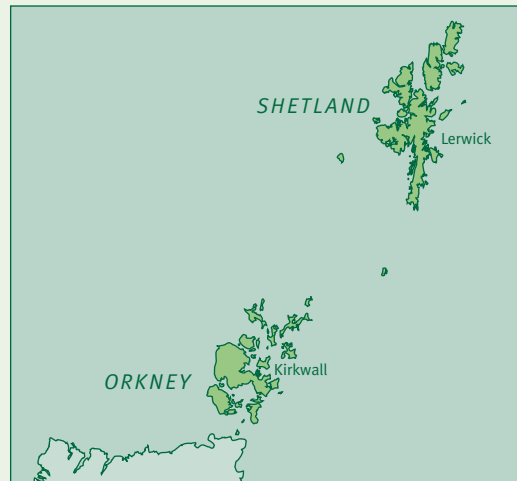


# Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme Northern Isles Locational Premium

## Introduction

In support of the Orkney and Shetland woodland strategies the Forestry Commission is offering additional funding through a Locational Premium to encourage the planting of new woodlands in the Northern Isles.

This note explains how to apply for this funding.



## What is Locational Premium?

Locational Premium is an extra grant payable **in addition** to the standard grants available under the Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme (SFGS). It is called a “locational” premium because it is only available in parts of Scotland where the Scottish Executive considers woodland planting, regeneration, improvement or management are priorities. Reflecting the commitment of the local groups to woodland development and the production of local woodland strategies the Northern Isles is such an area.

The Forestry Commission has consulted with the local woodland groups about the details of the criteria, which will apply to this premium, and their recommendations have been used to formulate the rules of the scheme.

Proposed new woodlands must satisfy the requirements of SFGS and meet the criteria set out in this leaflet.

Woodland planting which is eligible for SFGS and Locational Premium may also qualify for the Farmland Premium payments from the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department.

## How much is the Locational Premium?

The Northern Isles Locational Premium for 2003 will be:

- **£2000 per hectare for Orkney mainland and inner/south islands.**
- **£2500 per hectare for the north isles (Eday, North Ronaldsay, Papa Westray, Sanday, Stronsay and Westray).**
- **£3000 per hectare for Shetland.**

The Scottish Executive has announced that a total fund of £50,000 per year will be available for the Northern Isles Locational Premium over the 3 years, 2003 to 2006. The premium rate per hectare and eligibility criteria is set for 2003 only and will be reviewed thereafter to ensure the objectives are being achieved.

## The Orkney and Shetland woodland strategies

Reflecting the challenges of woodland establishment in the Northern Isles the local strategies emphasise the importance of site, species and provenance selection and the need for quality silviculture and management to achieve successful woodland establishment.

The **Orkney Woodland Strategy** was produced by the Orkney Islands Council with input from the Orkney Woodland Development group. It was produced in response to growing interest

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amongst the local community in planting trees. The strategy is not concerned with growing trees for economic purposes, but focuses on enhancing and enriching the environment by encouraging the conservation of remaining native woodlands, extending woodland habitat and creating attractive landscapes in both town and country.

The main aims outlined in the strategy are:

- To create a diverse woodland resource of high quality that will contribute to the future economic needs of Orkney
- To ensure that Orkney's trees and woods make a positive contribution to the environment
- To create opportunities for people to enjoy trees
- To help communities benefit from trees and woods

The **Shetland Woodland Strategy** was produced by the Shetland Amenity Trust following extensive consultation with local communities, agencies and interested parties, as part of its Community Woodland Project, and in response to the Scottish Forestry Strategy. The aim of the strategy is to encourage the use of trees and shrubs in the Shetland landscape, both urban and rural, so that they enhance the environment, and are of positive value to people and wildlife, for both present and future generations.

Benefits that the strategy seeks from new woodlands include:

- Community access, involvement and amenity.
- Provision of shelter for livestock, crops and buildings.
- Landscape enhancement both rural and urban.
- Expansion and creation of new native woodlands, using native stock, or stock of suitable provenance and origin.
- Contribution to the economy of Shetland, for example through shelter "wildlife tourism", small-scale timber and non-timber outputs or renewable energy crops.

## Where is the Locational Premium available?

You can apply for Locational Premium on suitable sites in the Orkney or Shetland Isles.

## What types of planting will be eligible?

The premium aims to encourage woodland planting which will help to deliver the Orkney and Shetland woodland strategies. It will be available for planting any new woodlands of up to 2ha, which form part of an SFGS application with the objective of improving the diversity of the farmed and crofting landscape.

Locating woodland in such an open, agricultural landscape requires careful design and consideration of the appropriate scale of woodlands. Consequently proposed woodlands greater than 2ha will require more detailed landscape appraisal to assess their suitability for the premium grants.

The Locational Premium represents a significant extra level of public funding for woodland planting and it must therefore, deliver more benefits than the standard SFGS alone. It must be used to help deliver the local woodland strategy objectives.

To ensure this extra delivery applications for Locational Premium will be assessed against the additional criteria set out below.

- Is the site suitable for tree planting? Consider such factors as geology, soil, exposure, aspect, existing flora and fauna and archaeological interests.
- Is the provenance and species of tree suitable to the site? The provenance and origin of seed used to grow trees is considered highly important and should be approved by your local woodland group.
- Are the proposed establishment operations satisfactory for the Northern Isles conditions?
- Is the design of the proposed wood sympathetic to the surrounding landscape?

In addition, new woodlands will be expected to help deliver at least three of the following aims identified in the Orkney and Shetland woodland strategies:

- improved public access
- community/school involvement
- conservation of Orkney's native provenance trees
- fulfilment of local biodiversity action plans
- shelter
- improvement/increased diversity of urban or rural landscapes
- economic benefits
- tourism benefits
- linkages to existing woodlands.

## How do I apply?

You must apply for an SFGS in the normal way. An applicant's pack containing application forms is available from your local Conservancy office.

In order to simplify processing of the application we will only accept whole management units (compartments) for the Locational Premium, so you should bear this in mind when completing the forms.

Please use the specific Locational Premium reference number [5302 for Orkney mainland and inner/south islands, 5303 for the north isles and 5304 for Shetland] to indicate the management units (compartments) for which you wish to apply for the premium.

There is a limited amount of money available for Locational Premium which will be allocated on a first come first served basis. **We will make this allocation at the point when the Forestry Commission approves each SFGS contract.** Once the entire Locational Premium for the year has been allocated we will not accept further applications.

The transitional arrangements announced in October 2002 for transfer from Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) to SFGS do not apply to the Locational Premium. If you already have a WGS contract, and wish to apply for the Locational Premium you will need to make a fresh application under SFGS after 16th June 2003. We will carry out appropriate consultation and place your new application on the public register. Full details of the transitional arrangements are given in the SFGS Applicant's Booklet "Transitional Arrangements for New Planting."

## How will applications be assessed?

The Forestry Commission will assess applications in the usual way against the SFGS standards.

They will then be passed to local groups on Orkney and Shetland for assessment of the contribution of the proposed new woodland to the local woodland strategy (as described in section 6).

These groups will recommend to the Forestry Commission approval of applications, which contribute to delivery of the local strategy.

In addition applications of more than 2ha will be passed the Forestry Commission landscape architect for consideration and comment.

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### When should I start work?

You can start work as soon as you have received a signed SFGS contract from the Forestry Commission, which confirms that you have been allocated Locational Premium. All work should be completed and claims lodged by 30th June in the year following approval.

If you have also applied for SFGS Farmland Premium you must also have received SFGS Farmland Premium approval before starting work.

### How will the Locational Premium be paid?

You can claim the full SFGS payment for protection and ground preparation 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 amount of Locational Premium along with the first (70%) payment for planting. We will not process a claim for part of a management unit (compartment). However you need not claim for all management units (compartments) at the same time.

### Where can I get more information?

For further information on the Northern Isles Locational Premium and advice on tree planting and grant applications:

**For Orkney contact:**

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**For Shetland contact:**

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**Or contact the  
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at the address opposite  
or go to our website at  
[www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland)

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