

Customer Liaison Events 2013

FAQ

Pre-emptive Larch Felling

Q1: Is there a potential for pre-emptive felling of larch? The larch will have no economic value if we wait for it to be infected before felling.

PO advised that there is an opportunity to address this question in the review of the national policy and is something that is being considered.

A number of agents expressed the need for consolidation and consensus between FCE, FCS and FCW policy. This was a recurring message and one which couldn't be guaranteed. PO agreed to raise this issue with Andy Hall.

NELMs

Q2: Has FCE consulted with FCS when developing NELMs. FCS has had a similar scheme running for many years and agents don't want to see the same problems which they have faced in the past.

FC response was that other integrated schemes had been looked at including examples in Scotland and Natural Resources Wales

Woodland Management Plan

Q3. Agents asked we could get rid of the Woodland Management Grant as they would prefer a 10 year scheme period as apposed to just 5 years.

The Higher Level Stewardship Scheme (HLS) was highlighted as this scheme offers European money over a 10 year period. ELMS agreements are all likely to be 5 years.

Current thinking is that NELM's agreements will last for 5 years.

IT Training

Q4: With the new IT systems being put in place for grants, agents wanted to know if adequate training would be provided, particularly for those unfamiliar IT in general.

Training on the new system is within scope of those responsible for designing the new IT system..

Switching Between Existing and New Grants

Q5: Agents wanted to know if it would be possible to switch to the new grant despite already being in an existing one. Or if it would make more sense to wait until the new grant is in place.

KM explained that for those considering waiting for the new grant it would be very much at their own risk as the selection criteria is likely to be stricter and budgets not yet known. KM later elaborated that selection will be based on targeting and eligibility/selection criteria as opposed to a first come first served basis.

NELM and Research

Q6: An agent wanted to know if there were any avenues in NELM's for Ancient Woodland research. He felt this was essential as they are a remarkable resource, offering fuel, biodiversity and other intrinsic value.

There is consideration currently to offer an assessment grant in support of surveys to support data gathering and subsequent management requirements.

Juniper Planting Guidance

Q7: Agent wanted to know if there was any guidance available for juniper planting.

Yes – Scottish advice published, awaiting Defra clearance for England revision, but we are happy to share the final draft on request.

NELMS

Q8: If NELMS is to focus on improvement how can we maintain woodlands in good condition?

Current thinking is to use grant support for improvements. We need to work towards maintaining woodland condition through economic and commercial activities.

Natural Regeneration Funding

Q9: Natural Regeneration – why not fund?

Activities to support natural regeneration are within scope – but just supporting something without a cost cannot be.

Plant Health

Q10: Chalara and Coppice

There is guidance on the website

Management Plans

Q11: Can we still use our own templates?

Yes – as long as it includes all of the relevant information with reference to UKFS and management planning.

Q12: Mapping – issues with transferring shape files?

Need to ensure that this can be done with the new system.

European Protected Species

Q13: At the last training event we were informed that there was a new form being developed – what is the progress of this?

The new form plus guidance is now uploaded on the web at:

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-protectedspecies>

Look on the right hand side for Operation Site Assessment guidance and form.

CAP System

Q14: Will the new digital system include digital maps?

Yes. CAP system looking to engage with customers to make it useable.

Grey Squirrel Control

Q6: Will there be grant aid for grey squirrel control?

Support will be provided in relation to protecting red squirrel populations. However funding is difficult to secure when dealing with the grey squirrel impact on timber as this is mainly commercial and not environmental.

Certification

Q7: Will there be a need for certification?

Defra will decide whether it is needed or not. However certification should not be an influencing factor.