



Forestry Commission  
England

# e.wgs 6



The English Woodland Grant Scheme is supported with European Union and Defra funding.

## English Woodland Grant Scheme

# Woodland Management Grant Guide

Version 3/March 2009  
For updates and the latest version go to: [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs)

## Purpose

Woodland Management Grant (WMG) aims to encourage low key, sustainable woodland practice. The intention is to safeguard the existing environmental and social public benefits that the woodland provides, and to create the conditions under which woodland can continue to deliver benefits into the future.

The objectives of WMG are:

- To contribute to the additional costs of providing more, and higher quality, public benefits that arise from meeting the broad UK Forestry Standard requirements for sustainable woodland management;
- To protect, maintain and increase the area of woodland under sustainable management;
- To identify and address threats to woodland, prevent decline, and increase the capacity for sustainable management.



## Eligibility

Each woodland area must be eligible in terms of its certified status and the reasons for paying WMG.

### Certified status

Woodland properties of 100 hectares or more must be certified to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and the management plan required for that certified status must support the proposed work.

Woodland properties between 30 and 100 hectares must be either certified, or have an approved management plan in place.

Woodland properties of less than 30 hectares must either be certified, have an approved management plan, or the application must be supported by a Condition, Opportunity and Threat (COT) assessment on the standard FC template. The COT assessment must be less than 1 year old at the time of application. The COT assessment form is available to download from [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wmg](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wmg).

Now closed for information only

## Eligibility basis

The WMG payments made on each woodland area must be justified. This is done as part of the FC's background administration process but it relies on an indication in the application, of the main reason why a woodland area is eligible. WMG can be paid in the following situations:

1. A woodland type important to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP).
2. Offering public access where there is a demand.
3. Located within a Red squirrel reserve.
4. East Midland Woodland Bird priority area.

Each woodland area, or group of areas, in the application must be allocated to one of the above to justify the WMG payments. Important UKBAP woodland types are justified for WMG on that basis, but other woodlands that cannot qualify on this basis must be in a Red squirrel reserve or must offer needed public access.

## The important UKBAP woodland types for WMG

### SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI)

SSSIs are defined and designated as such by Natural England. Applicants can use the Land Information Search (LIS) from the FC website on page [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-lis](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-lis) to view these areas. Naturally, there must be woodland on the SSSI to qualify for consideration under the EWGS.

### ANCIENT SEMI-NATURAL WOODLANDS (ASNW)

Woodland composed of mainly native trees and shrubs derived from natural seedfall or coppice rather than from planting, and known to be continuously present on the site since at least AD 1600. The eligible areas are on Natural England's Inventory of Ancient Woodland. The extent of Ancient Woodland (i.e. ASNW and PAWS combined) can be viewed via the LIS on the FC website. Inspection may determine that other areas qualify, this is because the Inventory is 'provisional' in nature, and small areas less than 2ha were never recorded. Such areas will all be potentially eligible for WMG.

### PLANTATIONS ON ANCIENT WOODLAND SITE (PAWS)

Woodland derived from past planting, but on sites known to be continuously wooded in one form or another since at least AD 1600. Very old PAWS composed of native species can have the characteristics of ASNW. The eligible areas are on Natural England's Inventory of Ancient Woodland. The extent of Ancient Woodland (i.e. ASNW and PAWS combined) can be viewed via the LIS on the FC website. Inspection may determine that other areas qualify, this is because the Inventory is 'provisional' in nature, and small areas less than 2ha were never recorded. Such areas will all be potentially eligible for WMG.

### OTHER SEMI-NATURAL WOODLAND (OSNW)

Woodland which has arisen since 1600 AD, is derived from natural seedfall or planting, and consists of at least 80% locally native trees and shrubs (i.e. species historically found in England that would arise naturally on the site). Sometimes known as 'recent semi-natural woodland'.

There are 2 levels of eligibility for public access provision:

1. Public access provision within 'Quality of Place' priority areas. Quality of Place priority areas take into account areas of high population, deprivation indices and current public access provision. Maps showing the distribution and precise location of the priority areas are available on the Land Information Search. Woodlands that provide free public access and fall within either the dark purple or light purple areas are eligible for WMG.
2. Woodland outside the Quality of Place priority areas are eligible for WMG where there is less than 1 hectare of free public access for every 500 residents within 8km.

## Determining the demand for public access



Population estimates by electoral ward may be obtained from [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk) (click on Census2001). More detailed guidance on extracting this information and estimating the population that is local to the woodland is available from the FC website and FC offices.

The area of woodland deemed to be providing free public access will include areas shown on the 'Woods for People' maps plus any other known areas not yet included. The Woods for People information can be viewed from the Land Information Search facility available from the FC website at [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs).

If demand cannot be demonstrated using this procedure then the woodland cannot normally qualify for WMG on this basis. In exceptional circumstances, access projects that cannot satisfy this general criterion may still be justified subject to FC discretion based on more detailed assessment of need and public support within the community concerned.

Further guidance is contained in *Operations Note 013 – WMG: Public Access Exceptional Circumstances*, available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments).

### Designated 'Red squirrel reserves' for WMG

These comprise the Isle of Wight, the Poole Harbour Islands and the reserves (plus 5km buffer zones) in northern England in the list below. The boundaries of the areas can be viewed via the Land Information Search on the FC website, or contact your local FC office.

|           |                        |                      |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Kyloe     | Dipton/Dukeshouse Wood | Whinlatter           |
| Uswayford | Healy/Kellas           | Thirlmere            |
| Kidland   | Slaley/Dukesfield      | Garsdale/Mallerstang |
| Harwood   | Greystoke              | Whiddale             |
| Raylees   | Whinfell               | Sefton               |
| Kielder   |                        |                      |

Further guidance on good management within northern England reserves is in *Operations Notes 10a & 10b - Red Squirrel Reserves*, available from [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments).

### Situations not eligible for Woodland Management Grant

Woodland properties of 100 hectares or over which are not certified to the UKWA Standard cannot apply to EWGS for this particular grant. Other EWGS stewardship grants may be more appropriate.

The proposed work cannot be a legal requirement nor can it be simultaneously funded under any other EWGS grant or Defra's Higher Level Stewardship scheme.

### Grant

The grant is £30 per hectare per year for 5 years.

The FC will agree and measure the areas of priority woodland in the application. The area can include integral woodland open space up to a limit of 20% of the total area.

### Area for grant calculation purposes

# Main Requirements

## For woodland properties certified to the UKWA Standard

The Management Plan upon which the certified status and the EWGS application rely must be made available to FC staff, on request, during their consideration of the WMG application and at any time during the WMG agreement.

## For other eligible woodland properties

Woodland between 30 and 100 hectares must have an approved management plan to be eligible for WMG. The approved plan should meet the FC's management plan requirements.

For woodlands less than 30 hectares it must have an approved management plan or else, the applicant must complete a Condition, Opportunity and Threat (COT) assessment. The form is reproduced at the back of this guide (clear photocopies are acceptable) and is also available to download from [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs).

Anyone may complete one of these assessments but professional advice or assistance at this early stage will help to ensure that the application for grant is accurate and acceptable. Applications for WMG that are supported by inaccurate or incomplete plans or assessments will not be considered for grant. These assessments are an eligibility requirement for WMG and so cannot be funded by Woodland Assessment Grants under EWGS.

SSSIs will already have a condition assessment from Natural England. The most recent assessment should be used to support the WMG application along with the completed 'opportunities' section of the FC COT assessment.

## Outcomes expected and standards

At the conclusion of the management agreement the FC will expect to see woodland being sustainably managed through activities that address or have started to address the opportunities and threats outlined in the Plan, SSSI condition statement or COT assessment. The indicators of such management will generally be those set out in pages 15 to 18 of the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS), where they apply to the woodland concerned.

The good practice set out in the UKFS must be followed. The UK Forestry Standard is available as a pdf file for free download from [www.forestry.gov.uk/publications](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/publications).

Later sections of this guide offer more detailed advice on good practice and achieving acceptable results and outcomes for the grant payments.

## Appropriate management work

The basis of a woodland's eligibility for WMG will indicate the main values that the grant seeks to support and will give an overall direction for the management work required, e.g. to restore a woodland habitat type, protect Red squirrels or provide for public access.

However, WMG can only support woodland management that takes place on a sustainable basis to ensure that other values are not ignored, diminished or lost. It is therefore the **management plan** or the **COT assessment** that will set the appropriate management work to meet the needs of the woodland and the grant.

In most woodlands, some basic management of the different woodland habitats and, if they exist, irreplaceable historic features, will nearly always be necessary. Most of the management activities described may be carried out in any eligible woodland provided the work is appropriate, agreed and addresses the needs of the woodland and maintains any improvements gained.

It is not required that all areas of every eligible woodland should be actively managed at any one time, however, the FC will assess the likely costs of all the proposed work. If the assessed costs of the work are deemed to be less than the value of the WMG then the FC may require applicants to either increase the proposed work, or reduce the eligible area to suit. Even where a woodland is eligible to apply for WMG, if little or no work is required then WMG is unlikely to be approved.

The following summarises the management activities that should normally feature in WMG applications. The activities are detailed in the latter sections of this guide.



## Most WMG applications should include appropriate elements of...

- Open space management
- Management of deadwood habitat and veteran trees
- Management of features of archaeological and cultural heritage interest

These should be balanced with one or more of the following, depending on the reason for the woodland being eligible for WMG and the issues identified in the plan or COT assessment.

- Specific management of biodiversity interest or other special values
- Provision and upkeep of signed paths and maintenance of visual amenity
- Grey squirrel control in Red squirrel reserves
- Controlling the spread of invasive non-native woody and herbaceous species
- Management of light reaching the woodland floor
- Managing the impact of deer
- Maintenance of woodland boundaries
- Soil and ground water protection
- Sustainability monitoring

## Making an Application

Before preparing an application, we recommend you check that there is funding still available for the work you wish to propose. This will avoid wasted time preparing an application if funds are already fully subscribed. To find out whether there is funding still available, contact your local FC office or look at the grant availability webpage for your region, available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-regions](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-regions).

An application comprises completed EWGS 1 and EWGS 6 forms, plus an appropriately annotated Ordnance Survey MasterMap. Base maps can be obtained free of charge from the Forestry Commission. Map request forms and detailed map guidance is contained in *EWGS 1 – General Guide to EWGS*, available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs).

Where tree felling is proposed then form *EWGS 4 – Felling Permission and Woodland Regeneration Grant* should also be completed.

For properties with more than 100 hectares of woodland, you should complete the “Woodland Management Grant calculator”, which is an excel file and available from [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wmg](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wmg) or your local FC office.

# Completing the Woodland Management Grant form EWGS 6

## Page 1

**Item 1 Property Name and Application No.**

Enter the property name and application number as per the *EWGS 1 – General Details Form*.

**Item 2 Case Ref. No.**

Applicants should leave this blank.

**Item 3 UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) certification**

- Enter the whole area of woodland on your property, whether or not it is included in this application.
- If your woodlands are certified then enter the date that the property became certified and your certification reference (available from your certificate or Group manager).
- If your woodlands are not certified you may still apply if the total area of woodland on your property is less than 30 ha and you include a completed Woodland Condition Opportunity and Threat assessment. Tick to confirm that the assessment is included with your application.

The Condition Opportunity and Threat (COT) assessment form is available to download from [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs) or paper copies can be requested from your local FC office.

**Item 4 Areas Included**

Use the table to indicate the reason why each area of woodland (from the list entered on form EWGS 1) is eligible for the grant (see the 'eligibility' section of this guide). Different areas of the woodlands may qualify for different reasons – use the rows of the table to record this.

**Item 5 Subcompartments**

Please refer to Section 4 of the *EWGS 1 – General Guide* for advice on mapping and referencing woodland areas for grant purposes. Note that WMG does not require highly detailed subcompartment information and the application can use fewer, larger subcompartments to show only the major differences for grant purposes. Also see the notes on completing item 6 of the form below.

**Item 6 Area (ha)**

This is an optional column in this table. The FC will measure the areas from the application map but applicants may enter an estimate here if they so wish.

**Item 7 % of Area**

Most applicants will be able to map the eligible areas clearly, and can enter 100% in this column. Some woodland, however, can comprise a mixture of eligible and ineligible areas, which may be difficult to map. In this case the whole area should be included and the application simply adjusted by entering a percentage in this column. This removes the need for very detailed mapping of eligible areas.

**Item 8 Payments**

WMG is paid in 5 annual payments and applicants can suggest when they would wish the agreement and payments to start. Indicate here the proposed financial year that **the first payment is to be made** (e.g. 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010 is noted as 09/10). The year selected should be the current or next financial year.

## Page 2

### Item 9 Work Specification

Set out the work that you intend to do for this grant from the list of eligible work in the Guide. The work chosen should reflect the reasons why the woodland is eligible, and the issues highlighted in the management plan or COT assessment. Continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

The specification should be brief and should locate the work within the woodlands.

## WMG Agreements

### Felling Licences

Approved WMG agreements will commence from 1 January in the year agreed, receive first WMG instalment in Autumn of that year and will run for five years from that date. This will mean that the agreement start date may be different to the date it is actually signed. The agreement will show the year in which the first WMG payment is to be made.

Felling Licences issued alongside EWGS schemes will expire when the grant approval expires. This will be when the work is done or when the due date for claiming grant passes.

If there is a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on any of the trees in the felling application (or if any of the trees are in a Conservation Area) applicants are advised to discuss the proposal with the Local Authority before applying. The FC will in any case consult the Local Authority over the felling proposals, and if a Felling Licence is issued then separate approval from the Local Authority will not be required. If applicants do not tell the FC that a TPO exists, then any licence issued on that basis will be void and any tree felling may potentially be in contravention of the Felling Regulations.

In carrying out its statutory duties, the FC may refuse an application for a Felling Licence and the FC may also issue a Felling Licence with conditions attached for the restocking or regeneration of the woodland. For Felling Licence applicants who disagree with FC decisions there is an appeals procedure governing the resolution of these issues, details of which are set out in the FC booklet *Tree Felling – Getting Permission* available from [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs) and FC offices.

## Claims and Payments

Each WMG agreement will offer 5 annual payments. For contracts that include Woodland Management Grant, we take your signing of the contract as your claim for all 5 instalments of Woodland Management Grant. There will be no need to claim for the grant using a claim form. FC may inspect the woodlands and the management activities undertaken, prior to approving a payment.

During the period of the contract the Forestry Commission may request, in the first part of the calendar year, annual confirmation of ongoing contract compliance and details of work undertaken. Confirmation must be submitted to the Forestry Commission by 15th May of that year, otherwise the Autumn payment will not be paid. If an annual payment is not paid because of a failure to meet the grant requirements, then no right to that payment will exist and it can only be paid at the Forestry Commission's absolute discretion.

## Getting help

The FC will offer advice and help you come to decisions about management of your woodland but cannot help you draw up your Plan. Obtaining professional assistance to draw up your Plan is likely to be a worthwhile investment if you intend to seek further support, approvals and grants on the basis of the Plan.

The application forms, plan template, guidance and examples are available from [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wpg](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wpg), as is more detailed guidance on this particular grant and the full FC code covering the operation of the EWGS.

### Further advice

The Forestry Commission website contains all of the information regarding EWGS and the forms needed to apply, in particular:

[www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs) – EWGS homepage

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments) – EWGS document library

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-regions](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-regions) – Regional webpages that include details of regionally focussed grants

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-lis](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-lis) – The Land Information Search tool, telling you about special designations, features and other grant schemes that are displayed in map form

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-grants](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-grants) – FC England Grants and Regulations homepage.

This provides links to all aspects of woodland regulations, grants available and public registers of felling/planting proposals

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 are listed at

[www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice) or available from your local FC office.



# Woodland Management Grant – Guidance

## Open Space Management

Internal open space, whether permanent (such as a track or glade) or temporary (such as a felled or coppiced area), is an important element of most woodland. The edge between tree canopy and ground cover is diverse due to the variety of plants and habitats it can support with the extra light and warmth available. Well-managed boundary and internal edges also impart a vertical structure to help reduce wind speeds and retain warmth and humidity within the wooded areas.

The creation of new open spaces in ancient woodland and in very small copses must be carefully considered, as it can be harmful to the woodland if done insensitively.

**Where agreed, the FC will expect to see...**

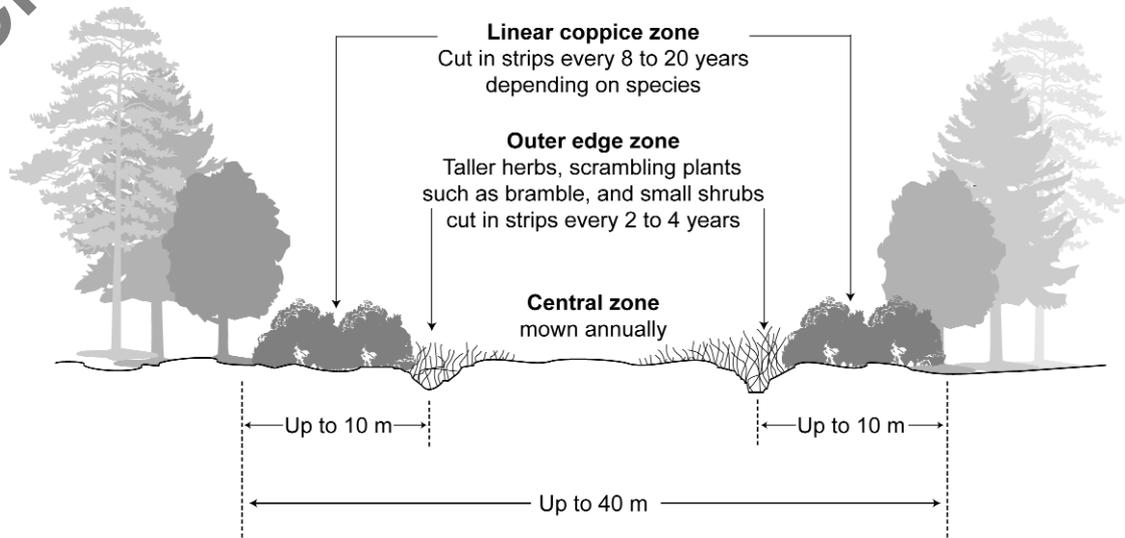
**Clear evidence of recent and cyclical management of woodland edges and open spaces appropriate to the particular biodiversity values of the woodland.**

- A diverse and unregimented shape and structure.
- A developing or developed range of heights and ages of vegetation.

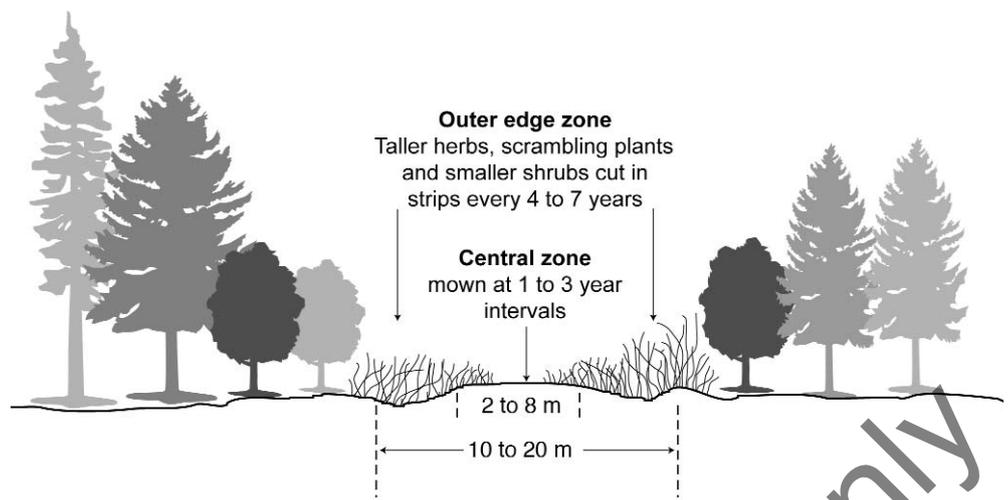
**Maintenance of, or the process of forming, predominantly graded edges for major rides, glades and riparian zones.**

- Rides are wide enough to allow light to the ride surface and scrub edge.
- Light being allowed into the edges to support the shrub layer.
- No significant damage to the diversity of vegetation and shrub edges from grazing and browsing.
- No significant damage to ride surfaces from vehicles (see soil and water protection).

The following diagrams illustrate good practice for ride management in larger woodlands. Glade edges can be managed similarly. In smaller woodlands the scale can be reduced or the work confined to southern edges. Riparian edges should be more variable to offer different levels of light and shade on the water. Further and more detailed guidance can be found in *FC Bulletin 123*, which can be obtained from [www.forestry.gov.uk/publications](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/publications) or there is a simpler pdf guide, *Operations Note 011 – Managing woodland open space for wildlife*, available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments).



A three-zone cutting system, for use on forest rides identified as having high or potential conservation value. Modified from Warren and Fuller (1993)



A simple two-zone cutting system, suitable for forest rides.  
Modified from Warren and Fuller (1993)

## Management of deadwood habitat

In fully natural woodland, deadwood may account for up to half the total volume of wood present. This is many times the amount normally encountered in a managed woodland (even those managed for wildlife) but deadwood supports a large and complex food chain and is an essential element of any sustainably managed woodland. Decaying wood produces humid, protected niches for invertebrates, plants and fungi which in turn help form the woodland soil and directly support other plant, bird and animal populations.

There is no right or wrong level of deadwood in any woodland. The principle is to take opportunities to create and retain this resource as much as possible without compromising the effective management of the woodland for other purposes. Because deadwood rots away, it can quickly cease to be the 'obstacle' it apparently poses when it is initially retained. Retaining deadwood in clusters can also reduce its impact on other management activities.

Whole trees or large stems and logs are of most value as they provide habitat niches for longer but even twigs are a valuable short-term part of the deadwood element.

*Operations Note 15 – Deadwood*, available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments), provides more detailed information on deadwood management.

The FC will expect to see some or all of the following activities...

### The management of standing and fallen deadwood habitat.

- Trees that are dying or have died standing should be left standing wherever it is safe to do so, or made safe without felling the main stem if possible.
- Windblown trees provide extremely valuable habitat where the roots have lifted and exposed the soil. Again some specimens should be retained (or even created by winching) where possible.
- Large piles of branch wood arising from felling work should not be burned but should be reduced by repeatedly cutting into the piles. Mechanically chipped waste wood does not produce good deadwood habitat. If chipping is employed, leave some larger pieces of deadwood intact.

### The creation of new deadwood habitat.

- Deadwood should ideally be provided where it builds upon any existing deadwood reserves, as many invertebrates are relatively immobile. Clusters of deadwood can be linked by ongoing addition.
- Newly created deadwood in woods with little existing resource must be positioned in shade, close to internal open areas where flowering plants will provide food for adult invertebrates.

- Smaller trees dying from over-shading should be left to become deadwood rather than being 'tidied up'.
- Larger volumes of standing deadwood can be created by ring barking to kill the selected tree. This can form an effective part of other activities such as thinning and removing unwanted species from a wood. A mixture of tree sizes is desirable.

## Management of veteran trees

Veteran trees provide a continuous succession of deadwood and niche habitats. Old trees may also be part of the cultural heritage of a wood or the local area. They may be damaged, partially rotted or hollow, or just poorly formed, but these trees have the potential to continue providing habitats for many decades, and remain as living features with careful management. Veteran trees can also be the focus for a new deadwood cluster in the woodland and can also be a valuable element of diverse open space and edge habitats.

Veteran trees can be broadleaved or conifer although native broadleaves are much preferred. The richest trees are often of the poorest form and quality for timber.

**The FC will expect to see some or all of the following activities...**

### **All ancient trees retained unchanged wherever they are found.**

- Veteran trees can be adversely affected by tree surgery, as they are often moribund and unable to respond vigorously. Limb removal or pollarding can easily kill them, and reduce their potential habitat value. Tree surgery may, however, be required for public safety reasons.

### **Current and potential future veteran trees identified.**

- A map showing the positions of all old trees in the woodland and these marked in the wood to reduce the risk of inadvertent removal.
- Selection of a younger tree nearby, or elsewhere where veteran trees are scarce (particularly near boundaries, in less accessible places and near to larger open areas) to manage as eventual replacements. These should also be mapped and marked in the wood for permanent retention.

### **The careful and gradual removal of heavy shade from veteran trees.**

- Any actions to reduce shade must be extremely gradual to retain humidity around the tree and prevent drying of the buds and soil, and damage to lichens and mosses that may be on the upper branches.
- Damage from wind or lightning can be made safe if necessary but should not be tidied up otherwise.

### **The premature 'ageing' of younger trees.**

- Where very old trees are non-existent, selected trees can be managed to provide similar conditions. Deliberately removing sections of the stem bark can effectively wound younger trees, or large limbs can be partly cut several metres from the stem and then snapped. This will quickly create pockets of rot and niche habitats in these stems.

# Management of features of archaeological and cultural heritage interest

The greatest risk to these irreplaceable aspects of a woodland's value is a simple lack of knowledge about the existence and extent of the features.

**The FC will expect to see evidence of some or all of the following...**

## **Locating and recording sites of interest.**

- The mapping and recording of all archaeological and cultural heritage features visible on the ground and those listed in the Sites and Monuments Record/Historic Environment Record. Some of this information can also be found on the Rural Land Register.
- The clear marking of sites inside the woodland to reduce the risk of inadvertent damage during other works.

## **Appropriate management to minimise disturbance.**

- Obtaining expert written management advice.
- Reduction of tree cover over the site of interest to allow management as open space rather than as woodland.
- Management of trees and ground cover on the site of interest to minimise damage from roots, and the risk of damage from trees being uprooted by wind.
- Creation of new access routes to avoid the traffic of vehicles and machinery over sites of interest.

# Grey squirrel control

This activity will only be supported through WMG where control is undertaken within the context of a programme of work to protect Red squirrel and their habitat within the designated Red squirrel reserves.

Elsewhere, targeted Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) support may be available in certain woodlands critically threatened by Grey squirrel damage.

**The FC will expect to see...**

## **In the Red squirrel reserves in Northern England**

- Woodlands managed as per the Red squirrel reserve and buffer zone management guidelines available from [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs) or FC offices.

**The FC will expect to see...**

## **In the Isle of White and Poole Harbour Islands**

- Management in accordance with the Red Squirrel Action Plan for these areas. Advice is available from FC offices.

# Management of biodiversity interest

**Where appropriate and agreed, the FC will expect to see...**

- Completion of specific agreed actions to support the UK Biodiversity Action Plan for woodland habitats and UK Species Action Plan (SAP) targets where the grant is crucial to their delivery.

# Provision and upkeep of signed paths and the maintenance of visual amenity

AGREEMENT HOLDERS ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO TAKE OUT APPROPRIATE THIRD-PARTY INSURANCE COVER.

**The main outcomes that the FC will expect to see include...**

**The provision and maintenance of usable access paths, entrance and exit points and appropriate way marking.**

- Access points must display “Woodland Welcome” signs provided by the Forestry Commission.
- Paths and routes must be obvious or otherwise marked. “Woodland Welcome” route markers can be provided by the Forestry Commission.
- Gaps or gates must be created and maintained to offer reasonable access to a wide range of user abilities. Gaps and gates are preferred over stiles.

**Actions to address issues arising from safety inspections.**

- Documented safety inspections noting any issues and actions completed.
- Path surfaces must be appropriate to the soil conditions and maintained to support the level of use.
- Paths must be passable for the majority of the year and free of obvious hazards such as steep slopes, running water or physical obstacles.
- Overhead hazards such as dense hanging growth and loose debris must be removed.

**Addressing visual amenity issues.**

- Removal of litter.
- Maintenance of facilities (such as car parks, signs and seats) in a serviceable condition.
- Maintenance of verges, vistas and viewpoints where agreed.

## Controlling non-native species

**Where appropriate and agreed, the FC will expect to see evidence of some or all of the following...**

- Action to reduce or prevent further spread of invasive non-native tree species and other species such as rhododendron, Himalayan balsam, and Japanese knotweed.
- Maintenance of the outcome through follow-up control work throughout the agreement period.

## Managing impacts of deer

Where present in large numbers, deer can potentially pose the greatest threat to the sustainability of the woodland environment.

**Where appropriate and agreed, the FC will expect to see evidence of some or all of the following...**

- Implementation of landscape scale, organised population management.
- Participation in an effective deer management group
- Monitoring and responding to changes in deer populations

The FC will not usually use WMG to support the management of deer in woodlands that lie within a larger landscape unit where there is little other effective population management.

Further guidance is contained in *Operations Note 012 – Deer Support under EWGS* available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments).

## Woodland light management

**Where appropriate and agreed, the FC will expect to see evidence of some or all of the following...**

- Action to reduce very heavy shade and create varied shade in riparian zones and adjacent to open spaces.
- Action to create areas of dappled shade for woodland plant communities.
- Actions to reduce canopy density to encourage natural regeneration of trees, native shrub layer and woodland plants.
- No excessive damage due to grazing and browsing.

## Maintenance of woodland boundaries

**Where appropriate and agreed, the FC will expect to see some evidence of or all of the following...**

- Maintenance of stock-proof fencing to control grazing by farm animals (providing that this work is not being funded under ELS).
- Protection and sensitive management of historic boundaries and associated ancient trees or earthworks in line with the earlier guidelines for these features.
- A managed boundary edge vegetation structure (see 'Open Space Management' above).

## Soil and ground water protection

**Where appropriate and agreed, the FC will expect to see some evidence of or all of the following...**

- The removal of debris and stored materials from the woodland.
- The reduction of effects arising from the adjacent use of fertilisers, fuels, oils and farm sprays.
- Action to limit unwarranted soil disturbance within the woodland.
- Maintenance of drains, watergates and culverts as specified, which can include the restriction of existing drains.

## Sustainability monitoring

**Where appropriate and agreed, the FC will expect to see some evidence of or all of the following...**

- Current records (updated at least every 6 months) of the physical characteristics of woodland.
- A current subcompartment map incorporating any recent felling areas.
- Records of known special values.
- Records of any known health and safety hazards.
- Maintaining notes (or diary) of work that has taken place including protection and control activities undertaken and any pesticide use.

# EWGS Woodland Condition, Opportunity and Threat Assessment

PLEASE USE PHOTOCOPIES OF THE FOLLOWING PAGES/USE BLOCK CAPITALS

## 1. Contact and property information

Wood name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grid reference: \_\_\_\_\_

Wood area (ha): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner name: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner email: \_\_\_\_\_

Other contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor name: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor email: \_\_\_\_\_

Other contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

FC contact name: \_\_\_\_\_

FC contact tel: \_\_\_\_\_

FC contact email: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Background survey

| Tick | Designations ( <i>see below</i> ) | Name or other reference or descriptor |
|------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|      | SSSI, SAC, SPA, Ramsar            |                                       |
|      | SINC, LNR, Local wildlife site    |                                       |
|      | ASNW, PAWS                        |                                       |
|      | National Park, AONB, TPO          |                                       |
|      | SAM, OAM                          |                                       |
|      | Veteran trees                     |                                       |

|      |   |        |  |
|------|---|--------|--|
| SSSI | Site of Special Scientific Interest     | SAC    | Special Area of Conservation               |
| SPA  | Special Protection Area (birds)         | Ramsar | Convention Site (Wetland)                  |
| SINC | Site of Interest to Nature Conservation | LNR    | Local Nature Reserve                       |
| ASNW | Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland           | PAWS   | Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site        |
| AONB | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty      | TPO    | Tree Preservation Order                    |
| SAM  | Scheduled Ancient Monument              | OAM    | Other Ancient Monument or historic feature |

Veteran trees are living trees that are often centuries old

### 3. Woodland benefits and desired outcomes

State clearly and simply any specific benefits that the woodland owner wishes to achieve from looking after the woodland.

State clearly and simply any desired outcomes for management. These should be consistent with the woodland's status, the UK Forestry standard and all supporting guidelines.

Benefits and desired outcomes...*describe*

Now closed for information only

### 4. Assessment of condition

Date of assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

|                            |                    |   |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---|
| <b>Species composition</b> | Native broadleaves | % |
|                            | Other broadleaves  | % |
|                            | Conifers           | % |

**Stocking** (percentage of gross area that is under canopy cover)

Please tick  0 – 20%  21 – 40%  41 – 60%  61 – 80%  81 – 100%

|                      |                      |   |
|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| <b>Age structure</b> | Open space           | % |
|                      | Single age class     | % |
|                      | 2 – 4 age classes    | % |
|                      | Multiple age classes | % |
|                      | Intimate and diverse | % |

**Understorey**

Please tick  Present  Patchy  Largely absent

**Regeneration**

Are there signs of seedling regeneration in sufficient density to maintain the canopy over the next 20 years?

Please tick  YES  NO  N/A (too young)

**Browsing and grazing levels...describe**

What animal is browsing? Where is it taking place? Does it vary? Note any problems with the level of browsing. Note any benefits observed.

**Significant other features...describe**

Note presence and location of features such as historic features, ponds, glades, veteran trees, deadwood etc.

**Management access...describe**

Is the woodland sufficiently served by roads and rides? Describe current situation and suggested improvements.

**Predominant adjoining land use...describe**

E.g. arable, grazed land, woodland etc.

**Predominant adjoining land use...describe**

Make any further observations or comments here. Continue on an attached page if required.

Now closed for information only

## 5. Assessment of opportunities and threats

Comment on the **management opportunities** and **threats** to the woodland as appropriate.

### Social/Cultural...describe

(Including visual aspects)

### Environmental...describe

(Including external threats like spray drift, drainage impacts etc.)

### Economic...describe

(Including tourism activities and links to existing rural businesses)

Now closed for information only

## 6. Work proposed to achieve the desired outcomes set out in Section 3

Proposed work...*describe*

(Create a numbered list of actions to be taken)

Now closed for information only

## 7. Recommendations for further survey before work commences

### Recommended Surveys

Empty box for recommended surveys.

## 8. Support for woodland work

### Advice for woodland owner re: potential for grants, Felling Licence needs, potential for training, seminar attendance, organisational membership

Empty box for advice for woodland owner.

This document is for information only and does not constitute an agreement of any form nor does it confer any rights. It is intended as a guide to help applicants decide whether the grant is applicable to them and whether the main requirements of any grant agreement can be met. The information is subject to change. Full and current details of the grant scheme and the requirements of any EWGS grant contract that may be made between the applicant(s) and the Forestry Commission arising from an application to the grant scheme can be found at [www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs)