

Funding for Farm Woodlands

1 Purpose

This note provides brief guidance on the range of funding available for farm woodlands in England. Please note that it is a summary only and liable to change. Further details are in the full scheme literature, with links to them provided in this note.

2 Customer & Land Registration

You and your land must be registered with the Rural Payments Agency before applying for any funding. You will be given a Customer Registration Number and references for your land on the Rural Land Register (RLR). Please refer to [FC Operations Note 19](#) for more information on the requirements and how to register.

3 Single Payment Scheme (SPS)

New woodland created since 2009 may continue to receive both grant scheme payments and SPS payments. Existing woodland is normally not eligible for SPS entitlements except in occasional circumstances such as grazed woodlands. Woodland eligible for SPS payment must be kept in good agricultural and environmental condition such as preventing overgrazing. You must also comply with relevant regulations such as the Forestry Act and Environmental Impact Regulations.

4 English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS)

The Forestry Commission offer a suite of 6 grants to help create and enhance woodlands for environmental and social benefit such as biodiversity and public access.

Woodland Planning Grant (WPG)

To produce a management plan that supports sustainable woodland management

<u>Area of woodland on the property</u>	<u>Grant rate</u>
3–30 ha	£1000 total
30–100 ha	£20 per hectare
Any additional area over 100 ha	£10 per hectare

A template is available that contains all the necessary sections needed to fulfil the grant.

Woodland Assessment Grant (WAG)

To gather information that improves woodland management decisions. The need for information depends on the site and work proposed. There are 4 types of assessment, with minimum £300 payment for them all:

Funding for Farm Woodlands

- Ecological or Archaeology Assessment - £5.60 per hectare
- Landscape Assessment - £2.80 per hectare
- Determining stakeholder interests - £300

Woodland Regeneration Grant (WRG)

To restock woodland after tree felling. The grant rate depends on the type of woodland being felled and regenerated.

<u>Type of woodland felled</u>	<u>Type of woodland restocked</u>	<u>Grant rate per hectare</u>
Any woodland type / designation	Broadleaf	£950
Plantation on an ancient woodland site	Native	£1760
Any non ancient or Ancient Semi Natural	Native	£1100
Non ancient conifer plantation	Conifer	£360
Ancient conifer woodland	Conifer	£0

Woodland Management Grant (WMG)

£30 per hectare per year to carry out routine ongoing work that maintains or enhances the environmental value of the woodland, or for permissive access provision where there is a demand. This includes work such as ride/path cutting, pest control and coppicing.

Properties with more than 100 hectares of woodland must be certified to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard. Smaller woodlands will need a management plan or general condition assessment. Native or ancient woodlands, woodland in red squirrel reserves or public access woodland are eligible for this grant.

Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG)

To carry out capital work for environmental or social improvement. Up to 80% contribution may be offered towards the cost of work such as:

- Bringing SSSI woodland into and keeping it in favourable condition
- Work that improves biodiversity
- Enhancement of public access facilities

Grants are available to meet regional priorities such as woodland work that helps woodland birds and county wildlife sites.

Woodland Creation Grant (WCG)

To create new woodland:

- A basic planting grant of £1800 per hectare for broadleaves is available, plus
- 'Additional Contributions' of up to £2000 per hectare for national and regional priorities
- Farm Woodland Payments of up to £300 per hectare per year are available for 15 years when planting on agricultural land
- You can receive all of the above and still be entitled to SPS payments on the new woodland

The composition of the woodland (tree species, open space, number of trees etc) will be determined by your objectives.

5 Environmental Stewardship

The scheme is administered by Natural England with Entry and Higher Level Stewardship

Entry Level Stewardship (ELS)

£30 / ha / yr is available for eligible woodland on a points basis e.g. a 100Ha holding would need to achieve 3000 points. The woodland on a holding does not need to be included. An example option is "maintenance of a stock-proof woodland boundary" – to prevent livestock grazing the woodland and causing environmental damage @ 4 points per 100 m of boundary.

Organic Entry Level Stewardship (OELS) is similar to ELS except that eligible land must be registered with an organic inspection body.

Upland Entry Level Stewardship (UELS) to support hill farmers in Severely Disadvantaged Areas (SDA) and offers £62 /ha/yr.

Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)

Support for woodlands is based on a set of targeting maps to deliver multiple benefits such as biodiversity, designated landscapes and catchment sensitive areas. A Farm Environment Plan is first produced to identify the special environmental features and their condition.

HLS can pay for capital work and annual payments, with supplements also available. For example, woodland creation may include capital payment for tree planting and protection work; annual payment for income forgone and tree maintenance; supplementary payment if public access is provided.

Specific woodland options in HLS are creation, restoration and maintenance. Other related options include wood pasture, orchards, scrub, trees, historic parkland and heathland restoration.

6 Which funding can I receive?

Woodland is normally supported through EWGS, though there are some instances where HLS is more appropriate e.g. woodlands that are grazed by livestock, or woodland on common land. Woodland creation under HLS can fund up to 1Ha woodland blocks and up to 3 ha on the holding. The Forestry Commission and Natural England will determine which grant scheme is most appropriate.

7 Other funding for woodlands

In addition to the environmental grants, there are other sources of funding to support rural, economic and tourism development.

The EWGS Woodfuel WIG (planned launch Spring 2011) will support woodland management for woodfuel and timber production. This will include infrastructure such as forest roading and work relating to timber harvesting such as inventory surveys.

Other support can be obtained for woodlands such as recreation / tourism facilities, public health initiatives and woodland education facilities. This kind of work is normally supported through regional funding bodies.

8 Woodland regulations

Regulatory approval may be required when carrying out woodland work, including work as part of a grant scheme. You may need to apply to the Forestry Commission for felling licence approval or Environmental Impact assessment. Other regulations may also link to woodlands e.g. Wildlife & Countryside Act, administered by Natural England.

9 Sources of Further Information

- Single Payment – <https://spsonline.rpa.gov.uk>
- Entry Level Stewardship – <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/farming/funding/es/els/default.aspx>
- English Woodland Grant Scheme – www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs

If you want further information regarding the English Woodland Grant Scheme, Felling Licence Regulations or Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, please contact your regional Forestry Commission Office:

North West England	01768 776616
North East England	01669 621591
Yorkshire & the Humber	01904 448778
East Midlands	01673 843461
West Midlands	01905 532200
East England	01842 815544
South West England	01626 890666
South East England	01420 23337