

EWGS 4: Woodland Regeneration Grant Interim Arrangements for 2011

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, either by planting or natural seeding, represents a great opportunity to change the woodland and improve its capacity for sustainable management and public benefit delivery. The objective of Woodland Regeneration Grant is therefore to support desirable change and an increase in a woodland's capacity for sustainable management, arising from timely felling and appropriate regeneration of woodlands.

2 Changes for 2011

Woodland Regeneration Grant was launched in 2005. It has proved very successful in supporting woodland restocking, particularly the restoration of ancient woodland. The changes for 2011 have been introduced to:

- Adjust restocking practice to help deliver new and revised policy;
- Simplify the grant rates;
- Enable more flexibility in certain circumstances to better reflect good forestry practice, notably productive potential and woodland resilience;
- Enable the introduction of supplements for Phytophthora infected sites.

3 Eligibility

- The application must be approved by the FC before any work takes place.
- The area of broadleaved woodland must not be diminished as a result of felling and replacing woodland areas.
- Any felling or pre-clearance of the woodland area must be undertaken in accordance with the 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](#), which was published in November 2010.
- The restocking will be claimed before 31st March 2014.

Situations not eligible for Woodland Regeneration Grant:

WRG will normally be withheld:

- Where tree removal has been undertaken in unsustainable or insensitive ways that are incompatible with the status of the site or features on the site. This includes woodland that is illegally felled.
- Where proposed or implemented work does not meet the UK Forestry Standard, associated guidelines, or does not meet recognised good forestry practice.

4 Payment rates

The grant rate is dependant on whether the site is designated ancient woodland, and whether the type of woodland being restocking is native.

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

The supplement can be applied to all of the basic restocking rates, so restocking of PAWS with conifer on an Phytophthora affected site will receive £1500 / ha.

5 Restocking standards

Planting or natural seeding:

These methods are interchangeable as far as EWGS is concerned and can be used together or separately as required to make the restocking successful and meet the owner's objectives. The grant covers any method or mixture of methods that the FC and the applicant agree as suitable. In the case of natural regeneration, the grant contributes most towards ground preparation and protection, whereas with planting it contributes most towards the plants and protection.

In all cases in Ancient Woodlands and Ancient Woodland Sites, natural regeneration will be the preferred method of restocking. The FC will not approve proposals for regeneration by natural seeding where the potential for success is clearly very low, for example due to the distance or type of seed trees available.

Restock Species

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

- Up to 20% non-natives are allowed, providing they are not invasive;
- A maximum of 20% of the remaining 80% could be 'advancing native species (e.g. beech) or 'honorary natives' (e.g. sycamore), particularly if they are already present on the site. At this stage definitive rules (e.g. geographic spread of naturalised species) have not been set but will be reviewed and introduced if required.

Highly productive broadleaves planted as a commercial crop at wide spacing (e.g. poplar and cricket bat willows) are, for the sake of grant aid, considered as 'non natives' and would be paid pro-rata.

Conifer nurses may be used, and in ancient or native woodland the principles set out in the practice guide must be followed. What ever the woodland type and proposals, the key principle remains that existing features and values cannot be damaged.

Restocking should be with mixed species (minimum 2, normally at least 3) to increase resilience/adaptability to climate change, pests and diseases. A mixed species at landscape scale is essential to increase and maintain resilience. Species should be suited to the site conditions so they are productive as well as meeting other objectives.

Mixtures

If over 80% native species are planted, it will be paid at full native rate (£1750 or £1000). Below 80% 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%, we will not pay any grant.

Open space

Normally open space is limited to 20% or below when restocking, but increased flexibility up to 40% may be allowed for 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.

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 / ha for production of high quality hardwood timber;
- 1000 – 2500 / ha where timber is desirable but quality is not so important;
- 500 – 1000 / 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. Very small numbers of trees will not receive WRG but may attract Woodland Improvement Grant e.g. replanting a small number of future standards in a coppice with standard silvicultural system.

6 Phytophthora 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 preparing an application, we recommend you check that there is funding still available for the work you wish to propose. This will avoid wasted time preparing an application if funds are already fully subscribed. To find out whether there is funding still available for the grant type and claim year they wish to apply for, contact your [local FC office](#).

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

The 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 Ordnance Survey MasterMap®. 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 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 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 12 before completing this question.

Pages 2 & 3

Grouping operations

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

Column 4: Subcompartments in the Work Group

List all the subcompartments there are. 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/subcompartment; they should match the subcompartment 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 subcompartment 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
SF	Selective 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
FIT	Felling Individual Trees	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

Enter the estimated proportion of broadleaves and conifers to be felled. For example, if a mixed woodland (70% BL/30% CON) is to be thinned by removing half of the conifers, you should enter 100% CON.

Column 9: Type of licence

Licences normally carry a requirement to regenerate the area felled, or occasionally a replacement area. 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 replaced. Unconditional licences for felling are only approved if there is a significant public benefit gain to be had. 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 Phytophthora supplementary rate, please add 'PH' for Plant Health rate to the 'To' column.

Column 11: Preferred 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 2011 to 31 March 2012, for example, is written as 11/12. Each planting season spans the start and end of two Claim Years so either may legitimately be chosen.

Column 12: Details of felling and regeneration

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 regeneration 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;
- The proposed ground preparation for natural or direct seeding of trees.

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 Cypress	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:

If it is intended to encourage and include naturally seeded trees as part of the established woodland, estimate the proportion of the work group area to be established in this way.

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 funding availability.

10 Payments

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

Once the first WRG payment is made the contractual obligations on the applicant are to establish the woodland and maintain it for 10 years from payment. Where natural regeneration is used, however, the establishment of a suitable stocking of new trees may take longer than this. In these cases the FC will either request that the stocking is made up by planting of appropriate species or will agree an extended period over which the contract may be fulfilled.

If it is discovered within the contractual period that the woodland has not been regenerated 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 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 Forestry Commission will use its enforcement powers under the Forestry Act. This may include demanding remedial work, issuing a Restocking Notice or criminal prosecution.

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.

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 Forestry Commission 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 Forestry Commission 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