

WOODLANDS

A practical guide for landowners in
the Derbyshire Derwent catchment



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guide has been developed to provide clear information regarding woodlands for farmers in the Derwent catchment.

This document was updated July 2022 specifically for the River Derwent, Derbyshire, as part of the Derwent Connections Green Recovery Challenge Fund (GRCF) and People's Postcode Lottery.

This document has been designed by the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust as part of the Derwent Connections Project. Work carried out under this project will be fully supported by our team of Woodland Living Landscape Advisors and funded by the GRCF.

The Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund was developed by Defra and its Arm's-Length Bodies. The fund is being delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England, the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission.

All information contained in this publication – including links to websites and further reading – is believed to be correct at the time of going to press.



Between June 2022 and March 2023 the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust have funding available to support landowners with woodland creation throughout the Derwent Catchment.

If you own or manage land in Derbyshire and would like to work with us on woodland creation or natural flood management measures, please get in touch at:

derwentconnections@derbyshirewt.co.uk

Tell us:

- Your name
- Contact details (an email address or phone number)
- Location of your land (please provide a grid reference, postcode or What3Words)
- Current land use
- Size of your land (less than 1 ha, 1–5 ha, 5–10 ha, over 10 ha)
- Do you own the land? (If you help manage the land do you have contact details for the owner?)

Our Woodland Living Landscape Advisors will be in contact with you to arrange a site visit and discuss funding for your project.



WORKING TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP

Green Recovery Challenge Fund



INTRODUCTION

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE DERWENT VALLEY?

In November 2021 the Environment Act was agreed in the UK, coinciding with the COP26 conference. Together they highlighted the important changes that need to be made for the recovery of species and habitats and to tackle the increasingly worrying situation with our weather systems.

By increasing our woodland coverage we can turn a corner and deliver multiple benefits such as carbon capture, natural flood management, the reversal of biodiversity loss by improving woodland and habitat connectivity, along with a wealth of good for our wellbeing.

DERWENT CONNECTIONS BOUNDARY

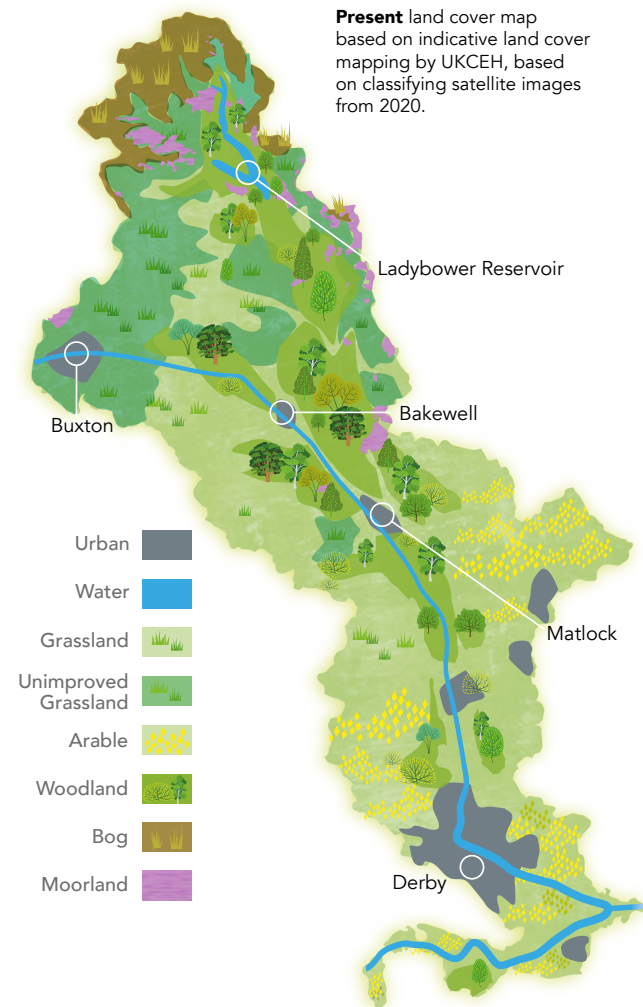
NATIONAL FOREST BOUNDARY

THE NORTHERN FOREST BOUNDARY



THE DERWENT CONNECTIONS PROJECT

The project is a landscape scale approach that aims to create, extend and expand woodlands in the Derbyshire Derwent River Catchment. This will create a network of interconnected woodlands from the National Forest in the south of Derbyshire and Midlands and upwards to the Northern Forest.

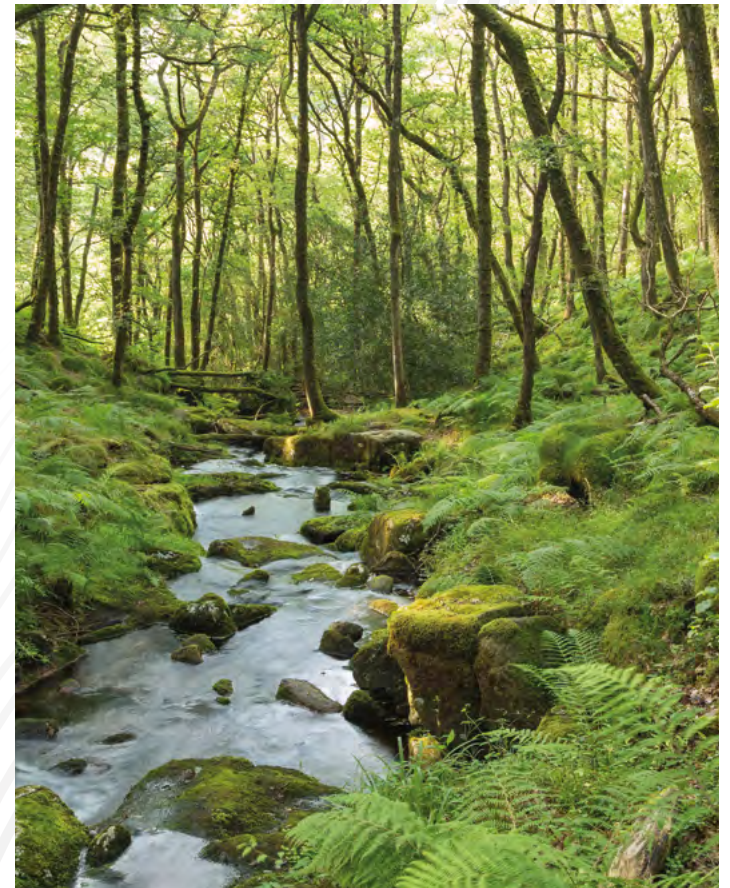


WHY ARE TREES AND WOODLANDS SO SIGNIFICANT? BENEFITS TO YOUR LAND:

Abundant wildlife and habitats are found in healthy woodland where natural processes can occur. They are tremendous places for species recovery and provide crucial food, shelter and routes for movement of species. In addition to this, the woodlands play a huge part in the sequestering of carbon and the functioning of the water cycle. This is critical as the country is now more prone to periods of high rainfall and flood events, followed by drought and ever-growing concerns about the effects of CO².

Trees help to prevent floods in many ways – by taking in volumes of water through their roots and feeding it up through their trunk, branches and leaves, which then carry out transpiration back into the atmosphere. They also knit together the soil by their numerous roots and enable the soil to retain much more water than most types of open land. Their very presence act as barriers to excessive water flow and, when beside water courses, they can trap flowing debris and slow down the flow, whilst also minimising the amount of agricultural and horticultural chemicals, such as pesticides and herbicides, that reach the watercourses.

In periods of drought the trees will have already created a soil more capable of holding water at their roots, fallen leaves and associated fungi etc. create strong resilient soils. These soils are more capable of retaining water and thus reduce the drying out effects during periods of low rainfall.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Through the Derwent Connections Project, we are encouraging landowners to create new deciduous woodlands. All woodlands, large or small, are of value and contribute to the network in the catchment.

Support and funding is available for the creation of new woodlands, by either natural colonization or by planting (see Forestry Commission summary table at the end for levels of funds available). The selected method depends on the characteristics of the site and objectives for it.

Advice is available to help choose the most suitable method. The Woodland Living Landscape Advisers team at Derbyshire Wildlife Trust can provide support with grant applications. Woodlands can often be created naturally by excluding livestock and deer. This can be done by using fencing and allowing existing shrubs near the site to colonise. Wind or birds often spread the natural seeds sources. This may take several years to create a woodland but woodlands created in this way are normally more natural looking and more resilient to climate change.

If you have land that may be available for creating woodlands, please do contact us on: derwentconnections@derbyshirewt.co.uk. We have a team of Woodland Living Landscape Advisers who can support on applying for the most suitable grant plan.



Through much of Europe, woodland creation and management on small farms is seen as a contributor to business sustainability. Woodland creation, can in time, provide wood for use on farms as wood fuel and as fencing materials. Woodlands can also be designed as windbreaks to give stock shelter and can be laid out to allow continued use of droving routes to move stock around the farm.

The value of woodlands for biodiversity and climate change is now recognized and income sources for these roles are now available, e.g. through the Woodland Carbon Code and Biodiversity Net Gain schemes.

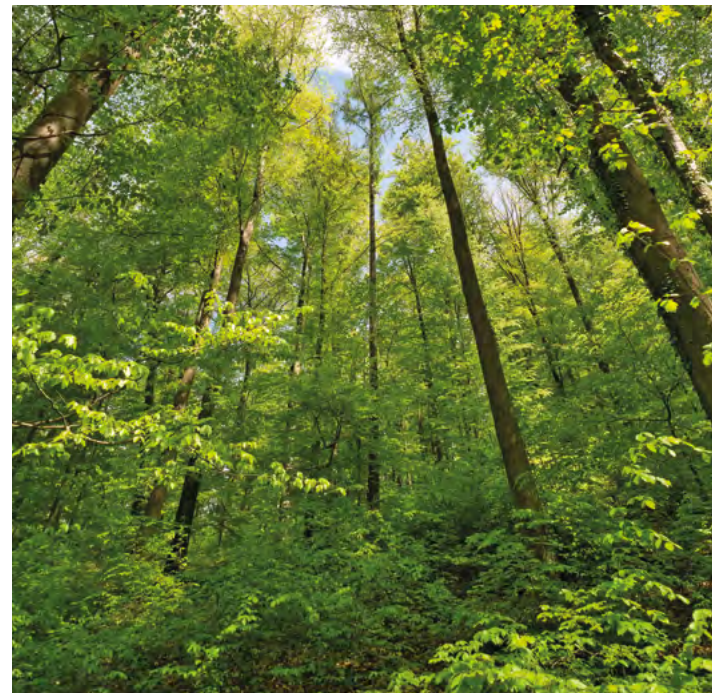
WILL WOODLAND HAVE AN IMPACT ON MY SHOOT?

New woodland will create extra woodland and scrub edge habitat which would suit some game birds such as partridge and pheasant. Whatever the size of the new woodland, careful planning and design will ensure a varied structure with areas of open ground incorporated into the design. This will mean ease of access for shooters and beaters when appropriate.

IMPLICATIONS OF POTENTIAL PESTS AND PREDATORS

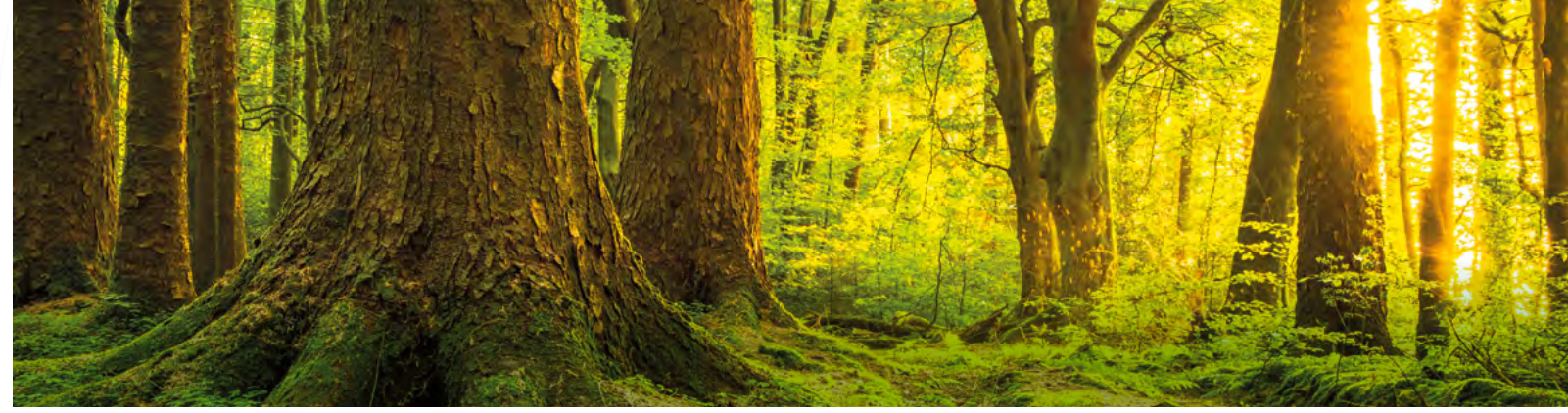
The density of trees and shrubs as a standard recommendation is within the range of 1100–2500 per hectare. During the woodland planning process, access requirements should be considered for woodland management activities such as maintenance of tree guards and stock control fences, e.g. deer fencing. A standard 20% open ground is the usual recommendation for the England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO). Exceptions may apply in extenuating circumstances, such as potentially for utility services or archaeological features. Such issues should be discussed and agreed with the Forestry Commission.

Consideration will be given to the potential impact of woodland on rare ground-nesting birds, such as curlew, where this may be an issue.



TIME AND FINANCIAL COSTS OF CREATING WOODLANDS

The amount of time involved will depend on how much of the work is carried out by contractors and how much is carried out by the landowner. If work is carried out in-house by the landowner, establishing a woodland may include work such as fencing and fence maintenance, tree planting, weed control and tree shelter maintenance. Woodland management may be carried out at potentially quieter times in the farming calendar. The tree planting season is throughout the winter months.

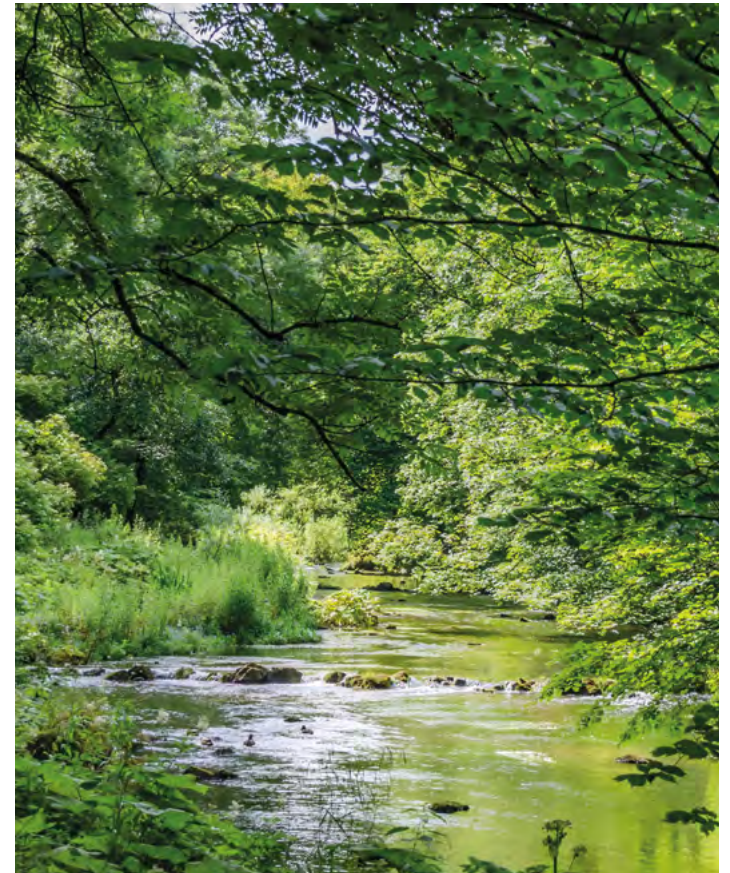


RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH DISEASE

There are some serious plant diseases causing significant problems at present. The secret is to plant or encourage a wide selection of tree species and to ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place. This way, trees are healthy, less stressed and more able to cope with any diseases that come along. Creating woodlands through natural regeneration normally produces woodlands best suited to the conditions of the site. Planting of some trees, such as ash, is currently not recommended. Guidance on suitable species is readily available, e.g. as outlined in the National Character Area descriptions. Help with details and decisions is available from the Woodland Living Landscape Advisers.

LIVESTOCK AND NEWLY CREATED WOODLANDS

Livestock should be excluded from new woodlands so that the young trees are not eaten or trampled. The exclusion of livestock remains a management requirement until the woodlands are well established and in many situations stock exclusion will continue to be a factor of ongoing woodland management. The landowner should inform the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) that the land is no longer in agricultural use when the land is set aside for tree planting. Occasionally, where a woodland mosaic is the objective, grazing may be considered (by agreement with the relevant funder), once the woodland has established, i.e. after at least 10–15 years.

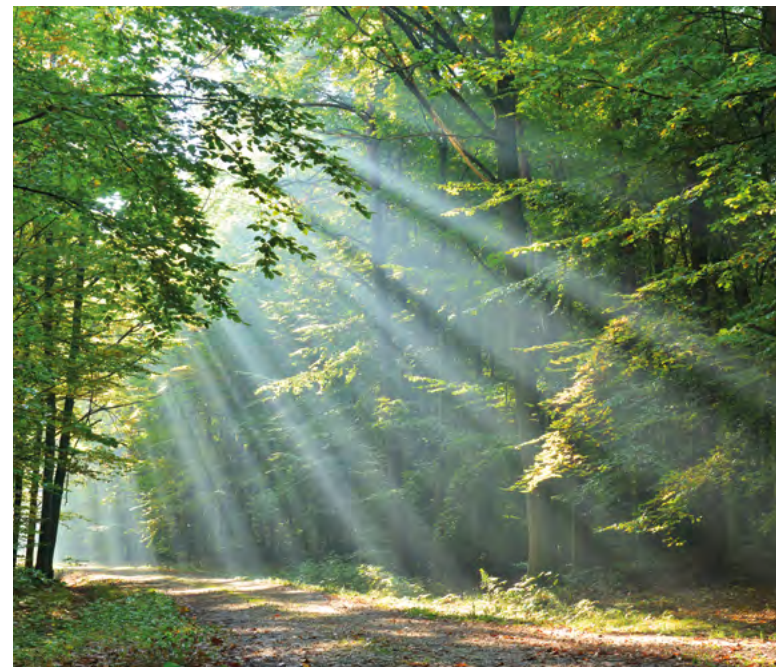


LIVESTOCK AND ESTABLISHED WOODLANDS

The main thing to ensure is that stock does not damage or kill the trees by either eating them or compacting the soil around the trees. A grazed woodland habitat could benefit certain bird species, such as tree pipit and spotted flycatcher. At a landscape scale it would be good to have a mixture of woodlands where some grazing was allowed and others where an understory is allowed to develop. The characteristics of the land will often determine the suitability of livestock presence.

WILL THE WOODLAND ATTRACT DEER?

When planning new woodland it is crucial to consider what pests, such as deer, are present in the area and what protection needs to be put in place. This is usually tree shelters or deer fences. This, together with deer control programmes, will allow new woodlands to establish. Once the woodlands are established, they will undoubtedly provide additional habitat for deer but open ground (designed into the woodlands at the start) will enable deer culling if and when it is needed.



Grants and support

WOODLANDS – ADVICE AND FUNDING

The government has put together a range of funding sources that provide a great deal of support for woodland creation projects. The table by the Forestry Commission, at the end of this leaflet, shows the various schemes and a summary of the basic requirements.

The information in the Forestry Commission guidance provides advice on the planning and application process:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1033301/A_Guide_to_Planning_New_Woodland_in_England_V1.0_Nov2021.pdf

Conditions and constraints can be checked on the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forestry-project-checks-constraints>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forestry-project-checks-all-projects>

In addition to the Forestry Commission options (and potentially of particular interest in smaller areas), the Woodland Trust has a range of initiatives to help people create new woodlands, such as their 'MOREwoods' scheme. The scheme is relevant to areas of 0.5 ha and above: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/trees-for-landowners-and-farmers/morewoods/>

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust have small grants available to support woodland creation on areas of land below 0.5 ha. Advice is available from our Woodland Living Landscape Advisers.

WHO CAN APPLY FOR WOODLAND CREATION GRANTS

Land managers, owners, leaseholders and tenants can apply for grants. Leaseholders and tenants must have formal agreement from the owner of the land for their woodland creation proposal.

Minimal area limits apply for some of the schemes, such as 1 ha for the England Woodland Creation Offer. However, this can be made up of blocks of land of at least 0.1 ha and at least 20 metres wide, or 10 metres if on riverside (permissible for riparian buffers and shelterbelts – please see details in the table at the end). A minimum of 5 ha applies for the Woodland Creation Planning Grant. Areas of less than 1 ha may also find help through Woodland Trust and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust schemes.

Advice and help is available for decisions on grant options, so please do contact us if you have questions on this subject.

LENGTH OF WOODLAND CREATION AGREEMENTS

The requirements for the Forestry Commission EWCO are as follows:

There is a 2-year capital grant funding period, which is followed by a 15-year obligatory management period. The EWCO grant scheme provides annual maintenance payments for 10 years.

This may be the main source of funding for most situations in the Derwent Connections Project. Timings for other funds can be found by following the links as provided.

WHEN TO APPLY

The table shows the application windows for each scheme, and our Woodland Living Landscape Advisors can provide further support in selecting and applying for the most suitable grant scheme. Most schemes are open for applications all year round. The order of the steps involved in the applications process is crucial to understand so that funding and opportunities for assistance are available:

The Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG) can be sought before applications for the EWCO for areas of 5 ha and above. If the land is eligible for a WCPG, applications should be made before any Environmental Impact Assessment enquiry or EWCO application. NB: Woodland Creation Planning Grants cannot be provided if the application for the England Woodland Creation offer and/or Environmental Impact Assessment have already started.

Likewise, if you are considering applying for the carbon sequestering programmes, it is advisable to look into these before applying for establishment funding such as EWCO. The EWCO is compatible with the UK Woodland Carbon Code (WCC), but timing of applications should be considered.

Applications for any funding should always take place before any actual work begins on the site. Funding will not be granted if works have already begun.

A helpful flowchart outlining the steps is included on page six of the 'Guide to Planning New Woodlands in England' document: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1033301/A_Guide_to_Planning_New_Woodland_in_England_V1.0_Nov2021.pdf

HOW TO APPLY

Contact Woodland Living Landscape Advisers team for help and advice for relevant funding in your situation. We can work together with the Forestry Commission, the Woodland Trust and other conservation organisations to advise you on the processes and plans. The Countryside Stewardship (CS) Woodland Creation grant is now closed to new applicants. People are advised to consider the Forestry Commission's England Woodland Creation Offer, which has updated payment rates and is suitable in many situations where CS was previously.

PAYMENT RATES

Woodland Creation Planning Grant

- Applications can be made for £1,000 to complete the stage 1 checklist
- In stage 2, there is £150/ha (minus the £1,000 already provided at stage 1) available to create a woodland creation design plan. This is capped at £30,000 per project.
- A 70% contribution is available towards a specialist survey if agreed to be required.

Please refer the table at the end, Forestry Commission Grant Table.

England Woodland Creation Offer

- Capital payments for standard costs of tree planting – up to a cap of £8,500/ha
- Annual maintenance payment of £300/ha for 10 years
- Payments for 'Additional Contributions' where appropriate. These payments are applicable if the land is situated within one of the option target areas. Your adviser can help to give an indication of the potential on your land, but the decision on eligibility lies with the Forestry Commission.

Please refer to the table at the end, Forestry Commission Grant Table.



In addition to creating a new woodland, the option to create 'leaky woody dams' may be suitable in some situations. Funding is available for these structures, which are designed to slow the flow of watercourses and help towards natural flood

management. Details are available in the FC Comparison table.

Other support and funding may be available from sources such as the Woodland Trust.

COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER SCHEMES AND INCOME SOURCES

As mentioned in 'How to Apply', the order in which the applications are made is a factor that should be considered to ensure funds are available.

The Forestry Commission Summary Table at the end shows the compatibility of the schemes. Generally of note is that the EWCO is compatible with Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), but BPS is not available if the woodland is registered for the Woodland Carbon Code.

If an existing Environmental Stewardship scheme is already in place on the land, e.g. ELS/HLS/CS, then the land may still be eligible for funding with woodland creation grants, subject to agreement between FC, and RPA. Seek further advice from the FC, the Woodland Living Landscape Advisors or RPA if existing schemes are nearing their completion or for site-specific guidance.

As the new Environmental Land Management Scheme is rolled out, new guidance will be available to show compatibility of options. It is envisaged that the new scheme will complement the EWCO and may provide options for management once the end of the 10 years of the EWCO is reached.

Funding is not available for sites in which woodland creation is a requirement of planning permission or mitigation.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CREATING WOODLANDS

In most woodland creation cases, the land must be registered with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA), particularly if funding is being sought. The Forestry Commission comparison table at the end has more information for each scheme.

The density of tree planting and the spacing will be detailed through the woodland creation planning process and may vary from site to site.

DEFINITION OF A TREE FOR WOODLAND FUNDING AND TREE SPECIES

The size and growth pattern of a tree varies greatly from species to species and to factors such as nutrient availability and weather, etc. New woodland can be created by natural regeneration or by planting, but in all cases the species must have the ability to become trees (as opposed to shrubs, such as bramble) and have at least one woody stem and the potential to reach at least 5 metres in height. The locality and the underlying geology and soils will determine what species are best suited to the site.

The following link to the Derbyshire County Council's mapping portal is a great resource for appropriate species by landscape character area and provides advice on how the species chosen can enhance and complement the local landscape:

https://maps.derbyshire.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=Ordnance_Survey_Maps

In all cases, native species are recommended (please see the following section for notes on climate change adaptability research).

Typical species may include: oak (*Quercus robur*), silver and downy birch (*Betula pendula* & *B. pubescens*), small and large-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata* & *T. platyphyllos*), wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*), aspen (*Populus tremula*), goat willow (*Salix caprea*), rowans and whitebeam (*Sorbus aucuparia* & *S. aria*), hornbeam (*Carpinus Betula*) and alder (*Alnus glutinosa*).

Due to the ongoing issue with ash dieback caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*, the planting of ash trees is not generally advised at present. The Forestry Commission will assess the suitability in some situations.

Non-native and pest species can be very problematic in woodlands and should be avoided in all situations: Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), Rhododendron (*Rhododendron* spp.), Sea buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*) and Laurel (such as cherry, spotted and bay laurel).

AIMS FOR THE WOODLAND – RESILIENT WOODLANDS

We recognise that climate change and plant health issues mean we need to increase the resilience of our woodlands. The extent of impact is still uncertain so we support adaptive management. To create resilient woodland, one tree species should not make up more than two thirds of the overall woodland. We recommend using at least three species to ensure a woodland that is resilient to pest and disease threats and that can adapt to the future. In addition to species considerations, careful thought should be given to the origin of the tree species (provenance). It is an opportunity to select species provenance that can establish in current conditions and survive and thrive in future conditions. It is also an opportunity to maximise the tree's productive potential where appropriate. Natural regeneration is regarded as the most reliable method of afforestation and is the preferred option if practicalities allow. It enables colonisation by species most suited to the area whilst also increasing resilience and providing a beautiful, natural structure throughout the woodland.

Given the potentially rapid shift in climate suitability, tree species from a more southerly UK provenance may potentially be included where native and indigenous species are being considered. Further information on climate change and adaptive woodland management is on the FC website: <https://cdn.forestryresearch.gov.uk/2022/05/UKFSPG026.pdf>



The plan does not cover other legal aspects, such as planning laws, so applicants should make enquiries with relevant councils etc. where appropriate.

PREPARATION OF A WOODLAND CREATION PLAN

When creating new woodlands, applicants must prepare a woodland creation plan that states:

- Planting objectives
- Species & percentage to be used
- Planting density (number of trees per hectare)
- Percentage of open space, areas to be planted and areas of open space on a plan/map
- Means of tree protection (if tree guards are to be used, state type and material; if plastic guards are chosen, explain why)

To be eligible for the Woodland Creation Planning Grant and to access any funding, the woodland creation plan must be UK Forestry Standard Compliant. Detailed guidance is available in the UK Forestry Standard publication:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/687147/The_UK_Forestry_Standard.pdf

And in the guidance document:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1033301/A_Guide_to_Planning_New_Woodland_in_England_V1.0_Nov2021.pdf

The woodland creation plan will be a helpful resource, covering the many aspects that are essential when considering the location and design of a woodland. For example, one component of the plan will be a search to identify any designations, such as SSSIs or relevant legislation on the proposed woodland area.

PLANTING A NEW WOODLAND

Benefits

- Creating shelter and shade for livestock
- Reducing soil erosion
- Capturing ammonia generated on livestock farms
- Improving water quality
- Mitigating downstream flood risk
- Supporting woodland and upland birds
- Increasing habitat and species diversity
- Storing carbon
- Increasing resilience of the landscape in the face of climate change
- Enhancing the landscape
- Enhancing visitor experience and wellbeing
- Providing an evidence base for the future

TYPES OF WOODLAND

Many types of woodland are appropriate in the Derwent Valley, including clough woodlands, shelter belt woodlands, wildlife focus woodlands, productive woodland, mixed woodland with conifer component, landscape/amenity woodlands, larger scale woodlands, ravine woodlands and riparian (river/stream) woodlands. Together these woodlands help to create the rich mosaic that will increase in coverage throughout the area and provide links for species to move freely and for natural ecosystem functioning to take place.

EFFECTS OF WOODLANDS IN THE WIDER LANDSCAPE

The application process ensures that the positioning of new woodlands is appropriate to the landscape. Where larger or more visible sites are selected, thorough consultation with all stakeholders will take place. Sound landscape design principles will be implemented when planning all new woodland. The objectives of the Derwent Connections project has highlighted the Derwent Valley as a place where woodlands would have likely been situated in the not so distant past and are inherent features of the landscape. The project aims to restore the rich mosaic of the area and contribute to the Nature Recovery Network.

The Forestry Commission suggests a principle called 'Spirit of Place', which is based on factors that make a place distinctive, cherished and unique. Such intangible factors add greatly to the design of a new woodland, as do unity (fitting in with the landscape) and scale, along with other factors as mentioned in the Forestry Commission 'Guide to Planning New Woodlands in England' document-link provided on p. 10. A great deal of research has been carried out to guide the new woodland creation plans, and a bounty of information is available by following the links in this leaflet.

EFFECTS OF THE WOODLANDS REGARDING HAZARDS – FIRE

Woodland will often be created adjacent to existing woodland and so woodland cover may be increased. New woodland creation will be mainly broadleaved trees at relatively low-density planting. Such woodland is less likely to catch fire (compared to many conifers), and a fire would not readily spread through such new woodlands because they are not planted at tight spacing.

HOW WILL THE WOODLAND AFFECT PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

On land designated as open access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, there will be a right of access maintained in newly established woodland. If deer or stock fencing is needed initially to establish new woodland then

adequate stiles, gates or through passes will be designed into the fence layout to give access. Once the trees are established the fencing can be removed and open ground within the woodland will still be accessible.

CREATION OF NEW WOODLAND VERSUS OTHER HABITATS OF CONSERVATION INTEREST

In the initial stage of enquiry into the woodland creation projects, the land will be assessed for its current biodiversity interest. Advice is available to assess the potential of the land and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening will be carried out by the Forestry Commission on receipt of the application form. If funding is not being sought, then an independent EIA should be considered. In many situations design and careful planning can ensure that new woodlands enhance the existing features on the land.

In some cases, such as on land with rich grassland flora or areas of peatland, where woodland creation would be considered detrimental, the new woodland planting will not be permitted. A range of species and habitats are protected from detrimental management under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006).

Some land that is likely to be suitable for woodland planting has been identified by the Forestry Commission. A mapping system on their website shows areas which are considered areas of 'low risk' for woodland creation. This is a useful tool as a guide in the initial stages, but in all cases a site-specific survey is always required to assess factors, such as biodiversity, that may not yet have been registered and may fall within EIA requirements. Please note timing of EIA in relation to applications – see 'When to apply' on p. 7). The new woodlands are not confined to the low-risk areas – woodland creation can take place outside of the FC low-risk area, providing that existing biodiversity interest has been considered. Consultation with designatory organizations, e.g. Natural England, is recommended.

<https://www.forestergis.com/Apps/MapBrowser/>



LONG-TERM OUTLOOK FOR THE NEWLY CREATED WOODLANDS

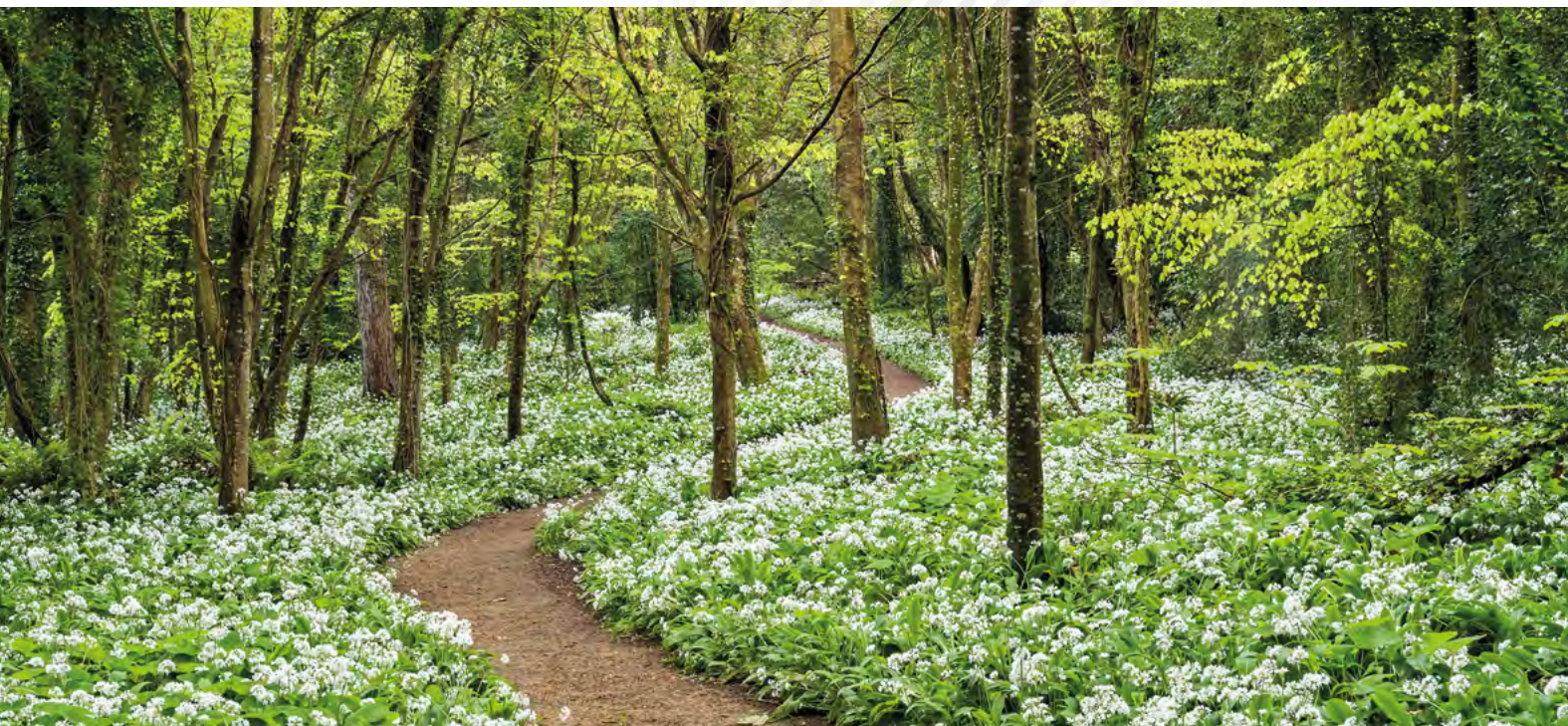
Ensure that long-term objectives for the woodland are included throughout the planning stage. This will assist in informing the design of the woodland and enable its objectives to be realistic. Some sites may include multi-objectives, such as timber production, biodiversity gain, natural flood management and public recreational features. If carbon sequestration/storage provision is an aim, e.g. through the Woodland Carbon Code Scheme, it is important to ensure that this is raised early in the planning process so that registration is made at the correct stage.

Considerations should be made to the wide variety of benefits that woodlands can deliver, such as provisions, e.g. fuel, food, genetic resources; regulatory service, e.g. reducing air pollution, 'slowing the flow' of water; cultural assets, e.g. cultural heritage, educational; and supporting of natural systems, e.g. retention of soils, nutrient cycling.

The forthcoming ELMS scheme will support farmers and landowners to provide public goods, such as climate change mitigation, biodiversity recovery and water quality. Woodlands can deliver on these issues, but the funding elements have not yet been finalized, although details are being reviewed and trialed to ensure relevant payments will be appropriate.

Carbon sequestering is a recognized function of woodlands. New woodlands must be registered into the carbon schemes before they are created, and, as such, they will continue to sequester carbon and potentially provide income for many years.

The woodlands will be an asset in many ways, for many years, and the ecosystem services they offer are crucial to the planet right now.



The Derwent Connections partnership. For more advice and information regarding the Derwent Connections Project please contact:

Molly Dunne, Project Manager

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, Sandy Hill,
Main Street, Middleton, Matlock, DE4 4LR

Tel: 01773 881188

Email: mdunne@derbyshirewt.co.uk

Web: www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/derwent-connections

Registered Charity Number: 222212

Alternatively if you would like to register your land and start developing woodland scan the QR code below:



WORKING TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP

Derwent Connections project is delivered in partnership with the Environment Agency, Natural England and funded by the Green Recovery Challenge Fund as well as People's Postcode Lottery.

Green Recovery Challenge Fund



There are several grants and other incentives available for woodland creation, maintenance, management and tree health. Here is a brief overview so you can see at-a-glance which you would like to explore in more detail. This is a starting point and further information can be found at the links provided, or contact your local Forestry Commission (FC) area office.

	Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG)	England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO)	HS2 Woodland Fund (HS2WFF)	Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCf)	Woodland Carbon Code (WCC)	Woodland Carbon Guarantee (WCaG)
Summary	The WCPG provides funding to prepare a Woodland Creation Design Plan which is UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) compliant. Landowners, land managers and public bodies can apply to the FC to support the planning of woodland creation.	The EWCO is a flagship new grant scheme for farmers and landowners to encourage investment in woodland creation. These woodlands will help to mitigate climate change, deliver nature recovery and provide wider environmental and social benefits.	The HS2WFF provides funding for woodland creation and restoration of woodlands on ancient woodland sites (PAWS). Your land will need to be within a 25-mile zone or phase one of the HS2 route from London to the West Midlands.	The UTCf provides capital funding to plant and establish large 'standard' trees in urban and peri-urban areas. The fund will provide three years of establishment payments following planting of the trees, sequestered in your Woodland Carbon Units.	The WCC is the UK's voluntary carbon standard for woodland creation projects. If you are a landowner and can demonstrate that you meet this standard, you can sell the carbon removed from the atmosphere.	The WCaG is an incentive scheme to help accelerate woodland planting rates across England to mitigate the effects of climate change. These new woodlands will permanently remove carbon dioxide (CO ₂) from the atmosphere.
Can I apply year round?	Yes – open year round.	Yes – open year round.	Yes – open year round, but subject to quarterly application review panels.	Applications must be submitted during an application window. See weblink below to find out more.	Yes – open year round.	Yes – applications are open year round, but participation in the scheme is through periodic auctions and there is a cut-off date for applications in advance of each auction. Auction dates are advertised online.
Are there financial incentives available?	You can apply for £1,000 to complete a stage one checklist. At stage two, you can get £150 per hectare to produce woodland creation design plan, minus the £1,000 offered at stage one. You can also receive a 70% contribution towards any additional, specialist surveys that we agree need to be undertaken. Funding is capped at £30,000 per project. If your application is under 10 hectares in size, we will pay a minimum payment of £500 for stage two.	In addition to covering the standard capital costs of tree planting (up to a cap of £8,500 per hectare) and annual maintenance payments of £300 per hectare for 10 years, EWCO also offers 'Additional Contributions' (per hectare) for: Nature recovery: £1,100 to £2,800 Water quality: £400 Reduced flood risk: £500 Riparian buffers: £1,600 Close to settlements: £500 Public access: £2,200	You'll receive a total payment per hectare for capital items, capped at £8,500 (gross) for native woodland creation and £4,000 (net) for PAWS restoration. The cap for PAWS restoration only applies to tree planting and does not include other capital items such as fencing. For both application types, the relevant cap does not include leaky woody dams – these can be included over and above the cap. You'll also get two maintenance payments of £1,000 per hectare – once in year five and once in year ten.	The UTCf provides 50% of published standard costs for planting large 'standard' trees and their establishment costs for three years following planting. The remaining funding must be met through match funding, either in the form of money or labour.	A new native woodland can capture 400–500 tonnes of CO ₂ (tCO ₂ e/ha) over 100 years and buyers have recently paid between £5 and £15/tCO ₂ e for carbon units captured by woodland projects verified through the Woodland Carbon Code.	The WCaG provides you with the option to sell your captured CO ₂ to the government for a guaranteed price every five or ten years up to 2055/56, which provides an additional long-term income from your woodland. If you prefer, you can still choose to sell the CO ₂ on the open market rather than to the government. If you are successful in the auction, the government will buy the CO ₂ for the price that you bid – which is protected against inflation for the life of the contract.
Can I apply alongside other FC grant and funding schemes?	If you've already applied for a woodland creation grant such as EWCO, or submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment enquiry form to plant a new woodland, you're not eligible to apply for a WCPG on that site. You can, however, apply for EWCO once the FC have made you a Stage 2 offer under the WCPG.	Before you apply to the EWCO, you may want to consider using the WCPG. The WCPG provides funding to prepare a UKFS-compliant Woodland Creation Design Plan – this plan can subsequently be used to support a EWCO application.	You can't get an HS2WFF agreement if your land is already under an Environmental Stewardship agreement or a Countryside Stewardship agreement, but you may still apply if the existing agreement is due to expire or you are planning to withdraw the land from it. (Financial penalties may apply – check with the relevant grant administrator).	No	If you apply for registration with the WCC, you are not excluded from applying for other FC grant and funding schemes.	WCaG applications may be made alongside applications for woodland creation grants (for example, EWCO, Countryside Stewardship or the HS2WFF). Participation in the WCC is a prerequisite to participation in the WCaG and its additional tests will apply. Applications for the WCaG can only be submitted for projects registered with the WCC after 29 October 2018.
Minimum area	5 hectares	The minimum total size of woodland included in a EWCO application is 1 hectare.	1 hectare (if connecting or expanding existing ancient woodland or ASNW). 5 hectares for standalone woodland). Applications of any type must be no larger than 25 hectares.	There isn't a minimum area size to apply, but individual applications will be required to meet a minimum value threshold ¹ . This is at least: £125,000 for block bids, or £10,000 for individual applications.	There's no minimum size for the WCC and there's a streamlined process for small woods which are less than five hectares.	The WCaG does not have specific minimum area thresholds. The minimum area of a successful WCaG project will therefore be the area threshold of any associated establishment grant scheme.
Minimum woodland block size	Any block must meet the definition of woodland set out by the National Forest Inventory: a minimum area of 0.5 hectares and a minimum width of 20 metres. You should consider the minimum thresholds that apply to grants for woodland creation if you intend to seek grant aid to plant the woodland.	All woodland blocks within a EWCO application must be 0.1 hectares or more in size. Blocks must have a minimum width of 20 metres (except for riparian buffers and shelterbelts, where the minimum width is 10 metres).	0.1 hectare (if connecting or expanding existing ancient woodland or ASNW). 5 hectares for standalone woodland).	For street trees, parkland trees (planted as specimens singly or in groups), orchards and other planting. Minimum block size of 10 standard trees.	None	The WCaG does not have specific minimum area thresholds. The minimum woodland block size of a successful WCaG project will therefore be the threshold of any associated establishment grant scheme.
Applicant and Land Registration with the RPA	No	Yes	No	Applicants will need to register with Rural Payments to obtain a Single Business Identifier (SBI). Visit www.gov.uk/guidance/rural-payments-service-registering-and-updating-your-details if applicable.	No	The WCaG does not have any specific RPA applicant or land registration requirements. Registration requirements will be those of any associated establishment or maintenance grant scheme.
Basic Payment Scheme eligibility (land manager and land must be registered with RPA)	N/A	Eligible land under EWCO can also be used to claim payments via the Basic Payment Scheme. Read our 'Guidance on woodland grant schemes and BPS' operations note 42 for more information.	Eligible land under HS2WFF can also be used to claim payments via the Basic Payment Scheme. Read our 'Guidance on woodland grant schemes and BPS' operations note 42 for more information.	Yes	No	BPS eligibility will be dependent on the eligibility of any associated establishment or maintenance grant.
Does it include support for leaky woody dams?	No	Yes	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
Where can I find out more?	www.gov.uk/guidance/woodland-creation-planning-grant	www.gov.uk/guidance/england-woodland-creation-offer	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hs2-woodland-fund	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/urban-tree-challenge-fund	https://woodlandcarboncode.org.uk/	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/woodland-carbon-guarantee

The Local Authority Treescapes Fund (LATF) is a grant scheme for local authorities (LAs), to drive an increase in non-woodland tree planting across our landscapes. The fund is focused on replanting trees outside of woodlands, including trees in hedgerows, parklands, riparian zones, urban areas, beside roads and footpaths, as well as small linear woodlands, copses, and shelterbelts. For more information visit: www.gov.uk/guidance/local-authority-treescapes-fund

¹ Please note, you cannot switch from one grant that pays for woodland establishment to another. E.g. you can't withdraw from a CS agreement to apply for the HS2WFF or vice versa.

² Minimum value subject to change.

There are a range of woodland grants available under Countryside Stewardship (CS). CS is jointly delivered by the Forestry Commission, Natural England and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) on behalf of Defra. The RPA process the applications and claims, and the Forestry Commission will discuss and agree your proposals with you. **The woodland grants within Countryside Stewardship are:**

	Woodland Management Planning Grant (WMP) Part of Countryside Stewardship	Woodland Tree Health Part of Countryside Stewardship	Woodland Improvement (WD2 and capital items) Part of Countryside Stewardship
Summary	The WMP is a one-off payment to create a 10-year Woodland Management Plan which is UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) compliant. You have two years from the agreement start date to write your plan and secure approval from the FC. Once your plan is approved you can claim the grant payment. You must make your claim within two years and three months of the agreement start date.	There are two elements within this grant: Restoration provides support for restocking woodland after felling due to a tree health issue. Improvement provides support for the removal of diseased trees and infected rhododendron.	This grant is to improve the biodiversity of woodland and/or make it more resilient to climate change. Applications for Woodland Improvement are made under the Higher Tier, including the Woodland Improvement option (WD2) and/or capital items, including Woodland Infrastructure (FY2).
Can I apply year round?	Yes – open year round.	Yes – open year round.	No – applications are made during the Higher Tier submission window. Check the link below for opening dates which are announced each year.
Are there financial incentives available?	The payment rate for the WMP is based on the area of woodland: 3–50 hectares: flat rate of £1,000 51–100 hectares: £20 per hectare Over 100 hectares: £2,000 + £10 per additional hectares over 100 hectares	To restock native tree species on an ancient woodland site the payment is capped at an average of £3,500 per hectare (£1,750 per hectare for non-native species), whilst on other sites it's £2,750 per hectare for native species (£2,250 per hectare for non-native species). To fell diseased trees you can receive between £260 and £1,680 per hectare, and between £2,800 and £4,400 per hectare for rhododendron control.	The WD2 option pays £100 per hectare for five years. You can also receive 40% of actual costs for capital item woodland infrastructure (item FY2). You can receive: £461.39 for each small leaky woody dam (RP32), and £764.42 for each large leaky woody dam (RP33).
Is this Higher Tier, Mid Tier or a capital item?*	Capital only	Capital only	Higher Tier
Can I apply alongside other FC and CS grant and funding schemes?	Yes – but to apply for the Countryside Stewardship Woodland Improvement Grant (part of Higher Tier) your Woodland Management Plan must be approved.	Yes – a Woodland Management Plan is strongly recommended and the woodland can already be subject to other grants.	Yes – an existing FC approved Woodland Management Plan is a pre-requisite.
Minimum area	3 hectares	0.25 hectares	3 hectares if woodland-only 1 hectare if woodland is a Site of Special Scientific Interest 0.5 ha of woodland within an application that also includes agri-environment land (a 'mixed' application) Capital only must have a value of £500
Minimum woodland block size	0.5 hectares	0.1 hectares	0.5 hectares
Applicant and Land Registration with the RPA	Yes	Yes	Yes
Basic Payment Scheme eligibility (land manager and land must be registered with RPA)	No	Yes – only while the grant agreement is in place and where the land can be claimed under BPS as RD01.	No
Does it include support for leaky woody dams (RP32 and RP33)?	No	No	Yes
Does it include support for woodland infrastructure (FY2)?	No	No	Yes – an existing FC approved Woodland Management Plan must identify that poor vehicle access to the woodland is preventing the movement of forest products.
Where can I find out more?	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/countryside-stewardship-woodland-management-plan-grant-manual-from-8-february-2022	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/woodland-tree-health-grant-countryside-stewardship	https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/woodland-improvement-wd2

The CS Woodland Creation grant has now closed to new applicants. If you already have a CS Woodland Creation Maintenance agreement when the capital works are complete. You will be invited to apply for the 10 year CS Woodland Creation grant you can continue with the capital works as agreed with the FC.

*There are three main elements within Countryside Stewardship:

• Mid Tier: multi-year agreements for environmental improvements in the wider countryside that include multi-year options and capital items

• Higher Tier: multi-year agreements for environmentally significant sites, commons and woodlands where more complex management requires support from Natural England or the Forestry Commission that include multi-year options and capital items;

• Capital-only grants: a range of grants specific to outcomes for hedgerows and boundaries, developing implementation plans, feasibility studies, woodland management plans, woodland creation (establishment), and tree health – normally two year agreements.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you are interested in creating woodland habitats on your land and would like more information and help, here are useful contacts:

ORGANISATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Derbyshire Wildlife Trust	Name: Molly Dunne, Derwent Connections, Project Manager Telephone: 0177 388 1188 Email: derwentconnections@derbyshirewt.co.uk
Environment Agency	Telephone: 0370 850 6506 Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
Forestry Commission	Telephone: 0300 067 4000 Email: fe.England@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
Natural England	Telephone: 0300 060 3900 Email: enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk
The Woodland Trust	Telephone: 0330 333 3300
Rural Payments Agency	Helpline for queries on eligibility of features for BPS: 0300 020 0301