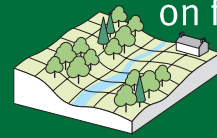




the creation of
small woodlands
on farms



1

Introduction





1 Introduction

Small woodlands, woodland features and even individual trees can be an asset on any farm. This guidance describes the benefits of creating new small woodlands, where they can best be sited and offers some advice on planning, layout and species. It focuses on small woodlands of a few hectares in size, say no bigger than five hectares.

1.1 The Potential Benefits of Small Woodlands



Small woods on farms should be seen as practical additions to the farm infrastructure. They can provide shelter, shade and a setting for farm buildings. They can also reduce wind-borne soil erosion and help reduce both the amount and rate of runoff into watercourses, thus contributing to flood prevention measures in susceptible areas.

Increasingly, woodlands are also being used to provide and direct access through farmland and to act as buffers to increase biosecurity. Even avenue, individual marker and hedgerow trees can add to the experience of the landscape, and help guide the visitor. Well placed woodlands can also enhance wildlife habitats and collectively form networks of woodland that allow plants and animals to expand their existing habitat.

Woodlands often contribute to an attractive farmed landscape, and an attractive landscape not only looks good to visitors and the wider public, but can also enhance the value of a property and the view from the farmhouse. Planting can be used to increase seasonal colour, add a feature to the landscape, frame a view or screen an unsightly structure.





Usually, woodlands are particularly useful because they are multi-purpose. A single woodland can often meet many objectives, and with careful management, those purposes can change over time. The adaptability of woodland and the many uses it can be put to over its lifetime is a potentially valuable addition to any farm.

Examples of the many different uses of small woodlands include:

- Screening unsightly buildings and activities
- Hiding buildings or structures from view for security purposes
- Reducing noise and headlight glare from road traffic
- Creating a setting for new development
- Increasing the value of a property
- Separating farm activities from more publicly accessible activities
- Providing autumn colour
- Framing a view
- Stabilising river banks
- Preventing erosion and the runoff of pollutants into watercourses
- Creating dappled shade for river fish and pond life
- Sheltering and directing public access
- Creating a landscape feature, such as an avenue or roundel
- Shading and sheltering farm roads
- Managing stock movements
- Providing shelter for stock
- Reducing wind-borne soil erosion
- Creating new wildlife habitats
- Linking existing wildlife corridors
- Providing game cover
- Providing fire wood, twiggy plant sticks and pea sticks
- Providing a habitat for edible plants and fungi, such as wild strawberries and brambles
- Creating shelter for free range chickens, ducks and geese
- Creating an orchard

1.2 How to use this Guidance

This guidance advises you on the opportunities for creating new small woodlands in three different types of agricultural settings, reflecting the three main farming enterprises in Scotland. It is therefore tailored to their respective different farmed landscape settings.

Siting small woodland in arable land, for example, offers different opportunities and benefits to siting small woodlands on hill land. The type of woodlands, their purpose and the species choice is also likely to vary depending on the agricultural land use. This guidance is therefore organised into three key sections:

Section 2: Arable Land, which includes fruit growing and horticulture

Section 3: Permanent Grassland, which includes stock rearing, fodder crops and dairy farming; and

Section 4: Hill Land and Unimproved Grazing, which focuses on largely unfenced land in the uplands used for extensive grazing

The guidance in these three sections identifies the type of woodlands most likely to benefit both your farm and the wider countryside in each of these different farmed landscape settings. It highlights key issues that will ensure that the woodland contributes to the farming enterprise and integrates well with the surrounding landscape, ecology and other countryside interests.

To use this guidance effectively, you should go to the section or sections that most closely reflects the farmed landscape of your own holding, and look at the guidance for that type of farmed land.

1.3 Planning New Woodlands

In addition to advising on the most appropriate woodlands for different agricultural enterprises, there is advice on how to plan for new woodlands. This is included in a fifth key section:

Section 5: Woodland Planning, which outlines a step-by-step process on how to assess opportunities, identify constraints and produce an outline plan.

The purpose of this advice is to ensure that you can produce a plan for new small woodlands that meets your objectives and which, if necessary, clearly explains your thinking if you need to discuss your proposals with a woodland adviser.

It is followed by a list of contact details in the Annexes, should you require more help and advice.

