



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE, DOCUMENT

Woodland Restoration Scheme (window 3): rules booklet

Follow these rules and guidance for window 3 of the
Woodland Restoration Scheme.

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Key messages

The Woodland Restoration Scheme (WRS) is based on the previous Glastir Scheme which was part of the Rural Development Programme. This year, the scheme's offer has been improved, to include higher payment rates, longer application window, more time to complete the works and funding for the felling of young larch.

The budget available for this Expression of Interest (EOI) window is £1 Million. This window for Expression of Interest will open on 11 November 2024 and close at midnight on 28 February 2025. You will need to complete all Establishment and Capital Works and submit all claims for payment by 31 March 2026.

The WRS Expression of Interest Window has been extended to cover a four month period to give applicants more time to apply. There will be multiple selection rounds within the window so those that apply early can progress their application. We suggest that if your site is a PAWS site and will require a site visit in spring, or if you intend to apply for the new young larch felling options, that you submit your EOI as early as possible to allow the Planning process to commence as soon as possible. Accordingly, if the agreed budget has been committed prior to the closure of the window the window will be closed to further applications.

You may submit a WRS Expression of Interest (EOI) if you have been issued with a felling licence, a felling licence application number or a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) containing Larch.

You must submit your felling licence, felling licence application with number or

SPHN with your EOI on or before 28 February 2025 for assessment by the Welsh Government. An EOI will not be considered for selection until the

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supporting documentation has been received. The Welsh Government will not consider any documentation submitted in support of any EOI's submitted under an historic Glastir Woodland Restoration (GWR or WRS) scheme Window.

Failure to do so will result in land parcels being rejected.

WRS provides capital works for restocking, fencing and associated operations on sites where there is larch and up to 50% non-larch species. Recognising the impact *Phytophthora ramorum* has on harvesting timber from young larch, for this window we are including the option to apply for grant funding towards the felling of young larch (under 25 years old). You cannot apply for funding towards the felling of any non-larch species. See section D for criteria.

You can only apply for felling funding if you are also applying for restock funding. Felling only funding is not permitted.

For this WRS window, the maximum % of a single species will be 65% for Options W615, W618 and W619. This is important for helping forests develop resilience to future threats such as tree disease. This is consistent with the UK Forestry Standard version 5.

To be eligible for support to replant your woodlands, you must submit a forest management plan for the eligible area to be restocked. We encourage you to invite Natural Resources Wales Woodland Programme Team onto your site prior to writing or submitting your plan.

Customers who accept a WRS Grant Award, where a PAWS is being restocked, will be eligible to claim a one-off grant of £1,500 towards the cost of the production of a management plan. This plan should consider the entire woodland management unit, as well as and including the area being applied for restoration support through the WRS. You are encouraged to apply early in the window to enable site visits to take place by NRW in the Spring. No further management plan payments will be supported in any successive rounds of Woodland schemes.

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Registered woodland planners must write a WRS Plan for PAWS to be restocked, which must comply with the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS).

If you claim the Plan grant, the PAWS restocking applied for in this round of WRS must take place. Failure to carry out the restocking will lead to recovery procedures.

Customers who wish to claim the grant are strongly advised to consider incorporating all of their woodlands, particularly all of their larch, as you may wish to apply to any subsequent rounds of WRS. Customers who have previously received a one off grant of £1,500 towards the cost of the production of a management plan under either GWR or WRS scheme are not eligible for this support.

To be eligible to submit an EOI, you must be able to adhere to the following dates:

- submit your Online EOI with supporting Felling Licence, Felling Licence application with number or SPHN between 11 November 2024 to 28 February 2025
- respond to regular selection results - the first will be 9 December 2024
- complete all establishment and capital works and submit all claims for payment by 31 March 2026

Forest Management Plan support will be processed for payment following acceptance of a verified grant award.

The WRS Scheme EOI is available through the RPW Online service. You will need a Customer Reference Number (CRN) and an RPW Online account before you can access the WRS Expression of Interest.

To register your business details for the first time, you need to complete the

online registration form. Please refer to the **how to register guidance** for further details. The vast majority of changes to business details can be done online. However, Welsh Government may require further details on any major changes. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre on 0300 062 5004 for further information. For further information on registering with RPW Online or submitting an Expression of Interest please refer to Section E of this booklet.

You should read this Booklet and the How to Complete Guidance before you submit your online EOI.

You should ensure that you meet all the eligibility criteria for the full contractual period of 1 year followed by the maintenance period of 10 years after the final claim.

You will need a Forest Management Plan which must comply with the UKFS.

Please respond to any queries raised by the Welsh Government or Natural Resources Wales regarding your WRS EOI promptly. Failure to respond within the given time may delay the offer of a WRS Grant Award.

Any subsequent changes to this guidance and commitments will be published in **Gwlad** and, where necessary, Welsh Government will contact farming businesses and land managers directly.

Section A: introduction

In Wales many larch woodlands have been infected by the fungal pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum*. WRS has been developed to enable woodlands infected by *Phytophthora ramorum* or areas of larch felled to help slow the spread of the disease, to be replanted. When woodland is clear felled, there is a significant opportunity to diversify tree species, creating more mixed and native woodlands.

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The Welsh Government is committed to encouraging species diversification in Wales in order to make our woodlands more resilient and more able to deliver a wider range of benefits.

Successful applicants will need to produce a Forest Management Plan which complies with the UKFS before being processed to grant award stage. This booklet is for foresters, farmers and land managers who intend to submit an EOI for the WRS. The details contained are not exhaustive and may be updated.

Glossary

Compartment: Refers to an area of woodland or an area of felled woodland due to be restocked.

Stems: A term used for the young trees being planted in a compartment.

Section B: eligibility

To be eligible for the Woodland Restoration Scheme you must:

- be a registered customer with the Welsh Government and have been issued with a Customer Reference Number (CRN)
- have registered your land with the Welsh Government's Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS)
- the woodland area must be a minimum of 0.25 hectares of eligible land
- have full management control over the land from the date the EOI is submitted for the duration of the grant award and full commitment period. If you only hold a grazing license, you are not eligible to apply
- have not made or will not make an insurance claim or received an insurance payment for the loss of trees due to *Phytophthora ramorum*

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- submit a Forest Management Plan which meets the UKFS and is approved by the Welsh Government

Section C: conditions of grant

WRS is subject to a range of relevant legislation (see Section L). The Welsh Government and the applicant / recipient must act in accordance with that legislation.

The offer of a WRS grant award is made subject to terms and conditions, which will be set out in full in your grant award letter and include those set out below. Failure to meet the terms and conditions of the grant award could result in the cancellation of your grant award and / or the recovery of sums already paid with interest, or a reduction of the amount payable.

Conditions

The award is made on the basis of statements and declarations made by you or your representatives in the EoI and the claim form and any subsequent correspondence. The making of false or misleading statements is an offence.

You must meet any legal obligations imposed and UK law.

No alterations may be made to the grant award, without the written approval of the Welsh Government.

You must provide confirmation that no other public funding has been sought. If it is found that you have received public funding from another source your claim may be rejected, payments may be recovered, and penalties may be applied.

Records concerning the application and claim for this grant, must be retained for

at least five years after the grant award end date.

You must allow representatives of the Welsh Government, the Auditor General for Wales, or their representatives to inspect the grant award land. On request, you must provide them with information and / or access to original documentation in relation to the project.

The information provided in the application and any supporting documentation is subject to the requirements of the Welsh Government's Code of Practice on Public Access to Information, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

You should be aware that, if successful, the Welsh Government reserve the right to publish the name of your business or company, the amount of grant you were awarded.

The information provided in the EoI is subject to the Privacy Notice. The Privacy Notice explains the Welsh Government's processing and use of your personal data and your rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Land eligibility requirements

To be eligible for a WRS Grant Award, the land must:

- contain larch trees or have contained larch trees which have now been felled.
- be covered by an SPHN or Felling Licence
- not have been grant funded to restock from any other source
- not have been grant funded to fell young larch trees from any other source
- have satisfied all necessary consents with stakeholders and statutory bodies
- consist of field parcels that are 0.1ha or greater in area
- be located in Wales

Funding from other sources

If you are receiving payment from any other source for works required under WRS, this would be considered double funding.

Please note, it is your responsibility to ensure you do not enter into a WRS Grant Award which overlaps with any other agreement and that there is no conflict of requirements between schemes.

If it is established that you are or have received funding from another source for commitments under WRS, this could result in financial penalties, the recovery of payments and possible termination of your grant award.

Section D: WRS funding available

If you are successfully selected for the WRS, you will be required to complete a

Forest Management Plan that complies with the UKFS ([Forestry Commission UK Forestry Standard and Guidelines](#)). The Forest Management Plan will be assessed by Natural Resources Wales. Following the approval of the Forest Management Plan, eligible Capital Works items listed in the Management Plan can be included in a WRS Grant Award. This section details the capital works items available under the WRS.

If you are considering PAWS restoration, you will need to engage a Registered Woodland Planner to complete your plan from the [list of Welsh Government Registered Woodland Planners, contact details can be found here](#).

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Maximum area eligible for support under woodland restoration

The maximum area eligible for support under the WRS will be equivalent to twice the area of larch (all age) identified on the Statutory Plant Health Notice or Felling Licence.

For example - if 1 hectare of larch is shown on your Felling Licence, the maximum area eligible for support under WRS will be 2 hectares.

As the minimum area eligible for support is 0.25ha, therefore the minimal area of Larch required within that area would be 0.13ha.

Replanting capital works

The following requirements apply to all Capital Works replanting options:

- all replanting must be carried out to the UKFS
- all replanting will be to a minimum of 2,500 stems per hectare
- the replanted woodland must be maintained for 10 years after the date of the final claim. 2,500 stems per hectare must be alive at the end of the 10-year maintenance period or canopy closure has been achieved. Failure to achieve the specified stocking density across the area of the grant award may result in the recovery of payments.

Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites restoration (PAWS) specific rules

Any area of PAWS to be restocked will require a PAWS survey and map to accompany the WRS Forest Management Plan to be verified by Natural

Resources Wales verification team. The PAWS survey and mapping of ancient woodland features should be undertaken before felling. Further guidance is available in [PAWS Restoration – Guidance on Best Practice here](#).

Only areas of PAWS identified on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) can be considered eligible for the one-off Forest Management plan support of £1,500 under WRS. AWI data can be viewed or downloaded via the [Woodland Opportunity Map on Datamap Wales here](#).

Any area that falls outside of the AWI layer will not be considered PAWS for the purposes of WRS.

Further guidance on Forest Management Plan fee support can be found in Section E of this Rules Booklet.

Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)

If all or part of the woodland that you intend to restock is PAWS, a registered woodland planner must write the Forest Management Plan, including a PAWS assessment. This must follow the [PAWS Restoration – Guidance on Best Practice found on the Welsh Government web site here](#). The planner must survey the woodland, if possible before the site has been felled and assess the Ecological Important Criteria, the Ecological Development Criteria and Threats to obtain an Ecological Potential score. NRW woodland verification team or Welsh Government will verify the Forest Management Plans and may inspect a scheme as part of the verification process.

An accurate, annotated digital map showing the Ecological Development, Criteria and Threats must be submitted with the WRS plan.

The restocking options for the PAWS will depend on the Ecological Potential Score for the area being applied for support (High, Medium, Low) as set out

below. You should ensure any native broadleaved tree species mixture is appropriate to the site.

The NRW Woodland Programme team may request to carry out a site visit for an application that includes PAWS prior to receiving a plan (but after EoI selection) to coincide with the visibility of AWI ground flora. You are encouraged to apply early in the application window to enable NRW site visits to take place in the Spring should they be required.

Restocking options for PAWS

High priority/high score for ecological potential

Aim - Achieve full restoration to native broadleaved woodland, aiming for favourable condition. Hotspots and remnants protected and bolstered with good potential to expand. 100% restocking with site native broadleaves and shrubs

Restocking option - 100% Capital Works (CW) W631

Medium priority/medium score for ecological potential

Aim - Transitional/Restored PAWS – to achieve a more gradual improvement towards favourable condition *i.e.* recovering condition (a minimum of 50% native broadleaves in the canopy) with future potential to improve condition/full restoration. Minimum of 50% native broadleaves.

Restocking option - Minimum of 45% CW W631; Up to 55% CW W615, W618, W619, W632 including 10% native broadleaves.

Low priority/low score for ecological potential

Aim – Managing the site as a PAWS in line with UKFS, maintaining, protecting and bolstering any ancient woodland remnants. Minimum of 15% site native broadleaf restocking in line with UKFS.

Restocking option – Minimum 10% CW W631; Remainder up to 90% CW W615, W618, W619, W632).

Non-Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)

On non-PAWS sites consideration will need to be given to the compartments' altitude in metres above sea level and the species mixture to be planted.

Change of species requirements for felling licences

The species composition for a Woodland Restoration scheme may vary from the Felling Licence specification. The NRW Woodland Programme team will deal with the change of species form for all WRS applications on behalf of you.

You should not request the change of species before WRS verification. In some cases further changes may be required. If the scheme is a PAWS, the change of species will need to conform with the specification set out in ***PAWS Restoration – Guidance on Best Practice***.

There are five different Capital Works restocking options available under Woodland Restoration. These Capital Works Options include:

W615 capital works, basic restocking - above 350 metres

This Capital Works option is for restocking compartments where more than 50% of the compartment is located 350 metres above sea level (e.g. 1.4 ha (54%) of a compartment is above 350 metres and 1.2 ha (46%) is below 350m). It is acceptable to split the compartment along the relevant contour line so that the appropriate option can be used above and below the line. The change is in line with the proposed updated content of the UK Forestry Standard, which is due to be published in spring 2023.

A minimum of 10% of compartment area must be planted with broadleaved tree species.

The remaining area of the compartment (maximum of 90%) can be planted with broadleaved species, conifer species or a mixture of both. There must be a minimum of two different species planted, with no one species exceeding 65% of the compartment. This is consistent with the UK Forestry Standard version 5. The same change has been made for W618 and W619.

The area of shrub species (e.g. hazel) within the compartment should not exceed 10%. Shrub species cannot contribute towards the minimum area of broadleaved tree species to be planted.

W618 capital works, basic restocking - between 250 – 350 metres

This Capital Works option is for restocking compartments where more than 50% of the compartment is located between 250 to 350 metres above sea level (e.g. 1.4 ha (54%) of a compartment is above 250 metres and 1.2 ha (46%) is below 250 metres). It is acceptable to split the compartment along the relevant contour line so that the appropriate option can be used above and below the line.

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A minimum of 10% of site area must be planted with broadleaved tree species.

The remaining area of the compartment (maximum of 90%) can be planted with broadleaved species, conifer species or a mixture of both. A minimum of three different tree species must be planted, with no one species exceeding 65% of the compartment.

The area of shrub species (e.g. hazel) within the compartment should not exceed 10%. Shrub species cannot contribute towards the minimum area of broadleaved tree species to be planted.

W619 capital works, basic restocking - below 250 metres

This Capital Works option is for restocking compartments where more than 50% of the compartment is located below 250 metres above sea level (e.g. 1.4 ha (54%) of a compartment is below 250 metres and 1.2 ha (46%) is above 250 metres). It is acceptable to split the compartment along the relevant contour line so that the appropriate option can be used above and below the line.

A minimum of 10% of compartment area must be planted with broadleaved tree species.

The remaining area of the compartment (maximum of 90%) can be planted with broadleaved species, conifer trees or a mixture of both. There must be a minimum of three different tree species planted, with no one species exceeding 65% of the compartment.

No more than 40% of the compartment can be planted with Sitka Spruce.

The area of shrub species (e.g. hazel) within the compartment should not exceed 10%. Shrub species cannot contribute towards the minimum area of broadleaved tree species.

W631 capital works, native broadleaved trees

This Capital Works option requires the whole site to be planted with a mixture Native Broadleaved Trees species. The mix should be site native and largely conform to habitat types listed at section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 ([Wales Biodiversity Partnership website](#)). These reflect previous Habitat Action Plan types such as upland oak woods and lowland mixed deciduous woodland. However local conditions may necessitate some variation from these. Further information on species mix for these habitats can be found at on the [Forest Research Website](#).

The area of shrub species (e.g. hazel) within the compartment should not exceed 20%.

W632 capital works, broadleaved trees

This Capital Works option requires the 80% of the site to be planted with native broadleaved trees species. The remaining 20% can be planted with either native or non-native broadleaved trees species.

The area of shrub species (e.g. hazel) within the compartment should not exceed 20%.

Open space

The stocking density shown in the planting specifications is based on number of stems per hectare and the presumption is that the area included in the grant award to be felled will be fully restocked with trees to the specified density in the grant award.

Areas of unplantable / open ground, such as tracks and streamside areas within the woodland which are 0.1ha or over must be mapped and excluded from the grant aided area. These areas are ineligible for funding under the WRS.

Scattered and un-mappable open ground (i.e. less than 0.1ha) can be included within the planting area up to a total of 15% of the total area. Under such circumstances this will need to be noted on the Forest Management Plan. You will need to increase the stems per hectare in parts of the site to account for unplanted ground to ensure the minimum number of trees required by the grant award are planted.

Felling of young larch under 25 years

The scheme provides funding for the felling of young larch under 25 years old to recognise the little or no value in the timber to support this activity. Your site must have a SPHN served on it that specifically requires the area to be cleared within a defined timescale. There are two grant rates available based on whether you are using a clearance saw or mechanised equipment. We will only fund this activity on the basis you apply to restock any area of woodland you clear under this grant scheme.

Young larch may provide habitat to European Protected Species (EPS) such as dormice. You may need to apply for an EPS licence before felling operations can begin, even where the work does not require a felling licence. Further guidance is found on the [NRW webpages for protected species](#).

W697 – Young larch under 25 years - clearance saw and W698 – young larch under 25 years - other mechanised equipment

Your site must have a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) served on it that

specifically requires the area to be cleared within a defined timescale. This grant will be paid on the affected land within either the Management Zone or the SPHN area.

This is available for the clearance of *Phytophthora ramorum* infected larch crops of less than 25 years of age where such action can be undertaken safely by clearing saw.

The clearance rates for immature larch crops (i.e. less than 25 years of age) are available on the basis that any timber products subsequently recovered from the sites are dealt with in accordance with road haulage / timber processing licence requirements.

Grant is not available for other tree or shrub species unless felling of such material is absolutely necessary on sites to allow for the safe clearance of the larch within the Statutory Plant Health Notice area. Additional areas or compartments of trees and shrubs removed for operational or economic reasons will not be eligible for support.

We will only approve your application if you agree to replant any area of woodland you clear. We will not be able to fund any felling that was not replanted within the published timescale.

Payment rates

The table below provides the payment rates for Capital Works.

Capital works

Capital Works	Restock Type	£ / Ha
W615	Basic	£2,900
W618	Basic	£2,900
W619	Basic	£3,600
W631	Native Broadleaved	£4,200
W632	Broadleaved	£4,200
W697	Felling - Young larch - Clearing Saw	£600
W698	Felling - Young larch - Mechanised Equipment	£1,200

Other capital works

The table below lists additional Capital Works items available under Woodland Restoration and their payment rates. These items are for the preparation of the site to enable restocking and to protect the area under Grant Award from grazing.

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Other capital works

Capital Works	Description	Rate (£)
W549	High seat	£348.33 each
W595	Post and Wire fencing plus Stock Netting	£8.32 / m
W600	Softwood Gate	£291.75 each
W602	Deer Fencing	£11.93/ m
W654	Bramble/scrub control - hand/knapsack spraying	£273 / ha
W663	Rhododendron/Laurel control <1.5m	£3882.60 / ha
W666	Scrub clearance-mechanical	£227 / ha
W669	Invasive species control	£1179.00 / ha
W670	Rhododendron/Laurel control > 2.5m	£7461.13 / ha
W671	Rhododendron/Laurel control 1.5 - 2.5m	£5129.10/ha

Capital works payments for Rhododendron/Laurel control are only eligible to enable the establishment of trees. Clearance of Rhododendron and Laurel for disease prevention purposes are ineligible under this scheme.

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Derogations

In certain circumstances, it may be possible to grant a derogation to adjust the terms or withdraw your grant award. Requests will be assessed on a case by case basis, if you are unable to complete all or part of the work by the deadlines included in the grant award.

You will need to submit a request in writing to Welsh Government as soon as an issue arises. You will need to include evidence in support of the request, including your efforts to complete the work as set out in the grant award.

Where a derogation request is unable to be granted, your grant award may have to be withdrawn and any payments recovered, and you will be excluded from reapplying for two years.

Consultations

Where you intend to carry out work on or next to a designated site, all necessary consultations, e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of

Conservation (SAC), Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), Historic Environment

Feature (HEF), Public Rights of Way and Registered or Unregistered Parks and

Gardens must be carried out and the responses provided with the Forest Management Plan.

The presence of protected species (e.g. bats, dormice) needs to be considered and consultation with the appropriate authority may be required. You may also need to apply to Natural Resources Wales for a European Protected Species (EPS) licence as part of a felling licence application.

Herbicide use

Herbicides should not be used to treat stump regrowth of site native broadleaves within Planted Ancient Woodlands.

Section E: applying for the WRS

Submitting an Expression of Interest (EOI)

RPW Online

You can apply for the WRS by accessing Rural Payments Wales (RPW) Online only. If you already have a Customer Reference Number (CRN) you should have received a letter informing you of your Activation Code to set up your account. If you no longer have this, please telephone the Customer Contact Centre on 0300 062 5004 and tell the operator your CRN. They will send you a new Activation Code.

Once registered, you can access your RPW Online account from rpwonline.gov.wales. The Woodland Restoration Scheme EOI is available from the Applications and Claims section of your account.

Agents acting on behalf of a client will need to register as a Rural Payments Wales agent. If you have yet to do this, you are advised to complete and return an Agent / Farming Union Customer Details (Wales) form immediately. This form is available on rpwonline.gov.wales. Upon receipt of the form, we will send you an Agent Customer Reference Number (Agent CRN) and an RPW Online

Activation Code. You will also need to complete an Association Authorisation

Form to agree roles with your client. This form is available from rpwonline.gov.wales.

A broadcast message will be sent to all Customers who have an Expression of Interest in a draft status in the week leading up to the window closing.

If you have any questions about registering for RPW online or completing your EOI, please contact the Customer Contact Centre on 0300 062 5004. They will be able to provide advice, including the digital assistance that is available to you.

Please refer to the WRS guidance on [Rural Grants and Payments | Woodland Restoration](#) for more information about RPW Online and how to complete a WRS EOI.

The Selection Process

EOI applications will be selected based on their ability to meet the eligibility criteria, subject to budget availability. The budget available to the WRS for this EOI is £1 Million. If the available budget is not sufficient to offer all eligible applicants a grant award, the Welsh Government will prioritise EOI with a Statutory Plant Health Notice, followed by those which lie within the disease limitation zone, by order of largest area first. The disease limitation zone is currently the area in the east and north of Wales where active control measures are still in place.

Once the selection process is complete, you will be notified via your RPW online account of the outcome of your EOI.

If your EOI is selected you will need to accept or decline via your RPW Online account by the date given in the letter.

The selection letter will be issued via your RPW Online account and will include:

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- a table confirming the land parcels, WRS planting options and area of intended planting as declared in your EOI and validated by the Welsh Government
- a digital map of the land declared and validated on the EOI

If you wish to progress with your restock proposals, you must accept the offer of a selection via your RPW Online account within 30 days of notification.

If you accept the offer of selection, you must not start work i.e. start any establishment or fencing capital works for which you intend to claim grant.

Once you have accepted the selection, you will be able to commence drawing up your re-stock proposals and to complete a FMP for submission to Welsh Government.

If you decline or fail to respond to the offer of selection, your WRS Expression of Interest will be withdrawn, and you will not be eligible to submit a Forest Management Plan to Welsh Government for verification.

A reminder message will be sent via your RPW Online account in the week leading up to the selection acceptance deadline.

If your EOI has not been successful, you will be notified via your RPW online account with the reason for non-selection.

Submitting the Forest Management Plan

If your Expression of Interest is successful and you have accepted the offer of selection, you will be required to complete a Forest Management Plan, which will form the basis of your WRS application. You must return your completed Forest Management Plan by no later than the date set out in your selection letter.

A reminder message will be sent via your RPW Online account in the week

leading up to the Forest Management Plan submission deadline.

You will be sent a digital map outlining parcels included in your Expression of Interest. A Forest Management Plan template and guidance on how to complete, together with guidance on how to annotate your digital map, is available on the Welsh Government website. You must use the documents provided to you. If the WRS Geopdf scale is more than 1:25,000, please provide a more detailed map (1:25,000 or less) showing the WRS Capital Works.

Before completing your Forest Management Plan, you must read the guidance provided. The plan must comply with the UKFS (**Forestry Commission - UK Forestry Standard and Guidelines**). If there is PAWS within the Expression of Interest, you must engage a registered woodland planner to ensure that your application meets these standards. The Forest Management Plan will be assessed by the Welsh Government to ensure it meets these standards. The assessment will take into account the information provided in your plan and map, and consideration will be given to the eligibility of works included in the application for funding under the WRS.

Following the approval of the Forest Management Plan, eligible Capital Works items listed in the Forest Management Plan can be included in a WRS Grant Award.

Forest Management Plan Support Payment – PAWS Restocking only

Customers who accept a WRS Grant Award, which includes restocking of PAWS where there is larch and up to 50% non-larch, will be eligible to make a one-off claim of £1,500 towards the cost of the production of the plan. Payment will be limited to one payment per customer. This plan should consider the entire woodland management unit. No further forest management plan payments will be supported in any successive rounds.

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To be eligible for the £1,500 support payment, WRS plans with approved PAWS restocking must progress to planting after online acceptance of the WRS Grant Award.

If you have previously, received a £1,500 support payment under GWR or WRS you will not be eligible for further support in this scheme window.

Grant Award Letter offer

If your WRS application is successful, you will be offered a WRS Grant Award Letter via your RPW Online account containing some or all of the works listed in your Forest Management Plan.

You will need to accept your Grant Award Letter via your RPW Online account within 30 days of your offer notification, which will confirm that you are happy with the terms and conditions of the Grant Award Letter. Acceptance received after this date will be rejected and the offer of a Woodland Restoration Grant Award will be withdrawn.

If you decide not to proceed with your application or decide not to accept your offer of a grant award within the time permitted, you will not be able to apply to the Woodland Restoration Scheme for a further 2 years.

If you decide to withdraw from the grant award prior to the end of the contractual commitment (1 year for Capital Works, 10 years for Maintenance), you will be required to repay all of the monies you have received under the WRS Grant Award, with interest.

Subject to any changes needed to the Welsh Government domestic rural programmes as a result of regulatory changes, the WRS Grant Award may be terminated.

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Claiming support for a Forest Management Plan including PAWS

Once the Welsh Government has received online acceptance of the Grant Award Letter which includes approved PAWS restocking, you will be sent a WRS plan claim form via your online account which will need to be completed and returned. Once received, your claim will be validated and processed and, if eligible, payment will be processed and issued via BACS transfer.

If the PAWS restocking is not carried out, as set out in the WRS Grant Award Letter, the Welsh Government will recover the £1,500 payment. In addition, in line with the current scheme rules, the Grant Award holder will not be eligible to apply for WRS for a further 2 years because the planting did not occur.

If the offer of Grant Award Letter is declined or no response is received to the offer, the approved plan will not be eligible for support.

Starting Work

Grant Award holders should not start any work before accepting a Grant Award letter which confirms the areas to be planted following verification. If you start work before this point, the Welsh Government may reject the work started or terminate the grant award and recover any payments made. An example of starting work is commencing planting without the map containing the verified re-stock area being issued.

Claiming Payment for Restocking and Fencing Capital Works

Capital works claims are made using the Capital Works Claim form available via your RPW Online Account and after completion of work. Capital works payments under WRS are paid at a standard cost rate. Capital works that are to be completed and claimed via RPW online by the 31 March 2026.

A reminder message will be sent via your RPW Online account in the week leading up to the capital works completion and claim deadline.

Section F: transferring and selling land under Grant Award

Transferring or selling land under grant award

When you sign your Woodland Restoration Scheme Grant Award letter you are making a commitment for 10 years. If you subsequently sell or transfer all or part of your land during the 10 years commitment period, you may be subject to financial penalties and / or having to repay money you have already received.

The transfer of a Woodland Restoration Scheme Grant to a new occupier is subject to approval by the Welsh Government. Where the prospective new occupier decides to take over the Woodland Restoration Scheme commitment from you and the land continues to meet the minimum eligibility criteria, the new occupier must continue with the commitment on the land transferred for the remainder of the Grant Award period. The prospective occupier should be made aware of the Woodland Restoration Scheme commitment in advance of agreeing to the transfer of the land in question.

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The regulations concerning the scheme do not allow the transfer of a capital works Grant Award. The Grant Award holder will be the only business able to claim the WRS capital works. A transfer cannot be processed until the validation of the capital works claim and payment have been authorised.

Following the sale or transfer of part of your land, any land which you retain and is the subject of the original WRS Grant Award must continue to meet the minimum eligibility criteria. In the event that this does not happen, your Grant Award will be terminated, and you will be required to repay all of the payments made in respect of that land with interest.

If you transfer or sell any land which forms part of your WRS Grant Award, then you must notify the Welsh Government in writing within 30 calendar days of the event. Failure to notify the Welsh Government within this period is likely to result in a penalty.

In the event that you transfer and sell any land under a grant award and the Welsh Government considers that the objectives of the WRS have been undermined as a consequence, the grant award may be terminated, and all payments made recovered with interest.

Land changes and land sale notification requirements

You will be required to inform the Welsh Government of changes to field parcels within 30 days of the change. These changes include:

- fields not previously registered for IACS purposes (i.e. have not previously been included on the Single Application Form (SAF))
- fields which have been permanently divided
- fields which have been permanently amalgamated
- fields which have new boundaries
- fields which have changes to their permanent features

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You will also be required to inform the Welsh Government of changes to land occupation including changes of ownership and any tenancy agreements within the 30 days.

You will need to notify the Welsh Government of any change within 30 days. RPW's Online Manage My Land (MML) service has now replaced all functions of the paper FM4, which are no longer available. MML can be used to inform RPW of land registrations, new or changed permanent features, boundary changes and transfers of land. [Please follow this link for guidance on how to use Manage My Land.](#)

Section G: changes to scheme rules

Legislation changes (including changes in interpretation)

Regulations may change from time to time, and you will be required to abide by any changes imposed following notification from the Welsh Government.

Changes to scheme rules

We may need to make changes to your Grant Award. For example, we may need to update the management conditions to take account of the latest scientific advice, amend scheme rules to take account of any changes within the domestic rural programme or revise payment rates. We will publicise changes in Gwlad, on the Welsh Government website (gov.wales) and, where necessary, write to you.

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Section H: controls, monitoring and record keeping

Controls

You may be selected for an inspection to verify the scheme rules are being met, including record keeping requirements. Inspections may include on farm inspections and the use of Global Positioning Systems, aerial photography, and the use of satellite imagery. Inspections will be spread over the year and will cover all the commitments and obligations which can be checked at the time of the visit.

The Welsh Government and the specialist control bodies will try to ensure inspections cause you the minimum of disruption, but some checks require visits to be unannounced, which means it may not be possible to give you notice. You may be subject to more than one visit during a calendar year.

If you refuse to allow a visit or obstruct an officer or fail to give reasonable assistance, your claim may not be paid, we may recover payments and you may be prosecuted.

Monitoring

It is a requirement that all grant awards are monitored and the effect of the grant on the business is evaluated following completion.

You must allow officials from Welsh Government, or their representatives, to carry out inspections.

Record keeping

You must keep all records and information you need to evidence you have provided complete and accurate information and have complied with your undertakings for five years.

You will also be required to:

- supply to the Welsh Government any information about your WRS Grant Award and supply that information within the period determined by the Welsh Government
- make available to the Welsh Government, its authorised persons or its agents, all records and other information including access to computer data relating to your WRS Grant Award. Permit the Welsh Government to remove any such document or record to take copies or extracts from them.

Section I: penalties

Penalties are applied where there has been a breach of the rules or Capital Works requirements.

Breaches of grant award

Breaches of Grant Award may be identified from administrative checks, including insitu visits or on-the-spot inspections and you will be notified in writing if breaches are found. Where breaches of Grant Award are discovered appropriate levels of reductions and/or exclusions will be determined according to the level of severity, extent, duration, reoccurrence of the breach and will also be applied to previous year's payments.

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Where we consider a breach to be so serious that it cannot be rectified, this may result in the termination of your grant award. In serious circumstances this may also result in you being prohibited from entering another scheme, for up to two years. The breaches are assessed against verifiable standards relating to the scheme commitments and a penalty matrix is used to determine the level of penalty to be applied. You can view both the verifiable standards and the penalty matrix on the Welsh Government website gov.wales/rural-grants-payments.

Incorrect claims and penalties

In order to comply with the legislation governing the scheme and to ensure public money is spent correctly, the scheme includes penalties where there has been a serious breach of scheme rules.

You should only claim for the eligible work you have completed, even if this is less than that included in the grant award.

Where we find the work has not been completed to the project's technical specifications and is not able to be remedied, payments will be reduced to the amount of work completed to the required specification.

Where the level of reduction is more than 10% of the total value of the claim, we will apply administrative over declaration penalties.

Where false claims are made, or the land owner fails to provide the necessary information, this will result in the exclusion of payment in the year of the finding and any amounts already paid that year will be recovered

Section J: appeals and complaints procedure

There are no grounds for appeal if your EoI is unsuccessful

The 'Independent Appeals Process for Rural Grants and Payments' allows you to request a review if you feel the Welsh Government has not reached a correct decision according to the rules of the scheme.

The appeals process consists of two stages:

- stage 1: review by RPW
- stage 2: review by an Independent Appeals Panel (if you are dissatisfied with the stage 1 response).

The Independent Panel make recommendations to the Welsh Ministers, who take the final decision, which concludes the process.

There is no charge for Stage 1 of the process, but there is a charge at Stage 2 – £50 for a written hearing or £100 for an oral hearing. These charges are repaid in full if the Stage 2 appeal is either partially or fully successful.

Appeals, including supporting evidence, must be submitted via RPW Online within 60 days of the date of the letter outlining the decision you wish to appeal against.

We welcome appeals in Welsh and will respond to any correspondence in Welsh. This will not lead to delay in processing your appeal.

Further details of the appeals process and how to submit an appeal using the online appeal form, can be obtained from the Customer Contact Centre or our website at: [Rural Grants and Payments appeals: Guidance](#).

Complaints procedure

Complaints will be dealt with under the Welsh Government's procedure on Complaints. Further advice on how to make a complaint can be obtained from the Complaints Advice Team:

Welsh Government
Crown Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Tel: 03000 251378

E-mail: complaints@gov.wales

Website: [Complaints about Welsh Government](#)

You may also choose to contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales:

1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
CF35 5LJ

Tel: 0300 790 0203

Website: [Ombudsman](#)

Section K: general data protection regulation: privacy notice

How we will handle any personal data you provide in relation to your grant application or request for grant funding

The Welsh Government provides a wide range of grant schemes to help deliver our policies and create a fairer, more prosperous Wales.

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide in relation to your grant application or request for grant funding. The information will be processed as part of our public task (i.e. exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government) and will help us assess your eligibility for funding.

Before we provide grant funding to you, we undertake checks for the purposes of preventing fraud and money laundering, and to verify your identity. These checks require us to process personal data about you to third party fraud prevention agencies.

If we, or a fraud prevention agency, determine that you pose a fraud or money laundering risk, we may refuse to provide the grant funding you applied for, or we may stop providing existing grant funding to you.

A record of any fraud or money laundering risk will be retained by the fraud prevention agencies, and may result in others refusing to provide services, financing or employment to you.

In order to assess eligibility we may also need to share personal information relating to your application with:

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- Natural Resources Wales
- Animal and Plant Health Agency
- Veterinary Medicine Directorate
- Welsh Local Authorities
- Food Standards Agency Wales
- DEFRA
- Other UK Government Agriculture Offices.
- Regulatory authorities, such as HM Revenue and Customs, Local Authorities, Health and Safety Executive and the Police.

We may also share your information with organisations which deliver training, knowledge transfer and innovation advice and support on behalf of the Welsh Government for the purposes of appropriate targeting of support.

Your information, including your personal information, may be the subject of a request by another member of the public. When responding to such requests the Welsh Government may be required to release information, including your personal information, to fulfil its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental information Act 2004 or the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Welsh Government will publish details of the amounts paid to Rural Support beneficiaries. Data will be published for all beneficiaries on a searchable website and will include the name and locality of the farmer / land manager and details of the amounts and schemes for which subsidy has been paid. However, for those receiving less than the equivalent of £1,250 in subsidies the name will be withheld. The data will be published annually on 31 May and remain available for two years from the date it is published.

We will keep personal information contained in files in line with our retention policy. If successful in your application, then your personal data will be kept for 7 years after the date when you, as grant recipient, are free from all conditions relating to the grant awarded and all payment have been made. If you are

unsuccessful your details will be kept for one year after the date you provided them.

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to access the personal data the Welsh Government holds on you
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is the independent regulator for data protection.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ

Email: dataprotectionofficer@gov.wales

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

2nd Floor, Churchill House
Churchill Way
Cardiff
CF10 2HH

Telephone: 0330 414 6421 Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Should you have any queries regarding this privacy statement please contact

the RPW Customer Contact Centre.

<https://gov.wales/privacy-notice-welsh-government-grants>

The publication and disclosure of information

Your information, including your personal information, may be the subject of a request by another member of the public. When responding to such requests the Welsh Government may be required to release information, including your personal information.

Commission Regulation (EC) 908/2014 requires the Welsh Government to publish details of the amounts paid to CAP beneficiaries. Data will be published for all beneficiaries on a searchable website and will include the name and locality of the farmer/land manager and details of the amounts and schemes for which subsidy has been paid. However, for those 26 receiving less than the equivalent of €1,250 in subsidies the name will be withheld. The data will be published annually on 31 May and remain available for two years from the date it is published. The information will be available on the Defra website.

Section L: legislation

The Woodland Restoration Scheme delivers against a range of Government commitments and objectives, these are listed below along with the legislation and governance that applies.

The Woodland Restoration Scheme is governed by Retained EU Law (now known as 'Assimilated Law') Council Regulations No. 1305/2013, 1303/2013 and 1306/2013, Implementing Regulation No. 808/2014 and No. 809/2014 and Delegated Regulation 640/2014 and 807/2014 (all as amended from time to

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time).

The Assimilated Law is implemented in Wales through the following domestic law (all as amended from time to time), including by the Agricultural Support (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) (EU Exit) Regulations 2021/400 (W.129):

- the Rural Development Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2014/3222

(W.327)

- the Common Agricultural Policy (Integrated Administration and Control

System and Enforcement and Cross Compliance) (Wales) Regulations 2014/3223 (W.328)

The Woodland Restoration Scheme is a Capital Works grant scheme available to land managers and farming businesses across Wales. Capital Works available are chosen for their broad and general environmental benefits and their ability to deliver to the Welsh Government's four strategic objectives, which are:

- fostering the competitiveness of agriculture
- contributing towards the sustainable management of natural resources as set out in Part 1 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- ensuring climate resilience
- achieving a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities including the creation and maintenance of employment

There are three cross cutting objectives for The Woodland Restoration Grant, which are:

- climate change mitigation and adaptation
- innovation
- environment

Activities will address at least one of the following Welsh Government priorities:

1. fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas;
2. enhancing farm viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions and promoting innovative farm technologies and the sustainable management of forests;
3. promoting food chain organisation, including processing and marketing of agricultural products, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture;
4. restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems dependent on agriculture and forestry;
5. promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in the agriculture, food and forestry sectors;
6. promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

World Trade Organisation and subsidy control

1. Subsidies provided under this scheme are considered to be payments under an environmental programme, which fall within the scope of Annex II of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) and have been classified as ‘green box.’

As such these subsidies are exempt from the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) and the interim UK subsidy control regime.

Section M: contacts

Welsh Government's website: gov.wales/rural-grants-payments and bi-monthly Gwlad magazine [Gwlad](#) contain key information.

Contact details are as follows:

Customer Contact Centre Rural Payments Wales

PO Box 251
Caernarfon
LL55 9DA
Tel: 0300 062 5004

Rydym yn croesawu galwadau'n Gymraeg / We welcome calls in Welsh.

Natural Resources Wales c/o Customer Care Centre

Welsh Government Offices,
Cathays Park,
King Edward VII Avenue,
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ.

Tel: 0300 065 3000 (Mon-Fri, 8am - 6pm)

General enquiries:

ymholiadau@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

enquiries@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

For NRW woodland verification queries:

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gwiriocynlluncoetir@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk

woodlandplanverification@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

For Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) / Registered Parks and Gardens:

CADW
Welsh Government
Plas Carew
Unit 5/7 Cefn Coed
Parc Nantgarw
Cardiff
CF15 7QQ

Tel: 01443 33 6000

Fax: 01443 33 6001

E-mail: Cadw@gov.wales

For unscheduled ancient monuments or historic features:

Clwyd Powys Archaeology
41 Broad Street
Welshpool Powys
SY21 7RR

Tel: 01938 553670

Fax: 01938 552179

E-mail: trust@cpat.org.uk

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Website: www.cpat.org.uk

Dyfed Archaeology

The Shire Hall
Carmarthen Street
Llandeilo
Dyfed
SA19 6AF

Tel: 01558 823121

Fax: 01558 823133

E-mail: info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk

Website: www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeology

Heathfield House
Heathfield
Swansea SA1 6EL
Tel: 01792 655208
Fax: 01792 474469

E-mail: enquiries@ggat.org.uk

Website: ggat.org.uk

Gwynedd Archaeology
Craig Beuno,
Garth Road,
Bangor,

Gwynedd,
LL57 2RT

Tel: 01248 352535

Fax: 01248 370925

E-mail: gat@heneb.co.uk

Website: www.heneb.co.uk

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