

## English Woodland Grant Scheme

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Woodland Improvement Grant 80%

March 2010

# West Midlands Region Local Wildlife Sites - NI197

**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 web site](#).

**Background** Local Wildlife Site is a non-statutory designation that has a high environmental value in a county context. Together with statutory sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Local Wildlife Sites form a key part of the natural habitat resource in the wider countryside, helping to sustain and protect many important species communities.

Maintaining the high environmental value of Local Wildlife Sites, and monitoring their positive management is a key target (called “NI 197”) for Local Authorities. In the West Midlands region four of the “top tier” local authorities report on NI 197. These authorities are Herefordshire, Staffordshire, and Warwickshire County Councils and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

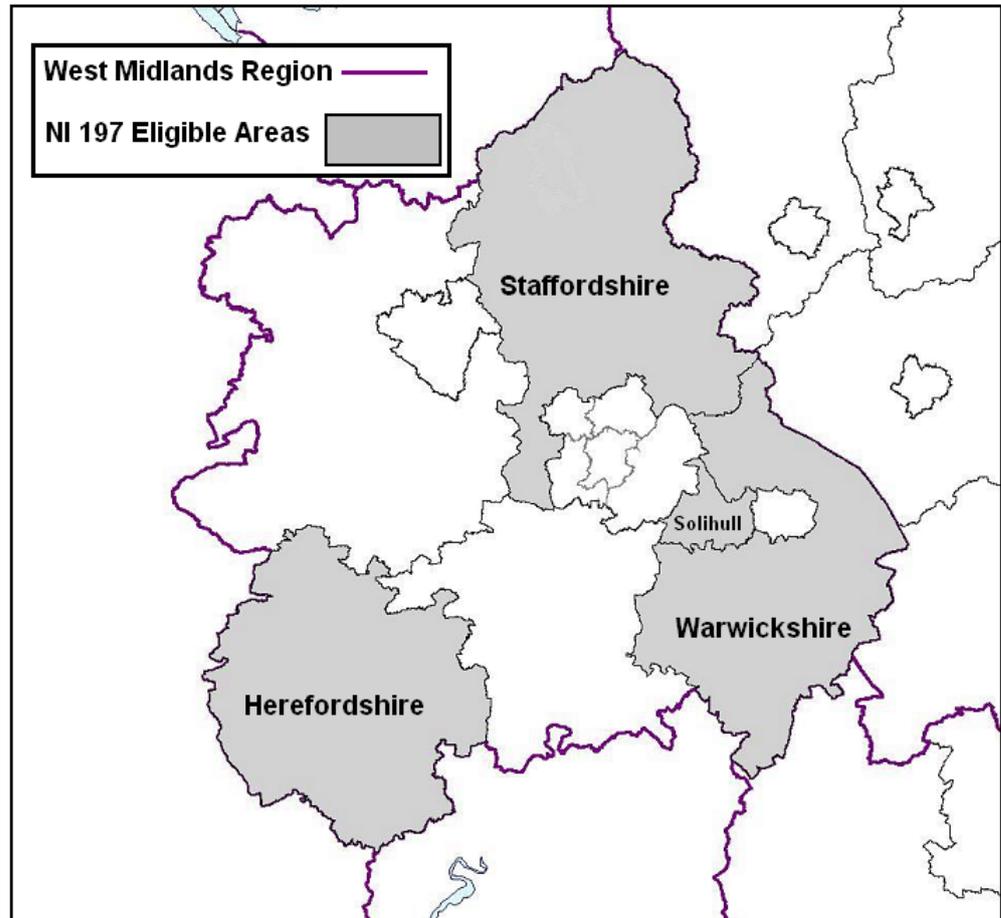
**Eligibility** To be eligible for this grant applicants must meet the following conditions:

- The general criteria and conditions for EWGS Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) apply – refer to the [WIG guidance](#) for general information.
- **The applicant will provide documentary evidence that the woodland is designated a Local Wildlife Site as part of the EWGS application.** Applicants may need to contact their county bio-records office for written confirmation of the site designation, or obtain a copy of the bio-records centre ecology report for the site. There may be a charge for reports.
- **A copy of a woodland management plan will be submitted with the application.** If a management plan does not exist, or if one is not of sufficient quality to satisfy the Forestry Commission (FC), we will require one to be written.

The FC will accept a Condition, Opportunities & Threats (COT) Assessment but would recommend (and will pay for) a woodland management plan. If assistance is needed with a COT Assessment or a woodland plan, the [COT Assessment](#) or [EWGS Woodland Planning Grant](#) templates can support one being drawn together.

NB. Woodland Planning Grant requires all woodlands in the ownership to be included as part of the planning process.

- The Local Wildlife Site must be in one of the Local Authorities that are monitoring and reporting on NI 197 (see map overleaf).
- The Local Wildlife Site must be predominately woodland in nature (of any type) with a minimum of 20% tree cover.
- The proposed work will improve the quality of the woodland on the site, while maintaining or enhancing the primary conservation interest of the site.
- Grant will not 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.



**Grant details** Local Wildlife Site work proposals must be compiled using the latest EWGS [Standard Costs](#). (click on the link)

The Forestry Commission will contribute 80% of agreed EWGS Standard Costs to woodland projects on Local Wildlife Sites that improve the woodland structure and overall biodiversity condition.

The [WIG Calculator](#) (click on the link) is an Excel spreadsheet that should be used to detail the work elements of the application and calculate the eligible costs and grant contribution. The completed WIG Calculator should be submitted electronically (by email or on disc) along side the application.

When applying for Local Wildlife Site WIG using the WIG Calculator you should choose ‘**UK Priority Biodiversity 80**’ under “**WIG Fund**”, and under “**Specific Fund**” you should write “**Local Wildlife Site NI197**”

**Further advice** Alternative EWGS funding is also available for public access improvement and other environmental work e.g. habitat management for birds, bats and other protected species

Use this link for advice relating to [Bats and woodland habitat management](#)

Use this link for advice and opportunities relating to [reversing woodland bird decline](#).

Use this link for advice relating to woodland habitat management and [protected species](#)

**More information** The Forestry Commission supports this guidance through the West Midlands Region Grant and Regulations team. Contact details for the local FC offices can be found on our [West Midlands Region](#) web page, or call 01905 532200 for more detailed information.

For general advice on the English Woodland Grant Scheme, visit online at [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs). Additional information on other EWGS grants and application forms is also available in the EWGS [document library](#) on the FC web site.

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