.

If you answer 'YES' you are VAT registered – You cannot claim for VAT on contractors' fees. You should still indicate the VAT charged (if any) as part of your quotes, below.

If you answer 'NO' you are not VAT registered – You may claim for VAT charged by contractors but you MUST have confirmation and evidence of your status from an accountant with your final application.

Quotations 1 to 3

Enter the following details, for 3 contractors' quotes:

- Contractor Name
- Fee amount excluding VAT
- VAT amount (enter '0' if no VAT is charged).

The total amounts will be calculated automatically in the Total actual costs box.

Selected Quotation – Quotation Ref

Choose the quote you're accepting from the dropdown list and enter a Quotation Reference (for example, the name of the contractor).

Justification for Selection

Explain why you've chosen the specific quote. This should normally be the lowest quote offered.

Selection approved by Woodland Officer

For FC Use Only, at Final Application.

Total actual costs of SB2 including VAT and agents' fees (where applicable)

This calculates automatically from the information you enter for the quote you accept.

Payment: up to 80% of actual costs

This calculates automatically.

If you are completing a paper annex, you will need to manually fill in this information. Refer to the [Higher Tier Manual](#) on GOV.UK, or contact us and we will try to help.

Annex 2f: How to score your Woodland Support application

Read the guidance below carefully before you complete Annex 2f, as Woodland Support is competitive and targeted. A Higher Tier application for Woodland Support must score at least 1100 points to be considered.

For more information read Annexes 3 and 5 in the [Higher Tier manual](#) on GOV.UK.

Use the 'Annex 2f: Scoring' tab for the Woodland Improvement option/capital items you are including in your application.

Eligibility

The application will need to meet the following criteria to proceed:

- Area: An application will need to cover an overall area (see below for definition) of at least 3 hectares. If the application includes an area of woodland, SSSI applications will need to have an overall area of at least 1 hectare; if the application is accompanied by an agri-environment application for the same property, the woodland application will need to have a minimum overall area of 0.5ha. The total area for the application can be made up of separate blocks of woodland but the minimum size for these blocks is 0.5 hectares.
- Capital Value: the total minimum value of capital items within applications is £500.
- Minimum score: An application must reach at least 1100 points before assessing and deciding which proposals are most likely to be successful. A further round of ranking will determine which final applications will get an agreement offer after the final submission deadline. The deadline for both Woodland Support only, and Agri-environment and Woodland Support application is 31 August 2022.
- Woodland Management Plan: All proposals within woodland improvement applications will need to be justified by a current Forestry Commission approved Woodland Management Plan.

Defining area for scoring:

You need to score each separate block of woodland individually. This means you need to determine the area under the Countryside Stewardship objectives and calculate the score for each separate block individually. If you have more than one block, sum the scores for each block to get the application's total overall score.

The area of woodland to score is based on the following:

- For the WD2 Woodland Improvement option - the area to be scored is where the activity is taking place; the area intended for receipt of a multi-year payment.
- For capital items, including Woodland Infrastructure FY2, the area is that which is impacted/benefitted by the investment – known as the 'area of influence'. The 'area of influence' is dependent on the capital item that is being used. For example, for a deer fence it would be the area within the fence; for woodland infrastructure it would be the area that the road brings into active management. For more information read the relevant Higher Tier manual on GOV.UK.

Any area of land can only be scored once:

- You cannot use the same area of woodland twice, so where areas under WD2 and capital items' overlap, you can only count that area.
- You can only score your application (even if it contains more than one separate block of woodland) under one Countryside Stewardship objective.

A supplementary score can be added where more than one objective applies – read the third bullet under the 'How score is calculated' heading below.

The area used for scoring purposes is the combined area covered (any overlap is not counted twice).

Objectives and Land Information Search (LIS)

Any area to be scored must fit into one of 4 Countryside Stewardship objectives:

1. Priority habitats
2. Priority species
3. PAWS restoration
4. Improving resilience to climate change through Continuous Cover Forestry (CFF) for Water

All of the land included in your application must be designated under at least one of these objectives. They will correspond to 'spatial layers' on the Forestry Commission's online system, Land Information Search (LIS) on GOV.UK.

Not all data layers that are relevant to priority species and woodland bird assemblages are available on the map browser, so you should also check the maps on the MAGIC website as part of any map searches that you are doing.

You should use this facility to determine which areas of your land fall within the spatial layers for any of the 4 objectives.

You will need to navigate to your woodland and the spatial layers required for your scoring purposes will be detailed on the right-hand side of the page. These can be activated or deactivated by clicking in their corresponding square tick boxes next to their names. You can also use LIS to measure areas of land.

Further instructions about how to use Land Information Search are available on GOV.UK.

Across your whole application a total score must be calculated for each objective, which will require opening the spatial layers in LIS. The layers required for each objective are detailed in the table below.

Please note the following:

Where more than one objective could apply (for example, more than one spatial layer applies to a section of land) you need to determine which one is to be used for scoring purpose. This is discretionary and you can decide, based on the relative scores. Supplementary points will be awarded later if your land is covered by more than one spatial layer.

How the score is calculated

The score for each objective is calculated through a combination of a predetermined 'base score' and the area score calculated by you (including the 'area of influence' of capital and infrastructure options – see the 'Defining area for scoring' section above).

- For each objective a predetermined base score has been allocated by the Forestry Commission according to Countryside Stewardship priorities (this base score is prepopulated in the score form and cannot be changed).
- You must establish the area to be scored against any relevant objectives. This area will be inserted into the score form and the final score will be calculated automatically.
- In some cases, supplementary scores are added to the preliminary total. Supplementary scores are awarded for applications where Woodland bird assemblage, woodland SSSI and/or multiple objectives apply. See the table below for further details.

The detail below shows the 'gateway' criteria for each of the 4 priority objectives with guidance on how to verify that your land falls into the correct spatial layer. To score your application against any of the objectives you must meet the 'gateway' criteria.

For more information you can watch the Forestry Commission video on YouTube for guidance on scoring your application: 'Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier – guidance for applicants.

How to calculate your self-score

Gateway criteria for priority objectives

You can access the Land Information Search (LIS) on GOV.UK. You can access the maps on the MAGIC website.

1) CS Priority: Biodiversity

Objective: Priority habitat

Gateway: scores for this Priority are determined on the % of the woodland block in the high or low priority area:

- If 50% or more of the woodland block is in the high priority spatial layer, the high priority score will apply across the entire woodland block (LIS layer colour is brown – high*.)
- If 50% or more of the woodland block is in the lower priority spatial layer, the lower priority score will apply across the entire woodland block (LIS layer colour is grey – lower*.)

In all cases for an area of low priority woodland to be included in the scoring the area is also in either a:

- Countryside Stewardship priority area for priority species; or
- woodland bird assemblage

(LIS layer colour is grey – lower*.) In addition, if the area is conifer woodland, there must be an intention for conversion to broadleaf identified in the woodland management plan other than where specific SSSI.

How to check: Open the two separate data layers in the FC Land Information Search (LIS) titled 'CS Biodiversity Woodland Improvement' to check the priority area applicable (that is high/ lower*).

If the lower priority score may apply you may also need to check the maps on the MAGIC website to see if the woodland is within a priority area for priority species or a woodland bird assemblage.

*Definition (for scoring purposes) of high, lower priority for Priority Habitat:

High Priority: All ancient woodland, all wooded SSSIs and any other woodland which is currently unmanaged (that is not subject to a stand-alone felling licence or grant scheme in the last 15 years). LIS colour layer: Brown

Lower Priority: Any other woodland (that is, not ancient, not SSSI and other woodland which is currently subject to a stand-alone felling licence or grant scheme). LIS colour layer: Grey

Objective: Priority species

Gateway: Read the specific [Countryside Stewardship Statement of Priorities](#) on GOV.UK for the list of priority species potentially within, or which will benefit from your woodland's management.

How to check: The area benefitting a priority species is defined by the area of activity/influence directly benefitting the priority species objective in the Woodland Improvement multi-year option or associated capital item(s).

Read [how to determine the works that will benefit the species](#) on GOV.UK, and from this the area to score.

Objective: PAWS restoration

Gateway: The area against this objective must be within a PAWS restoration area. The objective area must be mainly conifer (for example, 50% or more of the trees (canopy) are conifer).

How to check: Open the data layer in [Land Information Search (LIS)](#) titled 'CS HT Biodiversity – Priority Habitat Proximity – Ancient Woodland – PAWS' to show the area of PAWS and determine the area that will be restored.

Next open the 'CS Biodiversity – Priority Habitat Network' layer to confirm the eligibility. To be eligible the area of proposed PAWS restoration activity must be either:

a) within a woodland block that includes ASNW (that is a woodland block with ASNW marked by the High Priority buffer area).

b) be in a woodland block, with a High Priority habitat network buffer that touches the High Priority buffer area of another woodland that contains ASNW.

LIS colour layer:

Green stripe: Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland

Red stripe: Ancient Replanted Woodland

2) CS Priority: Water

Objective: CCF for water

Gateway: The area against this objective must be within a water quality catchment area for acidification.

The woodland will need to be managed to meet the UKFS Practice Guide titled 'Managing forests in acid sensitive water catchments.'

How to check: Open the spatial layer in Land Information Search (LIS) titled 'CS HT Water - Water Quality Acidification (Silvicultural Transformation)' to find out whether the application area is within the spatial layer.

LIS colour layer:

Teal

3) CS Priority: Supplementary scores

Objective: Woodland bird assemblage

Gateway: The application area is made up of blocks within, or touching, a Woodland Bird Assemblage area.

How to check: Open the spatial layer in the Land Information Search (LIS) titled ' CS HT Biodiversity - Priority Species - Woodland Bird Assemblage to find out whether the application area is within the spatial layer. If this requirement is met and additional score of 1000 can be applied

LIS colour layer:

Light blue

Objective: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Gateway: All or part of the application is located within a woodland SSSI.

How to check: Open the data layer in the [Land Information Search (LIS)](#) titled 'Sites of Special Scientific interest' to check how much of the application is in a SSSI. A 10% supplement is added to the score for the area which is in a SSSI.

LIS colour layer:

Red with dots

Objective: Multiple objectives

Gateway: All or part of the application falls within multiple priority objective spatial layers.

How to check: If all or part of the application falls within the spatial layer for one or more priority objective(s) (Priority habitat, Priority species, PAWS restoration or CCF for water) in addition to the main scoring objective an additional score of 1000 points can be applied.

LIS colour layer: Not applicable

Complete Annex 2f

Complete this annex for all applications.

Make sure that you've read the whole 'How to score your Woodland Support application' section in this guide before you score your application.

For more information read Annex 5(g) in the [Higher Tier manual](#).

Objective

A – Total Area (in ha) for WD2 (Priority)

Enter the total area of WD2 applied for in the cell for the priority objective you wish to apply under (that is, Priority Habitat, Priority Species, PAWS or Water).

All land for Woodland Improvement 'multi-year' WD2 applications needs to be attributed to a priority objective.

Any single area cannot score under more than one objective but if your entire application covers more than one of objective, a supplementary score will be added. (read Defining Area for Scoring section in the 'How to score your application section' above for more information).

B – Additional Area (in ha) for Capital items

Enter any additional 'area of influence' for any capital items and/or infrastructure (FY2) against each priority. Read the Defining Area for Scoring section in the 'How to score your application section' above for details on how to calculate the area of influence.

C – Total Area (in ha) for Objective

Automatically calculated: Totals of columns A and B. Will not populate until columns A and B have been completed.

D – Base score

Pre-populated: Base score for each of the priorities

E – Area score

Pre-populated: Area score for each of the priorities.

F – Applicant Self-Score

Automatically calculated: The score for each of the priority objectives

G – FC Agreed Score

For Forestry Commission use only: please do not enter anything in this column.

If your application progresses following an initial ranking exercise, your woodland officer will use this column to verify the final score following any alterations made to the application during the 'developing applications' period between the 1 May and the final application deadline. This deadline for Woodland Support only applications and Agri environment with Woodland Support application is 31 August 2022.

Preliminary Totals

The total area and score for the priority objectives, before any supplementary objectives have been calculated.

Supplementary Scores

Read the instructions in Gateway criteria for priority objectives above carefully to see if you are eligible for any of the supplementary scores and answer the following questions in Annex 2f.

Woodland Bird Assemblage

If your application is within the Woodland Bird Assemblage spatial layer answer 'Yes'. Otherwise answer 'No.' If you choose 'Yes' the 'Applicant Self-Score' column will show the supplementary score.

SSSI

If any of the area in your application is in a Woodland SSSI enter the area of SSSI. If you enter an area the 'Applicant Self-Score' column will calculate and show the 10% uplift score.

Multiple Objectives

If all or part of the application falls within the spatial layer for two or more priority objective(s) answer 'Yes'. Otherwise answer 'No'.

If you choose 'Yes' the 'Applicant self-score' column will show the supplementary score.

Grand Totals

Automatically calculated: The total of the preliminary and supplementary scores; the total score for your application.

The total score must be 1100 or over for your application to be eligible. If it has not reached this score, do not submit your application.

FC Agreed score

For Forestry Commission use only: please do not enter anything in this column.

If your application progresses following an initial ranking exercise, your woodland officer will use this column to verify the final score following any alterations made to the application during the 'developing applications' period between the 1 May and the final application deadline. This deadline for a Woodland Support only application and Agri environment with Woodland Support application is 31 August 2022.

Summary

The summary tab shows the totals for each of the items and options you are applying for in your application. The information presented on this sheet is based on the information in Annexes 2a-2h. Note that this tab is not editable by applicants, and will not calculate the totals fully until all the worksheets have been completed.

Option WD2

This table will summarise the numbers of hectares of WD2 that have been applied for, the total WD2 granted applied per year and the total WD2 grant applied for over the 5 year period. For any application that has 3 ha- 10 ha of WD2 applied for, there will be a minimum of £1000 per year awarded to the agreement holder for the duration of the agreement.

Capital Items excluding FY2 and SB2

This will calculate the total value of the grant awarded for capital items applied to under Annex 2c. This will be the amount that can be claimed upon completed works.

Capital Item FY2

This will calculate the total value of the grant awarded for capital items applied to under Annex 2d. This will be the amount that can be claimed upon completed works.

Capital Item SB2

This will calculate the total value of the grant awarded for capital items applied to under Annex 2e. This will be the amount that can be claimed upon completed works.

Capital Item HE1

This will calculate the total value of the grant awarded for capital items applied to under Annex 2g. This will be the amount that can be claimed upon completed works.

Multi-Annual Options Excluding WD2

This table will summarise the multi-annual option chosen in the Annex 2g tab. The total revenue item grant applied over the 5-year period is based on a calculation using the rate per multi-annual option.

For information on the rate of each multi-annual option, please visit the 'Countryside Stewardship grants' page

Total Grant Awarded Table

This table summarises the total value of the grant awarded. Each of the values are calculated from the existing data displayed on the summary tab and cannot be edited

Annex 2g: Capital item Historic and Archaeological feature protection HE1

Complete this annex if you are including capital item, Historic and Archaeological feature protection (HE1) in your application. The deadline for all final applications to reach the Forestry commission (FC) is 31 August 2022.

Read more information about HE1: Historic and archaeological feature protection in 'Countryside Stewardship grants' on GOV.UK.

Are you VAT registered?

Click into the box and choose 'Yes' or 'No' to answer the question 'Are you VAT registered'.

If you answer 'YES' you are VAT registered – this also states that you cannot claim for VAT on contractors' or agents' fees. You should still indicate the VAT charged (if any) as part of your quotes, below.

If you answer 'NO' you are not VAT registered – this also states that you may claim for VAT charged by contractors and agents but MUST provide evidence from an accountant of your status as non-VAT registered with your final application.

Quotations 1-3

Enter the following details, for 3 contractors' quotes:

- Contractor Name
- Fee amount excluding VAT
- VAT amount (enter '0' if no VAT is charged).

The total amounts will be calculated automatically in the Total actual costs box.

If you do not have a completed Implementation Plan (PA1) or Feasibility Study (PA2) to support your application at the time of applying for this grant you should agree your specification to quote with the Forestry Commission before submitting your application.

You can submit your application without the Forestry Commission approving your specification but, if you choose to do so, there is a risk that your Higher Tier application maybe rejected or you will be asked to update your specification and re-run the quotation process.

If you have accrued agent fees while preparing your specification or running the quotation process, it will not be possible to include these in your itemised quote when applying. You can include any future agent fees you expect to pay to deliver capital item HE1.

At the point of claim, include agent fees within your final itemised invoice. If there are multiple invoices for agent fees and completed works respectively, include the sum cost of agent fees, and completed works as the total cost of works completed against capital item HE1.

Selected Quotation – Quotation Ref

Choose the quote you're accepting from the dropdown list and enter a Quotation Reference (for example, the name of the contractor).

Justification for selection

Explain why you've chosen the specific quote. This should normally be the lowest quote offered.

Selection approved by Woodland Officer

For FC Use Only, at Final Application.

Percentage of actual costs to be paid

For FC Use Only, the total amount awarded can be between 40% to 100% of quoted amount, this percentage is decided by the Woodland Officer after their site visit.

Total actual costs of HE1, including VAT (where applicable)

Will be automatically populated after the Woodland Officer has selected a quote.

Payment: up to the selected percentage of actual costs

Will be automatically populated after the Woodland Officer has selected what percentage of actual costs should be awarded.

Annex 2h: Multi-Annual Options Excluding WD2

Complete this annex if you are including any revenue multiyear options excluding WD2 in your application.

Land Parcel details ID: This is an existing ID number which was generated automatically from Annex 2a, applicants will be able to select a land parcel previously entered as an option, using the dropdown menu.

Land parcel: Applicants will need to select the land parcel reference you want to apply these multi-annual options to, using the dropdown menu.

Total area of this parcel (ha): This is the information in Annex 2a, the total area of the land parcel based on the area registered in the Rural Payments service. This cell will be automatically populated based on the data entered into the Annex 2a tab.

Compartment(s) or sub compartment(s): This cell will be automatically populated based on the data entered into the Annex 2a tab.

Area-based Supplements

From 2023 scheme year, applicants with Higher Tier Woodland Only, or Mixed Agreements may be eligible for new multi-annual options. The multi-annual options are area-based where WD2 eligibility underpins the multi-annual option.

WS1: Deer Control and Management

Make sure that you have opted for P2015 under WD2 on Annex 2b

The use of this supplement will aim to achieve effective deer management.

This supplement can be used in areas where deer are identified in the Woodland Management Plan as a threat to semi-natural woodlands, regeneration and/or where deer browsing negatively impacts on woodland features, ground flora or structure.

How to check: Open the data layer in Land Information Search (LIS) titled 'Indicative Deer Risk England' to check if parcels within the application are in a deer risk area.

The value of the supplements you've selected will pre-populate automatically.

For information and guidance on Deer Control visit the Forestry Commission operations notes (England) page on GOV.UK.

WS2: PAWS Restoration and Maintenance

The use of this supplement will aim to restore and maintain plantations on ancient woodland sites.

Make sure that you have opted for P2018 under WD2 on Annex 2b.

This supplement can be used in ancient woodland to maintain the restoration of PAWS where tree felling work is selected under WD2.

How to check: Ancient woodland can be identified on Natural England's ancient woodland inventory - download the data . Open the data layer in Land Information Search (LIS) titled 'CS HT Biodiversity - Priority Habitat Proximity - Ancient Woodland to show the area of PAWS and determine the area that will be restored.

LIS colour layer:

red stripe: Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland

green line: Ancient Replanted Woodland

Next open the 'CS Biodiversity – Priority Habitat Network' layer to confirm the eligibility. To be eligible the area of proposed PAWS restoration activity must be either:

a) within a woodland block that includes ASNW (that is a woodland block with ASNW marked by the High Priority buffer area).

b) be in a woodland block, with a High Priority habitat network buffer that touches the High Priority buffer area of another woodland that contains ASNW.

LIS colour layer:

Brown for High Spatial Priority.

WS3: Squirrel Control and Management

The use of this supplement will aim to achieve effective squirrel management on the appropriate landscape scale.

Ensure that you have opted for P2016 under WD2 on Annex 2b

Squirrel control management within a red squirrel population can only use non-lethal traps.

How to check: Open the data layer in [Land Information Search (LIS)](#) titled 'CS HT Biodiversity - Priority Species - Red Squirrel - Woodland Management' to check if parcels within the application are in a red squirrel area.

Lis Colour layer:

Peach

The value of the supplements you've selected will pre-populate automatically.

[Information and guidance on Squirrel Control](#).

WS4: Access for People

The use of this supplement will require applicants to allow permissive access (by foot) across the whole woodland.

This supplement can be used in areas where people would benefit from gaining access to woodlands.

How to check: Open the data layer in [Land Information Search](#) titled 'CS-Social' to check if parcels within the application are in the correct area.

Lis Colour layer:

Lilac

This supplement cannot be used where the woodland owner/manager already has a legal obligation to provide access by foot due to their existing commitments or where legal rights already exist.

For more information on these supplements, please visit the 'Countryside Stewardship grants' page.

HS 1: Maintenance of Weatherproof Traditional Farm Buildings

A multi-year option used to support the management of historic environment features in your woodland parcels. This option will help maintain traditional farm or forestry buildings using traditional methods and materials, and enhance the local landscape and preserve places for wildlife.

Applicants must own or control the building or the part of the building, entered into the option, for the life of the agreement.

For more information on this option, please visit the 'Countryside Stewardship grants finder page.

HS4: Scrub Control on Historic and Archaeological Features (ha)

A multi-year option used to support the reduction of risk of root damage, to historic and archaeological features, by permanently removing the majority of the scrub.

This option can be applied to the whole or part of the land parcel and only on historic and archaeological features with more than 5% scrub cover.

For more information on this option, please visit the 'Countryside Stewardship grants' page

HS6: Maintenance of Designed / Engineered Water Bodies (ha)

A multi-year option to support the protection of banks and associated historic built water control features of designed or engineered historic water bodies; to maintain or strengthen the role of these features in water quality management.

For more information on this option, please visit the 'Countryside Stewardship grants' page

HS8: Maintenance of Weatherproof Traditional Farm Buildings in Remote Area (ha)

A multi-year option to support the maintenance of traditional farm or forestry buildings in remote areas.

Applicants must own or control the building or the part of the building, entered into the option for the life of the agreement.

For more information on this option, please visit the 'Countryside Stewardship grants finder page

BE6: Veteran Tree Surgery (unit)

This multi-year option must be linked with the individual trees included within the WD2 prescription with P2010.

It is available for Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier:

- on veteran open grown trees and trees in open canopy woodlands
- where specialist tree surgery is identified via specialist report

The aim of this option is to reduce the rate of loss of veteran trees by carrying out specialist tree surgery to extend their lifespan.

Step 5 – Your Options map(s) and/or Woodland Support agreement map

You need to complete either an options map or an agreement map or both, depending on what you are applying for:

- Agri-environment only – complete an options map (and a FER map – read Step 2).
- Woodland Support only – complete an agreement map.
- Agri-environment with Woodland Support – complete both an options map and an agreement map (and a FER map for Agri-environment – read Step 2).

You'll receive one combined Options/FER map in your application pack.

Before you start to complete your maps, you need to photocopy or print the Options/FER map enough times to create the required Agri-environment options and/or Woodland Support agreement maps and FER maps.

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

Agri-environment Options map(s)

Complete the CS options map for options and capital items

For each non-rotational option (including capital items) you want to include, complete the 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 boundary are mapped in the Rural Payments service. If one side has not been mapped, you are only allowed a single sided hedge.

For Higher Tier water quality capital items only, create a sketch map

Create a sketch map showing the location of the farmyard and all farmyard water only options.

Woodland Support maps

You must complete an agreement map for every Woodland Support 'initial application'.

You will also need to complete a set of annotated maps. These must all be submitted by 1 May 2022.

Agreement map

You will be sent a map with the application pack you requested. You can choose to use the supplied map as a base on which to mark items, boundaries and/or other details, to create your own Agreement Map using GIS software, or to request a map through the Forestry Commission map request service. The Agreement Map must meet the minimum mapping standards outlined below. Whichever map you choose to use, you must create 2 copies of your Options/FER map. You must show your options choices on one copy and show the environmental features on your holding on the second copy. After you have done this, scan them into your computer or post them. See step 9 for details of how to do this.

Minimum mapping standards for your Agreement Map

If you use the map we sent you, you'll need to:

- colour the location of the proposed area of WD2 and/or any capital items using a coloured pen. List the capital item code(s) next to the areas you mark
    - make sure that the map's key includes areas of WD2 and capital items
    - make sure that your land parcel numbers are clearly shown
    - Mark fence lines - make a note on the map to show the type of fence (code) you are applying for
    - write on the top right corner of each map:
    - your SBI
    - the business name (this is the name registered with the SBI in the Rural Payments service)

- application year and agreement title (as detailed on the application form)
- use black ink when you write on the Agreement Map
- if you make a mistake do not use correction fluid, strike through the mistake instead.

If you create a map using GIS software, instead of using the map supplied by us, you need to meet the following minimum standards in addition to those listed above:

- if there are no numbered Ordnance Survey (OS) grid lines, you must note the 6 figure OS grid reference for the centre of the map on the bottom left of the map.
- he scale of the map must be clearly shown.

You will be responsible for providing updated maps following any agreed changes to the proposed annual or capital items.

Annotated maps

You must submit a supplementary set of high quality, colour maps when you are developing your Higher Tier initial application. You must write/mark on the maps:

- the locations of the capital items
- the specific locations where the annual work prescriptions will be carried out - for example, ride management, coppice management, veteran trees – other examples are given in Annex 2
- the specification of the work if required, for example, 2 and 3 zone ride mowing.
- You must include a clear and concise key on your map so that we understand your marks and notes.

You can make your annotated maps by using one of the following:

- a copy of the base map we sent you
- an appropriate OS map.

Your map, or maps, can show a mixture of information but must be clear and easy to read. You can create a series of maps if you need to add a lot of information, and this would be clearer on multiple maps. A single annotated map, or a series of maps, must cover all of the WD2 elements included in your application.

Some examples of this include:

- ride creation/management - clarifying where each type of ride will be created

- open space creation and management
- veteran trees identification and management to be worked on
- areas of thinning/regeneration felling – clarifying where each felling operation will be carried out.

The full list of WD2 elements can be found in Annex 5, section e of the Higher Tier Manual. You must have annotated maps for the Forestry Commission Woodland Officer's site visit. They will need the maps to discuss and agree your final application and to help prepare your agreement with RPA.

When you submit your final Agreement Map and the annotated map(s), it is your responsibility to make sure that areas marked on the maps are accurate and agree with the details of your application.

Step 6 – Continue your application form

Complete this section to confirm that you have read and understood the requirements of the Countryside Stewardship Higher 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, 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.
- Before you submit your application, make sure you must 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 7 – Application summary and Grant totals annexes

The 'Grant totals' and 'Application summary' tabs in Annex 1, and 'Summary' tab in Annex 2 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 the annexes. If you have completed paper annexes, this information will not appear unless you manually fill it in.

Annex 1 – Grant totals tab – use this tab to confirm for yourself the value of your application.

Annex 1– Application summary tab – use this tab to confirm for yourself that you have added all the correct options and items into your application.

Annex 2 – Summary tab – use this tab to confirm for yourself that you have added all the correct options and items into your application

Step 8 – 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.

You've read and understood the CS scheme rules and requirements including the terms and conditions in the Higher Tier manual.

You and the land that you are including in your application, are eligible for CS – read Section 3: 'Who can apply and what land is eligible' section in the Higher Tier manual.

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.

Where your CS application includes historic environment multi-year options or capital items within the woodland, the work required should be declared in your WMP. Any work related to Scheduled Monuments may require Historic England to provide Scheduled Monument Consent. This can either be obtained separately, or alongside the Forestry Commission's approval of your WMP.

Cross compliance requirements apply across the whole holding.

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

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

You have your County Parish Holding (CPH) number to hand if you are contacting the Forestry Commission or a Catchment Sensitive Farming officer (CSFO). Read 'Get a permanent CPH number' on GOV.UK, search for Register land you use to keep livestock.

You've completed Annex 1 and/or 2 (if appropriate)

You've given the following details in your Annex 1a:

- all land parcels at moderate to high risk from runoff or soil erosion
- land use codes for all the land parcels in this Higher 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 your Higher Tier application that are not in the BPS application.
- all land parcels, including those with yards and tracks, you want to consider for soil and water (water quality) and resource protection options/capital items
- all land parcels you want to be considered for the Wild Pollinator and Farm Wildlife Package
- all land parcels containing SSSIs
- all land parcels containing Scheduled Monuments
- all organic land parcels

You've completed the following maps for an Agri-environment only or Agri-environment with Woodland Support application:

- 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 Agri-environment application
- a separate Options/Agreement map for Woodland Support
- for water quality capital items only, a sketch map showing the location of the farmyard and all farmyard water quality options.

You've completed an Options/Agreement map for the multi-year and capital items in your Woodland Support application if applicable.

You've filled in Section 5: 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 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 17
- a CS common land and shared grazing supplementary application form – read Question 6
- the required evidence if someone else applies for BPS on any land in your Higher Tier application – read Question 7. And read about dual use under 'Management control: eligibility and scheme rules' in the Higher Tier manual.

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 5.4 in the Higher Tier manual on GOV.UK. Or for information about evidence for each option and capital item read Countryside Stewardship grants on GOV.UK.

You've attached any other required supporting documents, evidence, or permissions and consents applied for.

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

Step 9 – Supporting documents and evidence

We must receive your application and supporting documents by midnight on 29 April 2022. We may also need to receive some evidence by this date – read below.

Supporting documents

For example:

- Options map
- FER map
- Woodland Support agreement map
- Land Ownership and Control form(s)
- Common land and shared grazing supplementary application form

Maps – for more information about what to include in your maps, read 'Step 2 – Your Farm Environment Record (FER) map(s)' and 'Step 5 – Your options map(s)'. Or read the 'How to Apply' section in the Higher Tier manual for 2022 on GOV.UK.

Evidence

Some evidence RPA may need to receive by midnight on 29 April 2022, and some you may need to keep until you're asked for it. Read about the evidence requirements for each relevant option or capital 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' below.

For more information read Step 10 – Submit your application

Step 10 – Submit your application

All of the following must reach RPA by the application deadline (midnight on 29 April 2022):

- 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 won't wait in a queue to be sorted manually.

If you downloaded your application pack or received it 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 be:

- 'Higher Tier Agri-environment application 2022' for Agri-environment applications (with or without Woodland Support) or;
- 'Higher Tier Woodland Support application 2022' for Woodland Support only applications

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.

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 (Countryside Stewardship),
PO Box 324,
Worksop
S95 1DF

Remember to sign your paper application at Section 5 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's wrong and how you can correct it (if relevant).

CS Higher 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 successful

A Natural England or Forestry Commission adviser (depending on the application type) will contact you and invite you to work towards a final application. This will involve a site visit and possibly changes to your application based on the adviser's recommendations.

If your application has not been successful

You can appeal. For more information read the 'Disputes, appeals and complaints' section in the [Higher Tier manual](#) for agreements starting in 2023.

More information and contacts

This section provides the contact details for the Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier

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 31 March, to request an application pack.

Technical advice on higher tier applications is available from Natural England by:

email: enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk or; telephone: 0300 060 3900

Technical advice on the woodland sections of Higher Tier applications is available from the Forestry Commission. You can find contact details for the Forestry Commission on GOV.UK

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'.

How RPA will use and share Agreement Holders' information

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is the data controller for personal data you give to the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). For information on how we handle personal data search for 'Rural Payments Agency Personal Information Charter' on GOV.UK.