What is Tir Gofal?

Tir Gofal is an agri-environment scheme, available on farmed land throughout Wales, which rewards farmers for caring for the environmental, historical and cultural features on their land. Tir Gofal builds on the experience of previous schemes, such as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and Tir Cymen. It is designed to support the farming community in protecting the rich heritage of rural Wales and reflects the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities for sustainable farming, coupled with greater opportunities for public enjoyment of the countryside. Agreements apply to the whole farm and last for ten years with a break clause after five years.

The objectives of Tir Gofal are:

- To protect and enhance habitats of importance to wildlife
- To protect and enhance the beauty of the landscape
- To protect and enhance historic and archaeological features
- To provide opportunities for new public access to the countryside

Who runs the scheme?

Tir Gofal is part of the Welsh Assembly Government's agri-environment programme, and is part funded by the European Union and run in accordance with the rules and requirements of the Rural Development Plan regulations (Council Regulations EC - No 1698/2005). Final implementation details for these requirements are still being agreed at the time of going to print.

The scheme is delivered in partnership with a number of other organisations including the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission, Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments and Local and National Park Authorities. Contact details are listed in Appendix 1.

What will I be paid?

If your holding is accepted into the scheme, the agreement will be for ten years with a break clause after five years. Payments will be made for:

- The whole farm section - an obligatory set of requirements applying to the entire holding. This includes the preparation of a whole farm Resource Management Plan
- Management of existing habitats and environmental features
- Establishment and management of new habitats and features
- New permissive access for use by the public
- One off payments for Capital Works such as fencing and hedge laying

Payment rates are listed in the Payments Booklet included in this pack.

The payment rates will be kept under review by the Welsh Assembly Government.
How do I apply?

The application form is included within this pack. The application form is designed to gather information about your farm, as well as details of present or past management agreements or grant schemes.

If you have problems completing your application form contact your local office for help (contact details are listed in Appendix 1). You may also wish to seek professional advice before submitting your application.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the application is correctly completed and that the information you provide is correct.

Submitting Your Form

The level of interest in the Tir Gofal scheme is known to be high, but only a limited number of applications can be processed. Considering this, we recommend that you submit your application at the earliest date possible. Applications can only be returned by post using the enclosed pre-addressed envelope.

Remember to affix sufficient postage. You are strongly advised to use Recorded Delivery, and retain the slip issued by the Post Office. We recommend you make a photocopy of your completed application for future reference. All applications will be acknowledged and you will be notified if you have been successful or not.

The Application Process

• All applications must include at least 3ha of land.
• The Welsh Assembly Government will process applications in date order subject to the special provisions applying to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which will be prioritised in accordance with meeting the targets set in the Wales Environment Strategy (2006).
• A Project Officer will visit you to discuss your application and the content of a possible Tir Gofal agreement. At this stage your application will be scored to ensure it offers sufficient value for money. A summary of the scoring system is outlined below.
• The Project Officer will explain the score achieved by your application and provide you with a copy of the scoring sheet.
• All applications must score a minimum level of 100 points to proceed to the next stage.
• If your proposals do not meet the minimum threshold, your application will be rejected unless it is possible to modify it so that it meets the threshold score.
• If successful, your Project Officer will then draw up a management plan which will subsequently form part of the Tir Gofal agreement.

To ensure value for money the Project Officer will consult other interested bodies, such as the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments and the relevant Local Authority/National Park Authority. Any relevant information supplied by these bodies may be used in preparing your management plan.
Tir Gofal is well placed to contribute to the Welsh Assembly Government’s wider objective to halt the loss of biodiversity (Wales Environment Strategy 2006), and as part of preparing a draft management plan, Project Officers will use species distribution maps provided by a wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations to prepare what are known as “species packages” for certain farms. These packages consist of a mixture of prescriptions drawn from the standard scheme together with special projects designed to help look after any key species on the farm. It is not mandatory to adopt such packages provided the farm otherwise scores over the minimum requirement of 100 points, but by adopting such packages agreement holders can make a major contribution towards stemming the loss of biodiversity in the Welsh countryside.

Please note:

- You must not carry out any work in connection with your application until a formal agreement document has been signed by you and the Welsh Assembly Government.

- You must not undertake any work prior to entering the scheme which may damage the environmental value of the land. Examples of such works include draining, ploughing, fertilising or otherwise improving old grassland and heathland or removing any hedgerows or banks. Any of these operations could result in your application being rejected.

The Tir Gofal Scoring System

Points are awarded for a range of habitats, environmental features and farm characteristics. Points are generally awarded on a per hectare or metre basis but fixed scores are awarded for certain features such as the provision of new public access. In order to qualify for a Tir Gofal agreement your farm will need to score at least 100 points.

Existing habitats, management options and the creation of new environmental features are generally scored using a weighting factor. The size of this weighting varies according to the environmental benefit.

Landscape features, capital work commitments, farming practices and voluntary access provisions are awarded fixed scores. Fixed scores are also awarded for the following criteria:

- Applicants who can demonstrate that they are farming organically or in organic conversion.
- Applicants, or applications including partners, who are 18 or over but under 40 years of age at the date of application.
- Applications that include land designated as SSSI, provided the applicant agrees to carry out any work needed to enhance the value of the special features for which the SSSI was notified.

As an applicant, you do not need to score your own Tir Gofal application, as your Project Officer will do this as part of the initial visit. However, in advance of this visit you may wish to consider the sort of management you will need to carry out to ensure you reach the threshold score of 100 points. Full details of the scoring system together with some worked examples are available from your local office or they can be viewed on the Welsh Assembly Government’s web site, www.wales.gov.uk.
Who can apply?

To enter the scheme you must be able to show that you have, or expect to have, a controlling interest in the land for the duration of the agreement. Eligible land includes that held under freehold, agricultural or farm business tenancies. If your period of tenancy is shorter than the agreement period it may still be possible to apply (see the section on Farm Business Tenancies below). Land held by you under licence cannot be entered into your agreement. Common land may be eligible in some circumstances (see below for further details).

The land must be managed as part of a holding in agricultural production. *Agricultural activity* is defined as “the production, rearing or growing of agricultural products including harvesting, milking, breeding animals and keeping animals for farming purposes, or maintaining the land in GAEC”.

A County and Parish Holding (CPH) number and Customer Reference Number (CRN) are not required to apply for the scheme, but you will need to obtain these in order for us to process your application. Your Tir Gofal Project Officer can advise you on how to obtain these details. **It will be a condition of the scheme that a Single Application Form (SAF) is submitted for each of the years during which you are participating.**

All eligible land that you own or rent in Wales, including any detached parcels, must be entered into the scheme. The minimum total area is 3 hectares.

You can enter existing woodland which forms part of an agricultural holding into the scheme. Conifer woodlands are subject to size limitations depending on the environmental benefits arising from their inclusion in any particular agreement.

**Farm Business and Full Agricultural Tenancies**

If you are a tenant you must notify your landlord of your intention to apply to enter land into a Tir Gofal agreement. A form for notifying your landlord is included in the application pack (TG2 form). The TG2 form does not have to be completed and returned with your application. If your application is successful however you will need to complete the form before your application can be processed. The Welsh Assembly Government will also require confirmation of your landlord’s approval before any agreement can be signed (TG3 form).

If the term of your tenancy is shorter than the 10 years of the agreement, the land can be entered into a Tir Gofal agreement if the landlord signs an indemnity, which is an undertaking that the land will remain in the scheme at least until the 5 year break clause. This removes the risk of the tenant being liable for financial penalties which would result from withdrawal from the agreement. If your tenancy expires before the end of the agreement period, the agreement could be transferred to a new tenant, or to the landlord to manage the land in-hand.

**Common Land**

- **Sole Grazing Rights**

If you are able to show that you have sufficient control over the management of the land over which you have common rights, you can enter this into Tir Gofal along with the rest of your holding. You will need to notify the landowner of the common of your intention to apply to enter the land into Tir Gofal. If the common is Crown Land, you will need consent from the Crown Estate Commissioners.
• **Shared Grazing**

If you share common grazing with other right holders, it is unlikely that we will be able to offer you a Tir Gofal agreement for land over which you hold common rights, as the land is not wholly under your control. This will not prevent your main holding entering the scheme but you must indicate on your application form that you hold common grazing rights. If you reduce stocking levels on the main holding to comply with the agreement, you must not increase the number of stock you graze on common land.

• **Applications from Commons with Shared Grazing**

Joint applications to bring common land into Tir Gofal can be considered from Commoners Associations, Common Land Management Committees, commoners with registered rights, owners of common land and local authorities in which the powers of management are vested. Such groups will need to show that the overwhelming majority of common rights holders support the application and agree to manage the land according to the Tir Gofal agreement. You will need to fill in the common land application form enclosed in the pack. Joint applications should be discussed with a Tir Gofal Project Officer. The landowner(s) of the common will normally need to be signatories to the agreement if the application is accepted into the scheme.

**Group applications**

Farms that are in close proximity to one another (within 0.5km of each other) are eligible to submit their individual applications in the form of a group application. The advantage of this approach is that the Welsh Assembly Government will process all of the applications together, so that the signing of individual agreements can be co-ordinated over as short a time period as possible. This will make it easier for groups of farms to enjoy economies of scale when implementing Tir Gofal agreements. For instance, it may be possible to co-ordinate the employment of contractors as well as the use and or purchase of any specialist machinery.

The maximum number of participating farms in any one group is six. Each member of the group must submit an individual application and each application must reach the qualifying score in its own right. The group must identify a secretary who can act as a contact point for the Welsh Assembly Government (the secretary does not necessarily have to be one of the participating farmers). The secretary must ensure that all of the relevant application forms are submitted before closure of the application window (preferably by submitting all of the forms in one envelope). The secretary must also include with the applications a list of all of the farmers in the group, together with farm names and holding numbers.

Successful applications submitted under this procedure will be allocated adjacent positions in the waiting list. The Welsh Assembly Government will contact the group secretary when it is time to start preparing individual farm management plans.

**Land in other agreements**

• **Tir Cynnal**

Tir Cynnal agreement holders can apply for a Tir Gofal agreement. If the Tir Gofal application is successful the new agreement can only be signed on the termination of the Tir Cynnal agreement at the next anniversary. Landowners whose Tir Cynnal applications are being processed are still able to apply for Tir Gofal but any Tir Gofal agreement cannot be signed until written notification is received that the Tir Cynnal application has been withdrawn.
• **ESA and Tir Cymen**

Existing ESA agreement holders are eligible to apply for a Tir Gofal agreement at the five year break clause and during any application window thereafter.

Farmers with existing ESA or Tir Cymen agreements who also control land outside the designated ESA/Tir Cymen area can submit a Tir Gofal application for the whole of the land which they farm during any application window. If the application is successful a whole farm Tir Gofal agreement may be offered to replace the existing agreement.

• **Other agri-environment schemes**

If you have land entered into a part farm scheme, such as the Habitat Scheme, you may cancel your agreement at any time. But there may be a requirement to pay back some of the money received under the other scheme, so that you are not paid twice for any work undertaken. Note that Tir Gofal is a discretionary scheme and you should not end an existing agreement until you have been offered a Tir Gofal agreement.

• **Organic Farming Scheme**

If you are already in, or are intending to enter, the Organic Farming Scheme, you can still apply to enter Tir Gofal. Organic production systems work well with the aims of Tir Gofal, however it may be necessary to adjust the payments of either scheme (OFS or Tir Gofal) depending on which was signed first, to remove the possibility of any dual funding.

• **Woodland Grant Scheme and Better Woodlands for Wales (BWW)**

Existing Forestry Commission (Wales) Woodland Grant Schemes and Better Woodlands for Wales (BWW) agreements can usually be accommodated within the Tir Gofal agreement, as long as there is no dual funding. It may be a requirement of the Tir Gofal agreement to exclude stock from the majority of the woodlands on the holding (at least 80% unless specific conservation priorities dictate otherwise). Prior to the five-year review of the agreement, an advisor will visit the woodlands on the holding to assess the scope for silvicultural works and prepare a management brief covering both the management of existing woodland and scope for new planting. As part of concluding the five-year review, agreement holders will then be required to progress the required woodland management either through BWW (the grant aided route) or through Tir Gofal (as a condition of participating in the scheme).

• **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**

SSSIs support special features which are recognised to be of national and in some cases international importance. The Welsh Assembly Government is required to ensure that these sites are protected and managed appropriately. Tir Gofal can make a significant contribution to the maintenance, enhancement and restoration of these sites. If you have a SSSI on your farm please fill in the relevant section of the application form.

If you have already entered into a Section 15 or Section 16 agreement with the Countryside Council for Wales on this land, the Project Officer will discuss this with you on visiting your farm.

• **Other agreements**

You must outline in the Application Form if you have or have had any other agreements or grant schemes during the last five years. As a general rule, you cannot be paid under Tir Gofal for something which is being paid for under another agreement, but you can apply to enter any
remaining land on the holding into Tir Gofal. If the first agreement comes to an end before the Tir Gofal Agreement expires, you must offer to enter this land into the Tir Gofal agreement.

**Agricultural Subsidies**

You will remain eligible for other agricultural subsidies such as the Tir Mynydd Scheme and the Single Payment Scheme, and must abide by the rules of those schemes in the normal way, including observing cross compliance requirements.

SAF details will be used to cross-check all Tir Gofal applications with information held by other organisations such as the Environment Planning and Countryside Department, Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission, Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments and Local and National Park Authorities.
The Whole Farm Management Plan

The Whole Farm Section

All agreement holders have to adhere to the Whole Farm Section - a set of general prescriptions applying to the entire holding. These are summarised below:

Summary of The Whole Farm Section

- Retain all existing traditional field boundaries (e.g. stone walls, earth banks, hedges and slate fences) and maintain those that are stock proof. Leave at least 25% of all hedges untrimmed each year unless annual trimming is necessary to comply with health and safety requirements. Otherwise do not trim between the dates of 1 March and 31 August.

- Retain a buffer strip 1m wide from the base of the field boundary (on each side) without using any cultivations, fertilisers, lime, herbicides or other pesticides.

- Retain individual trees and small groups of trees and replace where necessary. Retain dead trees unless they cause a hazard or obstruction.

- Retain and safeguard any archaeological or historic features and maintain in good repair any weatherproof traditional buildings.

- Safeguard any rock features and geological sites by avoiding physical disturbance and establishing a 2m wide buffer strip around the base of the feature. Similarly, all ponds, streams and rivers must be protected by a 1m wide buffer strip (extended to a width of 10m when using farmyard manure, slurry or other organic manures).

- Keep the farm clear of rubbish and scrap.

- Agree a whole farm stocking rate that avoids any overgrazing or undergrazing.

- Complete a Farm Resource Management Plan within six months of signing an agreement as well as any necessary Manure Management Plan or Soil Nutrient Management Plan within 12 months of signing an agreement (standard templates for preparing these plans will be provided).

- All activities affecting agricultural land must be carried out in accordance with the Farmers’ Guide to Cross Compliance (as issued by the Welsh Assembly Government).

- All legal responsibilities relating to existing Public Rights of Way and land defined as open country under the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 must be complied with.

- Agreement holders must consult the Project Officer before undertaking any construction or alteration of tracks, roads, yards, hardstandings or any new structures, any works involving watercourses or waterbodies, quarrying, or use of the land for commercial or recreational activities.

- Scheme participants must comply with all relevant legal requirements and will be responsible for obtaining any necessary consent, e.g. disposal of farm wastes (including hedgerow brash and sheep dip), planning consent and felling licences.
Managing Specific Features and Habitats on your Farm

Your management plan will contain specific prescriptions to suit the particular circumstances of your holding. These are designed to deliver environmental benefits on your farm, and the success of the scheme and continuation of your payments depend on you following these prescriptions carefully. A range of payments recompense you for the work involved (see Payments Booklet included in this pack).

There are a number of general management requirements and commitments for all the wildlife habitats on your farm. On any of your land which is classed as a habitat within your farm management plan you will not be able to carry out practices like:

• ploughing
• re-seeding
• or similar agricultural operations.

There will also be restrictions on practices such as:

• burning
• grazing
• mowing
• fertilising
• clearing drains.

Your Project Officer will explain these before you sign the agreement, and may be able to permit them under the relevant section of your management plan.

Your agreement map will mark all the habitats to which the Tir Gofal prescriptions apply. In order to safeguard the payments due to you, it is important that you comply with the relevant prescriptions on this land. It is also very important that you comply with the EIA (Uncultivated Land Regulations) on all of your land, as it is possible that there may be some areas of land which are covered by the Regulations, but which are not mapped as habitat within your Tir Gofal agreement.

### Stocking Rates

On most habitats identified under Tir Gofal the number of livestock you will be able to graze will be limited. An indication of the stocking rates for each habitat are outlined in the following section. All of the rates are average rates per hectare per year. The following conversions will apply when calculating stocking rates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livestock Type</th>
<th>Stocking Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dairy Cow</td>
<td>1.0 LSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Beef Animal (less than 24 months)</td>
<td>0.6 LSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suckler Cow</td>
<td>1.0 LSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breeding Ewe (with or without lamb)</td>
<td>0.15 LSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>1.0 LSU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You will normally be able to manage land that is classified as agriculturally improved as you have done in the past, **provided** this does not contravene the Whole Farm Section.
Habitats and Feature

What is a Habitat?
A habitat is an area of land which consists of a recognisable community of native plants and animals, such as a woodland, heathland, wetland or flower-rich meadow.

The habitats and environmental features described in this section have all been shaped by past agricultural practice. Most open habitats still need to be grazed and so depend on the continuation of farming for their survival. However intensive agricultural practices can be very damaging.

The general aim of the management prescriptions is to maintain and improve the environmental value of your farm, by helping you to carry out the right kinds of management, which usually involves traditional forms of agriculture. Some habitats, such as woodland, will be enhanced by the exclusion of livestock although most habitats and features benefit from light grazing. If you have any of the following habitats or features on your land they will have to be managed in accordance with the Tir Gofal prescriptions:

- **Broad-leaved Woodland**
  The aim of management is to maintain or increase the composition of native broad-leaved trees, which must form at least 50% of the woodland. This can be achieved by agreeing a programme of management work with the project officer such as thinning or coppicing of the trees within at least part of the wood. You will also need to limit the number of grazing animals which can have access to your woodland - this will frequently involve the complete exclusion of grazing for the duration of the agreement.

- **Scrub**
  Scrub consists of areas dominated by gorse, thorn, bracken and/or scattered trees. Management involves maintaining this habitat by agreeing a simple management plan, which may involve thinning dense blocks of scrub and light grazing (between 0.4 and 0.75 LSU per ha/yr).

- **Traditional orchards and parklands**
  Traditional orchards must contain tall, widely spaced fruit trees whilst parkland is usually enclosed, with scattered trees or groups of trees, and must be in agricultural use. To maintain the historic and wildlife value of these habitats, a simple management plan will be agreed to cover the maintenance of existing trees and historic features, as well as any rehabilitation or replanting needed. Stock will need to be controlled within agreed levels (usually between 1.0 and 1.5 LSU per ha/yr).

- **Heathland**
  Heathland covers large parts of the uplands and is also found in smaller quantities in the lowlands, especially around the coast. During the twentieth century the area of this special habitat has declined considerably. It consists of a mixture of heather and bilberry, often with gorse and a wide range of grasses and other plants. Management aims to maintain or increase the cover of typical heathland species and this is usually achieved by light grazing (usually between 0.1 and 0.225 LSUs per ha/yr). The complete removal of stock during the winter months may be necessary alongside burning, mowing and scrub control.
• **Unimproved and Semi-improved Grassland**

Unimproved grassland is land that has not been fertilised, ploughed or heavily grazed for many years. Several types of grassland are recognised by Tir Gofal (see Payments Booklet included in this pack). They all contain a wide range of grasses and flowering plants, whilst marshy grasslands have an abundance of sedges and rushes.

Unimproved grassland has declined considerably during the twentieth century, but scattered across Wales there are still many fields with this kind of habitat. Large areas of moorland are dominated by acid and marshy unimproved grassland.

Semi-improved grasslands are extremely variable. They may be derived from unimproved grasslands which have been more intensely farmed, or in some cases maybe grasslands which are reverting to a more semi natural state after past agricultural improvements. They are likely to have a more limited range of native plants than unimproved grassland and will often contain both ryegrass and clover.

The aim of management is to safeguard the native plants of these grasslands. This can be achieved by agreeing a regime involving light grazing (usually between 0.4 and 1.00 LSU per ha/yr), reducing or avoiding all inputs such as fertilizers and if managed for hay, mowing during July/August.

• **Wetlands**

There are many different kinds of wetlands, such as bogs that cover large parts of the uplands; reedbeds, usually found in the lowlands; and grazing marsh found near the coast and in river valleys. The aim of management is to maintain their distinctive fauna and flora. This can be achieved through low levels of stocking, or stock exclusion in some cases, by maintaining or increasing water levels and avoiding burning or drainage.

• **Coastal habitats**

These include saltmarshes, sand dunes and coastal cliffs and slopes. The aim will be to agree a suitable grazing regime (usually between 0.4 and 1.0 LSU per ha/yr). In some cases, such as on exposed coastal cliffs and slopes, grazing may not be necessary or practicable.

• **Agriculturally Improved Grasslands**

Generally, improved grasslands should be managed in accordance with the Whole Farm Section. However in coastal and floodplain locations with ditch networks, some fields may need to be managed by restricting fertilizer use and applying seasonal grazing restrictions.

**Historic and Geological features**

As well as following the requirements of the Whole Farm Section, you may choose to include some of the following elements in your management plan:

• **Traditional boundaries**

These include hedgerows, stone walls, earth banks and slate fences. You may agree a programme of boundary repairs or the establishment of new boundaries. Capital payments are available, and a combination of different boundaries can be included over the lifetime of the agreement. The amount of work is limited to 10m of traditional field boundary per ha of farm per year (up to a maximum payment of £3,850 per farm per year).
• **Historic Earthworks and Historic Stone Structures**

As with traditional boundaries, you will need to agree a simple plan of management which should cover issues such as the clearance of scrub, management of trees, realignment of access tracks and relocation of existing fences and water troughs.

• **Buried Archaeological Remains**

These can provide important evidence of past land-use, such as pre-historic field systems that may only be visible using aerial photography. Your management plan may include prescriptions designed to preserve such remains, for example by converting arable land to lightly stocked grassland, by reducing grazing levels or by increasing water levels.

Further details are provided on the “Tir Gofal and the historic environment” leaflet included in this application pack.

• **Geological features**

Rock features, such as cliff, rock outcrops, scree and shingle banks, should be protected within your agreement. You will need to manage them in accordance with the Whole Farm Section. In addition, payments may be available for particular work, such as fencing, stock management and scrub control.
Additional Commitments for Increasing the Environmental Value of Your Land or Providing New Public Access

If you wish, you may also make a commitment to carrying out a range of additional work as part of your Tir Gofal agreement. In some cases these will be essential in order to reach the threshold score. Such work may be eligible for annual payments or capital payments.

The additional commitments are as follows:

**Arable**

In order to encourage the wildlife of arable land, especially declining species of birds such as grey partridge and yellowhammer, you can receive payments for growing a number of arable crops, mainly without the use of pesticides. These are:

- Unsprayed Cereal, Rape and Linseed Crops
- Winter Stubbles with limited winter grazing
- Spring Cereals or Oilseed Rape Undersown with Grasses and Legumes
- Unsprayed Root Crops followed by Winter Grazing
- Rough Grass Margins
- Uncropped Fallow Margin (maximum of 3ha per agreement)
- Establishment of Wildlife Cover Crop (maximum of 3ha per agreement)
- Conversion of Arable to Grassland - this option is only available on sites that have been continuously managed for arable crops for at least 5 years and will normally be limited to coastal locations, parkland, historic sites and land adjacent to wetlands.

**Grassland restoration**

There are a number of options available:

- **Convert Improved Grassland to Semi-improved Grassland**
  
  This can be achieved by taking an annual hay cut and stocking at 1.0 LSUs per ha/yr, or by taking an annual hay crop in each of the first three years of the agreement and stocking at 0.75 LSU per ha/yr. Manage the grassland without using any lime, inorganic or inorganic fertilisers (maximum area of 10ha per agreement).

- **Restoration of Semi-improved Grassland**
  
  Manage semi-improved grasslands without using any cultivations or inorganic fertilisers. Stock at between 0.4 and 0.75 LSU per ha/yr.

- **Management of Improved Grassland for Breeding Lapwing**
  
  Lapwings have declined considerably over the last few decades. This option aims to help halt this decline by managing grassland being used for nesting or that is in close proximity to existing breeding sites. Any grassland with more than 5 breeding pairs must be entered into this option. Manage the land by limiting stocking rates between 1 April and 15 June preferably using cattle. You should create a short sward by end of March. There is no restriction on grazing for the remainder of the year. Inorganic fertilisers may not be applied between 1 February and 15 June.
• **Management of Improved Grassland for Overwintering Wildfowl**

Suitable for improved grassland in close proximity to existing wildfowl roosts. Create a short sward by October each year. Manage the land by stocking at no more than 0.4 LSU per ha between 1 October and 30 March. It is acceptable to apply both inorganic and organic fertilisers provided applications take place between 1 April and 30 September.

**Other Habitat Restoration Commitments**

• **Increase Water Levels on Suitable Habitats and Features**

On areas of floodplain grassland in particular it may be possible to raise water levels by breaking up existing field drains and pipes, blocking ditches or inserting sluice gates into ditches in order to ensure that the water level is close to the soil surface throughout the year. This is likely to be extremely beneficial to a wide range of wetland wildlife.

• **Establish New Broadleaved Woodlands and Scrub**

Exclude stock and plant a range of native broad-leaved trees and shrubs. Areas greater than 0.25ha will be funded by the Forestry Commission’s Better Woodlands for Wales Scheme.

• **Establish Streamside Corridors on Improved Land**

Exclude livestock from a 7m strip along the margins of rivers and streams. This option is only available on improved grassland or arable land.

• **Establish New Reedbeds and other Swamps**

In some areas such as floodplains it may be possible to create reedbeds, primarily for the benefit of wetland birds such as bittern and bearded tits and other wildlife. In conjunction with your Project Officer you will have to develop a water level management plan together with proposals for implementation.

• **Establish Heathland Vegetation on Acid or Coastal Grassland and Cliff**

This may be suitable for some acid soils with less than 25% cover of dwarf shrubs such as heather. Reduce stocking levels to no more than 0.05 LSU per ha/yr until heather has established.

• **Establish Heathland on Improved Land**

This may be suitable for sites with light soils adjacent to existing lowland heath. You will need to remove turf, scarify the soil and apply heather seed. Exclude all stock until the vegetation has established and then agree with the Project Officer a suitable plan of grazing management.

• **Establish New Saltmarshes**

New saltmarshes may only be created on improved land. Provide suitable conditions for tidal flooding by removing existing embankments and sluices. Agree a simple plan of grazing management with the Project Officer.

• **Establish New Sand Dunes on Improved Land**

Suitable on previously improved land lying downwind of an existing dune systems. Remove existing turf in order to reduce soil nutrient levels and allow natural regeneration from the seed bank.
• Additional Payments for Introduction of Grazing with Cattle

The Tir Gofal programme includes support for cattle grazing on certain habitats such as heathland, unimproved grassland and coastal habitats. Annual habitat management payments can be increased by 10% where the use of cattle will be beneficial.

New Public Access on Enclosed Land

Payments are available for new public access where it is sensible, safe and environmentally sound. This may be through permissive footpaths, permissive bridleways and cyclepaths and permissive access routes for the disabled. Any new access will be publicised by the Welsh Assembly Government, making clear that it is available for the lifetime of the agreement only and setting out the rules governing its use by the public.

• Access for Educational Purposes

A payment is available to encourage visits to be made to farms for educational purposes. Your Project Officer will discuss with you the possibility of using this option on your farm.
Capital Works

Capital payments are available for the categories of work listed below. Payment rates for these categories are listed in the Payments Booklet included in this pack. All capital payments must be linked to work agreed in your Tir Gofal agreement.

**Traditional field boundaries** - such as the restoration of stone walls, earthbanks and hedgerows.

**Protective fencing for environmental management purposes** - such as fencing off woodland or hedgerows.

**Habitat management, restoration and creation** - such as the creation of new wetlands, ponds, planting of woodlands, installation of otter holts etc.

**Landscape and historic feature management and restoration** - such as replanting parkland or orchard trees or restoring archaeological features.

**Facilities for new permissive public access** - such as stiles and bridle gates.

**Special projects** - payment may be offered towards the cost of other capital or land management work which is of real environmental benefit. Each case will be treated on its merits at the discretion of the Project Officer.

**Training**

Training courses will be made available to Tir Gofal agreement holders on the management of specific habitats and features, as well as on the sorts of practical skills needed to deliver such management.
Scheme Rules and Requirements

If your application is successful and you decide to proceed to the agreement stage, all the rules and requirements will be set out in detail in your contract, including aspects such as:-

• Claiming management and capital works payments
• Compliance checks
• Penalties
• Obtaining consent to undertake certain management works
• Health and Safety
• Sale and Purchase of Land During the Course of Your Agreement
• Entering into other grant schemes or agreements
• Appeals
• Complaints Procedure

Disclosure of data

Details of how information gathered at inspection will be shared with the specialist enforcement bodies is set out in this section of this booklet.

Data Disclosure

Management and Disclosure of Data Fair Processing Notice

This notice informs farmers about the Welsh Assembly Government’s/National Assembly for Wales’ (NAfW) use of the information provided on the Tir Gofal Application Form and how the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW will share some of the information with other relevant agri-environmental agencies and other government departments. It also addresses requests for information from members of the public.

The information that farmers provide to the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW in connection with their Tir Gofal application will be processed and managed by the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW in accordance with its obligations and duties under the:

- Data Protection Act 1998;
- Freedom of Information Act 2000; and

The information that farmers provide will primarily be used for the purposes of processing and determining their application. However the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW (or its agents) may also make use of the information supplied for other purposes connected with its functions and duties under the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Community and with its statutory environmental obligations.

Eligibility for Tir Gofal payments will be dependant on, among other things, on meeting the requirements of “cross compliance”. Cross compliance means that all farming activities must comply with rules provided for in 19 existing EC Directives (set out in Annex III of European Council Regulation (EC) No 1782/2003) and the GAEC set out in Statutory Instrument -

The agencies currently involved in enforcing these directives and with whom the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW may share information are:

- Environment Agency Wales
- Countryside Council for Wales
- State Veterinary Service
- 22 Welsh Local Authorities
- Food Standards Agency Wales
- DEFRA
- Welsh Assembly Government
- Forestry Commission.
- Veterinary Medicine Directorate
- Health and Safety Executive
- Rural Payments Agency (RPA)
- Scottish Executive Rural Affairs Department (SERAD)
- Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland (DARDNI)

Articles 9 (a) and (e) of European Commission Regulation (EC) No 796/2004, expressly provide for the establishment of a system of effective control on cross compliance, which involves the “sharing of necessary information between the paying agencies and the competent control authorities”.

**Reasons for Sharing Personal Data**

The information farmers provide will be used in the following ways:

- cross compliance and cross checking between partner organisations to prevent breaches of the agri-environment schemes each administer
- for administrating IACS and SPS and other schemes claimed on the SAF
- produce maps showing the areas of land that have been brought into the agreements
- compile reports of aggregated data, to be made publicly available, via the Welsh Assembly Government/National Assembly for Wales Internet pages
- prepare summary statistical analyses (from which individuals cannot be identified)
- provide information to Welsh Assembly Government Ministers, which will inform decisions relating to policy changes and funding
- to identify landowners/users in events of emergencies, e.g. disease control and breach control
- to protect farmers’ interest in land conservation and issues that may arise due to funding queries
- to allow partner organisations to fulfil their statutory regulatory duties laid out by law
- regulatory inspection authorities, such as HM Customs & Excise, Inland Revenue and the police, where the law says that information must be passed so that they can do their work
- for controlling and monitoring animal diseases outbreaks.

All requests to the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW for the disclosure of any of the information provided or details of payments made to farmers will be considered in accordance with the Assembly’s Code of Practice on Public Access to Information (“the Code”), the Assembly’s statutory obligation under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).
The code reflects the Assembly’s approach to open government and provides guidance on how the Assembly will respond to requests for information from members of the public whether they fall under FOIA, DPA or EIR. The Welsh Assembly Government’s policy is to publish information relating to payments made under schemes covered by the Single Application Form. This will include the business name, the geographical area in which the business is located and the aggregate sum paid to each farming business.

Other information may also be disclosed where permitted by law.

**Rights under the Data Protection Act 1998**

The Data Protection Act 1998 gives individuals certain rights in respect of the personal data held on them. Whilst not intending to be exhaustive, examples of these rights include:

- the right for any personal information held about them to be processed fairly and lawfully
- the right to ask for and receive copies of the personal information that the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW holds about them, although the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW can sometimes withhold some information
- the right, in some circumstances, to prevent the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW processing personal information if doing so will cause damage or distress
- the right to ask for wrong information to be put right.

Individuals also have the right to ask the Information Commissioner, who enforces and oversees the Data Protection Act 1998, to assess whether or not the processing of their personal information is likely to comply with the provisions of the Act.

The information provided will not go outside of the European Union area, unless there is due concern to do so (e.g. in the case of a disease outbreak). If it does, the Welsh Assembly Government/NAfW will make sure that the information continues to be processed in accordance with the rules of the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Data Disclosure - Further Information**

For further information about the information collected and its use, farmers should contact the Welsh Assembly Government.

Alternatively, farmers with any concerns about the accuracy of their personal data, or those wishing to exercise any of their rights under the Data Protection Act 1998, can contact the National Assembly’s Data Protection Officer on 029 2082 3999.

**Keeping records**

Farmers must keep, for up to 10 years, all of the records and information they need to confirm that they have provided complete and accurate information and have complied with their undertakings. There are also specific livestock record requirements to be observed. These records must meet the current legislative requirements in terms of animal registration, identification, movement and numbers. Standard record books for cattle are available from local Divisional Offices.

If farmers would like the Welsh Assembly Government to look at their records to give them guidance as to whether they meet the necessary standard, they should contact their local Divisional Office to make an appointment. The Welsh Assembly Government is not able to check the accuracy of the records but can give guidance on whether the format meets the required regulations. This service is not available if an inspection has already been arranged.
Contact Details

Local Tir Gofal Offices

Bangor
Tel: 01248 62500

Mold
Tel: 01352 706600

Penrhyndeudraeth
Tel: 01766 771222

Dolgellau
Tel: 01341 424800

Newtown
Tel: 01686 611970

Aberystwyth
Tel: 01970 821100

Llandrindod Wells
Tel: 01597 823777

Llandeilo
Tel: 01588 825800

Abergavenny
Tel: 01873 737000

Pembroke Dock
Tel: 01646 624000

Swansea
Tel: 01792 634960

Cardiff
Tel: 02920 772400

Welsh Assembly Government Offices

Caernarfon
Tel: 01286 674144

Llandrindod Wells
Tel: 01597 823777

Carmarthen
Tel: 01267 225300

Countryside Council for Wales
Tel: 01248 385500

Appendix 1

National Parks

Snowdonia National Park
Tel: 01766 770274

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
Tel: 08453 457275

Brecon Beacons National Park
Tel: 01874 624437

Cadw & the Archaeological Trusts

Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments
Tel: 029 20 500200

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust
Tel: 01248 352535

Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
Tel: 01938 553670

Archaeoleg Cambria Archaeology (The Dyfed Archaeological Trust covers Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire)
Tel: 01558 823131

Gwent & Glamorgan Archaeological Trust
Tel: 01792 655208

Forestry Commission

Forestry Commission North Wales Conservancy
Tel: 01824 750492/493

Forestry Commission South Wales Conservancy
Tel: 01873 850060

Environment Agency

General Enquiries
Tel: 08708 506506