



English Woodland Grant Scheme

Woodland Improvement Grant

August 2008

Community Access 70

North East England

Purpose This leaflet provides guidance on how to apply for this regionally focussed grant. It supplements the generic guidance on Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG), which is available from the [EWGS web site](#).

Introduction The health benefits of being in a natural environment are widely known. Forest research publications - 'Health and Wellbeing: Trees, Woodlands and Natural Spaces' (Tabbush, O'Brian, 2002) and 'Trees and Woodlands: Nature's Health Service' (O'Brian, 2004) demonstrate how forests have a positive impact on people's physical, mental and social well being.

Woodland creation and/or management can be a focal point for community activity, building greater community cohesion and can provide opportunities for the acquisition of new skills and personal development.

There are already several community lead woodland initiatives in the North East where local groups are actively involved with managing local woodlands.

The objective of this grant is to provide the support required to encourage more communities to become actively involved with woodland creation or management and offer existing groups further assistance.

Whether your community group simply wants to plant trees or get more heavily involved in managing a local wood there are some essential steps that need to be followed in order for projects to be successful. These include:

- Finding a site and getting permission
- Talking to professionals
- Setting-out objectives
- Consulting with the wider community
- Obtaining funding
- Planning the work
- Initiating and promoting the project

In addition to this grant other types of grant in the EWGS family may be available. For example, Woodland Assessment Grant may be used to contribute to stakeholder meetings or surveys and Woodland Planning Grant may be available to help with the cost of creating a long-term woodland plan in woodlands of 3ha or greater in size.

This grant will contribute to the costs of work associated with community use or involvement within woodlands or on sites where new woodlands are being created.

Eligibility In order to be eligible for this grant applicants must meet the following:

- The general criteria and conditions for Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) apply – refer to the WIG guidance for further details
- The application must be supported by a local community group
- The community group must have a signed agreement with the woodland owner
- The application must always be made in the name of the woodland owner with whom the contract will be signed
- The FC normally expects a management plan to assess the appropriateness and priority of proposals, as well as put them in a wider context. If there is no plan, the woodland should have a Condition, Opportunities & Threats (COT) Assessment undertaken. An [electronic version of the COT](#) is available for download in the WMG section of the website www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wmg

Grant will be paid at 70% of Standard Costs for the agreed items in the proposed work schedule. The operations and standard costs are listed in *Operations Note 9 – Standard Costs*, which is available from the [EWGS document library](#).

This WIG fund is limited to payments in the financial years 1st April 2009 to 31 March 2012. Claims must be received before 28 February in the financial year in which payment is due.

Funds are limited and will be awarded on a first come first served basis. The maximum contribution for each application is £1500.

How to Apply Both EWGS 1 General Details form and EWGS 5 Woodland Improvement Grant form must be completed and submitted with an OS Master Map ® showing the areas for which grant is sought. Applications must be submitted by the 28 February in the financial year before the first payment is due.

Further Advice and Information Further information can be obtained from your local Woodland Officer by contacting the Regional office at Rothbury on 01669 621591 or the Southern Area office at Hamsterley on 01388 488721.

Other Advice The EWGS website www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs contains all the information needed to apply for grant support. Details relating to grants specific to NE England are available at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/northeastengland> 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 is available at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/inf-74adb> or from your local office at: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-6VMDZD>.

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