

[Detailed guide: Sites of special scientific interest on or near woodland](#)

Sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) are protected by law to conserve their wildlife or geology. The Forestry Commission or [Natural England](#) can help identify woodland you own or occupy as an SSSI – this is called being designated.

Find out [what you can do on or near an SSSI](#) and when you need consent for an activity. The Forestry Commission in consultation with Natural England can help you manage your woodland.

You don't need formal consent for work next to an SSSI but Natural England may choose to advise on precautions you may need to consider so that your work doesn't harm the SSSI.

How the Forestry Commission can help

The Forestry Commission will obtain consent from Natural England on your behalf when we process your application for grant aid or a felling licence. This means that when we send the grant agreement or felling licence to you we'll also send Natural England's consent, which may list additional conditions. Prior to carrying out any work on an SSSI it remains your responsibility to check that you have the relevant consents from Natural England.

Find out about applying for a felling licence

Find out more about applying for grants and funding in the overview guidance on creating woodland.

What you need to do

Complete a supplementary notice of operations for work on an SSSI and send this with your grant or licence application. If you don't send this form to us, you'll have to get consent from Natural England independently.

Download the SSSI supplementary notice of operations to complete and return with your application to the Forestry Commission.

In this form you'll answer a series of questions related to woodland management operations and what the impacts will be in order to carry out tree felling on a SSSI.

You must give full and clear details about the specific nature of the proposed operations, how you propose to carry out and manage them and where

and when within the SSSI they would take place. This information allows Natural England to check that you won't harm the SSSI's special wildlife so they can decide whether to give consent.

To process your application as quickly as possible, we may contact you to arrange a joint site visit with a Natural England advisor.

Contact the Forestry Commission

You can [contact the Forestry Commission](#). The Forestry Commission area offices assist with:

- grants
- licences
- advice for woodland owners and managers
- pests and diseases