

## English Woodland Grant Scheme

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# Woodland Creation Grant Guide

## Purpose

This grant supports the establishment of new woodlands that meet national and regional priorities. To qualify for this grant the application and subsequent activities must meet the standards of environmental protection and practice set out in the UK Forestry Standard and its supporting guidelines. The grant is available on a competitive and regional basis, using scoring systems that select applications against public benefit priorities.

The aim of this grant is to create woodlands that generate the greatest public benefits. Particular priorities for the EWGS are:

- New woodlands near to where people live, particularly within the urban fringe
- New woodlands for access, recreation and sport
- New woodlands for wildlife, particularly where they can act as protective buffers and link important woodland habitats and other associated natural areas
- New woodland to enhance the landscape
- Restoring former industrial land
- New woodland to act as buffer strips along watercourses or to prevent soil erosion

# Support for new woodlands

There are three elements of the EWGS grant for new woodland that can be applied for depending on the eligibility of the site and the applicant.

- **Woodland Creation Grant (WCG)**  
This is the main grant that contributes to the costs of establishing new woodlands that deliver public benefits.
- **Additional Contributions (AC)**  
These increase the contribution towards the costs of establishing new woodland in certain situations such as location, and woodland uses (e.g. as public access).
- **Farm Woodland Payments (FWP)**  
These are compensation payments for agricultural income forgone as a result of creating new woodlands on agricultural land.

**Every application MUST be eligible for the Woodland Creation Grant element. The application may also qualify for Additional Contributions and Farm Woodland Payments depending on whether the land, the use or ownership meets the criteria for those grants and payments.**

## Eligibility

Any bare land is potentially eligible to be considered for WCG but each application will be tested against relevant legislation, environmental standards and other grant requirements.

Bare land is any land (including woodland open space) that has been under a non-woodland use or land cover for at least 10 years prior to the date of application. EWGS will not support tree planting where other important public benefits, land cover types or habitats would be lost.

### Minimum areas

There is no minimum size for new woodland as very small areas can be effectively added to existing woodlands. Nevertheless, the requirement is to create woodland rather than a group of trees and so planting areas will normally be no less than 0.25 ha and no narrower than 30m on average, with 15m as an absolute minimum width at any point.

### Eligibility criteria for Woodland Creation Grant

- The completed application (including map) must be received by the FC by the 30th September 2008
- The application must be approved by the FC before any work is started
- The application must include work to be done in the next planting season, i.e. autumn 2008 to spring 2009. We normally expect the majority or at least some of the work to be done in the next planting season i.e. autumn 2008 to spring 2009
- The freeholder(s) must be party to, or in agreement with any application to plant the grant-aided trees on their land
- Each area must meet the specification of an agreed category (set out later in this guidance)
- All proposals must meet the EWGS grant and application selection (scoring) criteria in force at the time the application is considered by the FC

## **Eligibility requirements for Additional Contributions**

- WCG must be approved along with any AC
- The application must meet the specific criteria for each AC applied for (see later in this guidance)

## **Eligibility requirements for Farm Woodland Payments**

- WCG must be approved along with any FWP
- The land to be planted must be in agricultural use
- Further eligibility guidance can be found on page 5

## **Situations not eligible for these grants**

- Land currently in receipt of public funding for other purposes or other land cover types
- Land planted without any required consent under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations
- Woodland intended for the production of Christmas trees or primarily biomass as a fuel or other use
- Land resumed from a tenant by means of a contested notice to quit, or subject to such action
- Land that must be planted to comply with a Felling Licence condition or Restocking Notice following conviction for an offence under the Felling Regulations of the Forestry Act 1967
- Land excluded by regional application selection criteria and mechanisms
- Failed planting areas approved under EWGS or other woodland grant schemes, until such time as any obligations to make good the situation have been discharged

## **Woodland Creation and Single Payment Scheme**

Land claimed for under SPS should remain eligible for SPS for a full calendar year from 1st January to 31st December, so no woodland planting should take place within that year.

This means that if an applicant enters into a scheme for new planting for the planting season of 1st October 2008 to 30th September 2009, and you have claimed SPS on the same land for the calendar year 1st January 2008 to 31st December 2008, You must not begin the planting until 1st January 2009.

If an applicant wishes to plant WCG during an SPS scheme year, in order to avoid reductions on their SPS claim, they should withdraw the area of land from their SPS application. SPS applicants can withdraw all or part of their application at any time, provided they do so before being notified of any errors in their application or notified about an inspection that subsequently reveals errors in respect of that withdrawn information. The application to withdraw must be made to the RPA in writing. The WCG agreement should not go ahead until RPA have responded to the applicant confirming the land under SPS may be withdrawn because the applicant may not be able to withdraw the land from SPS. If further clarification is required on SPS issues, applicants should contact their local RPA office.

*This information is intended for guidance and clarification purposes only. It is the EWGS applicant's responsibly to make an EWGS application based upon their own commercial decisions and that due consideration is given to any Single Payment Scheme application made in the same calendar year.*

# Woodland categories for WCG

## Eligible categories

The following table sets out the woodland categories with the characteristics and criteria that all EWGS supported planting must fall within.

The prescription for each afforested area or defined part of the area (compartment or subcompartment) must fully fit within a particular EWGS category in order for it to benefit from the spacing, shrub and open ground allowances designated for that category. The default categories are Standard or Small Standard.

Woodland category	Characteristics	Stems per net hectare required at establishment	Spacing	Grant-aided open ground (% of grant-aided area)	Grant-aided shrub element (% of grant-aided area)
<b>Standard</b>	Wood size is 3.0 ha or more and not one of the other types	2250	Max 2.5m	Up to 20% where fully justified	Max 10%
<b>Small Standard</b>	Wood size up to 2.99 ha and not one of the other types	1100 for broadleaves 2250 for conifers	Max 3.0m	Normally 10%. Up to 20% where fully justified	Max 15%
<b>Native</b>	Native species only and an agreed and appropriate native woodland type for the site and location. Planting as per FC Bulletin 112 'Creating New Native Woodland'	1600 (or lower densities as required to create habitats for BAP priority species, e.g. Black grouse)	Max 15m	Up to 40% where fully justified	Max 25%
<b>Community</b>	Designed for public access and is agreed as an appropriate woodland type for the location	As agreed with FC Between 1100 and 2250	Max 3.0m	Up to 40% where fully justified	Max 25%
<b>Special Broadleaved</b>	Appropriate single species broadleaved trees grown at wide spacing	As agreed Minimum 100	Max 10m	Normally 10%. Up to 20% where fully justified	0% Shrubs may be planted as additional plants but will not be eligible for grant

## Determining whether an area is Standard or Small Standard

For the purposes of distinguishing between Standard or Small Standard, the area to be used will be the total of:

- The proposed area of new contiguous afforestation
- Any contiguous areas afforested with public funding within the last 10 years
- Any other contiguous areas approved for afforestation at the time of application

**'Contiguous areas'** for the purposes of EWGS are those where any part of their boundaries comes within 30m of each other or they are not separated by a physical boundary that prevents management as one unit. Such barriers are metalled public roads, un-bridged watercourses or unnavigable terrain.

## Additional Contribution criteria

<b>Priority locations close to people</b> <sup>1</sup>	To be eligible for this Additional Contribution the site of the new woodland must be located: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the National Forest area or</li> <li>• In a Community Forest area or</li> <li>• Within 8 km of the homes of 100,000 people</li> </ul>
<b>Public access use where there is a demand</b> <sup>2</sup>	To be eligible for this Additional Contribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The woodland must be appropriately located where there is a demand for public access</li> <li>• The woodland specification must be designed to fulfil the Community woodland category</li> <li>• The woodland must be accessible for free, quiet enjoyment by the public (including dogs on leads) during daylight hours for 11 months of each year</li> <li>• The applicant must agree to allow access for 30 years from first payment of the grants</li> </ul>
<b>South West Ancient Woodland Priority Areas (AWPA)</b> <sup>3</sup>	To be eligible for this Additional Contribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The woodland must be located within one of the four AWPAs in South West Region</li> <li>• The woodland must be inside or contiguous to a mapped habitat network</li> <li>• The woodland must be designed to fulfil the Native woodland category</li> </ul>
<b>South West Forest</b>	To be eligible for this Additional Contribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The woodland must be located within the South West Forest Area</li> <li>• The proposal must be scored against the specific criteria for this Additional Contribution (the value of which depends on the score achieved)</li> <li>• You are not eligible for any other Additional Contributions</li> </ul>

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> You can find out if your new woodland is close to people by using the Land Information Search (LIS) on the EWGS website. When you enter the area you intend to plant and run a search, the report will tell you whether you are close to 100,000 people.
- <sup>2</sup> Appropriate locations for woodlands with public access will be those where the ratio of area of existing woodland with free public access, to the local resident population, is less than 1 hectare per 500 people. A zone of 8 km around the proposed woodland site will be used to estimate these values. Guidance on how to find out the local population is available in Operations Note 1 which is available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments). The Land Information Search (LIS) on the EWGS website will tell you the area of accessible woodland within 8km of your proposed woodland.
- <sup>3</sup> The priority areas lie within the Cotswolds, Dartmoor and Exmoor. Maps showing the priority areas and habitat networks are available from [www.forestry.gov.uk-swe](http://www.forestry.gov.uk-swe) or your local South West FC office.

## Applying more than one Additional Contribution

Unless the eligibility criteria of an Additional Contribution says otherwise, more than one Contribution may be applied.

# Farm Woodland Payment Eligibility

Farm Woodland Payments are not grants, they are compensation payments for the loss of agricultural income as a result of afforesting agricultural land. On the other hand, EWGS Woodland Creation Grants are contributions towards the standard cost of actually planting and looking after the trees.

The tree planting proposals must meet the requirements for EWGS Woodland Creation Grant in all respects.

Eligibility for FWP and the level of FWP payment is determined by 4 factors:

- Whether the land is in agricultural use
- Whether the applicant is a farmer or non-farmer
- The current land use
- Where the land is located

## What is agricultural land?

For EWGS purposes, 'agricultural land' is specified as land used for horticulture, fruit growing, arable cropping, seed growing, dairy farming, livestock breeding and keeping, the use of the land as grazed land, meadowland, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds or the use of land as woodland where that is ancillary to the use of the land for other agricultural activities. Set-aside land is also included.

Letting land to another person to carry out an agricultural activity, where you retain some responsibility for the management of the land, e.g. letting land on a grazing licence or short term tenancy for grazing, is also considered to be an agricultural activity.

## Farmer or non-farmer?

### Farmer

A farmer is defined as a person who derives at least 25% of their gross income from farming, taking account of all the land that they farm in England.

### Non-farmer

A non-farmer is a person that does not meet the above definition and are limited to a maximum FWP rate of 150 euros per hectare per year. The limit is applied at the land parcel level and not aggregated over the whole application e.g. FWP on unimproved land will receive £60 per hectare per year, but FWP on arable land will receive the sterling equivalent of 150 euros per hectare

### Landlords and Tenants

In the case of an agricultural or farm business tenancy, it is the tenant and not the landlord who is eligible to apply, but the landlord's written consent (preferably as a party to the application) is required prior to any grant agreement being made. Tenants are recommended to take legal advice before applying for the scheme and should be aware that they may be liable to repay the Woodland Creation Grant if their tenancy ends before the EWGS agreement and their successor is unwilling to take over the agreement.

### Share Farmers

In the case of share-farmers, each farmer must be party to the application and normally one farmer will be the main agreement contact on behalf of the others. All parties will be required to sign the EWGS agreement.

## What is the land use?

For the purposes of FWP, there are four types of land:

- a. **Arable land** This is defined as land that used to be eligible for the Arable Area Payments Scheme (AAPS)

- b. Improved Grassland** Outside the Less Favoured Areas (LFAs), improved grassland that contains areas where over half the sward comprises either singly or in mixture, ryegrass, cocksfoot, timothy or white clover. Within the LFAs improved grassland that contains areas where over one third of the sward comprises either singly or in mixture, ryegrass, cocksfoot, timothy or white clover.

Grassland within the LFAs not qualifying under this definition may still be eligible if it has been 'improved' by management practices such as liming and top dressing, provided that there is not a significant presence of sensitive plant species indicative of native unimproved grassland. Further information and a list of these sensitive species can be obtained from your local FC office. Such land must have been 'improved' at least three years before the date of application

- c. Other Cropped land** This includes agricultural cropped land that has not been eligible for the Arable Area Payments Scheme.
- d. Unimproved Land** This is agricultural land that does not meet either of the definitions at (a) or (b) above, e.g. unimproved grazing land. Unimproved land (like any other land type) can only be eligible for EWGS Woodland Creation Grants if there is no environmental loss arising from the afforestation proposed.

## Location of the land

Certain parts of the country are classed as 'Less favoured Areas' (LFA), where farming is affected by significant natural handicaps e.g. low soil productivity or poor climatic conditions. Less favoured areas are further divided into an intermediate level of handicap ('Disadvantaged Area') and extreme level of handicap ('Severely Disadvantaged Area').

## Exclusions

The following circumstances are ineligible for Farm Woodland Payments under EWGS:

- a. Non-agricultural land.
- b. Applicants cannot apply for FWP on land which they are renting out to another person for their exclusive occupation.
- c. Land resumed from a tenant by means of a contestable notice to quit, which was the subject of a counter-notice by the tenant. In these circumstances no EWGS Woodland Creation Grants can be paid either. This exclusion will not apply however where the Agricultural Land Tribunal has consented to the operation of the notice to quit on 'greater hardship' grounds, or where the notice is an incontestable notice to quit where the land was resumed for development purposes.
- d. Where the aims and obligations of other schemes or legislation (for example, SSSIs, subsidies and land management payments under the Stewardship Scheme or previous licences and grants) would be frustrated or adversely affected by the planting of trees on the land.

**Applicants must check that any necessary permission has been obtained, and that there are no legal or contractual obligations that would prevent the planting or long-term management of trees on the land.**

## Minimum and maximum areas

There is no minimum or maximum area but all applications are subject to environmental considerations and budget funding restrictions.

## Grants

Woodland Creation Grant categories	Rate per hectare Broadleaves	Rate per hectare Conifers
Standard Small Standard Native Community woodland	£1800	£1200
Special Broadleaved Woodland	£700	n/a

Additional Contributions	Rate per hectare (in addition to the rates above)
Priority locations woods close to people	£500
Public access where there is a demand	£500
South West ancient woodland priority areas	£1000 <sup>1</sup>
South West Forest	Variable £100 to £2000

Farm Woodland Payments – Compensation rate per hectare per year <sup>2</sup> (in addition to the rates above)			
Land category	Outside LFA	LFA (Disadvantaged Areas)	LFA (Severely Disadvantaged Areas)
Arable land	£300	£230	£160
Improved grassland	£260	£200	£140
Other cropped land	£260	£200	£140
Unimproved land	£60	£60	£60

### Notes

- 1 A maximum of 10% of the total SW Woodland Creation Grant budget will be allocated to this Additional Contribution.
- 2 Non farmers will be limited to a maximum payment rate of 150 euros per hectare per year - please see page 6 of this guidance for more information.

## Periods and rates for Farm Woodland Payments

FWP payments are made during Oct/Nov of each planting year, further detail on the timing of payments are given in the guidance for completing an application under Pyear (column 13).

Work Groups comprising more than 50% broadleaves by area will receive 15 annual payments. Work Groups comprising 50% or less broadleaves by area or areas in the Special Broadleaved category will receive 10 annual payments. Cricket Bat Willow is not eligible for Farm Woodland Payments.

Where Farm Woodland Payment and set aside are located on the same area of land, the annual farm woodland grant payments must be reduced by an amount equivalent to the SPS set aside payment for that year. Further details on this are available in *Operations Note 16*, which can be found in the EWGS document library ([www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments))

The rates of annual payment will be reviewed at least every five years to take into account relevant factors including trends in farm income from comparable agricultural land. The rates of annual payment could, therefore, go up or down during the lifetime of the agreement. Any changes to the rates will only affect payments made after the change comes into force.

# Making an application

**Before applying** for an EWGS both you and your land must be registered with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). The *General Guide to EWGS* explains the requirements of the RPA in more detail.

The application comprises the completed EWGS forms, completed self-scoring forms as applicable and an acceptable map. Forms are available from FC offices or from the FC website [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs).

The applicant will need to complete forms *EWGS 1* and *EWGS 7* and provide an Ordnance Survey MasterMap® showing the proposed woodland on the property. For 2008, the closing date for receipt of applications is 30 September 2008. Completed applications must be received by this date.

The requirements for an acceptable map are set out in the *General Guide to EWGS* in your applicant's pack. Base maps of the required quality can be obtained free of charge from the Forestry Commission by completing a request form. This request form is found in the *General Guide to EWGS*, which is available from FC offices or from the FC website. This guide explains the EWGS map requirements more fully.

## Scoring

The FC uses a scoring system to rank applications for Woodland Creation Grants. The highest-ranked applications, that fit within the funding available, are taken forward to be considered for grant support. Applicants should complete more than one scoring form if some areas in the application would score significantly differently from others due to their design or location.

Woodland Officers will normally visit the site to check the proposals and score. They may be able to offer advice on how your proposals can achieve more points and hence increase the chance of being taken forward. The earlier your application is received, the greater the chance of receiving our advice. Later applications are unlikely to be visited before the applications are ranked, and we will consider them on the basis of the score you have submitted. If your score is found to be incorrect, there is a risk that the proposals may fall below the minimum score and the application will subsequently be rejected.

The scoring form and associated guidance is available from the FC website [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs) and FC offices.

Most areas of England currently use the same scoring criteria with 6 points allocated for regional priorities. Information about these priorities can be found on the back of each regional scoring form.

East England, however, has a regionally focused scoring form, which should be used for all applications for WCG on land within the East of England Region. This is available from the FC website [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs) and the East England Regional Office.

### Fast Track Score

Each region has a 'Fast track score' which is published on the EWGS website or available from your FC office. If high scoring applications achieve the fast track score or more and there are funds still available, the application will be processed before the 30 September 2008 deadline is reached and a grant offer made. If we receive a large number of high scoring applications relative to the budget available, the applications will be accepted on a first come first served basis.

### Applications below the Fast Track Score

Applications that fall below the Fast track score will be held until the 30 September deadline. The highest scoring ones will be accepted up to the budget available. Low scoring applications that deliver little public may benefit will not be accepted, even if there is funding available. Acceptance of low scoring applications are at the FC's discretion.

## Completing the Woodland Creation Grant form (EWGS 7)

### Page 1

**Item 1 Property Name and Application No.**

Enter the property name and application number as per the 'General Details' form (EWGS 1).

**Item 2 Case Ref. No.**

Applicants should leave this blank.

**Item 3**

This section is for general prescriptions of the proposals. Applicants can refer to these prescriptions when entering the new woodland details overleaf to avoid repetition. See the guidance for Column 16 before completing this question.

### Pages 2 & 3

**Column 4 Work Group**

Use a letter to identify each work group. A Work Group is simply a convenient way of showing that all the detailed work elements (specification, rates, timing and claims etc.) are all the same and can be applied to one or more subcompartments. If parts of your woodland proposals are different in some way (e.g. different land use category, grant type, species mix, planting season and claim year) these should be separated out into different subcompartments and entered under a different work group.

**Column 5 Current land use**

Please insert the relevant code to tell us what the land is currently used for. All the subcompartments in the Work Group must be the same (see notes on Column 6).

<b>Agricultural</b>	<b>Arable land</b> Land previously eligible for the Arable Area Payments Scheme (AAPS)	<b>AL</b>
	<b>Other cropped land</b> Cropped Land which was previously ineligible for the Arable Area Payments Scheme	<b>CL</b>
	<b>Improved grassland</b>	<b>IG</b>
	<b>Unimproved land</b> Farmed land that does not qualify as arable land, or other cropped land, or improved grassland	<b>UL</b>
<b>Non- agricultural</b>	<b>Industrial or mineral</b> Land previously used for industry or mineral extraction	<b>IM</b>
	<b>Other non-agricultural use</b> (e.g. public parks, school grounds)	<b>ON</b>

**Column 6 Subcompartments in the Work Group**

List all the subcompartments that are in this Work Group. The areas must have been entered on page 4 of the *General Details Form – EWGS 1* and they must be clearly shown on the application map(s).

**Column 7 Area of Work Group**

Enter the total area of all the subcompartments included in this Work Group. The FC will measure the areas from the maps but applicants should enter their estimate here.

**Column 8 Woodland to be created**

Enter the EWGS woodland category for this work group.

**Standard**  
**Small Standard**  
**Native\***  
**Community**  
**Special Broadleaved**

\* *If Native woodland is to be created, also enter the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) that best represents the type of native woodland proposed. The NVC type proposed will need to match the drainage of the site, the pH of the soil, the climate and the species range and mix. Further guidance on NVC is detailed in Operations Note 4, which is available on the FC website ([www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments)) or FC offices.*

**Column 9 Farm Woodland Payments**

Tick if all the land in this work group is eligible for these payments.

**Column 10 Additional Contributions**

Tick the additional grant(s) that you wish to apply for. For the South West Forest AC enter 'SWF' in the 'Other' column. See earlier sections in this guide on eligibility.

**Column 11 Species Mix**

Enter the species to be used for this work group and the estimated percentage of the total work group area for each. Use separate lines for:

- Each tree species that will comprise 20% or more of the woodland. Other species can be grouped together using the Species Group codes for this purpose. Where Species Group codes are used, list the species included in this mix in Column 16
- Woody Shrubs (WSH)
- Open Ground (OG) which is to be part of the grant-aided area.

*See table of species and codes overleaf.*

**Species codes for entry into  
Column 11**

<b>Species Groups</b>					
Species	Code	Species	Code	Species	Code
Native Mixed Broadleaves	NBL	Mixed Broadleaves	MB	Other broadleaves not in the main list	XB
		Mixed Conifers	MC	Other conifers not in the main list	XC

<b>Other Elements</b>		
Species	Code	Description
Woody Shrubs	WSH	Native woody shrubs and minor trees appropriate to the site, i.e. hawthorn, blackthorn, holly, dogwood, alder buckthorn, purging buckthorn, spindle, guelder-rose, wild privet, elder
Open Ground	OG	Managed open space (note the limits on grant-aided OG for each woodland category in the table on page 3)

<b>Broadleaf Species</b>					
Species	Code	Species	Code	Species	Code
Alder	AR	Wild Cherry	WCH	Sessile Oak	SOK
Common Alder	CAR	Elm	EM	Red Oak	ROK
Grey Alder	GAR	Hazel	HAZ	Poplar	PO
Ash	AH	Hornbeam	HBM	Rowan	ROW
Aspen	ASP	Lime	LI	Sweet Chestnut	SC
Beech	BE	Small-leaved Lime	SLI	Sycamore	SY
Birch	BI	Field Maple	FM	Willow	WL
Downy Birch	PBI	Norway Maple	NOM	Goat Willow	GWL
Silver Birch	SBI	Pedunculate Oak	POK	Cricket Bat Willow	CBW

<b>Conifer Species</b>					
Species	Code	Species	Code	Species	Code
Western Red Cedar	RC	European Larch	EL	Scots Pine	SP
Lawson Cypress	LC	Hybrid Larch	HL	Norway Spruce	NS
Douglas Fir	DF	Japanese Larch	JL	Sitka Spruce	SS
Noble Fir	NF	Lodgepole Pine	LP	Yew	YEW

**Column 12 Percentage to be established by natural regeneration**

If it is intended to encourage and include naturally seeded trees as some part of the established woodland, estimate the proportion of the work group area to be established in this way. This information ensures that any later inspection can take these additional trees into account.

**Column 13 Planting season**

Specify the planting season in which you will carry out the work. The season extending from 1st October 2008 to 30th September 2009 is noted as P2009. Applications for the 2008 round must include proposals and should go beyond planting season P2009. We normally expect the majority of work to be carried out in the coming planting season i.e. P2009.

**Note:** The first FWP payment following a successful claim for WCG is made during October/ November of the selected planting season e.g. FWP paid in Oct/Nov 2009 for P2009.

**Column 14 Claim Year**

Insert the financial year in which you intend to claim the grant for the whole of this work group. The Claim Year from 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010, for example, is written as 09/10.

Each planting season spans the start and end of two Claim Years so either may legitimately be chosen. **It is a fundamental requirement that the work group must be completed before grant can be claimed, and the claim must be submitted before the end of the designated Claim Year.**

If this is not possible for any reason, the applicant must seek an early amendment to the agreement or no right to the grant will exist under the EWGS contract.

It is important to note that we cannot guarantee approval of requests to defer claim years. Whilst we will consider reasonable requests, it is at the FC's discretion and subject to considerations such as budget availability.

Consequently where it is planned to plant in the spring, the FC strongly advises applicants to nominate the later Claim Year (for instance: nominate Claim Year 09/10 (1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010) for any planting in the spring of 2009.

For applications received by 30 September 2008 only the Claim Years 09/10 and 10/11 are available, and at least one Work Group in the application must be for Claim Year 09/10. The FC will tell you if the funds for your nominated Claim Year are already fully allocated and will offer alternatives if that is possible.

**Column 15 Standard proposals**

On the back page of the form is a set of standard proposals or specifications that can quickly be incorporated into the application by entering the reference in this column. This should help reduce the amount of text you need to add to your application and ensures key information is provided.

**Column 16 Additional details**

Use this column to note any changes to the Standard Proposals used and to make clear any particular details that help describe the work accurately. Such details might include:

- List of species included in Species Group codes (e.g. MB or WSH)
- A description of how the species will be distributed across the site
- The proposed ground preparation for natural or direct seeding of trees
- Details of public access provisions (e.g. path maintenance, access points, signage etc)

Applicants may also set out their own work specifications in this column rather than nominate standard specifications but these must include sufficient information to accurately describe the work details.

***General details about the work can also be entered under Question 3 and referenced back to this column to avoid repetition.***

# Claims and payments

## Claims

Applicants may submit claims as soon as the work has been completed. The FC prefers a single claim for all the woodland creation work agreed for each Claim Year. Incomplete work may not be claimed for until the agreement is amended to reflect the situation.

***Claims that are late or delayed because of unacceptable work standards may forfeit all payments if they cannot be approved and paid in the correct Claim Year.***

Where agreed, the first FWP payment will be made in the autumn following WCG payment and will continue annually thereafter for the agreed period. The claim for FWP must be renewed every five years and the FC will remind applicants in time to make subsequent FWP claims. Late submission of claims may result in the loss of those payments where the due date has passed before the claim is received. If WCG is not paid for any reason then FWP cannot commence.

## Payments

The area for payment will be based on the area in your submitted claim and the area approved in the contract. Payments are subject to adjustment if more accurate measurement in future highlights a difference, or alignment with the Rural Land Register is required.

### **Woodland Creation Grants and Additional Contributions**

These contributions are generally paid in **two** instalments: 80% of the total may be claimed upon satisfactory completion of the planting or initial works, the remaining 20% may be claimed five years after the first payment, provided the area has been maintained and established as agreed.

The 2nd instalment is subject to the same claim year rules as the 1st instalment. If it is not claimed in the correct claim year we cannot guarantee approval of the claim. A formal amendment must be submitted to defer the claim year. Whilst all reasonable requests to defer will be considered, it is at our discretion and subject to considerations such as budget availability.

Woodland created under the special broadleaved category is paid grant in one single instalment. This payment will include any Additional Contribution in full.

### **Farm Woodland Payments**

These payments are paid annually for 10 or 15 years. A review of average agricultural income is carried out at least every 5 years. This may result in a change in payment rate for subsequent payments, as FWP is a payment for agricultural income forgone.

### **Obligation period following payment**

Once the first WCG payment is made the contractual obligations on the applicant are to establish the woodland and maintain it for at least 10 years in the case of WCG. For FWP payments the obligation to retain the trees and cease agricultural activity on the land starts from the date of first payment of WCG and extends for 20 years (in the case of areas receiving 10 FWP payments) or 30 years (in the case of areas receiving 15 FWP payments). For woodlands in receipt of Additional Contribution for public access, the obligation to provide that access will exist for 30 years from first payment of the WCG.

If it is discovered within the contractual period that the woodland has not been established or maintained as agreed or that the intended use of the land and the woodland has been changed without prior agreement, then the FC may reclaim all the relevant grants paid with interest and cease to pay further grants on the areas concerned. Where this action would remove the eligibility for other grants these will also be reclaimed.

### **Selling land on which there is an EWGS contract**

Guidance on what happens in the event of land sale is detailed in the general guidance *EWGS 1* and *Operations Note 14 – Change of Ownership Under EWGS*, available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments).

If a non-farmer purchases land which is subject to Farm Woodland Payments, they will receive the appropriate ‘non-farmer’ rate of Farm Woodland Payment as explained in page 6 of this guidance.

## **Getting help**

The FC will offer advice and help you come to decisions about your options and opportunities for woodland creation but cannot help you draw up your application. Obtaining professional assistance is likely to be a worthwhile investment particularly if you intend to source plants and materials at industry rates.

The application forms and guidance are available from [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs). Further guidance can also be found in *EWGS Operations Notes* which are available in the EWGS document library ([www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments)) or from FC offices.

## **Further advice**

The Forestry Commission website contains all of the information regarding EWGS and the forms needed to apply, in particular:

[www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs) – EWGS homepage

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments) – EWGS document library

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-regions](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-regions) – Regional webpages that include details of regionally focussed grants

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-lis](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-lis) – The Land Information Search tool, telling you about special designations, features and other grant schemes that are displayed in map form

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-grants](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-grants) – FC England Grants and Regulations homepage.

This provides links to all aspects of woodland regulations, grants available and public registers of felling/planting proposals

If you do not have access to the internet, you can request any of the information from your local Forestry Commission office.

We recommend getting professional advice on woodland management and grants. A list of national and regional professional organisations are listed at

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice) or available from your local FC office.

This document is for information only and does not constitute an agreement of any form nor does it confer any rights. It is intended as a guide to help applicants decide whether the grant is applicable to them and whether the main requirements of any grant agreement can be met. The information is subject to change. Full and current details of the grant scheme and the requirements of any EWGS grant contract that may be made between the applicant(s) and the Forestry Commission arising from an application to the grant scheme can be found at [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs)



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