

Operations Note 039

Date 21 October 2015

Capital Grant Claims - Requirement for Photographic Evidence

Purpose

The requirement for photographic evidence in support of all capital grant claims was introduced on 1 April 2015. The purpose of this Operations Note is to provide guidance on how to produce adequate photographic evidence. This is specific to claims that are administered by the Forestry Commission, including legacy woodland grants such as the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) and the current Countryside Stewardship (CS) Woodland Capital Grants 2015.

Background

Due to clarification of the EU Regulations relating to the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) evidence is required to confirm that work has been undertaken. This includes:

- Photographic evidence to support grant claims from 1 April 2015;
- Invoices for the cost of the work and all associated materials should be retained by the applicant or their agent. These must be made available on request to an Inspector, during any future inspection process.

Please note that photographic evidence is not required to support annual grant claims for Farm Woodland Payments (FWP) or Woodland Management Grants (WMG) that are being paid under a legacy grant scheme (either the Woodland Grant Scheme – WGS, or English Woodland Grant Scheme – EWGS).

Introduction

These requirements will be built into the new Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CS). However the Forestry Commission (FC) is required to introduce the requirements for:

- All existing EWGS grants for capital items only. Grants affected include Woodland Creation Grant (WCG), Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) and Woodland Regeneration Grant (WRG);
- All capital grants agreed and claimed for under the CS Woodland Capital Grants 2015 namely support for woodland creation, tree health restoration and tree health improvement. As with EWGS, Management Plan claims do not require photographic evidence.

Concerns have been raised in relation to geo-tagging photographs, especially with regards to the equipment available at the moment and the accuracy of this equipment, particularly where a tree canopy is present. The FC and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) have reviewed these issues. As a result of this work it has been agreed that geo-tagging remains an option but is not compulsory.

What is required?

Photographs must be numbered, in colour, focus and clearly show the capital item or feature of concern. Images should be submitted electronically via email or in exceptional circumstances via CD or USB stick. The images should be supplied as jpeg files. As a general guide digital images should not be smaller than 600 x 400 pixels and ideally the image file size no larger than 400kB.

In exceptional circumstances, printed images may be submitted. These must be no smaller than 6" x 4". Images may be supplied in either portrait or landscape orientation.

The photo needs to identify the feature or capital item concerned and more than one photograph can be submitted where the item exceeds the frame or is not evident from a single photo. Where the grant is calculated per hectare or metre photographs should be supplied that cover a representative sample of the works being funded. The number and location of photographs is dependent on the nature and size of the area covered by the grant.

For example, pictures supporting a WCG claim should clearly show the planted trees, any protection measures taken (tubes/spirals/rabbit fencing etc.), demonstrate average spacing and show examples of open ground where appropriate.

The FC may request further photographs if necessary before processing any claim, the FC will clearly identify what additional work needs to be included.

The photo must be clearly labelled and dated digital images should be saved with an appropriate file name 'grant reference_grant type_photo number_date taken' i.e. '1234_WCG_NO1_Aug 2015'. Photographs submitted as hardcopy should have the label clearly written on the reverse of the image.

The number and description of what each picture represents should be detailed in the space provided on the claim form. Alternatively this can be in a separate word document where each photograph is listed and a description given.

Identify the location from which the photograph was taken, either:

1. geo-tag the photograph, this is a digital photograph that includes geographical identification metadata. This is done by assigning latitude and longitude, or another geographical reference to the image. This is most commonly carried out using a camera with a built-in GPS receiver, a function that is available on many camera phones or;
2. mark the number of the photo on an accompanying OS map, also note the direction in which it was taken and provide an 8 figure grid reference (example provided below).

Some standard cost items are exempt from the requirement for photographic evidence. This is only the case where a photograph cannot be used as evidence that the work has been carried out (time based elements such as L1 Forest Craftsperson). There are certain items that can't easily be photographed this includes C7 deer control landscape scale, V7 asulox, V8 stump treatment and V17 rhododendron spray for these items the photo needs to show the overall outcome rather than the activity being undertaken. For A12 and A13 leaflet production and A18 safety inspection a copy of the document produced should be provided in place of a photograph. Annex 1 of this operation note clearly lists the standard costs that must have photographic evidence to support a claim and those that are exempt.

Please note:

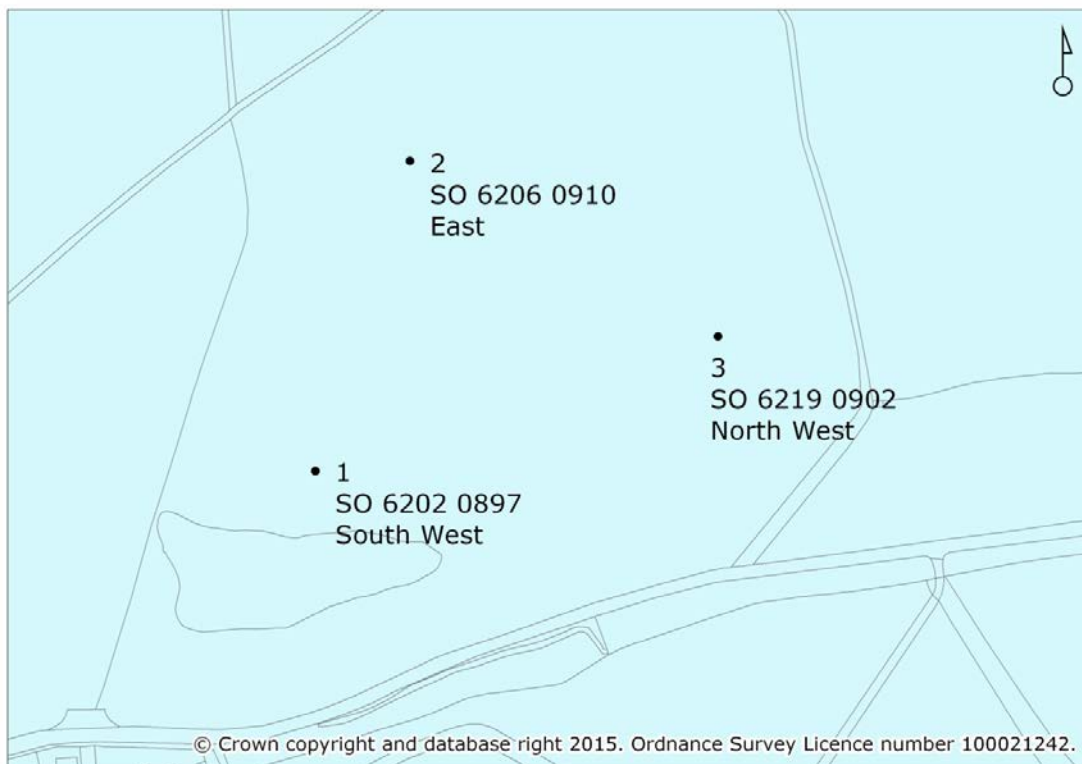
Photographic evidence

The FC is unable to process any capital claim for grant without the supporting evidence being provided by the applicant or their agent. We have no discretion in this respect.

Invoices

Retain invoices for all work for which you intend to claim grant in the event that FC or RPA staff request to see such supporting evidence at a future date, such as an on-site inspection.

Example map



Sources of further advice

The [Grants and Regulations website](#) contains all the information you need to apply for grant support. Alternatively, you can request this information from your local [Forestry Commission office](#).

Versions

Version 1 issued 26 August 2015

Version 2 issued 19 October 2015

Annex 1 EWGS Standard Costs

Public Access			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
A1	All ability footpath construction – dry sites	Dry site, cut and fill 1.2 m wide, 125mm depth including shallow drain. Materials and labour	metre	£ 30.00	✓
A2	All ability footpath construction – wet sites	heavy use or wet or steep site, dig foundation 2.0m wide metalled to all abilities, standard walls drainage	metre	£ 35.00	✓
A3	Access gap	Create ungated access gap with posts at sides and a level threshold surface	each	£ 45.00	✓
A4	Kissing gate – all ability	All ability use. Constructed and installed to conform with relevant British Standards	each	£ 380.00	✓
A5	Kissing gate – pedestrian	Pedestrian use. Constructed and installed to conform with relevant British Standard	each	£ 300.00	✓
A6	Stile	Timber stile conforming to the relevant British Standard	each	£ 125.00	✓
A7	Dog gate	Access through fence for dogs	each	£ 55.00	✓
A8	Post & disk waymarker	Treated softwood post and paint/disk marking	each	£ 30.00	✓
A9	Routed waymarker	3" x 3" square sawn hardwood + routed	each	£ 60.00	✓
A10	Interpretation boards	A1 – detailed on coloured plastic in hardwood/treated softwood frame. Weather proof. Durability 10years	each	£ 1,200.00	✓
A11	Notice boards - without interpretative signs	600 x 1200 x 45mm. Weather proof. Durability 10years	each	£ 350.00	✓

Photographic Evidence and Claiming Payment

Public Access (continued)			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
A12	A4 Leaflets	A4 – single colour, including design and printing	per 500	£ 500.00	x Provide copy of leaflet
A13	A3 Leaflets	A3 – single colour, including design and printing	per 500	£ 700.00	x Provide copy of leaflet
A14	Picnic bench with table	Treated softwood - materials & installation (table 1750mm x 740mm, height 770mm, bench 440mm high, 1750mm long) durability 10years.	each	£ 530.00	✓
A15	Bench with backrest	Treated softwood, bolted construction. 440mm high 1750mm long. All materials & installation	each	£ 410.00	✓
A16	Bench	Simple design, treated softwood - materials & installation (440mm high, 1750mm long)	each	£ 165.00	✓
A17	Footbridge	Timber frame with steel beams - non slip surface. Span >3.5m; requires hand rails	metre	£ 750.00	✓
A18	Safety inspection	Inspection includes assessment of facilities e.g. condition of paths and gates, tree safety inspection	visit	Agent's hourly rate	x Provide copy of inspection report, had to be claimed before 30 th September 2015 to receive payment.
A19 & A20	Litter Picking	Amount of time required to keep site litter free to be agreed on case by case basis		Use labour rate L1	x
A21	Brashing	Manual brashing for access areas	hectare	£ 300.00	✓
A22	Small car park	Small car park (up to about 10 cars) A22 Excavate to 300mm depth and fill to 150mm with clean hardcore. Surface with	Square metre	£ 20.00	✓

Photographic Evidence and Claiming Payment

		minimum 150mm of new hardcore (Type 1) with topping of fines to bind surface. Each parking bay requires 5m x 3m, plus turning space (1.5 x car length). Can also be used to create stacking areas where a similar specification is required.			
Public Access (continued)			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
A23	Disabled parking bays	Tarmac, delineated bays and additional signage, in addition to small car park (A22)	per bay	£ 220.00	✓
A24	Amenity Post & rail fence		metre	£ 18.00	✓
A25	Bridleway Gate	Gate with handle allowing easy opening for riders	each	£ 350.00	✓
A26	Horse Gate	Field Gate where central section is lowered, allowing horses to step over it for access; light duty spec	each	£ 400.00	✓
A27	Motorbike restriction barriers	Barriers that enable access on foot but prevents access by motorbike	each	£ 350.00	✓
A28	Footpath steps	Timber with max riser height 165mm, tread width max 300mm, normal max overall rise of 2000mm	Per step	£ 50.00	✓

Biodiversity			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
B1	Small pond creation	Normally with a maximum depth of 60cm and less than 25 square metres	square metre	£3.00	✓
B2	Bird Box	Supply and install Wood/concrete construction boxes; general purpose with 32mm hole or open fronted	each	£25.00	✓

Photographic Evidence and Claiming Payment

Mammal Management			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
C1	Squirrel hoppers	FC Practice Note "Controlling grey squirrel damage to woodland". Support will be given in accordance with the FC England squirrel policy	each	£ 40.00	✓
C2	Hopper Maintenance	To inc min fortnightly visits, bait, wheat and warfarin. Record sheets should be made available if required. Support will be given in accordance with the FC England squirrel policy	season/hopper	£ 80.00	x
C3	Squirrel cage trap	FC Practice Note "Controlling grey squirrel damage to woodland". Support will be given in accordance with the FC England squirrel policy	each	£ 35.00	✓
C4	Cage trap maintenance	Minimum of one daily visit to each cage to despatch and reset. Cost is per trap per season	each	£ 130.00	x
C5	Squirrel blood tests	Single use squirrel pox testing kits	10	£ 12.00	x
C6	Deer high seat	Portable, free standing in galvanised tubular or box section steel	each	£ 350.00	✓
C7	Deer control at landscape scale	Population control / management at landscape / national scale	Hectare	£ 6.00	✓

Photographic Evidence and Claiming Payment

Tree Establishment			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Unit	Cost	Requirement
E4	Supply and plant tree and shelter	Tree + 1.2m tube + treated softwood stake & labour	Per tree	3.00	✓
E8	Respacing	Natural Regeneration (2m spacing)	Hectare	£ 1000.00	✓

Fencing			Current unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Unit	Cost	Requirement
F1	Stock fencing	FC Bulletin 102 "Forest Fencing - Stakes at 3m centres using C8/80/15 netting with two lines of barb. Can also be used to stock proof stone walls	metre	£ 4.50	✓
F1a	Stock fencing in SDAs	as per F1 but for sites within Severely Disadvantaged Areas and where site access is poor	metre	£ 6.00	✓
F2	Stock & rabbit fencing	FC Bulletin 102 "Forest Fencing" - As above plus standard 18 gauge netting. Rabbit proof for min 10 years	metre	£ 7.20	✓
F3	Rabbit fencing	FC Bulletin 102 "Forest Fencing" - Standard 18 gauge netting, posts at 5m centres two line wires. Rabbit proof for min 10years	metre	£ 5.90	✓
F4	Deer fencing	FC Bulletin 102 "Forest Fencing" - Must be of a specification suitable for the species being excluded and deer proof for at least 10 years	metre	£ 7.80	✓

Photographic Evidence and Claiming Payment

Fencing (continued)			Current unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Unit	Cost	Requirement
F4a	Deer fencing in SDAs	as per F4 but for sites within Severely Disadvantaged Areas and site access is poor	metre	£ 10.00	✓
F5	Temporary deer fencing	FC Practice Note 9 - temporary fencing. Costs takes account of reuse	metre	£ 5.20	✓
F6	Deer & rabbit fencing	FC Bulletin 102 "Forest Fencing" - as above.	metre	£ 10.00	✓
F7	Deer gate	Vehicle access gate - swing type - 3m x 1.8m	each	£ 430.00	✓
F8	Hanging Watergate >5m	FC Bulletin 102 "Forest Fencing" >5m span	each	£ 350.00	✓
F9	Hanging Watergate <5m	FC Bulletin 102 "Forest Fencing" <5m span	each	£ 200.00	✓
F10	Field gate	British Standard - 12ft 5 bar treated soft wood	each	£ 365.00	✓
F11	Badger gate	FC Bulletin 102 "Forest Fencing"	each	£ 50.00	✓
F12	Pole barrier (wood)	Supply and fit the barrier including poles. Includes labour & materials (treated timber)	each	£ 190.00	✓
F13	Pole barrier (metal)	Supply and fit the barrier including poles. Includes labour & materials (metal pole and posts)	each	£ 600.00	✓
F14	Deer enclosure plot	4m x 4m enclosure plot, using stock fence and rabbit fence if necessary	each	£ 130.00	✓
F15	Stock proof stone wall boundaries	Two lines of top wire to make a breach stone wall stockproof	metre	£2.60	✓
F16	Fence removal	Removing old fences	metre	£0.50	✓

Photographic Evidence and Claiming Payment

Harvesting			Current unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Unit	Cost	Requirement
H1	Tree felling & conversion	Thinning of small woodlands where the wood is small or non-marketable. Fell, sned & cross cut (doesn't account for income)	Hectare	£ 600.00	✓
H2	Timber extraction	(doesn't account for income)	Hectare	£ 350.00	✓ Extraction, site cleared of timber or timber stacks
H3	Skyline extraction	Extraction where other methods are impossible and removal of timber is required (doesn't account for income)	Cubic Metre	£ 30.00	✓
N/A	Timber stacking areas	Use the small car park (A22) operation and cost for similar specification work	Square metre	£ 20.00	✓

Labour and Machinery			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence	Notes
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement	
L1	Forest Craftsperson		per day	£ 150.00	x	These standard costs (L1-L6) will not be funded under the new Rural Development Programme and had to be claimed before 30 th September 2015 to receive payment.
L2	Forestry Agent	Professionally qualified	per hour	£ 50.00	x	
L3	Tree surgery team & chipper	2 man team	per day	£ 500.00	x	
L4	Tractor & chipper/flail	Machine + operator	per day	£ 350.00	x	
L5	JCB hire & mini-excavator	Machine + operator	hour	£ 30.00	x	

Photographic Evidence and Claiming Payment

Labour and Machinery (continued)			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
L6	360 excavator	Machine + operator	hour	£ 40.00	x
L7	Low loader	To deliver whatever heavy machinery is required	To drop off and collect once	£ 350.00	x

Vegetation Management			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
V1	Open ground tree & scrub machine cutting <7cm	Tree & scrub cutting. Material majority <7cm diameter, cut with a flail mounted machine	net hectare	£ 500.00	✓
V2	Open ground tree & scrub manual cutting <7cm	Material majority <7cm diameter, manually cut	net hectare	£ 800.00	✓
V3	Open ground tree & scrub machine cutting >7cm	Material majority >7cm diameter, flailed with a mulcher	net hectare	£ 1,300.00	✓
V4	Open ground tree & scrub manual cutting >7cm	Material majority >7cm diameter, manually cut and left to decay	net hectare	£ 1,800.00	✓
V7	Asulox application	Asulox within woodland context	Hectare	£ 250.00	✓

Photographic Evidence and Claiming Payment

Vegetation Management (continued)			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
V8	Stump treatment	Chemical stump treatment	Hectare	£ 300.00	✓
V9	Coppicing 30+ yrs since last cut	Cut whole stool / whole area. Doesn't include fencing , gapping up or layering	Hectare	£ 1,800.00	✓
V10	Coppicing <30 yrs since last cut	Does not include fencing, gapping up or layering	Hectare	£ 1,200.00	✓
V10a	Coppicing small scale	No timber income; cut material needs to be cleared from site	Hectare	£ 2,400.00	✓
V11	Ride management 2 zone	2 zone cutting - Cut central zone annually, and alternate outer zones biannually. Ave ride width 5m	per km/yr	£ 250.00	✓
V12	Ride management 3 zone	3 zone cutting - as above with third zone cut on 5yr cycle. Ave ride width 8-10m	per km/yr	£ 400.00	✓
V13	Grass cutting recreation areas	Repeated mowing of open areas to maintain grass generally below 10cm	Hectare / season	£ 550.00	✓
V14	Path strimming	Path strimming (3m wide) each pass	metre	£ 0.23	✓
V15	Rhododendron control <7cm machine cut	Rhododendron control (see Practice Guide). Most material less than 7cm diameter, cut with flail	Hectare	£ 500.00	✓
V16	Rhododendron control >7cm machine cut	Rhododendron control (see Practice Guide). Most material greater than 7cm diameter, cut with flail	Hectare	£ 2,200.00	✓
V17	Rhododendron control – spray regrowth	Follow up respray of rhododendron regrowth	Hectare	£ 400.00	✓
V18	Rhododendron control difficult sites	Rhodo on very difficult sites - steep & inaccessible & dense/large rhodo	Hectare	£ 3,800.00	✓
V18a	Rhododendron control –	Rhododendron cutting in extremely difficult sites – very steep	Hectare	£ 5,000.00	✓

Photographic Evidence and Claiming Payment

	very difficult sites	and inaccessible with large / dense rhododendron. NW, SW & SE regions only			
Vegetation Management (continued)			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
V19	Ride management - Removal of arisings	Removing arisings from ride management for conservation purposes	linear metre	£ 0.60	✓
V20	Woodland hedge management	Cutting, coppicing, layering, gapping up.	Linear metre	£5.00	✓
V21	Tree pollarding	Pollarding of mature trees	Per tree	£90.00	✓

Special Funds			Current Unit / rate		Photographic evidence
	Activity	Specification	Units	Cost	Requirement
Z1	Special Fund - £1000 cost	These costs can only be used for special funds where the grant literature specifically says it can be used	Per £1000	£ 1000.00	✓
Z2	Special Fund - £100 cost		Per £100	£ 100.00	✓
X100	Special Fund - £100 cost	To account for operational income e.g. timber	Per £100	- £ 100.00	x