

English Woodland Grant Scheme

Woodland Improvement Grant 80%

March 2009

County Wildlife Sites in East England

Introduction This leaflet provides guidance on how to apply for this regionally focused grant. It supplements the generic guidance on Woodland Improvement Grant, which is available from the [EWGS website](#).

Background In the Local Government Bill of 2006, the Government committed to the establishment of a new framework for the local delivery of public services. One of the principal components of the new framework are Local Area Agreements (LAAs) - an action plan for the delivery of agreed national and local public service priorities and associated funding framework.

LAAs have been prepared within a new Local Government Performance Framework comprising 198 national performance indicators covering the full spectrum of public service provision.

National Indicator 197 (NI 197) is "Improved local biodiversity – proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented". The term "local sites" has become synonymous with "County Wildlife Sites".

County Wildlife Sites (CWS) are non-statutory designations used to identify high quality wildlife habitats in a county context. Together with statutory sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), County Wildlife Sites form an important part of the wildlife resource in the wider countryside helping to link and buffer sites. They include valuable semi-natural habitats such as species-rich grasslands, wetlands, roadside verges and hedgerows. Ancient woodland is an important component of CWS, although this varies in detail from County to County.

Four of the "top tier" local authorities in the East of England have chosen to adopt NI 197 as one of their 35 national indicators and have agreed targets with Government Office. These are Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk and Thurrock. Three other authorities have chosen NI 197 as a local indicator: Bedfordshire, Peterborough and Suffolk. Hertfordshire, Luton and Southend have not adopted NI 197.

Eligibility In order to be eligible for this grant applicants must meet the following:

- The general criteria and conditions for Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) apply – refer to the [WIG guidance](#) for further details
- The County Wildlife Site must be within a designated cluster area in Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk or Thurrock (see below)
- The County Wildlife Site must be predominately woodland in nature with

a minimum of 20% tree cover.

- At least 50% of the woodland must lie within the boundary of a cluster area
- The proposed work must protect or enhance agreed woodland aspects of a County Wildlife Site or restore a wooded County Wildlife Site to an agreed standard.
- Grant will not normally be paid for permanently removing woodland to create another semi-natural habitat. At the discretion of Forestry Commission Woodland Officers, grant may be payable to create non-woodland habitats as an integral part of a larger woodland habitat.

Clusters Clusters have been chosen by the relevant Local Biodiversity Partnership. For convenience these clusters are identified with a 8km radius around a centre grid reference.

Name of cluster	Local authority	Grid ref (centre point of 8km radius circle)
West Cambridgeshire Hundreds	Cambridgeshire	TL 314 544
South Cambridgeshire	Cambridgeshire	TL 452 437
Cobbins & Abridge	Essex	TQ 546 949
Danbury	Essex	TL 794 092
South Essex	Essex	TQ 796 933
Mid-Norfolk	Norfolk	TF 963 207
Norwich-Wymondham	Norfolk	TG 141 034
Breckland	Norfolk	TL 956 926
Thames Chase	Thurrock	TQ 586 855

Grant details Within the clusters we can contribute up to 80% of [standard costs](#) (scroll down to Operations Note 9) for the management of County Wildlife Sites. Woodlands outside the clusters may still be eligible for Woodland Improvement Grant at a contribution rate of 50%.

When applying and using the WIG Cost Calculator, under “WIG Fund” you should choose ‘UK Priority Biodiversity 80’ and under specific fund write “County Wildlife Sites”

Further information This guidance is supported by Forestry Commission East England Region (01842 815544; www.forestry.gov.uk/eastengland)

General details on the English Woodland Grant Scheme are available in a pack that can be obtained from your local FC office, or downloadable from the FC website www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs.

Supplementary information on EWGS is also available in the EWGS document library on the FC website www.forestry.gov.uk/england-documents. For general advice on EWGS you can contact either your local FC office or the EWGS helpline (01223 346004)

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