

Grants and Regulations National Email Alert

10 February 2015

IMPORTANT—End of England Woodland Grant Schemes

From April 1 2015 all England Woodland Grant Schemes (EWGS) and payments will become legacy work and any new work will be treated as a Countryside Stewardship scheme.

This raises two very important points for anyone with an EWGS scheme:

Returning signed contracts for schemes finalised last year

Any final draft contracts for EWGS schemes should have been despatched in the first two weeks of January to agents/owners to sign and return. The covering letter gave a deadline of 28 days to do this. We recognise there may be some instances when this is not possible. Therefore we have set a final deadline to return these signed contracts of Monday 30 March 2015. This will give us the following day to register and move these contracts to Approved (APR) status. This will allow you to go on and complete the work and submit a claim.

This is a very tight turnaround so we would appreciate every effort to return signed contracts much earlier than this. It is in your interests to do this as you will already be out of the 28 day notice to return the signed contract. Therefore if for any reason we cannot move your contract to APR status (for example if the EWGS IT system (GLOS) is unavailable) you will lose your contract. Any EWGS contracts still on GLOS at DCT status on April 1 2015 will be closed and rejected. We have no option but to do this. **We cannot approve EWGS contracts from April 1 onwards.**

Note: this does not apply to existing contracts requiring amendment (such as with the non-fundable WIG items) or GLOS contracts for felling licences.

14/15 Financial Year EWGS Claims – NO late claims allowed

This is the last claim year that funds will be used from the old 2007-2013 Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). From April 2015 onwards all claims (including EWGS legacy payments) will be funded from the next 2014-2020 RDPE round. **As a result we cannot accept any late claims.** This is a strict budgetary rule and we will not be allowed to retrospectively pay anything with a 14/15 claim year in April or beyond. You must make every effort to submit your claim by 11.59pm on 31 March 2015.

If you still intend to undertake the work but cannot complete it by 31 March please contact us to discuss whether a claim year amendment may be possible.

Submitting Contracts/Claims:

- If you are submitting your signed EWGS contract or your 14/15 claim by post we recommend you either check with the office that it has been received or preferably use registered post as we cannot be held responsible for lost or late postal delivery.
- If you are submitting your claim electronically please do not leave it until 11.59pm on the 31 March as, again, we cannot be held responsible for any IT/GLOS failure or broadband/phone failure.
- If submitting in person, please phone your [local area office](#) to check the time they will be closing.