

## **English Woodland Grant Scheme**

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Operations Note 21

21<sup>st</sup> April 2009

# EWGS Support for Continuous Cover Forestry

**Purpose** This note explains how Forestry Commission England EWGS grants will support continuous cover forestry in the delivery of high public benefit.

**Context** The large amount of our broadleaved woodland is managed under CCF principles. In addition, in a number of areas, CCF offers a management alternative for pre-dominantly coniferous crops in the delivery of high value public benefit. A number of PAW's restoration sites can be sensitively managed through the adoption of CCF principles as opposed to restoring through clear-felling. Policy drivers such as the Water Framework Directive and Climate Change mitigation also support systems which address soil and water resource protection.

CCF is recognised as a potentially beneficial silvicultural approach in the UK Forestry Standard, UK Woodland Assurance Standard and "A Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests".

**Introduction** Continuous cover forestry systems can offer higher public benefits compared with traditional silvicultural systems such as clear felling in many situations. This may include protection of soil and water resources, landscape and biodiversity value as well as production of quality timber. As such the Forestry Commission wants to ensure that Continuous Cover Forestry, where appropriate, is supported and encouraged through the suite of EWGS grant support.

Background Information on CCF is detailed in [FC Information Note 29 'What is Continuous Cover Forestry'](#). You may also want to refer to the publication [FC Information Note 40 'Transforming Even-aged Conifer Stands to Continuous Cover Management'](#).

**Requirements** In order to justify EWGS support, the Forestry Commission needs to be assured that CCF is an appropriate system for the site, taking account of factors such as species present, tree stability, tree establishment and protection. There should be a management plan in place that communicates this and provides information such as management objectives, silvicultural system, baseline species/size distribution, operational plans and monitoring methods. We would also normally expect evidence that current or proposed management accords with the

management plan.

Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) where conifers are currently present could be supported under CCF provided the long term management objective is restoration to broadleaves.

Non-ancient sites are more likely to be supported where it has semi natural characteristics, but there may be occasions where conifer woodland CCF would be supported, for example to minimise soil erosion and water pollution in catchment sensitive areas.

### **Woodland Planning & Assessment Grants**

Woodland Planning Grant can contribute towards production of management plans in support of our requirements.

In addition, Woodland Assessment Grant can support the survey work required to establish the baseline information required to inform the plan. This may include:

- a) stand surveys to gain a baseline of current stand structure and composition – such work would need to follow the guidelines such as those set out in [FC Information Note 45 – “Monitoring the Transformation of Even-aged Stands to Continuous Cover Management”](#)
- b) Woodland survey to establish the extent of damage from deer and production of a deer management plan

Management plans and survey work will normally be supported on a 10 year cycle

### **Woodland Improvement Grant**

Woodland Improvement Grant can support uneconomic thinning operations that help initiate, develop or maintain a CCF system. Situations could include necessary respacing, cleaning and early thinning interventions where crops have lower percentages of higher value material; or undertaking high cost thinning operations on steep ground e.g. cable crane sites. Up to 20% supervision cost will be supported in recognition of the importance of good stand management and marking by a manager

WIG may also support the provision of infrastructure to facilitate the interventions required of CCF system e.g. harvesting routes and loading areas.

### **Woodland Management Grant**

Woodland Management Grant (WMG) can support the additional ongoing costs associated with CCF systems where they clearly deliver additional public benefit. This may include:

- Uneconomic thinning, cleaning, respacing
- Monitoring
- Squirrel Management
- Deer management
- Deer exclosures

**Woodland Regeneration Grant** Woodland Regeneration Grant is not available for CCF managed woodland with large scale, long term replanting programmes under these arrangements, as we will be primarily supporting the work to encourage regeneration and recruitment via WIG and WMG.

WIG can fund operations that encourage tree regeneration such as scarification, and a small proportion of enrichment planting may be funded via WIG where appropriate.

**Further Advice** The EWGS website [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://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 from an agent experienced in woodland management using CCF systems. A list of national and regional professional organisations is provided at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice) or available from your local FC office.

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