

Ancient, Native & Other Semi-Natural Woodland Restoration and Improvement Grant

Purpose This leaflet provides background information, guidance on eligibility, and general guidance on what the grant pays for and how to apply for this regionally focussed grant. It supplements the generic guidance on Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG), which is available from the [EWGS web site](#). Further more detailed information can be obtained from our website at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/southeastengland>.

The Past A targeted grant towards the restoration and improvement of ancient woodland was launched in 2008 within the High Weald AONB in support of an initiative launched in late 2007. The aim was to target ancient woodlands within the AONB helping their owners restore their wood to favourable condition.

The main problems within the target area were invasive and non-native plant species (e.g. rhododendron ponticum, himalayan balsam, conifer tree species) and the need for targeted landscape wide deer management.

In support of this work, the Forestry Commission (FC) introduced a targeted Woodland Improvement Grant for ancient woods within the High Weald AONB. This grant offered an 80% contribution to standard costs of work.

The Present The target areas have now been expanded to include additional important landscape areas within the region and the types of woodland that qualify also includes native woods. The enhanced grant level covers all Areas of Outstanding Beauty in South East England Region that have significant areas of ancient and native woodland within their boundaries. This includes; Isle of Wight, Kent Downs, High Weald, Chilterns, Surrey Hills, New Forest, North Wessex Downs, Cranbourne Chase & the Cotswolds. In addition the South Downs and New Forest National Parks are also included.

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

- The woodland must fall within target areas (see appendix 1),
- The woodland must consist of native species or designated as ancient or other semi-natural woodland, either ancient semi-natural (ASNW) or a plantation on an ancient woodland site (PAWS),
- The woods of any type where invasive non-native plant species are threatening an adjacent ancient or semi-natural woodland or other important semi-natural habitat,
- The problem that is causing the wood's decline can be rectified through

woodland management.

- A management plan is agreed between the FC and the owner to tackle the restoration and improve native habitat within the woodland – use of the Woodland Planning Grant template is recommended – grant is available. However a full-scale management plan is not necessarily a requirement where the issue can be addressed in one or two seasons. Please check with local staff.

Qualifying Work Activities eligible for the targeted woodland improvement grant might include;

- Removal of rhododendron ponticum and laurel with up to 3 years spraying of re-growth,
- Removal of Himalayan balsam and control of future seedlings,
- Infrastructure and design improvements for the management of deer. Advice will be sought by the FC from the Deer Initiative for the appropriate infrastructure prior to agreeing works.
- Where grant is being offered for deer management a deer management plan must be written and the recommendations enacted at the start of any agreement and deer managed in conjunction with neighbours or within a recognised deer management group.
- Writing a deer management plan.
- Uneconomic thinning and removal of conifer or non-native broadleaf to restore to site native species. Woodland Regeneration Grant (WRG) may be sought for restocking.
- Infrastructure improvement either within the boundary of the wood or that enables access to a wood where the need is clearly demonstrated.

Further advice on relevant activities can be obtained from your local woodland officer – refer to the table on page 3.

Grant will be paid at 80% of Standard Costs for those items in a proposed work schedule that meet the aims of this grant. The operations and standard costs are listed in the latest [Standard Costs – Operation Note 009](#), available from the [EWGS document library](#)

This WIG fund is limited to payments from 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2013. Claims must be received before the end of the financial year in which the payment is due. Funds will be awarded on ‘first come first served’ basis until the fund is used up.

How to Apply Both [EWGS 1 General Details](#) form and [EWGS 5 Woodland Improvement Grant](#) form must be completed and submitted with an OS Master Map ® showing the areas for which grant is sought. The OS Master Map can be provided through the FC by applying to your local FC office.

Further Advice and Information Further information can be obtained from the Regional office on 01420 23337 or at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/southeastengland>

Other Advice The EWGS website www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs contains all the information needed to apply for grant support. 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 is available at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice or from your local FC office.

Contact Information Each landscape target area has a lead contact in the Forestry Commission (FC) for the advice and information you need to enable you to access the grants being offered. Three have dedicated officers from other organisations who can also assist you with your application.

They are as follows:

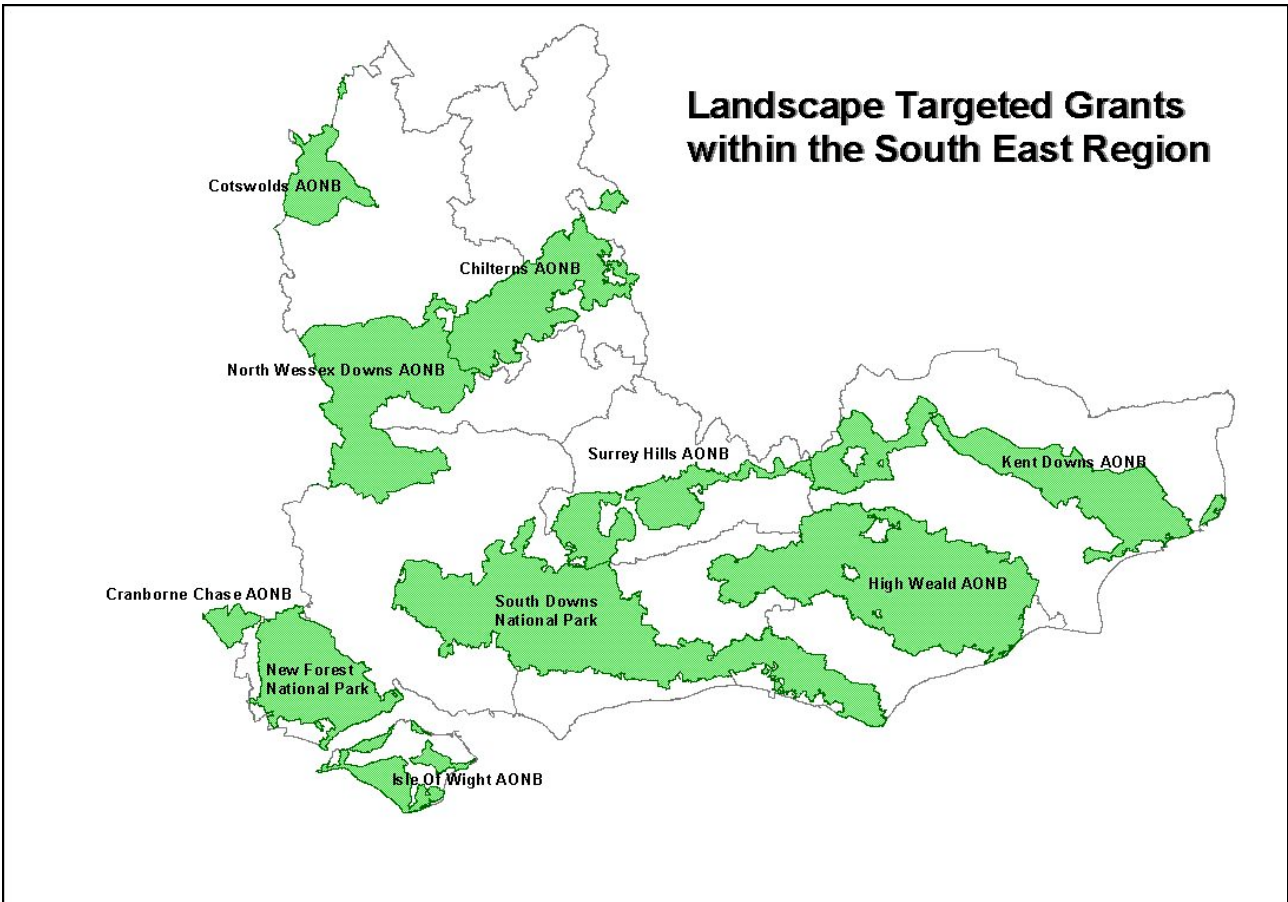
Chilterns AONB	Richard Pearce (FC) - 01296 696543
Cotswolds AONB	Richard Pearce (FC) - 01296 696543
High Weald AONB	John Stafford (FC) - 01580 211123 Andrew Wright (Forestry and Woodland Restoration Advisor, High Weald AONB) - 01580 879964
Kent Downs AONB	Andrew Dall'Oglio (Forestry Commission) - 01580 211123 Steve McCarthy (Forest Enterprise) – 01580 211044
South Downs National Park	Dave Rogers (FC) - 01420 23337 Andrew Wright (Forestry and Woodland Restoration Advisor, High Weald AONB) - 01580 879964
New Forest National Park	John Stride (FC) - 01420 23337
Cranbourne Chase AONB	John Stride (FC) - 01420 23337
Surrey Hills AONB	Richard Edwards (FC) - 01420 23337
North Wessex Downs AONB	Johnathan Rau (FC) – 01420 23337
Isle of Wight AONB	Micheal Pittock (FC) – 01983 532937

Versions

Version 1.1 issued June 2010

- 1 Issued 2008 for operations within High Weald AONB
- 1.1 Issued June 2010 extending support ancient and native woodlands within all of the AONBs / National Parks in the South East region

Appendix 1:



Woods falling within the green areas qualify for the Ancient, Native & Other Semi-Natural Woodland Restoration and Improvement Grant.