

UPDATE TO WOODLAND MANAGEMENT GRANTS

By Lochlan Dulson of Cumbria Woodlands

By now you may have seen the changes to SFI and CS that were released following the Oxford Farming Conference (if not see the link below), but did you notice the changes to the woodland management options?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024/technical-annex-the-combined-environmental-land-management-offer>

There are rate increases for all options and a range of new options, most of which look like they can be stacked. We encourage you to look through these and see if they apply to your woodland.

The changes included a small detail, which for many people may be significant. The minimum area for woodland management grants has been lowered from 3ha to 0.5ha. This is good news because, while the base CS option for woodland management WS2 is paid per ha, schemes between 3ha and 10ha receive a lump sum of £1,000 per year. The eligibility criteria haven't been updated on the .gov web page yet, so nothing is certain, but this could mean that 0.5ha of woodland could be eligible for a minimum of £1,000 / year.

The process for accessing these grants is first to apply for the woodland management planning grant, which will pay £1,500 for an approved woodland management plan. You can ask a forestry agent to do this for you or you can do it yourself.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/woodland-management-plan-grants-2023-countryside-stewardship>

Once you have an approved management plan you can apply for a CS Higher Tier either as a standalone forestry application or as a mixed application that includes agricultural options too. The table below shows the options you can include. Also below is a link to the applicants guide for higher tier applications, but the best thing to do is speak to your agent or a Forestry Commission Woodland officer, who should already be aware of your woodland from the woodland management plan process.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-tier-grants-2023-countryside-stewardship/applicants-guide-higher-tier-grants-2023>

Finally, if you would like help finding an agent or you would like free advice specific to your woodland feel free to contact Cumbria Woodlands in any of the following ways.

By email: info@cumbriawoodland.co.uk

By phone: 07960 085 795

By filling out an online form: <https://wkf.ms/3OUiCRT>

Option Name	Rate/ha/yr	What do I have to do?	Link
WD2: Woodland improvement	£127	Woodland is brought into sustainable management in line with the UK Forestry Standard	Click Link
WS1: Deer control and management	£105	Produce a deer management plan, put up deer monitoring exclosures, cull deer and report annually	Click Link
WS2: Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)	£275	Restore plantations on ancient woodlands back to native species	Click Link
WS3: Squirrel control and management	£60	Produce a squirrel control plan, take part in training, erect traps, cull squirrels and report annually.	Click Link
WS4: Access for people	£92	Enable access, put up signs, carry out safety inspections	Click Link
Manage native woodland including ancient semi-natural woodlands (ASNW)	£144	Support the management of native woodland and ancient and semi-natural woodlands	TBC
Improve woodland resilience	£202	The mixture of tree species, age and structural diversity in woodlands is increased through changes to management activities	TBC
Manage woodlands for flood and drought mitigation	£56	Woodland is managed to retain water onsite through enhanced soil infiltration and within water features	TBC
Manage historic features in woodlands	£949	Historic features within woodlands are managed, especially scheduled monuments	TBC
2-zone rides	£60	2-zone rides within woodlands are managed to maintain a diverse ride structure and provide habitat corridors for wildlife	TBC
3-zone rides	£197	3-zone rides within woodlands are managed to maintain a diverse ride structure and provide habitat corridors for wildlife	TBC