

EWGS 4: Woodland Regeneration Grant Interim Arrangements for 2014/15 and 2015/16

1 Purpose

Woodland Regeneration Grant (WRG) contributes to the costs of making changes to the composition of woodland within the normal cycle of felling and woodland regeneration.

The regeneration of felled areas represents a great opportunity to change the woodland and improve its capacity for sustainable management and the delivery of public benefits. The objective of WRG is to support desirable change and increase a woodlands capacity for sustainable management, arising from the appropriate regeneration of woodlands.

2 Interim Arrangements

Due to the significant uptake of WRG in previous years and the need to maintain funding for higher priority grant types, funding for WRG is now limited to the 14/15 and 15/16 years for **restocking sites related to plant health issues only**.

This guidance sets out:

- revised eligibility requirements for WRG in relation to Plant Health;
- payment rates;
- the extension of the Plant Health related supplements to include *Chalara* infected sites.

These arrangements are subject to ongoing budget availability

3 Eligibility

- The application must be approved by the Forestry Commission (FC) before any work takes place – see [Operations Note 34](#);
- The area of broadleaved woodland must not be reduced as a result of felling and replacing woodland areas;
- Any felling or pre-clearance of the woodland area must be undertaken in accordance with Felling Regulations and good practice set out in the UK Forestry Standard and associated guidelines;
- Work must also comply with the [Ancient & Native Woodland Practice Guidance](#) (published in November 2010);
- The restocking grant must be claimed before 31st March 2016.

3.1 Currently eligible plant health issues

- Confirmed *Chalara fraxinea* infected ash:
confirmed via: previous site related support to remove infected stock with a Plant Health Woodland Improvement Grant (PH WIG); or photographic evidence of symptomatic trees and photographic evidence linking the symptomatic tree to recognisable feature(s) on the site; or, if one has been issued, a letter from the FC or FERA confirming infection on the site;
- Confirmed (via Statutory Plant Health Notice [SPHN]) *Phytophthora ramorum* infected larch and *Phytophthora kernoviae*.

The FC may, at its discretion, offer grant for other plant health issues.

3.2 Situations not eligible for Woodland Regeneration Grant

- Where tree removal has been undertaken in an unsustainable or insensitive way that is incompatible with the status of the site or features on the site. This includes woodland that has been illegally felled;
- Where proposed or implemented work does not meet the UK Forestry Standard;
- Where the eligibility criteria for Plant Health has not been met.

4 Payment rates

The grant rate is dependent on whether the site is designated as ancient woodland and the type of species the woodland is being restocked with.

Restock species	Ancient woodland site	Non-ancient woodland site	Plant Health Supplement for infected sites
Native woodland	£1750	£1000	£1500
Non-native woodland	£0	£500	

The supplement, which reflects the increased biosecurity requirements on these sites, can be applied to all of the basic restocking rates, so restocking of plantation on an ancient woodland site (PAWS) with conifer on a *Phytophthora* affected site will receive £1500 per ha.

5 Restocking standards

5.1 Natural Regeneration

- We will support the replacement of infected natural regeneration with planted stock of an alternative species;

- We will only fund restocking where it uses planted material.

5.2 Native Woodland

Native woodland is defined as in the Ancient & Native Woodland Practice Guide, which means:

- A maximum of 40% “advancing native species” (e.g. beech) or “honorary natives” (e.g. sycamore) are allowed;
- Of that 40%, a maximum of half can be non-natives (i.e. 20% of the total area) providing they are not invasive and are present in the woodland already;
- These percentages apply to the planted area and do not include any open space;
- Conifer may be used as nurse species and in ancient or native woodland the principles set out in the practice guide must be followed. Whatever the woodland type and proposals, the key principle remains that existing features and values must not be damaged;
- Highly-productive broadleaves planted as a commercial crop at wide spacing (e.g. poplar and cricket bat willows) are, for the sake of grant rate, considered as ‘non-natives’ and would be paid pro-rata on area.

5.3 Woodland Resilience

We aim to increase the resilience of our woodlands through an appropriate increase in species diversity. We will be looking to support restocking to create restocking coupes of three or more species. We will still support restocking where the planting of one or two species is still in accord with creating a resilient woodland property as described in an FC-approved management plan.

5.4 Mixtures

- If over 80% native species are planted, it will be paid at full native rate (£1750 or £1000). If less than 20% native species, it will be paid at the full non-native rate (£500 or £0). Between 80% and 20% we will pay grant according to the percentage planted e.g. if the site is being restocked with 70% native, we will pay 70% of the restock area at the native rate, and 30% at the non-native rate;
- On ancient woodland sites, if the native proportion of the restocking species falls below 60%, the plant health supplement only (where applicable) will be payable.

5.5 Open space

Normally open space is limited to 20% or below when restocking, but increased flexibility up to 40% may be allowed for exceptional and clearly identified purposes. Proposals should clearly differentiate between temporary and permanent open space (the latter means areas that will be actively managed to ensure it remains open). Productive potential is an important consideration when determining the appropriate amount of open space.

5.6 Stocking density and spacing

Stocking and planting spacing should be matched to the objectives and desired outcomes; examples are given in the Ancient Woodland Practice Guide, including:

- At least 2500 per ha for the production of high quality hardwood timber;
- 1000 – 2500 per ha where timber is desirable but quality is not so important;
- 500 – 1000 per ha where the aim is simply to establish native tree canopy;
- A minimum of 2500 trees per hectare will be expected for conifer restocking.

The stocking density must reflect any approved management plan that is in place for the property, and there must be evidence of silvicultural practice that supports the management plan objectives.

Restocking below 1000 stems per hectare will be paid pro rata to the appropriate stocking levels as above.

6 Plant Health Supplement

In order to be eligible and claim the supplement for *Phytophthora* affected sites, you must meet the good practice guidelines set out in [Operations Note 24](#).

7 Making an application

Before starting an application, we recommend you check that funding is still available for the work you are planning. This will avoid wasted effort if funds are already fully subscribed. Contact your [local FC office](#) to find out if funding is still available for the grant type and claim year you wish to apply for.

An application includes completed forms and an acceptable map. Forms are available from FC Offices or from the FC website www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wrg.

An applicant will need to complete forms EWGS 1 and EWGS 4, and provide an Ordnance Survey MasterMap® showing the boundary of all the woodland to be felled and / or regenerated.

The FC cannot accept maps that are not on Ordnance Survey MasterMap®. Base maps of the required quality can be obtained free of charge from the FC by completing a request form. This request form is in EWGS 1 – General Guide to EWGS, available at www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs. This guide explains the EWGS map requirements more fully.

8 Completing the Woodland Regeneration Grant form

Page 1

Item 1: Property Name and Application No.

Enter the property name and application number as per form EWGS 1.

Item 2: Case Ref. No.

Applicants should leave this blank.

This section is for the general prescriptions of the proposals. Applicants can refer to these prescriptions when entering the details of the new woodland overleaf to avoid repetition. See the guidance for Column 12 before completing this section.

Pages 2 & 3

Grouping operations

You should group sub-compartments together where the type of felling and regeneration are the same. Leave a blank line between each group of sub-compartments to show how they are grouped.

Column 4: Sub-compartments in the Work Group

List all the sub-compartments. The areas must be entered on page 4 of form EWGS 1 – General Details and they must show clearly on the application map(s).

Column 5: Estimated area

Enter the total area of each compartment/sub-compartment; they should match the Sub-compartment areas entered on page 4 of the form EWGS 1 – General Details. The FC will measure the areas from the maps but applicants should enter their estimate here.

Column 6: Area to be worked

Enter the estimated proportion of the sub-compartment area that is to be worked. For example, if 0.4 ha of a 1 ha compartment is to be clear felled and the rest of the compartment not worked, you should enter 40%. If the whole 1 ha compartment is to be thinned, you should enter 100%.

Column 7: Type of felling

Enter the code that describes the tree felling in this Work Group.

CF	Clear Felling	Removing all the trees from an area
RF	Regeneration Felling	Removing groups of trees from within an area
T	Thinning	Removing a small proportion evenly over an area
FC	Fell Coppice	Cutting stems to promote growth from the stump
FO	Felling other	Felling large single trees (e.g. on boundaries)
CCF	Continuous Cover Felling	Continuous felling of a wide range of ages and sizes

Column 8: Composition of felled area

You must provide a breakdown of the individual species, where they represent more than 10% of the canopy to be removed, in order to comply with the EU Timber regulations. Where individual species represent less than 10%, then add these together and refer to them as either mixed broadleaves or mixed conifer, but list the species e.g. 50% oak, 15% ash, 10% cherry, 25% mixed broadleaves (beech, elm, hornbeam and lime).

Column 9: Type of licence

Conditional licences are issued for felling activities where there is a need to regenerate the woodland. Enter 'C' (Conditional licence) to indicate that regeneration is intended.

Unconditional licences are issued for thinning activities where there is no need to regenerate the woodland. Occasionally the FC issues Unconditional licences where the felled area is not to be replaced. Unconditional licences for felling are only approved if there is a significant gain in public benefit. Enter 'U' (Unconditional licence) if this is the intention.

Column 10: Change in woodland type

This column sets the grant to be applied to the restocking or regeneration work. Using the notation in the tables below, specify both the 'From' and 'To' woodland types.

From	Notation
ASNW – Native	ASNW-Nat
PAWS	PAWS
Non-ancient Non-Native	NA-NN
Non-ancient Native	NA –Nat

To	Notation
Native	Nat
Non-native	NN
<i>Plant Health Rate</i>	<i>PH</i>

If you wish to apply for the Plant Health supplementary rate, please add 'PH' for Plant Health rate to the 'To' column.

Column 11: Preferred Claim Year

The claim years currently open are 14/15 and 15/16.

Column 12: Details of felling and restocking

Use this column to briefly describe the proposed felling for example, the intended outcome, felling method and species/age of trees to be felled. For sensitive sites, describe how the site, soil and remaining trees and coppice stools will be protected from damage.

For thinning operations, you should state the purpose of the operation, thinning intensity, method (e.g. mechanical, selective by stems, basal area, volume or canopy) and which species/age trees will be selected or retained.

Give details of the proposed restocking work such as:

- List of species (if you've used species groups in column 13);
- A description of the stocking density and how the species will be distributed across the site;

Column 13: Restocking mixture

Enter the replacement species to be used and the estimated percentage of the total 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 12;
- Woody Shrubs (WSH);
- Open Ground (OG) which is to be part of the grant-aided area.

Species codes for entry into Column 13

Species Groups					
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

Other elements		
Species	Code	Description
Woody Shrubs	WSH	Native woody shrubs and minor trees appropriate to the site i.e. hawthorn, blackthorn, holly, dogwood, alder, spindle, guilder-rose, wild privet, elder
Open Ground	OG	Managed open space. It's purpose and how it will be managed must be clearly described

Broadleaf species					
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	pendunculate oak	POK	cricket bat willow	CBW

Conifer species					
Species	Code	Species	Code	Species	Code
Western Red Cedar	RC	European larch	EL	Scots pine	SP
lawson cypres	LC	hybrid larch	HL	Norway spruce	NS
douglas fir	DF	Japanese larch	JL	sitka spruce	SS
grand fir	GF	corsican pine	CP	western hemlock	WH
noble fir	NF	lodgepole pine	LP	yew	YEW

Column 14:

This column was for natural regeneration but now should not be filled in as we are not encouraging natural regeneration on plant health sites.

9 Claims

Once the contract has been approved, applicants may submit claims as soon as the work has been completed. The FC prefers a single claim for all the WRG agreed for each Claim Year. Incomplete work may not be claimed until the agreement is amended to reflect the situation. Changes to claim year are subject to Operations Note 7 – Grant Budget Management Policy, available at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments. The FC cannot guarantee your amendment will be approved, as it is subject to grant rules and availability of funds.

10 Payments

Regeneration Grants are paid in one instalment upon satisfactory completion of the planting.

Once the first WRG payment is made the contractual obligations on the applicant are to establish the woodland and maintain it for a period of 10 years from the date of payment.

If it is discovered within the contractual period that the woodland has not been 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 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. We may also take other enforcement action using our powers under the Forestry Act – see below.

11 Felling Permissions

Felling Licences issued alongside EWGS contracts will be valid for 5 years from the date of contract approval and you will be expected to adhere to the restocking conditions irrespective of whether grant has been claimed. Felling that is linked to an approved management plan will provide 10 year felling approval.

In carrying out its statutory duties, the FC may refuse an application for a Felling Licence or issue a Felling Licence with conditions attached for the restocking or regeneration of the woodland. For Felling Licence applicants who disagree with FC decisions there is an

appeals procedure governing the resolution of these issues, details of which are set out in the FC booklet Tree Felling – Getting Permission available from www.forestry.gov.uk/england-fladocuments and FC offices.

If conditions attached to the felling licence are not met, the FC will use its enforcement powers under the Forestry Act. This may include demanding remedial work, issuing a Restocking Notice or criminal prosecution.

11.1 Cross compliance

Failure to comply with the Forestry Act is included in the Cross Compliance regulations. This means the Rural Payments Agency may impose penalties with regard to Single Payment Scheme payments on the property and any other Environmental Stewardship payments.

11.2 Tree Preservation Orders

If there is a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on any of the trees in the felling application (or if any of the trees are in a Conservation Area) applicants are advised to discuss the proposal with the Local Authority before applying. If you inform us on your application that a TPO exists or the trees are within a Conservation Area, the FC will consult with the Local Authority over the proposals. If the Felling Licence is issued then separate approval from the Local Authority will not be required.

If applicants do not tell the FC that a TPO exists, then any licence issued on that basis will be void and any tree felling may potentially be in contravention of the Felling Regulations and/or TPO. Any associated grant already paid will be reclaimed and also any associated grants due will be forfeited.

12 Getting help

The FC will offer advice and help you come to decisions about your options and opportunities for woodland regeneration but cannot help you draw up your application.

The application forms and guidance are available from www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs, as is more detailed guidance on this particular grant and the full FC code covering the operation of the EWGS.

13 Further advice:

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

- www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs - EWGS homepage.
- www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wrg - Woodland Regeneration Grant webpage.
- www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments – EWGS document library.
- www.forestry.gov.uk/england-regions – Regional webpages that include details of regionally focussed grants.

- 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 – 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 FC office.

We recommend getting professional advice on woodland management and grants. A list of national and regional professional organisations can be found at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice or is 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