



Better woodlands for Wales

News from Forestry Commission Wales Grants and Regulations, Issue 21, September 2009

Contents

BWW finance update
Transitional restocking
supplements
New WIG cost calculator
Woodlands for learning
Royal Welsh Show
Squirrel control
CRN verification
Staff update

Issue dates:

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Current issue and back issues available
on the FCW website:

www.forestry.gov.uk/wales

BWW Finance update 2009/10

I am pleased to be able to inform you that Forestry Commission Wales are able to re-open BWW for grants to be paid in 2009/10. This is for all types of grant, however you must be able to carry out the work and claim the grant by 28th February 2010.

Thank you to everyone who has worked with us in re-scheduling operations that they are unable to carry out this year. We appreciate that the recession has had an effect on planned operations, we have been listening to your concerns and we are keen to continue to work with you to bring woodlands into management and create new woodlands.

Please note that the deadline for amending claim years to move work forward from 2009/10 remains the same – 31st October 2009 for Woodland Improvement Grants and 31st December 2009 for new planting and restocking.

As well as new BWW applications you can also move approved operations forward to 2009/10 if you can carry out the work this claim year. This means that you no longer need to use the reserve list, however the deadline for this is 31st December 2009.



Long Term Forest Plans - transitional restocking supplements

Please be aware that the transitional supplement for restocking on Long Term Forest Plans closed at the end of March 2009. Any restocking claims that are submitted from now on will be paid at the standard WGS restock rate. Owners wishing to take advantage of the higher restocking rates now available should bring their properties into BWW.

WIG cost calculator & web site changes

A new version of the "How to use the WIG cost calculator" is available from the BWW reference library. You will notice that we have changed the format of the document. We will be changing the structure of user guides into a manual format, laid out in a time sequence, from initial application through to approval and claims. Keep an eye on our BWW website for further changes.

A reminder from our Technical Services team

When a GLOS release note has been issued, would you please take a few minutes to read through it, before ringing or emailing the Technical Services team at Clawdd Newydd. They are always ready to help but following a release they are particularly busy concentrating on getting the system up and running for you to use.

CADW mailbox

Please use the central CADW mailbox when making initial contact on a BWW case Cadw@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Woodland Improvement Grants for 'Woodlands for Learning'

Over the last 10 years interest in woodland-based learning has increased. The introduction of the Foundation Phase in Wales, an innovative curriculum for 3 to 7 year olds which requires equal access to indoor and outdoor environments and a shift towards practical skills for all ages has meant that more people are seeking robust, safe, stimulating environments in which to learn in and learn about. What better place than a Welsh woodland?

Woodland can be used in a variety of ways both formally and informally, both as a setting and as a resource. One off day visits, volunteering, natural play, Forest School - a programme of visits by the same group to the same suit led by a qualified Forest School practitioner, delivery of the national curriculum, accredited courses, trails and guided walks. All can take place in an ever changing environment.

The new Wales Woodland strategy contains three key elements:

- To provide access to well-managed woodlands across Wales which are suitable settings to support education, learning and skills delivery and development
- That more people enjoy the life long learning benefits of woodlands and their products
- To facilitate a thriving, skilled workforce in the forestry and woodland sector

BWW presently offers certain funding opportunities through WIG (Woodland Improvement Grants). Two woodlands used for Forest Schools have recently had BWW plans approved. Woods that are to be used for regular learning can benefit from help with additional costs such as start-up equipment.

If you feel you have woodland owners would be interested in providing a site for woodland learning and would like to know more, please contact Sue Williams, Team Leader, FCW Woodlands for Learning Team on 0845 604 0845.



Beauty spot farmer is first to snap up new woodland grant

* Forestry Commission Wales at the Royal Welsh Show *

A farm owner in one of the most beautiful areas of Wales became the first recipient of a Forestry Commission Wales grant aimed at bringing 12,000 hectares of private woodland into sustainable woodland management over the next 3 years.

Colin Owen, owner of Fairbirch Farm in south Wales, signed up for the new Better Woodlands for Wales Smallwoods grant which targets the type of woodlands found on 90 per cent of Welsh farms.

Colin's farm is nestled in Three Crosses, near Swansea, within the Gower area of outstanding natural beauty, an iconic landscape which attracts millions of tourists to Wales.

The trees on the farm together comprise one of the largest blocks of woodland on the north of the Gower peninsula, making the land an important wildlife habitat as well as a magnet for visitors to the area.

Since buying the farm 25 years ago, Colin has steadily been balancing these considerations while maximising the value of his woods, creating a range of products from luxury floorboards to charcoal crayons for artists' pencils.

Now, he is looking forward to developing his woodland – which he describes as a “from the cradle to the grave” commitment – after being first in line for a Smallwoods grant.

The new grant is a more streamlined offshoot of the FC Wales BWW package and has been designed with farmers very much in mind: over 33,000 hectares of farm woodlands in Wales qualify for a Smallwoods grant.

It's hoped that Colin will be the first of many farmers in Wales to snap up the grant, which offers up to 75 per cent of the cost of managing any woodland of more than 0.25 hectares and less than 20 hectares. Richard Siddons, head of grants and regulation at Forestry Commission Wales, said, “The small woods of Wales have a critical role to play in creating more woodland cover and bringing more woodlands into sustainable management to help tackle climate change. We are aiming to create an extra 1,500 hectares of new planting by 2012.”

“Many of these woods are found on farms in Wales and we want to encourage farmers and smaller owners to manage their woodlands sustainably and in a way which unlocks the economic potential of these woods.”

The 15-hectare ancient woodland on Fairbirch Farm can be found on the Ancient Woodland Inventory, which means that it has probably been continuously wooded since at least 1600.



However, since the end of World War II, the woods had been mainly neglected, like many small farm woodlands. But over the past 10 years Colin has slowly started managing the land by coppicing, thinning trees and laying tracks to allow access for working the wood.

He has built up a business making floorboards but he plans to use his Smallwoods grant to use more of his own wood, rather than buying in the timber.

Colin will also put in new tracks to allow machinery to extract felled timber, and coppicing of dense hazel and holly will allow more light to hit the forest floor, giving seeds falling from mature trees enough light to grow and encouraging the number of flowering woodland plants.

Nothing goes to waste from the felled trees. He uses the waste to produce charcoal crayons for artists' pencils in his two charcoal burners, using material previously considered to contain no commercial value.

Other suitable left-over material is used to make quirky and unusual pieces of furniture.

Bank account details

When entering bank account numbers into the payee detail screen, please don't leave any spaces between the numbers.

Claims for squirrel control

Grant for squirrel control for crop protection purposes within BWW relies on the owner or agent carrying out surveys of squirrel damage levels by annual fixed point monitoring. It is a good idea to make this monitoring part of the operations section of your BWW management plan.



A number of marked trees should be examined for damage between September and October each year and a report on the number of trees with fresh damage, by plot, must be submitted to us every year. It would be helpful if the report could be in MS Word format or a pdf with photos. Where trapping is specified, the number of trapped squirrels must be recorded. This information should be uploaded to the case by the applicant or agent or by us on behalf of the applicant.

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/BR13WIG_Business_Rules20090625v1.1.pdf/\\$FILE/BR13WIG_Business_Rules20090625v1.1.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/BR13WIG_Business_Rules20090625v1.1.pdf/$FILE/BR13WIG_Business_Rules20090625v1.1.pdf)

At the end of year two it must be demonstrated that squirrel damage is decreasing or funding may be withdrawn.

For more details on squirrel control see document BR13 Business rules in our BWW reference library.

CRN verification for farmers

When developing a new BWW application for a farmer who already had a CRN number you should advise WAG as soon as possible that 'CRN AXXXXXXX needs to be registered as a forestry customer as they intend to apply for BWW'. Further details of who to contact are in GOH13 CRN and Land Registration guidance in the BWW reference library.



[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/GOH13_BWW_and_WAG200900702v1.1.pdf/\\$FILE/GOH13_BWW_and_WAG200900702v1.1.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/GOH13_BWW_and_WAG200900702v1.1.pdf/$FILE/GOH13_BWW_and_WAG200900702v1.1.pdf)

Staff update

Nick Fackrell is our new Woodland Officer for Brecon and the Monmouthshire area, taking over from Andy J Wright. Nick has moved up from Somerset County Council where he worked as their Woodlands and Trees officer and will gradually be taking on BWW case work.



We also welcome Kay Williams to the Grants and Regulations team as Business Development and Regulatory Support Officer. Kay's previous role within the Forestry Commission was Assistant Land Agent in Coed y Cymoedd.



Contact us...

For general BWW enquiries, telephone: 0845 604 0845 or log on to: www.forestry.gov.uk/wales

For technical queries, email: bww.ts@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

For the GLOS Service link: www.eforestry.gov.uk

and with suggestions for future issues, email: alison.evans@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

