



# Better woodlands for Wales

News from Forestry Commission Wales Grants and Regulations, Issue 20, July 2009

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## Issue dates:

Issue 21 September 2009

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Current issue and back issues available on the FCW website:

[www.forestry.gov.uk/wales](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/wales)

## BWW consultation and badgers



Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under this Act it is an offence to damage or obstruct a badger sett that shows signs of current use by badgers, or to disturb a badger within a sett. Information regarding the presence of badgers on a site can come from a number of sources including local knowledge, the local record centre or CCW.

Local badger groups can also provide useful information. Where a local badger group has a known interest in the woodland, Management Planners should treat the group as a non-compulsory responder and seek their input. Management Planners must always follow best practice, as outlined in FC Forest Practice Guide 9 'Forest Operations & Badger Setts' to ensure that badgers are accommodated, when planning operations.

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/publications.nsf/searchpub/?SearchView&Query=\(badgers\)&SearchOrder=4&SearchMax=0&SearchWV=TRUE&SearchThesaurus=TRUE](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/publications.nsf/searchpub/?SearchView&Query=(badgers)&SearchOrder=4&SearchMax=0&SearchWV=TRUE&SearchThesaurus=TRUE)



## Felling Licences

From 1st January 2009 all felling licences are now administered from our Clawdd Newydd office. Any licence applications and enquiries should be sent to Clawdd Newydd. To avoid delays please don't send them to the Woodland Officers.

## Woodland Grant Scheme

Woodland Grant Scheme claims continue to be administered from our Abergavenny office and all enquiries and claims should be sent to Abergavenny.

## Management plan numbers

At the end of June we had 1131 cases mapped in G&L On-line service with a total area of 47063 hectares.

Of those 1131 cases, 545 have been approved by us and total 17490 hectares.

## Staff update



Chris Botting, who some of you may remember from his days as a woodland officer, and more recently in charge of regulatory case work, is moving on to a new job as a District Planning Manager at Llandoverly. We wish him all the best in his new post.

## BWW Finance Update

You will be aware that BWW grants for the claim year 09/10 are now fully committed. The summary below shows the level of funding committed for the next 3 years, as at the end of June 2009.

Year	Budget	Committed	Committed	Paid	Paid
09/10	£3,060,000	£3,611,607	118%	£100,123	3%
10/11	£3,240,000	£2,175,790	49%		
11/12	£3,280,000	£1,232,374	34.00%		

We are keen to see committed funds spent. To date we have received approximately £10k of amendments to move operations from 09/10 to future claim years. The paid grants are behind profile for previous years so indications are that all of the approved work for 09/10 will not go ahead.

Therefore if you know that approved operations for 09/10 will not happen, please fill-in Amendment Form (FM02) ASAP so that funds can be released for other work, that is going ahead. Please email the completed forms to [bww.ts@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:bww.ts@forestry.gsi.gov.uk). Providing us with this information will allow us to reallocate funds to activities that will be completed in 09/10.

Please note that we have changed the amendment arrangements for altering claim years, in order to allow improved budget management. These changes are described in the BWW Grant Commitments Finance questions and answers July 2009 published on the BWW reference library page. A new amendments guidance document is also being written and we will e-mail all planners once it is published.

To summarise the changes:

- No amendments to roll forward Woodland Improvement Grants will be accepted after the 31st October in the claim year that these are approved for.
- No amendments to roll forward New Planting or Restocking Grants will be accepted after the 31st December in the claim year that these are approved for.

Where you have not claimed grant or submitted an amendment to change the claim year within the above deadlines you will lose the opportunity to claim that grant.

We will continue to provide updates on the financial position through the Technical Newsletters.



# BWW in action

## Springhill Wood



Contractor Simon Roscoe

Peter Farthing has lived in the peaceful and unspoilt Glyn Ceiriog valley for over 25 years. Only a few miles from the English border and the main A5 road, this valley in north Wales was described by Lloyd George as 'a little bit of heaven on earth'

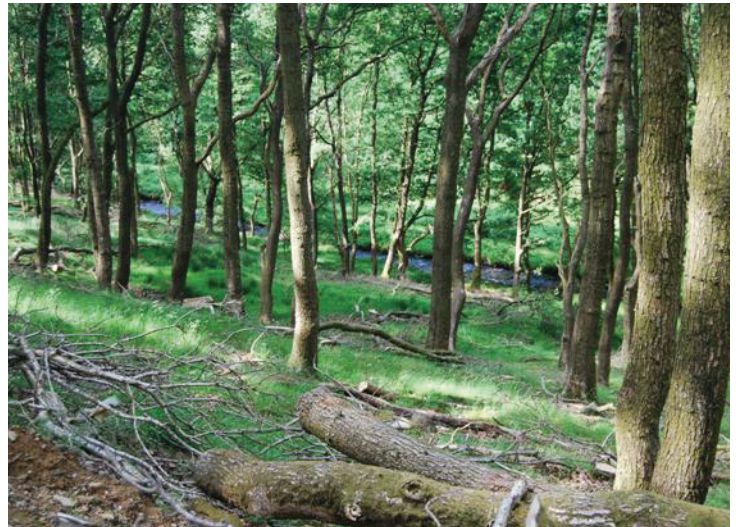
Peter's organic farm includes a large ex-Forestry Commission plantation of spruce, larch and pine growing on a very steep slope, which makes it a very difficult site to work. He had just begun to thin the woodlands when he was hit by 'Hurricane Lothar' in December 1999 which left him with a scene of devastation, familiar to many woodland owners throughout Europe.

Never daunted, Peter contacted a BWW Management Planner, Julian Miller. With a long term plan in place and thanks to the work of excellent local contractors, the site was cleared of huge piles of blown timber and BWW helped to fund the re-planting of young trees. An attack by pine weevil was the next challenge. His contractors, Simon and Stuart Roscoe of Venture Forestry came to his rescue and treated and replanted where necessary. Fortunately Peter had planted a mixture of species, and whilst the larch and spruce suffered badly from the attack, ash and oak have recovered after treatment against more weevil damage.

"Very prompt payment of BWW grant once a claim has been submitted has been particularly valuable in helping to fund the tracks and fencing which provide the essential infra-structure needed to manage my woodlands" said Peter. Existing areas of native woodland have been fenced off to exclude grazing and allow native trees to regenerate and BWW has also helped to fund the planting of new woods on the farm.

## Gilfach Orfydd

In 2006, when Carl and Helen Platel first walked into their woodlands in mid Glamorgan, it was a dark and silent experience. Lack of any management for at least 50 years and heavy grazing by stock had resulted in little wildlife and ground flora. Like many ancient woodlands in Wales, it had been felled during the First World War to provide much needed timber and left to its own devices ever since. A tramway had been built through the woods many years ago; to transport coal down to Bridgend, but a major fault in the coal seam put an end to plans.



Thinning of the woods in progress

Although coal production is no longer a viable proposition for the land, Carl and Helen are well on the way to being self-sufficient in energy from their own timber. They are purchasing a bio-mass boiler to provide all the energy they need for the house and farm buildings. "It's a great feeling to know that we will be helping the environment and no longer worried about rising fuel costs" commented Carl. There are also bigger plans in the pipe-line, not only are Carl and Helen going to provide all their own energy, they are also looking to supply fuel to the bio-mass power station in Port Talbot.

A planned programme of thinning to allow more light onto the woodland floor has led to regeneration of native trees in the cleared areas and a return of wild flowers and birds. "Thinning is improving the growth of the remaining trees but I would never have done the work without BWW", said Carl. The FCW scheme has also helped to fund the planting of 2,500 new native trees on other parts of the farm, so a supply of timber well into the future should never be a problem.

Thanks to the help and enthusiasm of their BWW Management Planner, Gareth Henson of Coed Cymru and grant aid from BWW, the woodlands are now alive with wildlife. "The first thing I do when we have visitors, is to take them for a tour of the woods" said Carl, "the change in less than 3 years is remarkable."

## Important new BWW guides on the web

New documents, '**WIG business rules**' and '**BWW and Welsh Assembly Government**' are now in the BWW reference library at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-6YMLSQ>

Both documents significantly affect the way you apply for grant. If you haven't already, I would urge you to read them before submitting your next plan.

## and in the pipeline...

The table below shows the documents which will be released over the coming months. We will also be producing a number of internal documents designed to guide FCW staff when approving applications and claims

Document	Description	Timing
WIG Business Rules - Civil Engineering	New Document with guidance on BWW tracking specifications.	End July
How to use WIG cost calculator	Revision of current document.	End July
GLOS Release 22 Information Note	Information on changes due in the July update of GLOS.	Mid July
Claims and inspection Approach	Revision of the Approach to document.	End August
BWW Grant Guide	Updated documents to take into account changes in grant rates.	TBC
Management Plan Preparation Grant	Updated document to take into account changes in grant rates.	End August
BWW Grants for Existing Woodlands	Updated document to take into account changes in grant rates.	End August
How to manage your contract and claims	Updated document.	End July
Summary of Customer Survey		End July
Approach to Amendments	New Document.	End July
How to Apply for an Amendment	New Document – User guide.	End July

## Liaison meetings with CCW and CADW (Gaer Fawr hillfort)

We've recently had useful talks with CCW and CADW to help speed up the IFES and consultation process. A number of changes are on the way: CCW are to revise their IFES report and remove some of the duplicated information supplied by the Local Record Centres and FCW constraints checks.

All SSSI site management reports will now be included with the IFES response, to give management planners a better understanding of site features etc at an early stage. Planners are reminded that any consultation must be directly with the member of staff named in the IFES response, rather than to a general email account.

CADW will create a similar IFES proforma to CCW. This will highlight a plan which falls within a SAM and/or Historic Park and Garden buffer zone. It will also state what consultation will be required and when it is needed. CADW would like to remind planners that consultations are dealt with by different

people and so sometimes two responses are required. This will be mentioned in the IFES response.

Documentation manager Andy Wright will be liaising with Liz Whittle of CADW to develop guidance on managing Historic Parks and Gardens.

Both CCW and CADW have requested that they receive a final management plan report showing agreed changes once consultation is complete. This will be kept for future reference.



# GLOS Work programme

Below is a summary of the improvements to our on-line service that are planned for the next 18 months. The table only includes changes which will affect Management Planners and owners.

In addition we have been actively investigating problems with GLOS which arise when trying to develop large Management Plans. Our technical team in Edinburgh is making changes to how the 'Save & Validate' function works and we hope that the required fix will be available in early August.

Due	Description
2009/10	Contract Map changes to improve layout and clarity
2009/10	Improve usability of spatial linking tool and visibility of operational information. This will include the ability to link to spatial data at Foundation Plan stage where this has been supplied digitally.
2009/10	Ability to directly upload data from WIG Cost calculator to GLOS, avoiding the copying and pasting and reduce the risk of errors.
2010/11	Further Contract Map improvements to include constraints map
2010/11	Ability to manage split change of ownership of cases where a BWW needs to be split between two or more owners.
2010/11	Improvements to the 'My Work' screen and list to remove cases where users are no longer involved.
2010/11	Ability to renew cases at year 5 of the plan, to update plan on progress and add new work
2010/11	Remove recording of DAMS Score as this is not used significantly
2010/11	GLOS Practice Area. We are investigating to see if a practice area (similar to that used during training) can be made available on the website for Planners. The main issue is security, as the practice area used during training is only available on FC's internal network and PCs.

## European Protected Species guidance notes

FCW, CCW and WAG are in the process of updating the existing guidance notes for dormouse, bats, otter and great crested newt to make them more user friendly. Once they have been finalised we will publish them on our web-site page

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-769erv>

There will be specific guidance for different species.

### EPS licence application

The Welsh Assembly Government have issued a new licence application form for forestry or woodland operations and this has replaced the previous one on the FCW website.

FCW and CCW have jointly designed a template for



Method Statements to accompany dormouse licence applications. This will ensure that applications include all the necessary information that CCW and WAG require to process an application, thus reducing requests for further information from the applicant and the accompanying time delays.

A method statement template for bats is planned in the future. It is not envisaged that templates will be produced for otter or great crested newt.

### Timescales

Specific guidance - dormouse and method statement  
August 2009

Specific guidance – bats, otter, great crested newt  
Autumn 2009

## Contact us...

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

For technical queries, email: [bww.ts@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:bww.ts@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

For the GLOS Service link: [www.eforestry.gov.uk](http://www.eforestry.gov.uk)

and with suggestions for future issues, email: [alison.evans@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:alison.evans@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

