



Friday, 5 July 2013

Grants and Regulations National Email Alert

EWGS Application Submission Guidance

The deadline for approval of all EWGS grants (excluding Woodland Management Grant, see below) in the current RDPE funding round is 31 December 2013. In order for us to process applications to contract stage and for you to return a signed contract by this date, we are providing information on submission dates for grant applications.

We hope this will allow for you to plan your applications – please note that funding limitations may also have an impact on our ability to process your application.

In taking into account Citizens' Charter process times (77 days) and the 30 days we allow for you to return a signed contract to us we would encourage you **to submit all EWGS applications by Friday 30 August 2013**. Whilst we cannot guarantee to process any application submitted before or after this date submission prior to this date will provide the best chance of being able to approve contracts before the 31 December 2013 deadline. We will try to accommodate small or simple applications received after this date where possible and will look to prioritise applications for Woodland Planning Grant (WPG) and Plant Health related grants.

Please note: this application dead-line does not apply to Woodland Management Grant (WMG). Because of the way WMG is structured we can continue to accept applications right up to 31 December 2013 (for 2014 payment) as we can continue to approve them until 15 May 2014.

We would like to remind you that we cannot guarantee to process any application to meet the 31 December 2013 approval date, no matter when it is submitted and particularly if complications arise that are out of our control, such as concerns raised through the public register or consultation process, or delays in receiving responses to queries. We will however work with the applicant to do all we can to meet the deadline but would appreciate your assistance in ensuring your application can be processed promptly. Again, be mindful that budget limitations could close some grant types before these dates.

RDPE Transition Year 2014

We are awaiting clarification of what approach Defra will take nationally to the handling of RDPE applications (if any) during the transition period in 2014. We will convey any news as soon as we have it but in the meantime the

above dates and previously communicated RDPE transition dates as in [Operations Note 29](#) should be regarded as the current working arrangements.

Warning – Don't start work before you have our agreement!

In the last few months we have noticed an increase in applicants starting work before they have our approval either via an amendment or a new contract. **Under European Union rules we cannot support any work that has been undertaken prior to EWGS contract/amendment approval.**

This applies equally to grants in relation to plant health. For example with the Plant Health WIG for *Chalara fraxinea*, **you must** wait for us to amend your existing EWGS contract or approve a new contract before undertaking any work. For cases with *Phytophthora ramorum*, a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) to fell larch **does not** automatically mean you can replant and then claim a Woodland Regeneration Grant (WRG), you must apply for WRG and have it approved before restocking.

Do not start work before you have received approval from your local Forestry Commission Area Office.