

### Woodland Creation - Stocking Density Survey Reporting

This note provides information about Stocking Density Survey Reporting to Scottish Forestry (SF), provides clarification on claim submission for the FGS capital items Gorse Removal and Bracken Control, updates budget availability for Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) applications in 2021 and introduces changes to the Felling Permission Mandate Form.

#### 1. Stocking Density Survey Reports

Briefing Note 26, published in Jan 2020, indicated that during 2020 SF would be contacting FGS Woodland Creation contract holders to request details of their stocking density surveys. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic the request for customer's survey reports was postponed, but is now re-commencing.

During September 2021 SF will be writing to selected customers as part of a pilot to design how Stocking Density Survey Returns for tree planting works are to be provided to SF in the future.

Some customers with FGS Woodland Creation contracts claimed in 2016 and 2017 will be contacted. Those customers who receive a letter, or e-mail, will be asked to provide survey returns by **30 November 2021**.

Regular stocking density surveys should be undertaken as part of all FGS funded tree planting works, such as a woodland creation contract (Schedule Part 2 - Specific Undertakings, section 3.1). By requesting this information we wish to ensure that customers are on track to deliver their contractual obligations and to ensure that areas of new planting reach establishment.

#### 2. Clarification on Claiming Gorse Removal and Bracken Control Capital Items

The guidance associated with the FGS Gorse Removal and Bracken Control capital items will be updated to confirm that for:

- Gorse Removal - this item must be claimed in the same claim year as the Initial Planting capital item, **and** they must be claimed together on the same claim form.
- Bracken Control – the claim year for this item can be no more than 1 year before the Initial Planting claim year, **and** cannot be claimed after the Initial Planting capital item has been claimed.

#### 3. Budget Availability

Table 1 has been updated to show the current indicative budget availability and minimum score thresholds for all options with a claim year of 2021 and 2022.

Changes include:

- **An additional £1m of funding** for the **WIG-Habitats & Species** and **WIG-Low Impact Silvicultural Systems** options in the 2021 claim year.
  - there is now good availability of funds in 2021.
  - new applications are invited for work that can be completed and claimed before 31 March 2022.
  - applicants who already hold a contract for work with a claim year of 2022, but wish to complete their work and claim before the 31 March 2022, are encouraged to contact their [local conservancy](#) to discuss if it will be possible to bring their work forward.

**Woodland Creation Budget Availability – 2021/22 planting season:** we are keen that applicants maximise planting in the 2021 claim year, in particular by bringing forward applications that are ready to be submitted. Conservancy teams will be prioritising applications with a 2021 claim year in order to minimise any delays.

#### 4. Felling Permission Mandate Form

We have updated our Felling Permission Mandate Form. This form must be completed and submitted in association with a Felling Permission, where authorisation from the Landowner(s) is required for a person or organisation to act on their behalf when dealing with SF in relation to standalone Felling Permission applications, Long Term Forest Plans, Management Plans, and WIAT plans.

Please use the updated Mandate Form, now available on our [Felling Permission](#) webpage when submitting future applications.

Please [contact your local Conservancy](#) if you have any queries about the content of this note.

#### Operational Delivery

**National Office**

**Scottish Forestry**

**Tel: 0131 370 5250**

**Email: [scottish.forestry@forestry.gov.scot](mailto:scottish.forestry@forestry.gov.scot)**

**Table 1 Forestry Grant Scheme: Clearing and Budget Categories with Threshold Scores – Sept 2021**

Grant Category	Clearing categories	Frequency of Clearing	Indicative 2021 Budget £m	Claim Years available for first year of contract	Number of Claim Years available	Indicative Headroom 2021	Indicative Headroom 2022	Threshold Score(Max)
Woodland Creation	WC with CSGNC	Monthly	£8.0	2021 & 2022	N+2			10 (31)
	WC High Cost* (>£6k/ha)		£3.0	2021 & 2022				10 (31)
	WC with Nat Regen		£0.25	2021 & 2022				2 (6)
	WC Other		<b>£43.25</b>	2021 & 2022				10 (31)
Woodland Improvement Grants	Restructuring Regeneration	Monthly	£2.0	2022	N+2			3 (6)
	Planning options		£0.35	2021 & 2022	N+2			2 (6)
	Habitats & species/Liss		£1.80	2022	N+2			4 (6)
	WIAT***		£0.90	2021 & 2022	N+2			9 (16)
Sustainable Management of Forests	Native Woodlands/ LISS/ livestock/Grazing	Monthly	£0.60	2022	N+1	N/A		2 (6)
	Squirrels/Predators/Deer#		£0.75		N+1	N/A		2 (6)
	WIAT		£0.05		N+1	N/A		6 (16)
	Rural Access		£0.15		N+1	N/A		2 (6)
Tree Health		Monthly	£0.45	2021 & 2022	N+1			2 (6)
Forest Infrastructure**		Monthly	£0.55	2021 & 2022	N+1			3 (6)
Agroforestry		Monthly	£0.1	2021 & 2022	N+2			2 (6)
Harvesting and Processing**		Annual	£2.0	2021	N		N/A	2 (6)
Co-operation		Monthly	£0.1	2021 & 2022	N+1			3 (16)
<b>Total</b>			<b>£ 64.3</b>					

Notes: \*Projects with average cost is £6,000/ha or higher. \*\*Projects must be completed and paid in the approved claim year. \*\*\* Projects limited up to £100k/BRN. N = current calendar year. #Includes £250k for landscape scale deer management and woodland restoration.

Indicative Headroom Colour Key:

There is currently good availability of funds within this FGS clearing category and we will be able to support most good quality application

It is likely the demand for funds within this FGS Clearing Category will exceed the available budget and there will be strong competition for funds

There are no longer any funds available within this FGS clearing category

**Claim Years Available** - Our approach to claim years is set out in Table 1 and depends on the grant type. This has been structured to ensure applications go through the competitive clearing process whilst at the same time manage the grant budget without a long forward booking of projects.

**Please note that for an application proposal with multiple claim years, the application score must meet the higher of the threshold scores for each claim year to obtain full approval.**

**Woodland Creation** - capital items such as fencing and initial planting - up to 3 claim years (i.e. within N+2, where N = the current calendar year at time of application submission) with work having to start in the first 2 years e.g. one option is to apply in 2021, start work in year 2021 and complete in 2022. Another option is to apply in 2021, start work in 2022 and complete work in claim year 2023. In exceptional circumstances multiple claim years up to N+4 may be allowable, but only where significant areas of woodland creation are proposed **and** initial planting capital items are claimed in each preceding year, by prior agreement with Scottish Forestry National Office.

**Woodland Improvement Grant** - up to 3 year claim years (within N+2, where N = the current calendar year at time of application submission) with work having to start in the first 2 years except for WIG Restructuring Regeneration where a delay until year 3 is acceptable to meet species diversity rules.

**Sustainable Management of Forests** – next claim year is available as the first annual management claim year.

**Agroforestry** – as for woodland creation up to 3 claim years (within N+2, where N = the current calendar year at time of application submission) with work having to start in the first 2 years.

**Tree health** – current and next year claim year (within N+1 where N = the current calendar year at time of application submission)

**Forest Infrastructure** – current and next claim year available (within N+1, where N = the calendar year of the application round)

**Harvesting & Processing** – one claim year available (within N, where N = the calendar year of the application round)

**Co-operation** – current and next claim year available (within N +1, where N = the calendar year of the application round)