



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION, DOCUMENT

Sustainable Farming Scheme: data confirmation general guidance

The data confirmation form will allow you to review your habitat and tree data.

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Introduction

The SFS data confirmation form provides updated maps and information showing the habitat and tree canopy on your farm as held in the Rural Payments Wales (RPW) mapping system.

The aim of data confirmation is to update RPW mapping systems to confirm habitat areas and tree canopy cover across Wales at field and farm level in advance of the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) design being finalised. To enable this to be done we will:

- provide you with a digital map of your farm with information created from your land declarations, previously published habitat maps and earth imagery used to identify potential habitat, woodland, including newly planted areas, and individual trees over 3 metres in height
- allow you to review the maps and confirm, amend, remove or add information to correctly show the habitat areas and tree canopy areas on your farm

Please note: This is not a declaration of land in respect of any current or future scheme. We will provide separate applications and give you the opportunity to declare the land for any future scheme.

Habitat Wales Scheme 2025

You will be asked if you intend to apply for the new Habitat Wales Scheme in 2025. This question is mandatory but does not indicate a commitment to apply for the scheme.

Scheme Guidance will be available later this year and a separate application will

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be available in 2025.

Data confirmation dates

The data confirmation form is available from 22 July to 6 December 2024.

Any changes will be publicised via [our website](#), GWLAD online and, where necessary, we will contact you directly.

Data confirmation submission

You will be able to submit a data confirmation form if:

- you are registered with Welsh Government and have been issued with a Customer Reference Number (CRN)
- your land is registered within Welsh Government Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS)

Land included in your data confirmation form

The data confirmation form will be pre-populated with field parcels where they:

- were registered within our LPIS at the end of 2023
- are under your management control in our LPIS and/or have been declared on the Single Application Form (SAF) 2024, as being under your management control on the date you start the data confirmation form

Land is under your management control if:

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- you are the owner occupier
- you are a tenant who has “exclusive occupation” under either the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995 with a Farm Business Tenancy and / or a Full Agricultural Holdings Act 1986 tenancy
- you are a tenant with an unwritten tenancy with the same level of control as the above
- you have ‘Sole Grazier’ common land registered as a field parcel with RPW

If you have declared land for the first time on your 2024 SAF or have submitted land changes via Manage My land in 2024, this may not be available in your data confirmation form immediately. RPW aims to have all land changes that were submitted by 15 May 2024, updated in the LPIS by the autumn. You will be notified via your RPW Online account when changes have been made. It will be possible to start the form again (if you have not submitted the form) to include the updated land. We recommend that you start the form again if there has been a significant time period between initially opening the form and undertaking any changes.

The alternative is to complete the data confirmation exercise on the prepopulated land and carry out any further amendments in 2025.

Land changes

If there are any parcels on your data confirmation form where the following changes have taken place you should submit a Manage My Land (MML) to inform us:

- 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 must also inform us of changes to land occupation including changes of ownership and any tenancy agreements within 30 days.

Please use the MML Facility via your RPW Online account to notify us of these changes within 30 days of the change.

Data confirmation form content

The data confirmation form includes data on habitat and tree canopy.

Habitat in the data confirmation form

The habitat data within the form is semi natural area-based habitats and does not include linear features such as hedgerows. The habitat will either be shown as 'included habitat' or 'potential habitat'.

'Included' habitat

The 'included' habitat information has been created from multiple data sources:

- habitat land has been identified through existing habitat layers as identified by published maps on 'DataMapWales'
- land that was previously under a habitat option in a Glastir Entry and/or Advanced contract

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'Potential' habitat

'Potential' habitat is an area not currently confirmed as habitat as part of the data sets used for included habitat which might fit into one of the broad habitat classifications listed below. The potential habitat has been mapped using satellite imagery taken from '[Living Wales](https://www.aber.ac.uk)' (on [aber.ac.uk](https://www.aber.ac.uk)) due to the resolution of the satellite imagery the potential habitat has an angular appearance on the map. It also includes land managed as habitat as confirmed under the Habitat Wales Scheme 2024.

Habitat classifications

The broad habitat classifications are as follows:

Enclosed Semi-natural Dry Grassland (managed as either pasture or hay meadow)

Enclosed dry grassland with less than 25% ryegrass and white clover. It includes acid, neutral, calcareous, coastal and Calaminarian (metal mine) grasslands.

Enclosed Wetland and Marshy grassland

This includes bog, fen, flush, swamp, reedbed, marshy grassland and rhos pasture. Enclosed wetland and marshy grassland will be identifiable as damp or wet ground with a high cover of rushes, purple moor grass, cotton grass, sedges, reeds and/or mosses with less than 25% ryegrass and white clover. Vegetation matching the description above on deep peat (more than 50 cm depth) are defined as wetland.

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Lowland and Coastal heath

Lowland heath is identifiable as having usually greater than 25% cover dwarf shrubs particularly heathers, western gorse and sometimes bilberry, occurring in a mosaic with grasses, rushes, sedges and mosses over mineral or shallow peat soils (less than 50 cm of peat).

Coastal Saltmarsh

Saltmarshes are areas of largely salt tolerant vegetation confined mainly within the tidal range. They are generally found in sheltered estuarine locations. Vegetation consists of grasses, sedges, rushes and specialist salt tolerant plants such as Samphire and Common cordgrass.

Coastal Sand dune and Shingle beach

Sand dunes include a range of coastal vegetation types growing on sand. They can form dynamic systems with areas of bare sand, coarse marram grass, finer grasses and herbs and heathland. Coastal vegetated shingle occurs where specialist plants colonise coarser material such as pebbles or gravels together with sand and finer sediment.

Upland Open Habitats (including ‘mosaics’ of heathland, peat bogs and extensive grasslands)

Upland is land above the upper limit of enclosure (approx. 300m). All upland open habitats and habitat mosaics, including heathland, wetland (bog, fen, flush and swamp), marshy grassland and dry grasslands. These areas must be

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predominantly less than 25% ryegrass and white clover, small areas of improved land can be included as part of a larger habitat mosaic.

Dense Bracken

Areas with a high level of bracken cover over a dense litter of dead bracken. Where the underlying habitat is identifiable under the bracken the area should be mapped as the underlying habitat.

Traditional Orchards (woody habitat)

Areas with apple, pear, cherry, plum, damson, walnut or cobnut trees usually on grassland managed by grazing or cutting. Intensively managed commercial orchards should not be included.

Scrub (woody habitat)

Scrub is vegetation dominated by shrubs. Scrub can be made up of a wide range of native species, such as gorse, blackthorn, hawthorn, elder, bramble and willow. If the shrubs are scattered and the underlying habitat is visible, the area should be mapped as the underlying habitat.

Wood Pasture (woody habitat)

Wood pasture consists of a grazed landscape of scattered native but sometimes non-native trees often overlying rough grassland or heathland. The most environmentally significant examples can include numerous veteran trees. Wood pasture on agriculturally improved or arable land is excluded. Please note, some of these habitats could include scattered permanent features such as rocks and

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bracken.

If a mixture (or mosaic) of different habitats are present within a field parcel which might be complex to map into individual habitat classifications, these should be mapped using the dominant habitat classification (i.e. with the greatest cover over the whole area).

[Further guidance on the habitat classifications which includes more detailed descriptions and example photos is available here.](#)

Reference layers

The following reference layers are included in the data confirmation maps for information only:

Peatland

The Peatland Layer has been taken from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) 'Peatlands of Wales map'. Welsh Government is currently updating the '**[Peatlands of Wales](#)**' map, which will be used for future reference.

Designated Sites

The Designated Sites layer has been made up of the following Natural Resources Wales (NRW) data sets (with links to further information):

- **[Site of Special Scientific Interest](#)**
- **[Special Area of Conservation](#)**
- **[Special Protection Area](#)**

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- [Ramsar Wetlands of International Importance](#)

Permanent Features

This layer shows the areas of permanent features on the land parcels.

Action to be taken

'Included' habitat

You can confirm, amend or remove any **'included' habitat** information to accurately reflect the habitat position on your farm.

Only 'included' habitat will be used as a starting reference point in any future farm support schemes.

Please note: RPW may not accept the removal of 'included' habitat on a field parcel which:

- was previously under a Glastir management option
- required an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) screening which was refused
- is within a designated site, see Designated Sites section below for further information

There will be further opportunity to remove and provide additional information on changes to these field parcels during the environmental baseline assessment of the farm, referred to as a Level 1 Habitat Baseline Review (HBR1) which RPW aims to pilot on the 2025 SAF, before the introduction of the SFS in 2026.

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‘Potential’ habitat

You can change the ‘potential’ habitat to ‘included’ habitat if you agree the habitat is in the field parcel. Once it has been changed to ‘included’ it can be amended or removed if required.

Glastir Management options

The Glastir Management options where RPW will not accept removal of habitat from a field parcel at this point are in Annex A.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

If land contains less than 25% cover of ryegrass and white clover or other agriculturally sown species, then it is subject to the EIA regulations.

Land falling within this definition is classed by the regulations as semi-natural and an EIA Screening Application must be made prior to any improvement works commencing on the land.

Any changes you have made to Habitat areas, will not be accepted if a previous screening application has been refused for that field parcel. Even if we accept a change for Data Confirmation purposes, you will still be required to undertake an EIA screening if the land is deemed semi-natural and you wish to improve the land.

You are reminded that if you are planning to undertake, or have undertaken:

1. a project on semi-natural land, or

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2. a large-scale restructuring on your holding

then it is necessary to complete an **Environmental impact assessment: screening application**.

Changes to habitat areas within Designated Sites

Any changes to Habitat areas within a Designated Site may not be accepted due to the potential ecological significance, biodiversity, cultural heritage, and/or scientific value. If you believe some of these areas are not habitat, you will have a chance to provide additional information and change these areas during the HBR1 process in 2025.

Tree Canopy in the data confirmation form

The tree canopy data consists of woodland, including newly planted areas and trees over 3 metres in height.

Where a tree is on a boundary, the tree canopy shown in the Data Confirmation form will be split at the parcel boundary line and show the area of canopy that is within that parcel.

Trees will be categorised as a 'group' or an 'individual'.

Woodland and tree canopy information has been created from historic SAF declarations, **the National Tree Map (NTM) (on bluesky-world.com)** and National Forest Inventory datasets.

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‘Groups’

‘Groups’ are woodlands or areas of tree canopies equal to or greater than 0.01 hectares (100m²) in size, this may include limited areas of open space within the woodland area and will fall into one of the following classification types:

- broadleaf (more than 80% of area is broadleaf)
- conifer (more than 80% of area is conifer)
- mixed mainly broadleaf (between 50% and 80% of area is broadleaf)
- mixed mainly conifer (between 50% and 80% of area is conifer)
- unknown - unknown trees are groups of trees that have not been assigned a type

‘Individuals’

‘Individuals’ are areas of tree canopies less than 0.01 hectares (100m²) in size. It is not possible to spatially capture the small area of these ‘individual’ trees as they are smaller than our minimum mapping size. RPW have identified them as a point feature on the map and categorised the canopy areas, to avoid the need for precise mapping with ‘individual trees’. We have allocated an average size per tree category based on the following specification:

- very small (less than 7 m²)
- small (7 m² to 19 m²)
- medium (19 m² to 38 m²)
- large (38 m² to 63 m²)
- very large (63 m² to 100 m²)

Whilst smaller areas are captured as point features, the total area of these features will still be recorded and shown against the individual field parcel and used in any future farm support scheme.

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'Individuals' will have one of the following types:

- broadleaf (more than 50% of area is broadleaf)
- conifer (more than 50% of area is conifer)

Action to be taken

You can confirm, amend, or remove the 'group' or 'individual' assessment on the form.

You can also add in any new 'group' or 'individual' trees that are present to accurately reflect the total tree canopy cover on your farm.

Unknown trees: You will need to confirm the type of tree on your field parcels.

If any 'group' or 'individual' trees have been planted within the last 3 years you can indicate that it is new planting using a new planting tick box in the form.

Impact on other schemes

Basic Payment Scheme (BPS)

The eligibility rules for BPS in respect of woodland and trees are not changing.

Woodland and tree canopy cover from groups of 3 or more trees over 0.01ha remain ineligible for BPS payments.

Canopy covers from small groups, lines of trees and individual trees are not deducted from BPS areas, although an assessment for trunks and stumps is still required.

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We will be using the latest mapping information to update our LPIS in line with existing BPS eligibility rules in preparation for the 2025 scheme year.

Additional information in the data confirmation form

We are gathering information on the current use of Carbon Calculators across the industry to get a better understanding of the number of farmers completing a carbon assessment and which Carbon Calculators are being used.

These questions are not mandatory and completing them does not indicate a commitment to apply for the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS).

Completing the data confirmation form via RPW Online

You can only complete a data confirmation form by accessing Rural Payments Wales (RPW) Online. The data confirmation form is available from the “Forms” 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 an online form immediately. Upon receipt of the form, we will send you an Agent Customer Reference Number (Agent CRN) and an RPW Online Activation Code.

If you have any questions about registering for RPW Online or completing your data confirmation form, 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.

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Further details regarding RPW Online are available on our website.

Submitting the data confirmation form

Guidance on how to submit your form via RPW Online is available at [Sustainable Farming Scheme: how to complete your data confirmation form](#).

RPW will issue a maximum of 2 reminders for any outstanding draft forms via your RPW Online account prior to the 6 December closing date.

Privacy notice

How we will handle any personal data you provide in relation to your SFS data confirmation

We will be data controller for any personal data you provide in relation to your SFS Data Confirmation. 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)

We may also need to share personal information relating to your SFS Data Confirmation with Regulatory authorities, such as Natural Resources Wales, Local Authorities, Health and Safety Executive, the Police and Living Wales to help validate Habitat information or where otherwise required by law.

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

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personal information, to fulfil its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental information Act 2004, Data Protection Act 2018 or the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. We will keep personal information contained in files in line with our retention policy. 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

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Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Should you have any queries regarding this privacy statement please contact Rural Payments Wales.

Privacy notice: Welsh Government grants

Contacts

Enquiries – Customer Contact Centre

You can contact the RPW Customer Contact Centre on 0300 062 5004.

Customer Contact Centre opening times are:

Monday to Friday: 09:00 to 16:00.

Enquiries can also be submitted via your RPW Online at any time.

Digital Assistance

Our Regional Offices are open to the public strictly by appointment only.

The Customer Contact Centre can make a 'Digital Assistance' appointment for you to attend a Regional Office where a member of staff can guide you through completing the Data Confirmation form. This service will be available from September onwards.

Please note RPW staff will provide help and support but cannot be held responsible for the information in the Data Confirmation form – this is your

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Welsh Government website

For all of the latest Agricultural and Rural Affairs information, visit [our website](#). By visiting the website, you can also sign up to receive the Rural Affairs e-newsletter which delivers the latest news directly to your e-mail inbox.

Gwlad

The Gwlad e-newsletter is ours e-newsletter for farm and forestry businesses and all those involved with agriculture and rural Wales. It contains news stories, guidance, and information in an accessible, easy-to-read format. To keep informed and up to date with all the latest agriculture news and developments in future we would encourage you to sign up to receive the Gwlad e-newsletter. You can do this either at [Announcements](#) or at [Subscribe to farming and forestry news \(Gwlad\)](#).

Annex A: Glastir Management options where RPW will not accept removal of Habitat

Glastir Management Option Number: Glastir Management Option description

3: Create a wildlife corridor – Establish wooded strip on improved ground

7A: Create a streamside corridor on improved land on one side of a watercourse

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7B: Create a streamside corridor on improved land on both sides of a watercourse

8: Continued management of existing streamside corridor

9A: Create a streamside corridor on improved land on one side of a watercourse with tree planting

9B: Create a streamside corridor on improved land on both sides of a watercourse with tree planting

10: Convert arable land containing archaeological sites to permanent grassland

11: Restore a traditional orchard

12: Create new orchard on improved land

15: Grazed Permanent Pasture With No Inputs

15C: Grazed Permanent Pasture With No Inputs and Mixed Grazing

19: Management of Lowland Marshy Grassland

19B: Management of Lowland Marshy Grassland with Mixed Grazing

20: Management of Coastal and Lowland Heath

20B: Management of Coastal and Lowland Heath With Mixed Grazing

21: Management of Grazed Saltmarsh

21B: Management of Grazed Saltmarsh With Mixed Grazing

22: Maintenance of Existing Haymeadow

25: Management of Sand Dunes

25B: Management of Sand Dunes with Mixed Grazing

26: Fixed rough grass margins on arable land

35B: Create a wildlife pond on enclosed improved land – variable size

36: Buffering existing unfenced in field ponds

40: Woodland stock exclusion

41A: Grazing Management of Open Country

41B: Grazing Management of Open Country With Mixed Grazing

100: Woodland: Stock Exclusion

420: Trees And Scrub: Establishment by Planting (less than 0.25ha)

421: Trees and Scrub: Establishment by Natural Regeneration (less than 0.25ha)

103: Scrub: Stock Exclusion

104: Wood Pasture

106: Historic Parks and Gardens

109: Calaminarian Grassland

115: Lowland Dry Heath With Less Than 50% Western Gorse

116: Lowland Dry Heath With More Than 50% Western Gorse

- 117: Lowland Wet Heath With Less Than 60% Purple Moor–Grass
- 118: Lowland Wet Heath With More Than 60% Purple Moor–Grass
- 119: Lowland Heath Habitat Expansion: Establishment on Grassland
- 120: Lowland Unimproved Acid Grassland
- 121: Lowland Unimproved Acid Grassland: Reversion (Pasture)
- 122: Lowland Unimproved Acid Grassland: Reversion (Hay Cutting)
- 123: Lowland Unimproved Neutral Grassland: Pasture
- 124: Lowland Unimproved Neutral Grassland: Haymeadow
- 125: Lowland Unimproved Neutral Grassland: Reversion (Pasture)
- 126: Lowland Unimproved Neutral Grassland: Reversion (Hay Cutting)
- 128: Lowland Unimproved Calcareous Grassland
- 129: Lowland Unimproved Calcareous Grassland: Reversion (Pasture)
- 130: Lowland Unimproved Calcareous Grassland: Reversion (Hay Cutting)
- 131: Conversion From Arable to Grassland (No Inputs)
- 132: Conversion From Improved Grassland to Semi–Improved Grassland (Hay Cutting)
- 133: Lowland Marshy Grassland
- 134: Lowland Marshy Grassland: Reversion (Pasture)

- 139: Lowland Bog and Other Acid Mires With Less Than 50% Purple Moor–Grass
- 140: Lowland Bog and Other Acid Mires With More Than 50% Purple Moor–Grass
- 141: Lowland Bog and Other Acid Mires: Restoration (No Grazing)
- 142: Lowland Bog and Other Acid Mires: Reversion (Pasture)
- 143: Lowland Fen
- 144: Lowland Fen: Restoration (No Grazing)
- 145: Lowland Fen: Reversion (Pasture)
- 146: Reedbed: Stock Exclusion
- 147: Reedbed: Creation
- 148: Coastal Grassland (Maritime Cliff and Slope)
- 149: Saltmarsh: Restoration (No Grazing)
- 150: Saltmarsh: Creation
- 151: Coastal Vegetated Shingle and Sand Dunes: Creation
- 160: No Lime On Improved or Semi–Improved Grassland Over Peat Soils
- 161: Grassland Management for Chough (Feeding)
- 164: Grassland Management for Curlew (Nesting and Chick Feeding)
- 165: Grassland Management for Curlew (Adult Feeding)

- 166: Haymeadow Management for Curlew (Nesting)
- 167: Grassland Management For Golden Plover (Feeding)
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- 173: Streamside Corridor Management
- 175: Management Of Rough Grassland: Enclosed Land
- 176: Woodland – Light Grazing

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For more information refer to our [accessibility statement](#).

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