



Scottish
Forestry
Coilltearachd
na h-Alba

Guide to Information

Scottish Forestry is the Scottish Government agency responsible for forestry policy, support and regulation

S e Coilltearachd na h-Alba a' bhuidheann-ghnìomha aig Riaghaltas na h-Alba a tha an urra ri poileasaidh, taic agus riaghladh do choilltearachd



Scottish Government
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Guide to information available through the publication scheme

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) provides individuals with a right to request any recorded information held by Scotland's public authorities. Anyone can use this right, and information can only be withheld where FOISA expressly permits it.

Section 23 of FOISA also requires that all Scottish public authorities maintain a publication scheme. A publication scheme sets out the types of information that a public authority routinely makes available.

Scottish Forestry has adopted the Model Publication Scheme, developed and approved by the Scottish Information Commissioner. The Commissioner is responsible for enforcing FOISA.

This Guide to Information is based on Commissioner's Model Publication Scheme and will help ensure that we meet our obligations to take account of the public interest in providing access to the information that we hold which relates to:

- the services they provide;
- the costs of those services;
- the standard of those services;
- the facts that inform the important decisions they take; and
- the reasoning that informs their decisions.

Scottish Forestry have therefore made a commitment to publish all information which we hold which falls within the classes of information in the scheme. The information we publish through this Guide is, wherever possible, available on our website.

The website front page guides readers to key forestry topics, and includes a search option on the top left of the website which will allow users to search key topics to aid navigation to key information sources.

As an Executive Agency within Government, the Scottish Government's own "6 principles of FOI", generally speaking, underpin our approach to FOI matters. These principles, in particular, make clear the Scottish Government's commitment to open government and publishing information proactively whenever possible. We have also considered the types of information which are requested from our predecessor body, Forestry Commission Scotland routinely and, where possible, sought to publish information proactively.

If you would like to access information not published under the scheme, you can still request it from us under FOISA or, in the case of environmental information, the EIRs. For further information on accessing information we do not publish, see "How to access information which we do not publish" section below.

About us

Scottish Forestry (SF) was established as an executive agency of the Scottish Government on 1 April 2019, following completion of the devolution of forestry as a result of the [Forestry and Land Management \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#) (the Act)

As an executive agency within the Scottish Government, Scottish Forestry is directly accountable to Scottish Ministers, and Scottish Forestry's Chief Executive is directly accountable to the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy.

Information about Scottish Forestry, including more details of [what the agency does and its organisational structure](#) is available on the Scottish Forestry website.

Information that we may withhold

All information published in this guide can be accessed either through our website, or by asking us for it.

Our aim in maintaining this Guide to Information is to be as open as possible. You should note, however, that there may be limited circumstances where information will be withheld from publication. Information will only be withheld where FOISA (or, in the case of environmental information, the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIR)) expressly permits it. For example, where the information's disclosure would breach the law of confidentiality, harm an organisation's commercial interests, or endanger the protection of the environment. Information may also be withheld if it is another person's personal information, and its release would breach the data protection legislation.

Where we withhold information we will remove or redact it before publication and explain why. Even where information is withheld it may, in many cases, be possible to provide copies with the withheld information edited out.

Availability and formats

The information we publish through this Guide is, wherever possible, available on our website. This information on our website (which can be navigated from our [home](#) page or [publications](#) page) includes material which is available to download. Alternatively, you can use our website's "Search" facility. We offer alternative arrangements for people who do not want to, or cannot, access the information online or by inspection at our premises. For example, we can usually arrange to send information to you in paper copy (although there may be a charge for this).

If you wish to request information in another format than that available, then please contact us using one of the methods mentioned below in the Contact Us section.

Our charging policy

Unless otherwise stated below under charges for information available only through request, all information contained within our scheme is available from us free of charge where it can be downloaded from our website or where it can be sent to you electronically by email.

We reserve the right to impose charges for providing information in paper copy or on computer disc. Charges will reflect the actual costs of reproduction and postage to Scottish Forestry, as set out below.

In the event that a charge is to be levied, you will be advised of the charge and how it has been calculated. Information will not be provided to you until payment has been received.

Fee Calculation

In calculating any fee, staff time will be calculated at actual cost per staff member hourly salary rate to a maximum of £15 per person per hour.

We do not charge for the time to determine whether we hold the information requested, nor for the time it takes to decide whether the information can be released. Charges may be made for locating, retrieving and providing information to you.

Reproduction costs

Where charges are applied, photocopied information will be charged at a standard rate of 10p per A4 side of paper (black and white copy) and 30p per A4 side of paper (colour copy).

Postage costs

We will pass on postage charges to the requester at the cost to Scottish Forestry of sending the information by first class post.

We are required by the Equality Act 2010 to make take steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic. In terms of access to information, this means making reasonable adjustments to our practices to ensure that information is physically accessible. This may, for example, involve producing information in a larger script or different format where it is practicable to do so. The costs of this will be met by Scottish Forestry.

Our copyright policy

Scottish Forestry is a Crown body and the information we produce is subject to Crown copyright, which is administered by the Queen's Printer for Scotland. The material listed in this publication scheme is Crown copyright unless stated otherwise.

You may use and re-use Crown copyright information published through this guide free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms and conditions of the [Open Government Licence](#), provided it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. Where any of the Crown copyright items published through this guide are being republished or copied to others, the source of the material must be identified and the copyright status acknowledged.

Our records management and disposal policy

Scottish Forestry will have a Records Management Plan and Records Retention and Disposition Schedules in respect of all documents that it creates and holds from August 2020. These Schedules will set out the lengths of time for which all types of records must be held. This means that whilst FOISA is retrospective, it is only possible to provide copies of records that are still in existence. Our policy and procedures in relation to records management will be set out in the our Record Management Plan.

Some Scottish Government records are selected to be permanently preserved at the National Records of Scotland. The Schedules referred to above set out what types of records will normally be preserved. Once transferred to the National Records of Scotland, these records are made publicly available and are listed on their [on-line catalogue](#).

Our conflict of interest policy

As an Executive Agency, Scottish Forestry must have effective corporate governance in place, with proper processes, systems and controls. We must have a Management Advisory Board to support the Accountable Officer. Within Scottish Forestry, this comprises the Senior Executive Team and the Strategic Advisory Board. Our [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) covers the behaviours, actions and responsibilities both for staff members and for board members.

How to access information which we do not publish

If the information you are seeking is not available through this website, then you may wish to request it from us using the contact details listed below.

Charges for information which is not available under the scheme

The charges for information which **is** available under this scheme are set out above. If you submit a request to us for information which **is not** available under the scheme the charges are outlined below. In the event that we decide to impose a charge we will issue you with notification of the charge (a fees notice) and how it has been calculated. You will have three months from the date of issue of the fees notice in which to decide whether to pay the charge. The information will be provided to you on payment of the charge. If you decide not to proceed with the request there will be no charge to you.

Processing Requests

There will be no charge for information requests which cost us £100 or less to process. Where information costs between £100 and £600 to provide you may be asked to pay 10% of the cost. That is, if you were to ask for information that cost us £600 to provide, you would be asked to pay £50, that calculated on the basis of a waiver for the first £100 and 10% of the remaining £500. At present however Scottish Forestry normally waives this fee. We are not obliged to respond to requests which will cost us over £600 to process.

For EIR requests, where it would cost more than £600 to provide the information to you, we may ask you to pay the full cost of providing the information, with no waiver for any portion of the cost.

Reproduction & Postage Costs

Photocopying is charged at 10p per A4 sheet for black and white copying, 30p per A4 sheet for colour copying.

Postage is charged at actual rate for first class mail.

The classes of information that we publish

We publish information that we hold within the classes set out in the Guide to Information. Once information is published under a class we will continue to make it available for the current and previous two financial years.

Where information has been updated or superseded, only the current version will be available. If you would like to see previous versions, you may make a request to us for that information.

Class 1: About Scottish Forestry

Class 2: How we deliver functions and services

Class 3: How we take decisions

Class 4: What we spend

Class 5: How we manage our human, physical and information resources

Class 6: How we procure goods and services from external providers

Class 7: How we are performing

Class 8: Our commercial publications

Class 9: Our open data

Contact us

If you wish to request information which we do not publish then please contact us via one of the below methods:

By email

If the information you seek can be identified from our website but you are unable to download it, we can usually send it to you by email. When requesting information from us, please provide a telephone number so that we can telephone you to clarify details, if necessary.

Please send your request for information to Scottish.Forestry@forestry.gov.scot

By phone

Please contact 0131 370 5250 to request information.

By post

Please address your request to:
Scottish Forestry Executive Office
Silvan House
231 Corstorphine Road,
EDINBURGH,
EH12 7AT

When writing to us to request information, please include:

- your full name and an email or postal address
- full details of the information or documents you would like to receive and why this information is required
- any payment (if you know the applicable fee)
- the format you wish to receive your information (paper, electronic, large print)

Scottish Information Commissioner

You have legal rights to access information under this scheme and a right of appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner if you are dissatisfied with our response. These rights apply only to information requests made in writing* or another recordable format. If you are unhappy with our responses to your request you can ask us to review it internally and if you are still unhappy, you can make an appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

The Commissioner's website has a guide to this three step process, and operates an enquiry service on Monday to Friday from 0900 to 1700. Their office can be contacted as follows:

Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St Andrews Fife
KY16 9DS
Tel: 01334 464610

Email: <mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info>
Website: <http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/>

*verbal requests for environmental information carry similar rights.

Data Protection Act

Under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) you have the right to ask Scottish Forestry as a part of Scottish Government to inform you whether it possesses any personal information relating to you, and if so to provide you with a copy of such data. This is called a "subject access request". Again these rights are subject to certain exceptions or exemptions. The Scottish Government, How to request personal data guidance provides further details.

All requests from members of the public for access to their personal data held by the Scottish Forestry should be passed to the Scottish Forestry Executive Team.

Your request should include a contact address and also documented evidence of who you are (e.g. copies of your driving licence, passport or birth certificate). You should also provide as much detail as possible regarding the information you wish to access. We may come back to you for additional details in order to locate the material you require.

We will also require from you payment of a fee of £10 before we start to search for your information.

We will aim to meet your request within 40 days of receiving from you all of the above information (and payment of the £10 fee).

The Scottish Government leaflet "How to open government" gives further explanation about your right of access to information under the different legislation.

Class 1: About Scottish Forestry

This class includes information about Scottish Forestry: who we are; where to find us; how to contact us; how we are managed; and our external relations.

General information about the authority

[About us](#), [Contact us](#)

Framework

The [Framework Document](#) sets out the different roles and responsibilities of Scottish Ministers, Scottish Forestry and the Scottish Government in delivering the Government's forestry policy objectives.

Corporate planning

The [Scottish Forestry Corporate Plan for 2020-2023](#) is our first Corporate Plan. It sets out our Strategic Objectives for the next three years and the priorities which will support their delivery.

It is supported by an annual [Business Plan](#), which provides more detail on steps we will be taking to make progress towards our strategic objectives for this year.

Legislation

Primary legislation relevant to Scottish Forestry.

- [Forestry and Land Management \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#)

The Act was supported by a [statement of administrative arrangements](#) for devolution of forestry, which was laid before the Scottish Parliament in March 2019.

Secondary legislation, Regulations and Standards

- [The UK Forestry Standard \(UKFS\)](#)
- [The Felling \(Scotland\) Regulations 2019](#)
- [The Felling \(Exemptions\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2019](#)
- [Forestry \(Environmental Impact Assessment \(Scotland\) Regulation 2017](#)
- [Plant Health \(Forestry\) Order 2005](#)

Scottish Ministers' Forestry Strategy

[Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-2029](#) presents the Scottish Government's 50-year vision for Scotland's forests and woodlands and sets out a 10-year framework for action. It was developed in full [consultation with a broad range of stakeholders](#).

Complaints Procedure

[Scottish Forestry complaints handling procedure](#).

Class 2: How we deliver functions and services

SF is responsible for the forestry policy, regulatory and support functions of the Scottish Government. Our functions will also include those elements of the new cross-border arrangements that the Scottish Government is co-ordinating on behalf of Scotland, England and Wales. These are the management of the UK Forestry Standard and the Woodland Carbon Code as well as the provision of economic advice on forestry.

To ensure that its policy functions are delivered as an integral part of wider Scottish Government policy-making, SF will operate very closely and collaboratively with colleagues in other parts of the Scottish Government and with Scottish Ministers.

We maintain three public information registers:

- [The register of legacy grant schemes and Forest Plans](#)
- [The register of felling permission and Forestry Grant Scheme woodland creation applications](#)
- [The register of Environmental Impact Assessments](#)

Our website contains information about a range of grant support and regulatory mechanisms that are in place to help protect and ensure the sustainable management and expansion of forestry in Scotland, including;

Grants

Forestry Grant Scheme - [guidance for applicants and how to apply](#).

Standards

The [UK Forestry Standard \(UKFS\)](#) is the national reference standard for sustainable forest management, enabling the management our forests to meet needs now without hindering future generations from meeting theirs.

Tree Felling

Scottish Forestry regulates tree felling in Scotland. A permission is needed to fell trees and it is an offence to fell without one unless there's an exemption. With the introduction of the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018 and associated Regulations on April 1st 2019, the old regulatory regime was repealed. To ensure continuity of felling and restocking operations, and to minimise disruption, certain aspects of the Forestry Act 1967 and its associated Regulations have been saved. We've set out what this means in this [Information note](#) and further information can also be found on the [Scottish Government website](#).

The quick reference guide '[Tree felling in Scotland – getting permission](#)' provides further information

Environmental Impact Assessments

Scottish Forestry has a [statutory duty](#) to consider proposals for the following forestry projects:

- afforestation (planting of new woodlands);
- deforestation (felling of woodland to another land use); and
- the construction and maintenance of forest roads and quarries.

If after assessing proposals, we consider that they will have a significant effect on the environment, then we will ask the landowner to formally apply for consent under the [Forestry \(Environmental Impact Assessment\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2017](#). The landowner must submit an EIA Report that sets out how the project will deal with the significant environmental effects. We will assess the EIA Report and also seek the views of interested parties. We will then decide whether or not to grant consent for the proposals taking account of any responses we have received during our consultations. We will notify all interested parties about our decision.

We publish details of the decisions that we make about our assessments of forestry projects in our [register of Environmental Impact Assessments](#).

Class 3: How we take decisions

Information about the decisions we take, how we make decisions and how we involve others.

[Scottish Forestry Senior Executive Team](#) The Senior Executive Team comprises all Function Heads and Head of the Executive Office. The role of the Senior Executive Team is to lead SF and oversee the day-to-day management and direction of the agency, delivering against agreed programmes of work, and providing information, advice and guidance to the Chief Executive on key corporate matters and decisions.

[Scottish Forestry Strategic Advisory Group](#) The Strategic Advisory Group comprises all Function Heads and Non-Executive Advisers, as well as the Chief Forester. The group serves to support and provide advice to the CEO. Non-executive members are specifically selected for their expertise or experience in matters relating to financial strategy, risk, service delivery and change management.

[Audit and Assurance Committee](#) The Audit and Assurance Committee supports the CEO by providing advice and constructive challenge in matters relating to risk management, control, governance and associated assurance to support year-end accountability and reporting. The membership comprises non-executive advisers. The Chief Executive and Head of Finance and Business Services routinely attend, along with representatives from Internal Audit and Audit Scotland. The Committee can also sit privately without Executives, or any other party present for all or part of a meeting if required.

Public Consultations

[Consultation](#) is an essential part of the decision making process. Before deciding whether to approve specific types of forestry activities we consult local authorities and other organisations with statutory powers in relation to land use, and make applications available for public comment by means of our public registers. Statutory consultees, local people and interested parties can offer valuable knowledge and insights that can be of great assistance when formulating forest management or woodland creation proposals. Moreover, developing a proactive dialogue can help improve decisions, implement forestry proposals more effectively, and lead to a culture of co-operation and support.

Class 4: What we spend

Information about our strategy for, and management of, financial resources in sufficient detail to explain how we plan to spend public money and what has actually been spent.

Scottish Forestry Annual Report and Accounts

The annual reporting on Scottish Forestry's aim, functions and targets, including our financial information for the year. As a new agency created 1 April 2019, the first annual report and accounts will be available around July 2020.

Finance Manual

[Scottish Public Finance Manual](#)

Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010

[Public Services Reform Act](#)

Under sections 31 & 32 of the Act Scottish Forestry as an Executive Agency of Scottish Government are required to publish information on expenditure as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year -

Payments Over £25,000

Scottish Forestry will publish monthly reports showing all items of expenditure over £25,000 as directed by the Act.

Statement of expenditure

Scottish Forestry will publish at the end of each financial year a statement of any expenditure incurred during the financial year on or in connection with:

- Public relations;
- Overseas travel;
- Hospitality & entertainment;
- External Consultancy.

Class 5: How we manage our human, physical and information resources

Information about how we manage the human, physical and information resources of the authority.

Scottish Forestry has a service level (SLA) agreement in place with another agency, Forest and Land Scotland. Both are agencies of the Scottish Government and sit within the Environment & Forestry Directorate of the Scottish Government.

The SLA covers the following range of services

- Human Resources (including payroll and E&D)
- Learning and Development (L&D)
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing (H,S&W)
- Digital Services
- Fleet Management
- Building Services
- Finance and financial Systems (19/20 only – other years by agreement)
- Media

Policies and procedures are being developed and information on the number and type of guidance will be made available later this financial year.

Information resource management

SF uses the Scottish Government's eRDM tool, Objective for record management, and have our own file plan which sits within the overall SG plan.

Class 6: How we procure goods and services from external providers

Information about how we procure goods and services, and our contracts with external providers

Contracts Advertised

In line with Scottish Government policy, Scottish Forestry advertises all contracts on the Public Contract Scotland portal. Contracts above the EU thresholds are published on the Official Journal of the European Communities via the PCS portal. Scottish Forestry's Register of Contracts valued at £50,000 or over is also available on the PCS portal.

The following will be made available

- Procurement policies and procedures
- Invitations to tender/Contract Notices for goods & services £5,000 and over.
- Contract Award Notices for goods & services £5,000 and over.
- Register of contracts awarded, which have gone through formal tendering, including name of supplier, period of contract and value
- Additional information which is required to be published by applicable procurement legislation and statutory guidance (e.g. the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, the Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016 and Public Contracts (Scotland) regulations 2015)

Class 7: How we are performing

Information about how the authority performs as an organisation, and how well it delivers its functions and services.

Performance standards and KPIs will be formulated as part of the Corporate Planning process and will be available soon.

Class 8: Our commercial publications

Information packaged and made available for sale on a commercial basis and sold at market value through a retail outlet (eg) bookshop, museum or research journal.

Scottish Forestry currently has no commercial publications. Charges may arise for information as explained in the charging policy in the Introduction to the Guide.

Class 9: Our Open Data

Open data made available by the authority as described by the [Scottish Government's Open Data Strategy](#) and [Resource Pack](#), available under an open licence.

Scottish Forestry is currently developing its Open Data Publications Plan and further information will be available this year.

Details of publications and statistics can be found in the body of this document or on the [Publication Section](#) of our website.

Further copies of this document are available, on request, in audio and large print formats and in community languages (Urdu; Bengali; Gaelic; Hindi; Punjabi; Cantonese; Arabic; Polish).

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Any enquiries regarding this document / publication should be sent to us at

Scottish.Forestry@forestry.gov.scot.

This document is also available on the Scottish Forestry website: www.forestry.gov.scot