

Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme Ayrshire and Arran Woodlands Locational Premium 2004 – 2005



Introduction

This leaflet explains how to apply for Locational Premium funding from the Forestry Commission's (FC) Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme (SFGS) for planting new woodlands in Ayrshire and Arran. The Locational Premium aims to encourage farmers and landowners in Ayrshire and Arran to establish the specific types of woodlands in the priority locations identified in the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy.

What is a Locational Premium?

A Locational Premium is an extra grant payable in addition to the standard grants available from the SFGS. It is called a 'locational' premium because it is only available in parts of Scotland where the Scottish Executive considers that woodland planting, regeneration, improvement or management are priorities for social, environmental or economic reasons.

Please note that your proposed schemes must satisfy the requirements of the SFGS and meet the criteria set out below. The Premium will be available for five years.

Woodland schemes on farmland may also qualify for SFGS Farmland Premium payments from the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD). The Farmland Premium provides annual payments as compensation for farming income foregone from the land planted with trees. Your woodland adviser can explain more.

How much is the Locational Premium?

The Ayrshire and Arran Woodlands Locational Premium for 2004 - 2005 will be between £1,600 and £3,000 per hectare (in addition to normal SFGS planting and Stewardship Grants) depending on the woodland type and land quality shown in the table overleaf. The Scottish Executive has announced that a total fund of £500,000 per year will be available for the Ayrshire and Arran Locational Premium over the five years, 2003 to 2008. Locational Premium levels and conditions will be reviewed annually to ensure that the objectives are being achieved.

The Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy

Ayrshire's woods and forests are an important component of its landscape and economy. Ranging from the great spruce forests of the south and east to the woodlands that typify the farmed and estate landscape of central Ayrshire, they also include important remnants of the original native woodland. Ayrshire is a UK centre for timber processing industries, producing sawn timber and timber products, chipboard and paper.

The Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy has been prepared by a partnership of public, private and voluntary organisations under the leadership of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan & Transportation Team (AJST). Its vision is to develop the woodlands of Ayrshire and Arran in a way that supports the local economy, contributes to community well being and promotes environmental excellence. It recognises both the economic importance of the timber industry and the value of different woodland types in the landscape for recreation and wildlife. It sets out a range of action points to protect and develop these woodlands to maximise their economic, social and environmental benefits to the people of Ayrshire and Arran.

The strategy also identifies areas where priority should be given to different types of woodland, such as native woodland, community woodland and well-designed productive woodland, in order to achieve these benefits.

The Ayrshire and Arran Woodlands Locational Premium will support the expansion of the different types of woodlands in these priority areas.

*Delivering the
Scottish Forestry Strategy*



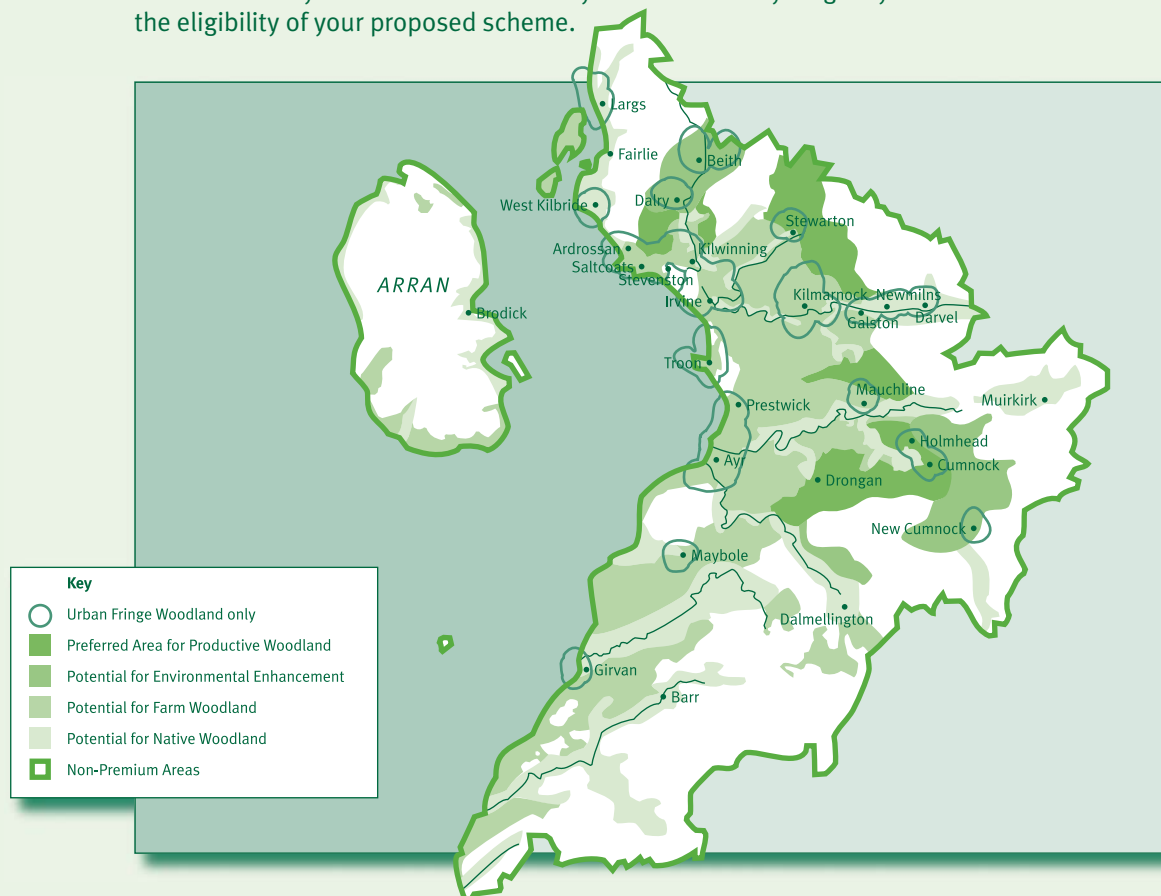
SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



Forestry Commission

Where is the Locational Premium available?

You can apply for the Locational Premium within the areas identified on the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy key diagram. A more detailed map is available from the AJST. Please contact your local FC Conservancy office at an early stage if you are in doubt about the eligibility of your proposed scheme.



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What types of planting are eligible?

We will pay the Locational Premium for new planting that forms part of an acceptable SFGS application under one of the following objectives:

- Establishing a well-designed productive forest;
- Expanding native and riparian woodlands;
- Improving the environment of post-industrial areas;
- Improving the quality and setting of specific urban areas; and
- Diversifying the farmed landscape.

| | Eligible Areas in Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy | Scheme Size (see 'Size requirements' opposite) | Quality of Ground | Locational Premium Amount | Locational Premium Code |
|---|---|--|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Well-designed productive woodland | Preferred area | 5ha-40ha | Improved arable | £1,600/ha | 1302 |
| New native and riparian woodland | Potential for Native Woodland | 1ha-40ha | Any | £2,000/ha | 2306 3307 |
| Woodland for environmental enhancement | Potential for environmental enhancement | 1ha-40ha | Any | £2,000/ha | 4304 |
| Urban fringe woodland | Defined urban fringes of settlements of population over 3,000 | 1ha-20ha | Any | £3,000/ha | 4305 |
| Farm woodland for landscape and diversification | Potential for woodland | 1ha-5ha for individual woodlands up to a maximum of 40ha per holding | Improved arable | £2,000/ha | 5308 |

Please note that size requirements and additional requirements also apply (see opposite).

Size requirements

All schemes must be of an appropriate scale in the landscape. Applications above 40 hectares (20 hectares in urban fringes) are acceptable, but in these cases the Locational Premium will be limited to the first 40 hectares (20 hectares in urban fringes). Only one application per landholding will qualify for the Locational Premium.

The purpose of the Locational Premium for the farm woodlands category is to enhance the Ayrshire and Arran agricultural landscape, which is characterised by small woods and shelterbelts. Individual farm woodlands greater than 5 hectares will not be eligible for any Locational Premium payment. A maximum of 40 hectares of farm woodlands per landholding will be eligible for Locational Premium.

Additional requirements

The Locational Premium represents a significant extra level of public funding for woodland schemes, it must therefore deliver more benefits than standard SFGS grants alone.

All proposals must therefore address the following:

Community consultation: You must demonstrate that neighbours, local communities, local authorities and interest groups have been consulted, at a level appropriate to your scheme and have had adequate opportunity to respond.

Recreation: You must consider public recreation and must include the following within your proposals (unless you can demonstrate that there is neither the demand, nor a link with the Ayrshire Councils' emerging access strategies):

- You must include recreation proposals that fit locally agreed priorities (eg core path networks and educational needs) and draw on discussion with, and support from, local authorities, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), local access forums, community councils, local tourist boards and local interest groups. You must provide a woodland recreation management plan for the woodland;
- All work must be in accordance with the FC Recreation Guidelines, and include specifications linked to FC Standard Costs, of all facilities. Where path routes enter or exit onto a road, or where a new car park is proposed, you must apply for relevant planning permission; and
- The recreation facilities must be publicised and will appear on the FC website and include adoption of the Walkers Welcome package and a named local contact.

Landscape enhancement: You must provide adequate information demonstrating how the landscape quality will be enhanced. The proposed design of the new woodland will usually be informed by a landscape character and visual analysis of the woodland area and wider environs, and must be accompanied by both analysis and proposals in plan and perspective.

Improving habitat quality: You must provide evidence of how your proposals will contribute to the delivery of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) and if appropriate, how you will maintain or enhance existing semi-natural habitats.

Protecting the built heritage: You must demonstrate that adequate account has been taken of all important built heritage features, including designed and historic landscapes and archaeological sites, in the area.

Public road access (well-designed productive woodland)

In consultation with the relevant local authority, you must demonstrate the suitability of forest access onto the public road(s) and the suitability of the public road(s) for transporting timber.

How do I apply?

Applications will be accepted from 1 May 2004. You must apply for an SFGS grant in the normal way. An SFGS Application Pack containing applications forms is available from your local Conservancy office.

Since there is a limited budget for the Locational Premium, it will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Locational Premium will be allocated at the point when the Forestry Commission approves each SFGS contract. We will not accept further applications once the budget for the year has been allocated. When this happens we will announce it in the local press and inform local forestry advisers directly.

We will not accept new applications for Locational Premium for areas that have already received an offer of funding under the previous year's Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Locational Premium.

Please use the specific Locational Premium reference code to indicate the compartments for which you wish to apply for the premium.

When can I start work?

You may start work as soon as you have an approved SFGS contract that confirms that you have been allocated a Locational Premium. All work should be completed and claims lodged by 28 February 2006. If you have also applied for the SFGS Farmland Premium you must also have received Farmland Premium approval before starting any work.

If you carry out any work on the area to which your application refers before you receive approval, your application will be rejected. If we discover this after we have approved an SFGS contract, we will cancel the contract and will not pay any further grant. We may reclaim with interest any grant already paid. If you are in any doubt you should consult the Forestry Commission and SEERAD before carrying out work on any area where you are considering making an application for SFGS.

How will the Locational Premium be paid?

You may claim the full SFGS grant payment for protection, ground preparation and establishment operations as soon as you complete the work. Payments for planting are made in two instalments: 70% when the operation has been satisfactorily carried out, and 30% five years later. We will pay the full Locational Premium along with the first (70%) payment for the establishment operations. You must claim the whole of each compartment together. You need not claim for all these compartments at the same time, but you must claim all those compartments receiving the Locational Premium before 28 February 2006. If you are late in claiming, we may not be able to pay the Locational Premium element; you will receive only the SFGS payments.

Where can I get more information?

Contact the Forestry Commission at the following addresses. Alternatively, go to the Forestry Commission's website at www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland

For North Ayrshire including Arran

Central Scotland Conservancy
Erskine House, 1 North Avenue, Clydebank Business Park
Clydebank G81 2DR
Tel: 0141 941 2611 • Fax: 0141 941 2125
E-mail: centralscotland.cons@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

For South & East Ayrshire

South Scotland Conservancy
11 Church Crescent, Dumfries DG1 1DF
Tel: 01387 256111 • Fax: 01387 257888
E-mail: southscotland.cons@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Please note that Forestry Commission staff may only give general advice about forestry and forestry grants. Please consult a woodland adviser for advice specific to your proposal.

For information on the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy

Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan & Transportation Team
15 Links Road, Ayrshire KA9 1QG
Tel: 01292 476716 • Fax: 01292 671455

How can I find out about relevant seminars and receive any further updates on the Locational Premium?

If you want to receive updates on the Ayrshire and Arran Woodlands Locational Premium or receive information on seminars or events, send your contact details:

For North Ayrshire

E-mail: central.cons@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 0141 941 2611 • Fax: 0141 941 2125

For South and East Ayrshire

E-mail: southscotland.cons@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 01387 256111 • Fax: 01387 257888