

[Detailed guide: Work with planting material for forestry purposes](#)

Updated: We have published an updated edition of the guidance on “Regulations controlling seed, cuttings and planting stock for forestry in Great Britain”, which is accessible from the text link “FRM and controlled species”.

If you collect and market seeds, cones, cuttings or planting stock for use in forest establishment, or collect seed and grow it in order to sell as planting stock to be used in forest establishment, there are rules applying to 46 controlled tree species that you must follow. You must be on the Forestry Commission’s Forest Reproductive Material public register of suppliers – it’s free to register, find out how to register below.

See the [list of controlled species](#)
(PDF, 913KB, 2 pages)

There’s also a voluntary scheme for the certification of non-controlled species of native trees and shrubs to help collect further valuable information – see below.

Read the detailed policy document that includes information on the regulations that cover [FRM and controlled species](#)
(PDF, 6.81MB, 40 pages)

The Forestry Commission is responsible for a system of identification and control of seeds, cuttings and planting stock used for forestry purposes in England, Scotland and Wales so that the people who buy forest material have enough information on the provenance, origin and genetic quality of the material they’re buying.

The system covers ‘basic material’ (see below) used for any forestry purpose, including:

- timber production
- forests and woodlands for tourism, recreational, sporting, educational or amenity purposes
- the conservation and enhancement of the forest and woodland environment

The term ‘forestry purposes’ excludes:

- landscape planting for transport infrastructure
- urban planting associated with industrial and urban developments
- production of Christmas trees

Basic material and forest reproductive material

The term 'basic material' refers to the sources of FRM. There are 6 sources of basic material:

- seed sources – these can range from a single tree to any collection of trees within a region of provenance, or a native seed zone that includes an altitude band above or below 300m
- stands – defined areas or groups of trees with identified boundaries
- seed orchards and parents of tree families – sources based on known individuals derived from tree breeding programmes (and the FRM produced will be seeds)
- clones and clonal mixtures – individuals from breeding programmes, but the FRM will be produced through vegetative propagation

FRM can consist of:

- fruits
- seeds
- cones
- all parts of plants obtained by vegetative propagation, including embryos and plants produced from any of these

You can only market FRM from registered basic material. There are 4 categories of reproductive material according to the basic material you collect it from:

- source-identified FRM comes from general or specific locations within a single region of provenance or native seed zone with an altitude band, but with no specific superior qualities recognised
- selected FRM is collected from stands showing superior characteristics (for example, better form, growth rate and health)
- qualified FRM derives from the selection of superior individual trees that have not undergone any form of testing
- tested FRM derives from the selection of individual trees or stands that have been evaluated for genetic quality or, in comparison to accepted standards, have been shown to be superior

National Register of Approved Basic Material

The Forestry Commission maintains the National Register of Approved Basic Material for Great Britain (The National Register). This is published in accordance with the Forest Reproductive Material (Great Britain) Regulations 2002 and European Union directive 1999/105/EC, which controls the marketing of Forest Reproductive Material in the EU.

Download and search the [National Register spreadsheet.](#)

(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 469KB)

The link on the right-hand column of the spreadsheet ('NR entry') will then take you to a 2-page .pdf showing stand, location, contact and site information, together with a map.

Or you can use the search facility to find:

- [registered stand of approved basic material](#)
- [seed orchard, clonal material or parent\(s\) of family\(ies\) material](#)

[Download the full 651-page National Register \(without maps\).](#)

(PDF, 2.35MB, 653 pages)

The National Register is kept under constant review and will be regularly updated. The version available is current as at 31 January 2018.

Apply to register basic material

You can only apply for registration on the national register of approved basic material if you're the owner or authorised agent, or a person with written authority from the owner.

Download and submit form [FRM1A](#) to apply for the registration of a stand or orchard as an approved source of basic material.

The Forestry Commission may want to inspect the basic material and check all relevant information. Applications to register stands in the 'Selected' category and applications to register 'Indigenous' stands will always be inspected to ensure they meet the relevant criteria. If the Forestry Commission accepts your proposed material, you will receive a copy of the register entry, including a unique register identity.

Once you have Forestry Commission approval of basic material, you must keep copies of all documents relating to the application. You must keep these documents for 5 years from the date of your application or for as long as the basic material is on the national register, whichever is greater.

The Forestry Commission will let you know if your application is rejected and you can make an appeal (see below).

Re-inspection of basic material

Once you've registered, you may need to prepare for a re-inspection of your basic material. The Forestry Commission gives you at least 14 days' notice of a proposed site visit. Re-inspection will concentrate on any material changes to the area and structure and composition of the material that could take it below the threshold for that particular category. Reasons for this might be:

- partial felling
- windblow
- disease
- pest attack
- thinning operations

You must inform the Forestry Commission of any changes to basic material – this is to prevent marketing of reproductive material that doesn't meet the requirements of the appropriate category. You must also tell the Forestry Commission of any reduction in area of the basic material – or any material change to its composition or stocking – no later than 28 days before a collection of reproductive material. Changes to basic material could mean it's either downgraded to a lower category or removed from the national register. This might trigger an inspection.

Register as a supplier of FRM

Check if you should be registered as a supplier – this will help you comply with the regulations.

Download, complete and submit [form FRM6 to apply for registration](#).

You must provide the following details:

- supplier's name, address and contact details
- nature of the business or trade in which FRM is marketed
- each address where you pursue FRM-related activities

The Forestry Commission will always register an application unless the applicant is likely to breach regulations or does not in fact market FRM. You'll be notified within 14 days of a refusal to register.

If the Forestry Commission is satisfied that a registered supplier has breached the regulations, their name may be removed from the register or conditions may be imposed on the continuing registration.

See the [register of FRM suppliers](#)
(PDF, 49.2KB, 6 pages)

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Inspections

You could be inspected by the Forestry Commission. Inspectors may visit collection sites, seed extraction units, seed testing facilities, nurseries, storage facilities and any other premises involved in FRM production.

Separation, labelling and mixing of FRM will also be inspected to ensure

compliance.

It's an offence if you fail to:

- adhere to the procedural requirements – find out more with our [guide to basic requirements of a registered supplier](#) (PDF, 34.8KB, 4 pages)
- notify the Forestry Commission within the specified period of changes to basic material
- notify the Forestry Commission within the specified period of the final results of testing basic material given 'conditional approval' in the tested category
- notify the Forestry Commission that an agreed production target for the propagation of clonal material has been reached
- provide documents, access to premises or reasonable facilities for copying

You must:

- register as a supplier to market FRM
- have an official certificate if you import FRM from a third country (non-EU country)
- comply with conditions under which a special licence has been granted

It's also an offence to obstruct an inspector in the course of their duties.

How to collect FRM

Make sure you register as a supplier before you begin to collect FRM.

You must:

- get permission from the owner of the collection site, or their agent, before starting work
- use the [Land Information Search](#) to find out if there are any designations or other sensitivities about the site that might need to be taken into account

You must provide the following details at least 14 days before collecting starts:

- your name, address and contact details
- place of collection – including a grid reference of collection site
- species to be collected
- basic material reference in the National Register, or for source identified (SI) material
- region of provenance or seed zone – download the [seed zone map](#)

(PDF, 1.54MB, 1 page)

for more information

- proposed date and duration of collection

Download and submit [form FRM7](#) to notify the Forestry Commission that you intend to collect tree seed.

Market and supply FRM – master certificates

Master certificates set out information relevant to each specific collection of FRM, such as:

- quantity
- species
- provenance
- origin

Each certificate has a unique number to identify that collection – it must refer to a single entry in the national register of basic material – see above.

The master certificate number allows the Forestry Commission to trace the FRM from collection to planting. You must keep master certificates for a minimum period of 5 years.

How to get a master certificate

Complete one or more of the following forms according to your FRM:

- [FRM4A](#) – seed sources and stands
- [FRM4B](#) – seed orchards or parents of family
- [FRM4C](#) – clones and clonal mixtures
- [FRM4c Aspen A](#) – reproductive material derived from clones/clonal mixtures of *Populus tremula* L
- [FRM4c Aspen B](#) – cuttings from recently selected clones, not already covered by a licence to market
- [FRM4c Aspen C](#) – application for a licence to market a clonal mixture

When to apply

You must apply to the Forestry Commission for a master certificate within 9 months of collection or before marketing FRM, whichever is earlier.

Supplier's document – when you need to provide one

Each time you market seed or plants grown from material covered by a master certificate you must give a supplier's document to the buyer at the time of delivery.

See the [FRM supplier's document and example – for multifunctional forestry.](#)

The supplier's document gives the following information:

- all the information required by the master certificate
- quantity of FRM supplied
- name of the supplier
- master certificate number
- additional information as required

You must issue a supplier's document whenever you market material at any stage in the production of planting stock for a single collection, not just when the original collector markets material.

Whenever you market seed, a seed test certificate must also be copied to the recipient. Seed testing is carried out by approved seed testers.

Read the

[Forestry Commission seed testing guidelines](#)

(PDF, 715KB, 55 pages)

and

[further guidance on seed testing](#)

(PDF, 42.6KB, 7 pages)

for more information.

Approved seed testers

These are the nurseries that are currently approved by the Forestry Commission to test seed. Download the list of

[Forestry Commission approved seed testers](#)

(PDF, 9.37KB, 1 page)

Keep your documents

You must retain the following documents, or copies of them:

- notification to the Forestry Commission of the intention to collect FRM and a written record of the owner's consent to collection
- master certificates
- seed testing information
- supplier's labels or documents
- special licences for marketing issued by the Forestry Commission
- information supplied to the Forestry Commission relating to the movement of FRM to another EU member state
- plant passports

It's recommended that you keep master certificates until the FRM to which they relate no longer exists.

The Forestry Commission can require other documents to be kept by giving you notice.

You must make all documents – including books, maps, plans or photographs – available for inspection by the Forestry Commission and copies may be taken. This also applies to documents you hold in digital form.

What you must do to import and export FRM

You can import FRM from countries outside the EU, referred to as third countries, where their certification scheme is recognised in the EU as equivalent to the EU scheme. Before you do this, you must get approval from the Forestry Commission. You can do this using email (see contact details below), stating that you intend to import from a third country.

In exceptional circumstances of short supply, the EU may authorise the marketing of FRM that does not meet the standards of the directive. This is referred to as derogation.

You must notify the Forestry Commission if you export FRM to another EU member state. See section 3 of

[Issue 4, July 2014](#)

(PDF, 98.1KB, 3 pages)

for more detail.

Voluntary scheme

The Forestry Commission manages a voluntary scheme for the certification of native trees and shrubs (The Voluntary Scheme) that aren't controlled by the regulations. It was set up in 1999. You have to follow the same procedures to join the scheme as you would for those species controlled under the regulations.

The Voluntary Scheme has increased the number of native species included in the list of controlled species.

The scheme uses the 24 native seed zones (as shown on

[seed zone map](#)

(PDF, 1.54MB, 1 page)

). The native seed zones are a non-statutory sub-division of the statutory regions of provenance (for native species only). The regions of provenance have been split into 24 smaller native seed zones based on information about climate and geological variation. These seed zones are also divided into 2 altitude bands, above and below 300 metres.

Sign up for FRM news

Any FRM registered supplier is added to the email distribution list of the FRM newsletters, unless you choose to opt out.

If you're not currently on the distribution list but would like to be included, you can send your request to: frm@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Read past FRM newsletters

- [Issue 5, December 2015](#)
(PDF, 406KB, 4 pages)
- [Issue 4, July 2014](#)
(PDF, 98.1KB, 3 pages)
- [Issue 3, October 2013](#)
(PDF, 60.5KB, 4 pages)
- [Issue 2, June 2012](#)
(PDF, 492KB, 5 pages)
- [Issue 1, December 2008](#)
(PDF, 310KB, 4 pages)

Appeal a Forestry Commission decision

You have the right to appeal against any Forestry Commission decisions, including:

- refusal to approve basic material
- withdrawal or amendment of approval of basic material
- time or production limits placed on the propagation of clones or clonal mixtures
- refusal to issue a master certificate
- refusal to register a supplier, or removal of a supplier's name from the register of suppliers
- refusal to grant a special licence
- refusal to approve seed testing practices as internationally acceptable techniques
- refusal to accept certain methodologies used in the application for approval of Basic Material in the Qualified and Tested categories

Contact the Forestry Commission for details on how to appeal as soon as you receive notification of the decision. You must send your appeal in writing. Procedures related to the Forestry Commission's decision must be suspended when you raise an appeal until you know the final outcome of the appeal.

Contact the Forestry Commission

For the national register of basic material and all matters related to basic material, register of suppliers, imports and exports, and queries on the FRM regulations, contact:

Forest Reproductive Material Manager

Forestry Commission

Silvan House

231 Corstorphine Road

Edinburgh

EH12 7AT

Phone: 0300 067 5041

Fax: 0131 314 6148

Email: frm@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

For seed collection notifications and queries, master certificates queries and applications and general FRM enquiries contact:

FRM Admin support

Forestry Commission

Silvan House

231 Corstorphine Road

Edinburgh

EH12 7AT

Phone: 0300 067 5129

Fax: 0131 314 6148

Email: frm@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Corporate report: Business Impact Target – Non-Qualifying Regulatory Provisions summary list

Under the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015, the Forestry Commission, as a regulator, is required to publish a summary of Non-Qualifying Regulatory Provisions each year.

Detailed guide: Planning applications affecting trees and woodland

Updated: The statement from the National Planning Policy Framework on development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats has been updated. The updated statement is under the 'Ancient woodland and the planning system' sub-heading.

Areas of woodland may be material considerations in planning decisions. Trees and woodlands are key components of [green infrastructure](#) and can help create resilient, sustainable places to live in. Management and creation of woodlands can also be promoted through the planning system.

When considering felling trees related to development, consents for tree felling may be required under different regimes, even if a planning application is not needed. These regimes include [felling licences](#) and [Environmental Impact Assessments](#).

The Forestry Commission is a statutory consultee for:

- nationally significant infrastructure projects that could affect forests and woodlands
- conditions on the after-use of minerals sites for forestry

The Forestry Commission is also a non-statutory consultee on development affecting or within 500m of ancient woodland.

Ancient woodland and the planning system

Ancient woodland is an irreplaceable habitat. The National Planning Policy Framework states that:

development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists

Advice on how to handle planning applications affecting ancient woodlands is set out in the [Standing Advice on Ancient Woodlands and Veteran Trees](#). You can also read the [Ancient Woodland and Veteran Trees: Assessment Guide to potential impacts in relation to planning decisions](#) (PDF, 112KB, 7 pages)

for further support in assessing these applications.

Felling trees on development sites

You need a [felling licence](#) from the Forestry Commission to fell trees, unless an exemption applies. Full planning permissions, where standing trees would impede the approved development, do not need to directly specify the trees to be felled in their application. However, where there's a desire to remove standing trees, and those trees are not, for example, within the approved footprint of a structure to be constructed, then those trees would need to be explicitly referenced in the planning application and permission in order to allow for their legal felling. Don't assume that all trees included within the 'red line' of an application are implicitly allowed to be felled.

Outline planning permission doesn't provide an exemption to the regulations that control tree felling in the Forestry Act 1967. This is because, until the reserve matters have been addressed and discharged by your local planning authority, your development may not proceed. Consequently there's no immediate requirement for the tree felling under the planning consent.

The Forestry Commission will only issue a felling licence if your proposals for tree felling are consistent with good forestry practice as outlined in the [UK Forestry Standard](#). Typically a licence will require restocking (replanting).

Tree Preservation Orders

Other legal controls on tree felling are mainly covered by [tree preservation orders](#) and the [Hedgerow Regulations](#). Both areas of regulation are administered by local planning authorities.

Without planning permission or a felling licence, felling trees may be an offence. That's why it's important to ensure that trees that you wish to remove for development are within the area included for full planning permission. An offence under the Forestry Act (as amended) may lead to a Notice being issued that requires the land to be restocked with trees, and for those trees to be maintained for 10 years. Such a Notice can be issued with or without a prosecution for the offence.

The developer is responsible for ensuring that any necessary permissions, consents and permits are in place when required. If tree felling related to development is carried out without the necessary planning permission or felling permission, this may lead to enforcement action.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The Forestry Commission is the competent authority under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999. Local authorities are the competent authority under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999. The relationship between the 2 sets of regulations can be complex, so you may need to seek further advice from the Forestry Commission regarding trees and woodlands.

As part of the planning process, the local authority will provide a screening opinion as to whether or not an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is needed under the Town and Country Planning Regulations. If an EIA is not considered under these regulations, you may need consent from us if your proposal includes:

- afforestation
- deforestation (the removal of trees and woodlands)
- forest roads
- forestry quarries

[Find out more about Environmental Impact Assessments.](#)

Further information

The [UK Forestry Standard \(UKFS\)](#) sets out the UK government's approach to sustainable forest management.

The [UK Forestry Standard for planners](#)
(PDF, 166KB, 4 pages)

highlights how those engaged in planning in England can use the UKFS to help inform planning decisions that involve woodlands and forests. This note is intended for planners in England only, although the UKFS covers the whole of the UK.

The UKFS for planners can help by:

- summarising the legislation that affects trees and woodlands
- clarifying the roles of the Forestry Commission and local planning authorities when dealing with woodland cases
- setting an appropriate standard for when woodland management or creation are to be covered by planning conditions or Section 106 agreements

You can also find information about land designations or features that may impact on your proposed development by using:

- the [Land Information Search \(LIS\)](#)
- [MAGIC](#)

Public registers

The register of Grant scheme and Felling applications details grant applications to carry out new planting, and applications for tree felling proposals (except for thinning only), and allows users 28 days to comment on proposals. The register of Environment Impact Assessments details decisions that the Forestry Commission makes about whether proposals will have a significant effect on the environment. Details of the case and our decision at the initial assessment (opinion) are shown. Where our consent to carry out the work is required, details of 2 further stages are displayed.

[Access the Forestry Commission public registers and find out about how the Forestry Commission consults on applications.](#)

When to contact the Forestry Commission

Contact your nearest [Forestry Commission area office](#) for individual advice that's not covered on this page.

For national applications or consultations, [contact our national office.](#)

[Detailed guide: Woodland Carbon Fund](#)

Landowners, land managers and local authorities can apply to the Forestry Commission for support to plant large-scale productive woodland under the Woodland Carbon Fund (WCF). This benefits the environment through carbon storage and helps tackle the effects of climate change. It also provides opportunities to work in partnership to open up public access to woodland and increase environmental benefits.

The scheme offers capital funding for the creation of new woodland. This includes the planting of trees and costs of protection items including tree guards, fencing and gates. You can also get funding for the installation of forest roads and recreational infrastructure.

A one-off capital payment of £1,000 per hectare is available in year 5 following successful establishment.

Applicants to the Woodland Carbon Fund may still be eligible to receive funding under the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) for the length of the WCF agreement, subject to meeting BPS eligibility criteria. The standard length of a WCF agreement is 5 years, however, where an agreement includes a second stage payment the agreement length extends to 10 years.

You can apply for the WCF for land under multiple ownership. You'll need the landowner's written permission if you don't own the land and the Forestry Commission may ask to see your tenancy agreement to confirm your land management responsibilities.

If you've been ordered to plant woodland as part of a planning consent you cannot apply to the WCF for grant support to fund the new planting.

How it works

You can get stage 1 capital funding for:

- planting trees
- protection items – tree guards, fencing and gates
- forest roads for maintenance access and infrastructure that encourages public use of the woodland
- £1,000 per hectare in year 5 after you've successfully established your woodland

There are 2 different funding rates you can apply for:

- standard planting rate – this applies to most proposals (unless your land is in 'priority places') and you get 80% of the standard costs for planting and establishment capital items, capped at £6,800 per hectare
- priority places planting rate – this applies to proposals near to urban areas, which give access to the public on foot, and you get 100% of the standard costs for planting and establishment capital items, capped at £8,500 per hectare

See the

[Woodland Carbon Fund: priority places in England map](#)

(PDF, 4.06MB, 1 page)

to work out which areas in England qualify for a higher rate of funding. You can claim the higher rate if:

- 30% or more of your site falls within a priority place area in England
- you agree to provide access to the public by foot for 30 years

In addition to planting trees, you can get funding for:

- added recreational features such as footpaths – paid at 80% of actual costs (100% in priority places), capped at 10% of the total cost of your application
- forest roads and tracks that support access so you can successfully establish, maintain and harvest woodland – paid at 40% of actual costs, capped at 10% of the total cost of your application

Use the

[WCF capital items calculator](#)
(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 128KB)

to work out costs and possible funding.

Find out if you're eligible

The land must meet the following size thresholds:

- 10 hectares or more to be planted as woodland with up to 20% open space in the final design
- either one continuous standalone block of 10 hectares or more or at least 10 hectares of new planting that expands existing woodland

The Forestry Commission may consider applications for grant support for additional blocks of woodland creation in landscape-scale projects as long as the blocks are each at least 5 hectares in area (standalone) or a total of 5 hectares if connecting or expanding existing woodland.

Find out how to develop woodland design plans and associated maps.

Tree species

You must include productive tree species on 70% of the net planted area in your woodland design, including:

- minimum general yield class (GYC) 6 – broadleaves
- GYC10 – pine
- GYC12 – other conifers

You can find country-specific advice on which tree-species to plant in the UKFS publication. Find further information on [species and provenance choice for adapting England's woodlands](#) from Forest Research, the research agency of the Forestry Commission.

Forest Research also offers a tool to help you select species ecologically suited to your site. Find out about the [Ecological Site Classification Decision Support System \(ESC-DSS\)](#).

You can't apply for funding if you plan to:

- create short-rotation forestry
- create short-rotation coppice
- plant fast-growing tree species such as eucalypts

Planting density

You must plant 2,000 stems per hectare minimum on a net area basis.

Funding to develop your proposal

Before you apply to the WCF you may want to consider using the [Woodland Creation Planning Grant \(WCPG\)](#). The WCPG provides funding to prepare a UKFS-complaint Woodland Creation Design Plan – this plan can subsequently be used to support a WCF application.

How to apply

You can apply year round and the Forestry Commission aims to respond to your application within 3 months.

Submit an application form

You need to [submit an application form](#) and send it to the WCF scheme administrator at the Forestry Commission.

Send an electronic copy of your completed application form to:
wcf@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Along with your application form you need to submit one of the following:

1. a completed WCPG stage 1 checklist and supporting documents including at least one map showing features of your site and any constraints – [find out more](#)
2. a draft UKFS-compliant woodland creation design plan
3. a completed UKFS-compliant woodland creation design plan
4. confirmation that Forestry Commission England has given an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening decision that the proposal does not require an EIA, or should consent be required, confirmation that the consent to plant has been awarded

If you submit your application form with either a WCPG stage 1 checklist or a draft woodland creation design plan (bullet point 1 or 2) then funding from the WCF can only be allocated in principle. This decision will be made within 3 months of the application being received. A final agreement will be issued once a completed woodland creation design plan has been prepared and the subsequent EIA process completed.

If you submit an application form with an EIA screening decision that the proposal does not require an EIA – or should consent be required, confirmation that the consent to plant has been awarded – you will receive a decision on the award of WCF funding within 3 months.

Applications will be assessed by a panel consisting of representatives from Defra, Natural England and the Environment Agency, who will evaluate applications to ensure they meet the criteria of the fund.

Give consent if you appoint an agent

If you decide to appoint an agent to apply for funding on your behalf you must [complete a form to give your consent](#).

(This is not the same form that you would complete to appoint an agent to apply for Countryside Stewardship: woodland support.)

Make an appeal

Find out how to [make a complaint or appeal](#).

Extra income from selling carbon

If your project is not cost-effective with the Woodland Carbon Fund grant alone, you might be able to earn further income by selling carbon credits from your project. In order to do this you need to register with the Woodland Carbon Code within 2 years from the start of planting.

Validation/verification to this standard provides assurance of the carbon savings and access to the voluntary carbon market.

Find out more in the guidance on woodland creation, including more information on the Woodland Carbon Code and an overview of how to manage woodland once it's created.

Contact the Forestry Commission (England)

You can get help developing maps or completing the application form from the Forestry Commission: wcf@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

[Detailed guide: Woodland Creation Planning Grant](#)

Landowners, land managers and public bodies (excluding Crown bodies and non-departmental public bodies) can apply to the Forestry Commission to support large-scale, multi-purpose productive woodland creation under the Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG). This is part of the Forestry Innovation Fund, along with the [Woodland Research and Development Grant \(RDG\)](#).

You can apply for £1,000 to complete a stage 1 checklist. This is a desk-based exercise to identify constraints and opportunities for proposed planting. If there's potential for woodland creation to take place on the site then you'll be offered a stage 2 payment. At stage 2, you can get £150 per hectare to produce a woodland creation design plan, minus the £1,000 offered at stage 1. You may get additional payments for survey work.

The total amount of funding is capped at £30,000 per project.

Find out if you're eligible

If you've already applied for Countryside Stewardship or the Woodland Carbon Fund, or submitted an EIA enquiry form to plant a new woodland, you're not eligible to apply for WCPG on that site.

You must plan to create woodland that is:

- 10 hectares or more, with potential to benefit the forestry sector in the long-term through production of timber or other wood products
- 10 hectares or more, with any additional blocks of at least 5 hectares

This means that if your application is for woodland less than 15 hectares in total, it must be a single woodland block. The Forestry Commission accepts applications that span multiple land holdings, though only for land in England.

You can include up to 20% of designed open space in your plan.

Tree species and forestry types

At least 70% of the species in your proposed woodland must be productive, including:

- minimum general yield class (GYC) 6 – broadleaves
- GYC10 – pine
- GYC12 – other conifers

Biodiversity, habitats and the environment

Existing native, semi-natural habitats are likely to have a high value for biodiversity, and for landscape and visual interest. This will need to be compared with the value of new woodland. The Forestry Commission does not support the conversion of priority habitats, such as deep peat or active raised bogs.

Where the proposed planting is on semi-natural habitat, the presumption is that the planting will be restricted to native broadleaved species or retained as open ground adding to the forest mosaic.

Find out more about [woodland species and habitats protection](#).

How it works

The funding will support you to gather and analyse the information that you need to make sure your proposal takes into account:

- biodiversity
- landscape
- water
- historic environment
- local stakeholders

You'll have to develop a [UK Forestry Standard](#)-compliant plan for woodland creation that shows any constraints and opportunities.

If your land is already under an existing grant agreement then your woodland creation plan must cover the impact of tree planting on that agreement.

You'll receive payments in 2 stages and possibly extraordinary payments (see below).

Stage 1

You must not start work on the stage 1 checklist until you have a signed agreement with the Forestry Commission in place.

Stage 1 is a desk-based exercise to complete a checklist identifying constraints and opportunities for the site. If the Forestry Commission decide there's potential for planting woodland on the proposed site then you'll be offered a stage 2 payment.

Compile your data using a [WCPG stage 1 checklist](#)
(MS Word Document, 147KB)

and give supporting documents, including at least one map. You must identify any constraints on the site.

Stage 2

You get a stage 2 payment for producing a woodland creation design plan by completing the template provided. You will find a list of required maps and plans on the first page of the template. This includes:

- a site context map
- a site appraisal plan
- a design concept plan and final design plan

Download the [WCPG stage 2 template](#)
(MS Word Document, 230KB)

The Forestry Commission makes the stage 2 payment on approval of your submitted stage 2 documentation.

Note: Forestry Commission approval of your woodland creation design plan does not provide approval to plant. If you wish to plant the woodland then it will still be subject to the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 and consultation. [Find out more about EIAs.](#)

Extraordinary payments

If your stage 1 data indicates that a more detailed assessment is needed (such as a landscape and visual impact assessment, or an archaeological survey) then you can apply for an 'extraordinary payment'.

Complete the [extraordinary payments application form](#) (PDF, 137KB, 6 pages)

. You should submit this with a completed stage 1 checklist. If the stage 1 checklist indicates that there's potential for productive multi-purpose woodland at the site then you will get an offer of stage 2 funding, including any extraordinary payments where relevant.

State aid rules

The WCPG operates under the EU state aid de minimis regulation. This means you can receive a maximum of €200,000 (~£140,000) over 3 financial years. As part of the application process, you'll need to declare the amount of de minimis aid received during the current and previous 2 financial years, and consider how a WCPG will add to this amount. [Find out more about state aid.](#)

How to apply

You can apply year-round. The Forestry Commission aims to respond to your application within 10 working days.

You'll need the landowner's consent and signature if you don't own the land, and the Forestry Commission may ask to see your tenancy agreement to confirm your land management responsibilities.

In part 2 of the application form (below), you'll need to outline your planting proposals, and the Forestry Commission may contact you to finalise some details.

Submit an application form

Complete the [application form](#) and return it to the grant scheme

administrator: WCPG@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

If you can't apply by email, send hard copies to:

Woodland Creation Planning Grant – WCPG

Forestry Commission

National Office, England

620 Bristol Business Park

Coldharbour Lane

Bristol, BS16 1EJ

Give consent if you appoint an agent

If you decide to appoint an agent to apply for funding on your behalf then you must [complete a form to give your consent.](#)

This is not the same form that you would complete to appoint an agent to apply for Countryside Stewardship: woodland support.

Further funding

Once you have a completed and approved woodland creation design plan, you can use this to apply for:

- [Woodland Carbon Fund](#)
- [Countryside Stewardship: woodland support](#)
- HS2 Woodland Fund

Appeals

You can [appeal against a Forestry Commission decision.](#)

Contact the Forestry Commission (England)

Contact the Forestry Innovation Fund team for more information:
WCPG@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Forestry Research

The research agency of the Forestry Commission offer a range of services that will [help with pest and disease control](#), and also offer resources such as [publications, statistics and datasets.](#)