

EWGS 7: Woodland Creation Grant

1 Introduction

Woodland Creation Grant supports the establishment of new woodlands that meet national and regional priorities. To qualify for this grant the application and subsequent activities must meet the standards of environmental protection and practice set out in the UK Forestry Standard and its supporting guidelines. The grant is available on a competitive and regional basis, using scoring systems that select applications against public benefit priorities.

The aim of this grant is to create woodlands that generate public benefits. Particular priorities are new woodlands:

- For wildlife, particularly where they can act as protective buffers and link important woodland habitats and other associated natural areas;
- To assist flood management, improve water quality and prevent soil erosion;
- That are resilient and can adapt to climate change;
- Near to where people live, particularly within the urban fringe;
- For access, recreation and sport;
- To enhance the landscape and restore former industrial land.

There are three elements of the EWGS grant for new woodland that can be applied for, depending on the eligibility of the site and the applicant:

- **Woodland Creation Grant (WCG)**. This is the main grant that contributes to the costs of establishing new woodlands.
- **Additional Contributions (AC)**. These increase the contribution towards the costs of establishing new woodland that deliver specific priorities.
- **Farm Woodland Payments (FWP)**. These are compensation payments for agricultural income forgone when creating new woodlands on agricultural land.

Every application MUST include and be eligible for the Woodland Creation Grant element. The application may also qualify for Additional Contributions and Farm Woodland Payments depending on whether the land, the use or ownership meets the criteria for those grants and payments.

This document must be read in conjunction with the regional guidance. The regional guidance sets out what additional contributions are available specifically for your woodland location, and the score forms / guidance that apply to your application.

2 Grants

2.1 Payment Rates

A summary of the payment rates are below. For more detail on the different rates and criteria, please refer to the eligibility section of this guidance.

Woodland Creation Grant

Woodland type	Rate per hectare
Broadleaved	£1800
Conifer	£1200
Special Broadleaves e.g. poplar, cricket bat willow	£700

Additional Contributions

More than one AC can be paid on the same woodland, but the maximum total AC allowed is £2000 per hectare. The amount of AC payable may, in exceptional circumstances, be capped subject to grant availability.

Priority	Rate per hectare
New woodland close to people	£500
New woodland with public access	£500
Regional priorities	Up to £2000

Farm Woodland Payments

Type of owner, land use and location	Rate per hectare per year
Arable land in the Lowlands	£300
Other improved land in the Lowlands	£200
Unimproved land or land in the Uplands	£60
Non-farmers	One of the above rates or €150, whichever is the lower

The rates of Farm Woodland Payment are reviewed at least every five years to take into account relevant factors including trends in farm income from comparable agricultural land. The rates of annual payment could, therefore, go up or down during the lifetime of the agreement. Any changes to the rates will only affect payments made after the change comes into force. The rates are due for review in 2011, with any changes introduced in Autumn 2012.

Payments are also subject to adjustment if more accurate measurement in future highlights a difference in area, or alignment with the Rural Land Register is required. Non-farmer payments are recalculated annually based on the sterling: euro exchange rate on the 31st December of the year before e.g. a non-farmer FWP instalment due Autumn 2015 will be based on the currency exchange rate on the 31st December 2014.

Single Payment Scheme (SPS)

If you are eligible for Single Payment Scheme on the land to be planted, you can continue to claim SPS as well as Farm Woodland Payments.

2.2 Payments

Woodland Creation Grants and Additional Contributions

These contributions are generally paid in two instalments: 80% of the total may be claimed upon satisfactory completion of the planting or initial works, the remaining 20% five years after the first payment, provided the area has been maintained and established as agreed. The 2nd instalment is subject to the same claim year rules as the 1st instalment.

Woodland created under the special broadleaved category is paid in one single instalment. This payment will include any Additional Contribution in full.

Farm Woodland Payments

FWP payments are made during October/November each year for either 10 or 15 years:

- Woodland comprising more than 50% broadleaves by area will receive 15 annual payments
- Woodland comprising 50% or less broadleaves by area, or areas in the Special Broadleaved category, will receive 10 annual payments

Where agreed, the first FWP payment will normally be made in the autumn following WCG payment and will continue annually thereafter for the agreed period. To get FWP first paid in the autumn following planting, the claim for WCG must be submitted by the 15th May at the latest, otherwise FWP will be delayed to the following autumn. If WCG is not paid for any reason then FWP cannot commence. The area for payment will be based on the woodland area planted and claimed, and the area approved in the contract.

3 Eligibility

- Bare Land - Any bare land is potentially eligible to be considered for WCG but each application will be tested against relevant legislation, environmental standards and other grant requirements. Bare land is any land (including woodland open space) that has been under a non-woodland use or land cover for at least 10 years prior to the date of application.
- EWGS will not support tree planting where other important public benefits, land cover types or habitats would be lost. The proposals must meet the UK Forestry Standard and associated guidelines.
- The woodland design must meet one of the woodland category standards set out on page 5 of this guidance.
- Your application must meet the regional threshold score. The scoring process is described on page 8, with detailed information in the regional guidance.
- The application must be approved by the FC before any work is started.

- We can only approve new woodland as far ahead as planting year 2014 i.e. woodland created by Summer 2014.
- The freeholder(s) must be party to, or in agreement with any application to plant the grant-aided trees on their land.
- Additional Contributions are only eligible if WCG is approved and the criteria for the specific contribution is met.
- Farm Woodland Payments are only eligible if WCG is approved, the land to be planted is in agricultural use and the proposed woodland does not comprise Cricket Bat Willow. Further FWP eligibility details can be found on page 10.

Situations not eligible for woodland creation grants

- Land in receipt of public funding for other purposes or other land cover types.
- Land planted without any required consent under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.
- Woodland intended for the production of Christmas trees or primarily biomass as a fuel or other use.
- Land resumed from a tenant by means of a contested notice to quit, or subject to such action.
- Land that must be planted to comply with a Felling Licence condition or Restocking Notice following conviction for an offence under the Felling Regulations of the Forestry Act 1967.
- Failed planting areas approved under EWGS or other woodland grant schemes, until such time as any obligations to make good the situation have been discharged.
- Land excluded by the application selection criteria and mechanisms – scoring, categories etc.

4 Woodland design standards and woodland categories

The general principles regarding minimum level of woodland design and work standards are:

- It meets the UK Forestry Standard and associated guidelines – critically that it does not damage or threaten the existing environmental value of the land being planted, or of adjacent habitat.
- It meets good forestry practice for robust woodland establishment e.g. species suited to the site, location and management objectives, and is established using recognised techniques.

The FC have identified different woodland 'categories' that set out the woodland design standards required to meet different landowner management objectives. Proposals must fit within a particular category to be eligible for grant.

For all categories, the design and species choice must be appropriate for the site and location. The species, open space and shrub proposals must be fully justified, particularly where they are at or near the limits allowed. In order to create woodland that is resilient, one tree species should not make up more than two thirds of the overall composition.

Proposals may include planting that is not grant aided e.g. additional shrub species interplanted at the owner's expense. Any such additions must be clearly described on the application form and cannot detract from the objectives or specification set out for the relevant category. The FC may reject an application or withhold grant payment on an approved contract if the woodland proposed/created has deviated from that set out in the application/contract and as a result fails to meet the rules of the scheme.

Woodland Categories

Category	Characteristics	Minimum stocking density (stems per hectare) of established trees & tree spacing	Open Ground (% of grant aided area)	Shrubs (% of grant aided area)
Native	Native woodland as per Ancient & Native practice guide	Normally 1600 sph, max 15m spacing. Lower density may be permitted for specific BAP priority species e.g. Black grouse	Max 40%	Max 25%
Community	Designed to include permissive access provision	Normally 2250 sph, max 2.1 spacing Lower density may be permitted for small woodlands, down to 1100, max 3m spacing	Max 40%	Max 25%
Standard	Woodland ≥3.0 ha	2250 sph, max 2.5m spacing	Max 20%	Max 10%
Small standard	Woodland <3.0 ha	1100 sph broadleaf 2250 sph conifer Max 3m spacing	Max 20%	Max 15%
Special broadleaved	Single species broadleaves grown at wide spacing	100 sph, max 10m spacing	Max 20%	0%

New Native Woodland – species choice

To meet the native woodland category above, and for score form purposes, the native woodland design must meet the principles set out in the Ancient and Native Woodland

Practice Guide which was published in 2010. It differs from the principles in Bulletin 112 in various ways, but notably:

- We now allow up to 20% of the species mix to be non-native.
- We now allow 20% of the native species to be 'advancing' or 'honorary' natives as per the practice guide e.g. beech advancing in the North West of England, and Sweet chestnut as an honorary native in southern England.

These increases in species choice are still limited to the key principles such as threat to adjacent habitat. As such, the FC will scrutinise species choice more closely where the proposed new woodland is adjacent to valuable habitat such as ancient semi-natural woodland.

4.1 Woodland Size & Area

Size

All applications are subject to environmental considerations and budget funding restrictions.

There is no minimum size for new woodland as very small areas can be effectively added to existing woodlands. Nevertheless, the requirement is to create woodland rather than a group of trees, and larger woodlands are generally more resilient.

Therefore planting areas will normally be no less than 0.25 ha and no narrower than 30m on average, with 15m as an absolute minimum width at any point. Woodlands 20 metres wide may be accepted in exceptional circumstances such as linking existing woodland, along riparian zones or in an urban environment.

There is no maximum size for new woodland but all applications are subject to environmental considerations and budget funding restrictions. Large scale or high impact woodland creation proposals may require consent under the Environmental Impact Regulations, and we normally will not approve an application that would commit more than 50% of the regional woodland creation grant budget.

Area

For the purposes of distinguishing between Standard or Small Standard woodland categories, the area is based on the total of:

- The proposed area of new contiguous afforestation.
- Any contiguous areas afforested with public funding within the last 10 years.
- Any other contiguous areas approved for afforestation at the time of application.

'Contiguous areas' for the purposes of EWGS are those where any part of their boundaries comes within 30m of each other or they are not separated by a physical boundary that prevents management as one unit. Such barriers are metalled public roads, un-bridged watercourses or un-navigable terrain.

5 Scoring

The FC uses a scoring system to rank applications for Woodland Creation Grants. Applications that meet or exceed the threshold score are processed and approved until grant funding is fully committed.

There is a different score form and threshold score for every region to reflect local circumstances and priorities. You must refer to the regional score form and guidance relevant to the location of the land you want to plant. Regional guidance is available from the [Woodland Creation Grant webpage](#), [regional FC webpages](#) or from your local FC office.

The threshold scores for 2011 are:

- 3 points in East of England region.
- 10 points in all other English regions.

Applicants should complete more than one scoring form if some areas in the application would score significantly differently from others due to their design or location.

6 Additional Contribution eligibility

Additional contributions (ACs) have extra eligibility criteria over and above the normal eligibility rules, to reflect the targeted nature of this grant. This guidance describes the criteria and payment rates for the nationally available ACs. For details of the regional ACs please refer to the relevant regional guidance.

Proposals may be eligible for more than one AC (and can be a mixture of national and regional priorities), up to a maximum contribution of £2000 per hectare.

National Additional Contribution: Priority locations close to people

To be eligible for this AC offering £500/ha, the new woodland must be:

- in the National Forest area, In a Community Forest area or;
- within 8 km of the homes of 100,000 people.

You can find out if your new woodland is close to people by using the [Land Information Search \(LIS\)](#) on the EWGS website. When you draw the area you intend to plant and run a search, the report will tell you whether you are close to 100,000 people.

National Additional Contribution: Permissive access woodland

To be eligible for this AC offering £500/ha, the new woodland must:

- be located where there is a demand for public access;
- be designed to facilitate permissive access on foot;
- be accessible for free, quiet enjoyment by the public (including dogs on leads) during daylight hours for 11 months of each year;

- offer permissive access for 30 years from first payment of the AC.

Determining public access demand

The Forestry Commission apply the following principles when determining the level of access demand. Appropriate locations for woodlands with public access will be those where the ratio of area of existing woodland with free public access, to the local resident population, is less than 1 hectare per 500 people.

A zone of 8 km around the proposed woodland site will be used to estimate these values. Guidance on how to find out the local population is available in Operations Note 1 which is available in the [EWGS document library](#). The [Land Information Search \(LIS\)](#) on the EWGS website will tell you the area of accessible woodland within 8km of your proposed woodland.

Regional Additional Contribution: Quality of Place priority areas

The Forestry Commission has identified "Quality of Place" (QoP) priority areas based on data that includes populations, deprivation indices and existing public access provision. All regions offer ACs for new woodland in QoP areas but the rules and payment rates vary slightly – please refer to the relevant regional guidance for full details.

Regional Priorities

Each region has their own range of Additional Contribution priority areas that reflect regional factors and priorities. Please refer to the relevant regional guidance for further information.

7 Farm Woodland Payment Eligibility

Farm Woodland Payments (FWP) are not grants but compensation payments for the loss of agricultural income as a result of afforesting agricultural land. The tree planting proposals must meet the requirements for EWGS Woodland Creation Grant in all respects.

Eligibility for FWP and the level of FWP payment is determined by 4 factors:

- Whether the land is in agricultural use.
- Whether the applicant is a farmer or non-farmer.
- The current land use.
- Where the land is located.

7.1 What is agricultural land?

For EWGS purposes, 'agricultural land' is specified as land used for horticulture, fruit growing, arable cropping, seed growing, dairy farming, livestock breeding and keeping, the use of the land as grazed land, meadowland, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds or the use of land as woodland where that is ancillary to the use of the land for other agricultural activities. Set-aside land is also included.

Letting land to another person to carry out an agricultural activity, where you retain some responsibility for the management of the land, e.g. letting land on a grazing licence or short term tenancy for grazing, is also considered to be an agricultural activity.

7.2 Farmer or non-farmer

Landowners are eligible for FWP regardless of their farmer status, but the rate non-farmers can be paid is capped. The Forestry Commission may, during any time of the application or contract period, ask for an accountant's declaration that farming income is >25%, should there be any doubt as to the landowner's status. Should the landowner's 'farmer' status change during the period of the contract, they must inform the FC and the FWP rate will be adjusted accordingly.

Farmer

A farmer is defined as a person who spends an essential part of their time and derives at least 25% of their gross income from farming, taking into account of all the land that they farm in England. Income derived from activities on land described in section 7.1 above is considered farming income. Agri-environment income forgone payments are eligible, including Farm Woodland payments on existing schemes.

The following activities are not considered as income from farming:

- Any income that has no link with the management of the property.
- From diversification enterprises such as bed & breakfast or café.
- Commercial letting of outbuildings.
- Income from timber or woodland grant schemes.

Non-farmer

A non-farmer is a person that does not meet the above definition and are limited to a maximum FWP rate of 150 Euros per hectare per year. The limit is applied at the land parcel level and not aggregated over the whole application e.g. FWP on unimproved land will receive £60 per hectare per year, but FWP on arable land in the lowlands will receive the sterling equivalent of 150 Euros per hectare.

Landlords and Tenants

In the case of an agricultural or farm business tenancy, it is the tenant and not the landlord who is eligible to apply, but the landlord's written consent (preferably as a party to the application) is required prior to any grant agreement being made. Tenants are recommended to take legal advice before applying for the scheme and should be aware that they may be liable to repay the Woodland Creation Grant if their tenancy ends before the EWGS agreement and their successor is unwilling to take over the agreement.

Share Farmers

In the case of share-farmers, each farmer must be party to the application and normally one farmer will be the main agreement contact on behalf of the others. All parties will normally be required to sign the EWGS agreement.

7.3 What is the land use?

For the purposes of FWP, there are three types of land:

a. Arable land. This includes cereal crops and other multi annual crops such as artichokes, asparagus, rhubarb and raspberries.

b. Other improved land. This includes improved grassland and other cropped land areas where over half the sward comprises either singly or in mixture, ryegrass, cocksfoot, timothy or white clover. Within Less Favoured Areas (LFA) improved grassland that contains areas where over one third of the sward comprises either singly or in mixture, ryegrass, cocksfoot, timothy or white clover. Grassland within the LFA not qualifying under this definition may still be eligible if it has been 'improved' by management practices such as liming and top dressing, provided that there is not a significant presence of sensitive plant species indicative of native unimproved grassland. Further information and a list of these sensitive species can be obtained from your local FC office. Such land must have been 'improved' at least three years before the date of application.

c. Unimproved land. This is agricultural land that does not meet either of the definitions at (a) or (b) above, e.g. unimproved grazing land. Unimproved land (like any other land type) can only be eligible for EWGS Woodland Creation Grants if there is no environmental loss arising from the afforestation proposed.

7.4 Location of the land

FWP rates are now determined by land location using similar categories as the Single Payment Scheme:

Lowland: Land Outside Less Favoured Area (OLFA) and land in Less Favoured Areas (LFA).

Upland: Land in Severely Disadvantaged Areas (SDA).

7.5 FWP ineligibility

The following circumstances are ineligible for Farm Woodland Payments under EWGS:

- a. Non-agricultural land.
- b. Applicants cannot apply for FWP on land which they are renting out to another person for their exclusive occupation.
- c. Land resumed from a tenant by means of a contestable notice to quit, which was the subject of a counter-notice by the tenant. In these circumstances no EWGS Woodland Creation Grants can be paid either. This exclusion will not apply however where the Agricultural Land Tribunal has consented to the operation of the notice to quit on 'greater hardship' grounds, or where the notice is an incontestable notice to quit where the land was resumed for development purposes.
- d. Where the aims and obligations of other schemes or legislation (for example, SSSIs, subsidies and land management payments under the Stewardship

Scheme or previous licences and grants) would be frustrated or adversely affected by the planting of trees on the land.

- e. New woodland that includes cricket bat willow.

Applicants must check that any necessary permission has been obtained, and that there are no legal or contractual obligations that would prevent the planting or long-term management of trees on the land.

The trees cannot be clearfelled during the FWP obligation period i.e. if receiving 10 or 15 years of payments, you cannot clearfell the trees for 20 or 30 years respectively. The only exception is where new woodland approved on the basis it will be a native species coppice system, designed and managed for environmental benefit; the woodland can be coppiced in accordance with good forestry practice within the obligation period and still receive FWP.

8 EWGS Woodland Creation & Carbon Funding

Carbon finance can provide an additional funding stream for woodland creation. Where EWGS funded schemes also receive carbon finance, it is important that statements are not made regarding the carbon benefits that are incorrect and risk bringing disrepute to the Scheme, applicant or Forestry Commission.

It is not possible at the present time for carbon offsets to be generated by forestry/tree planting projects taking place in the UK that satisfy the requirements of international carbon markets. To provide clarity over this issue and consistency with the Government's position on carbon offsetting, the Forestry Commission will not administer grant-aid to projects that also receive funding by claiming that they generate tradable carbon offsets.

FC wish to encourage private funding of woodland creation and grant-aid will continue to be administered to projects also receiving carbon funding as long as communication of the carbon benefits associated with woodland creation are consistent with the UK Government's position, as outlined below:

- It is acknowledged that the project will contribute to the UK meeting its future climate change commitments.
- The terms carbon offset, offsetting, carbon trading or carbon credits are not used.
- That those investing in the project are not under the impression that the carbon savings have already been made.

The submission of a WCG application will be taken as acceptance of these requirements as a condition of contract. The conditions apply to applications for grant-aid received after its publication and do not apply retrospectively.

The detailed requirements together with further information are set out in [Operations Note 20](#) "Position on co-funding of woodland creation through EWGS and carbon finance".

9 The Application Process

Before applying for EWGS both you and your land must be registered with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). The General Guide to EWGS and Operations Note 19 explains the requirements of the RPA in more detail.

The applicant will need to complete and submit a full application which comprises:

- Forms EWGS 1 & EWGS 7;
- The relevant regional score form EWGS 7a;
- An Ordnance Survey MasterMap® showing the proposed woodland on the property.

Forms are available from FC offices or from the FC website www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs-wcg. The requirements for an acceptable map are set out in the General Guide to EWGS. Base maps of the required quality can be obtained free of charge from the Forestry Commission by completing a request form. This request form is found in the General Guide to EWGS, which is available from FC offices or from the FC website.

An outline of the application process is detailed in the General Guide to EWGS.

For woodland creation applications, Woodland Officers will normally visit the site to check the proposals and score. They may be able to offer advice on how your proposals can achieve more points and hence increase the chance of being taken forward. If your score is found to be incorrect, there is a risk that the proposals may fall below the minimum score and the application will subsequently be rejected.

10 Completing the Woodland Creation Grant form (EWGS 7)

Page 1

Item 1: Property Name and Application No.

Enter the property name and application number as per the 'General Details' form (EWGS 1).

Item 2: Case Ref. No.

Applicants should leave this blank.

Item 3:

This section is for general prescriptions of the proposals. Applicants can refer to these prescriptions when entering the new woodland details overleaf to avoid repetition. See the guidance for Column 16 before completing this question.

Pages 2 & 3

Column 4: Work Group

Use a letter to identify each work group. A Work Group is simply a convenient way of showing that all the detailed work elements (specification, rates, timing and claims etc.) are all the same and can be applied to one or more subcompartments. If parts of your woodland proposals are different in some way (e.g. different land use category, grant

type, species mix, planting season and claim year) these should be separated out into different subcompartments and entered under a different work group.

Column 5: Current land use and location

Please insert the relevant code to tell us what the land is currently used for and where it is located. All the subcompartments in the Work Group must be the same (see notes on Column 6).

Agricultural	Arable land in the Lowlands	AL
	Other Improved land in the Lowlands	IL
	Unimproved land or agricultural land in the Uplands	UU
Non-agricultural	Industrial or mineral Land previously used for industry or mineral extraction	IM
	Other non-agricultural use (e.g. public parks, school grounds)	ON

Column 6: Subcompartments in the Work Group

List all the subcompartments that are in this Work Group. The areas must have been entered on page 4 of the General Details Form – EWGS 1 and they must be clearly shown on the application map(s).

Column 7: Area of Work Group

Enter the total area of all the subcompartments included in this Work Group. The FC will measure the areas from the maps but applicants should enter their estimate here. Land previously used for industry or mineral extraction.

Column 8: Woodland to be created

Enter the EWGS woodland category for this work group.

- Standard
- Small Standard
- Native*
- Community
- Special Broadleaved

* If Native woodland is to be created, also enter the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) that best represents the type of native woodland proposed. The NVC type proposed will need to match the drainage of the site, the pH of the soil, the climate and the species range and mix. Further guidance on NVC is detailed in Operations Note 4, which is available on the FC website (www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments) or FC offices.

Column 9: Farm Woodland Payments

Tick if all the land in this work group is eligible for these payments.

Column 10: Additional Contributions

Tick the additional grant(s) that you wish to apply for. See earlier sections in this guide on eligibility. For regionally targeted additional contributions, tick the 'Other' column and describe it in column 16 e.g. East Midlands Woodland Birds AC.

Column 11: Species Mix

Enter the species to be used for this work group and the estimated percentage of the total work group area for each. Use separate lines for:

- Each tree species that will comprise 20% or more of the woodland. Other species can be grouped together using the Species Group codes for this purpose. Where Species Group codes are used, list the species included in this mix in Column 16.
- Woody Shrubs (WSH).
- Open Ground (OG) which is to be part of the grant-aided area.

See table of species and codes overleaf.

Species codes for entry into Column 11

Species Groups					
Species	Code	Species	Code	Species	Code
Native Mixed Broadleaves	NBL	Mixed Broadleaves	MB	Other broadleaves not in the main list	XB
		Mixed Conifers	MC	Other conifers not in the main list	XC

Other elements		
Species	Code	Description
Woody Shrubs	WSH	Native woody shrubs and minor trees appropriate to the site i.e. hawthorn, blackthorn, holly, dogwood, alder, spindle, guelder-rose, wild privet, elder
Open Ground	OG	Managed open space. It's purpose and how it will be managed must be clearly described

Broadleaf species					
Species	Code	Species	Code	Species	Code
Alder	AR	Wild Cherry	WCH	Sessile Oak	SOK
Common Alder	CAR	Elm	EM	Red Oak	ROK
Grey Alder	GAR	Hazel	HAZ	Poplar	PO
Ash	AH	Hornbeam	HBM	Rowan	ROW
Aspen	ASP	Lime	LI	Sweet Chestnut	SC
Beech	BE	Small-leaved Lime	SLI	Sycamore	SY
Birch	BI	Field Maple	FM	Willow	WL
Downy Birch	PBI	Norway Maple	NOM	Goat Willow	GWL
Silver Birch	SBI	Pendunculate Oak	POK	Cricket Bat Willow	CBW

Conifer species					
Species	Code	Species	Code	Species	Code
Western Red Cedar	RC	European Larch	EL	Scots Pine	SP
Lawson Cypress	LC	Hybrid Larch	HL	Norway Spruce	NS
Douglas Fir	DF	Japanese Larch	JL	Sitka Spruce	SS
Grand Fir	GF	Corsican Pine	CP	Western Hemlock	WH
Noble Fir	NF	Lodgepole Pine	LP	Yew	YEW

Column 12: Percentage to be established by natural regeneration

If it is intended to encourage and include naturally seeded trees as some part of the established woodland, estimate the proportion of the work group area to be established in this way. This information ensures that any later inspection can take these additional trees into account.

Column 13: Planting season

Specify the planting season in which you will carry out the work. The season extending from 1st October 2011 to 30th September 2012 is noted as P2012. We normally expect the majority of work to be carried out in the coming planting season i.e. P2012 but we will allow exceptions where justified.

Note: The first FWP payment following a successful claim for WCG is made during October/November of the selected planting season e.g. FWP paid in Oct/Nov 2012 for P2012.

Column 14: Claim Year

Insert the financial year in which you intend to claim the grant for the whole of this work group. The Claim Year from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, for example, is written as 12/13. Each planting season spans the start and end of two Claim Years so either may legitimately be chosen. It is a fundamental requirement that the work group must be completed before grant can be claimed, and the claim must be submitted before the end of the designated Claim Year.

If this is not possible for any reason, the applicant must seek an early amendment to the agreement or no right to the grant will exist under the EWGS contract. It is important to note that we cannot guarantee approval of requests to defer claim years. Whilst we will consider reasonable requests, it is at the FC's discretion and subject to considerations such as budget availability.

Column 15: Standard proposals

On the back page of the form is a set of standard proposals or specifications that can quickly be incorporated into the application by entering the reference in this column. This should help reduce the amount of text you need to add to your application and ensures key information is provided.

Column 16: Additional details

Use this column to note any changes to the Standard Proposals used and to make clear any particular details that help describe the work accurately. Such details might include:

- List of species included in Species Group codes (e.g. MB or WSH).
- A description of how the species will be distributed across the site.
- The proposed ground preparation for natural or direct seeding of trees.
- Details of public access provisions (e.g. path maintenance, access points, signage etc).

Applicants may also set out their own work specifications in this column rather than nominate standard specifications but these must include sufficient information to accurately describe the work details.

General details about the work can also be entered under Question 3 and referenced back to this column to avoid repetition.

11 Claims and payments

Claims

Applicants may submit claims as soon as the work has been completed. The FC prefers a single claim for all the woodland creation work agreed for each Claim Year. Incomplete work cannot be claimed until the agreement is amended to reflect the situation.

The claim for FWP must be renewed every five years and the FC will remind applicants in time to make subsequent FWP claims. Late submission of claims may result in the loss of those payments.

Deadline for claim submission

Claims that are late or delayed because of unacceptable work standards may forfeit all payments if they cannot be approved and paid in the correct Claim Year.

If it is not claimed in the correct claim year we cannot guarantee approval of the claim. A formal amendment must be submitted before the end of the approved claim year to defer the work to a later claim year. Whilst all reasonable requests to defer will be considered, it is at our discretion and subject to considerations such as budget availability.

For Farm Woodland Payments, the claim for planting must be submitted by the 15th May in the year that 1st instalment is due e.g. if first instalment of FWP is approved for claim year 12/13, the payment will be due in October 2012 and the planting must be claimed by 15th May 2012. Failure to meet the 15th May deadline will result in contract amendment and the first instalment paid a year later

Obligation period following payment

Once the first WCG payment is made, the contractual obligations on the applicant are to establish the woodland and maintain it for at least 10 years in the case of WCG. For FWP payments the obligation to retain the trees and cease agricultural activity on the land starts from the date of first payment of WCG and extends for 20 years (in the case of areas receiving 10 FWP payments) or 30 years (in the case of areas receiving 15 FWP payments). For woodlands in receipt of Additional Contribution for public access, the obligation to provide that access will exist for 30 years from first payment of the WCG. If it is discovered within the contractual period that the woodland has not been established or maintained as agreed or that the intended use of the land and the woodland has been changed without prior agreement, then the FC may reclaim all the relevant grants paid with interest and cease to pay further grants on the areas concerned. Where this action would remove the eligibility for other grants, these will also be reclaimed.

Selling land on which there is an EWGS contract

Guidance on what happens in the event of land sale is detailed in the general guidance EWGS 1 and Operations Note 14 – Change of Ownership under EWGS, available at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments. It is important that you read the Operations Note and seek professional advice, but some key points are:

- The original grant recipient remains liable for reclaim of grants paid to them if the contract conditions are not met, even after the land is sold.
- New owners can only receive the remaining payments if they submit a completed "FC Successor Form" within 12 months of the date of land sale.
- Even if the new owner does not take on the liabilities of the scheme of remaining grant payments, they still cannot remove the young woodland as it is subject to Forestry Regulations such as the Environmental Impact Regulations and Forestry

Act. Contravention of these regulations could result in prosecution and penalties such as loss of SPS payments.

- Please note that if the new owner takes on the scheme, their FWP payment rate will be determined by their 'farmer' status (as described on page 10 of this guidance) e.g. if a farmer who received £300/ha/yr sells the land to a non-farmer, the new owner will have their payments capped at €150/ha/yr.

12 Getting help

The FC will offer advice and help you come to decisions about your options and opportunities for woodland regeneration but cannot help you draw up your application. To find your local FC office, please refer to the [FC regional directory](#).

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 – EWGS homepage
- www.forestry.gov.uk/england-ewgsdocuments – EWGS document library
- 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 – 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 is listed at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice or available from your local FC office.

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.