

## Introduction

The Management Plan template should be used for woodlands which are less than 100ha in size. If your total woodland area is over 100ha, you should develop a [Long Term Forest Plan](#) unless, in exceptional circumstances, a Management Plan is deemed suitable. Please note that there is no grant available for preparing a Management Plan.

Bringing woodlands into management provides a range of benefits. These can be:

- economic viability
- environmental sustainability
- improved social outcomes
- resilience to increased threats from tree pests and diseases and a changing climate

Management Plans provide a means to develop and communicate your objectives and work proposals for the woodland. Creating a clear woodland management plan shows how you will sustainably manage your woodlands. The detail within your Management Plan should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of your woodland.

## Forestry Grant Scheme Requirements

All of the Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) and Sustainable Management of Forests (SMF) options in the [Forestry Grant Scheme](#) (FGS) require an approved plan before you make an application for grant. The majority of options require either a Long term Forest Plan or Management Plan; the only exceptions are the Woods In and Around Towns (WIAT) and Woodland Grazing options (see individual option guidance for details).

You can use this guidance and the accompanying template to prepare your plan. The Management Plan must include all areas of woodland within your ownership.

Once we approve your Management Plan, you will be provided with a Management Plan reference number. You must use this reference number when submitting your FGS application. We will digitise the associated location map(s) and display it on our Map Viewer found on our website: [forestry.gov.scot](https://forestry.gov.scot).

The [UK Forestry Standard](#) (UKFS) is the reference standard for sustainable forest management and is our reference for approving plans. The UKFS is supported by a series of Guidelines (such as *Forests and water* and *Forests and landscape*) which define standards and requirements. These provide a basis for regulation and monitoring. Your Management Plan must state your objectives and also identify the interests and issues within and surrounding the woodland and take

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these into consideration when planning management operations. These aspects have been included in our template. Annex 1 provides an outline of the UKFS Requirements for forest management planning and provides a checklist that your local Conservancy office will be using to assess whether your Management Plan is UKFS compliant.

Contact your local [Conservancy office](#) if you have any questions about preparing your Management Plan.

## Thinning Permission

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 we will accept your Management Plan as an application for thinning. We can give permission to thin your woodland for 10 years; reducing the need for repeated felling applications.

If you intend to carry out thinning you must provide full details in Section 6 (Management Proposals), complete Table 1 (Thinning), and provide maps showing the areas you intend to thin over the lifetime of the plan.

If you do not provide this information we will assume you are not applying for permission and will approve the plan without thinning.

Permission for all other types of felling operation must be applied for separately.

## Renewable Heat Incentive / Renewables Obligation

An approved Management Plan and Felling Permission will count as evidence to prove that woodfuel meets Ofgem [sustainability requirements](#). Sustainability requirements may apply if the woodfuel is used in the Renewable Heat Incentive or Renewables Obligation schemes.

## Management Plan Template

To help inform future management decisions and to guide management objectives, your Management Plan must give:

- a clear and concise description of the woodland(s)
- a long term vision for the woodland
- the objectives of management
- your management proposals for the next ten years

## 1. Details

Please give all of the Management Plan details. The *Business Reference Number* and *Main Location Code* are required for grant applications. If you do not have

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either of these, contact your local rural Payments and Inspections Directorate (RPID) Area Office. You can find out more on this [here](#).

Please give all of the details requested for the owner and agent. Owner contact details must be included if you are using the Management Plan for the Renewable Heat Incentive or Renewables Obligation schemes.

Where you are applying for permission to thin, you must indicate whether or not we have consent to enter your property to assess and monitor your proposals.

## 2. Woodland Description

This section covers a range of information about the current condition of your woodland.

Under the various headings give a brief overview. This should cover information as detailed below.

To help you complete this section we recommend that you refer to the [Land Information Search](#) (LIS). If your woodland includes areas of native woodland then you can use the [Native Woodland Survey of Scotland](#) (NWSS) data to help inform your Management Plan. Details of the NWSS can be found on the Scottish Forestry Map Viewer. If you are planning work within a designated site then you will require [consent](#) from Scottish Natural Heritage.

### 2.1 Maps

You must provide maps with your Management Plan. The name or number of each map must be listed in section 1 Management Plan Details. Your maps must show:

- the location of your woodland in the wider landscape (at 1:50,000)
- your property boundary (as detailed by your Business Reference Number (BRN)) and the woodland boundary, if this differs
- details (at 1:10,000) within the woodland such as the woodland type, features, designations, existing access, and proposed management activities, such as thinning, felling and restocking

You may require more than one 1:10,000 map for these details. Please refer to the [general mapping guidance](#) for Scottish Forestry's mapping standards.

Please state the name or number of the maps that are associated with the Management Plan.

## 2.2 History of management

Give details of any work carried out with or without previous grant support; also include details of any previous felling or thinning permissions.

## 2.3 Species and age

Give the (approximate) percentage of each species, the structure (age class or development stage), and if any natural regeneration is present; you can also include related information here such as topography, soils, and flora. You may wish to append your own compartment schedule to your Management Plan for more complex woodlands.

## 2.4 Constraints and designations

Give details of any Scheduled Monuments, SSSI, SAC or Natura 2000 designations, landscape character, Garden and Designed Landscapes, National Scenic Areas, European protected species, National Parks, or watercourses; other constraints such as timber transport should also be included here.

## 2.5 Public access

If the public can access your woodland, give details of how the proposed operations may affect this.

## 2.6 Woodland Protection

Woodland management should maintain or enhance the resilience of the woodland to reduce potential risks. Use this section to set out what threats are facing your woodland in order to help inform your objectives and operations. You only need to assess and complete the topics that are relevant to your woodland. Provide details on the potential impacts and what you will do to manage these threats through planned operations. Further details are given under each subheading below.

- [Plant Health](#) – This could include major threats such as *Phytophthora ramorum* in larch stands or Chalara dieback of ash. Management to address these threats could include felling and restocking with other species. In the case of Dothistroma needle blight in pine it may mean thinning to reduce impacts. The tree species you have will be susceptible to [certain pests and diseases](#), recognising if these are present will aid in planning your management operations. This section could also include information on the presence of invasive or noxious species such as rhododendron, giant hogweed, or Japanese knotweed.
- [Deer, Livestock and other mammals](#) – Deer can drastically impact on habitats and new or regenerating woodlands. Deer populations and/or woodland habitats need to be assessed in order to manage deer effectively.

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Recognising the existing or potential impacts to your woodland will help you decide future management. Domestic livestock and wild mammals can have positive or negative impacts on your trees and woodland habitat. You should consider your woodland boundary and neighbouring land uses and ensure that your woodland is protected from unwanted grazing. You may wish to [control grazing](#) within your woodland to achieve your objectives.

- Grey squirrels – Crop damage and threats to [Red squirrel](#) populations should be considered here. You may wish to contact your local [Red squirrel Project Officer](#) to discuss what you can do to control grey squirrels.
- Water & soil – Soil erosion, diffuse pollution, catchment acidification, and the status of any waterbodies within your Management Plan area should be considered under this heading.
- Environment – Existing knowledge of your woodland will inform this section with regards to local flooding and the risks from fire. Guidance on fire resilience and forest planning can be found [here](#). You can also identify any risks from anti-social behaviour, such as fly tipping or vandalism and how this can be avoided or controlled.
- Climate Change resilience – Factors such as increased rainfall, longer growing seasons and warmer winters mean changes for Scotland's forests. This may increase the impact of new pests and disease but it may also mean that tree species will grow in previously inhospitable areas. Reviewing the diversity of your woodland may help improve its resilience to Climate Change. Guidance for forest managers can be found [here](#).

## 3. Vision and Objectives

### 3.1 Vision

Your long term vision (beyond 10 years) should be a clear statement about the overall direction of management for the woodland and how the woodland will develop.

### 3.2 Management objectives

Considering economic, social and environmental factors, decide what your key objectives are for the woodland – that is what you hope to achieve or change within the woodland over the next ten years.

Make sure that your objectives are specific and that the outcomes can be measured. For example: *Improve species diversity and age class structure to ensure UK Forestry Standard is met in plan period.*

## 4. Stakeholder Engagement

Please contact any neighbours, organisations, statutory bodies, or other members of the public who may be affected by any operations you have planned for your woodland. If there is no evidence of stakeholder engagement we may request that you consult certain parties. If we feel that formal consultation is necessary due to certain constraints or designations we will carry that out. Please discuss this with your local Conservancy office.

## 5. Analysis and Management Strategy

Analyse the information you have collected in the previous sections to allow you to identify how to make the best use of the woodland and its resources to achieve your objectives.

- Analyse the context of the site and identify options for increasing the opportunities within the woodland.
- Explore how the trees and woodland can be actively managed using good silvicultural practice to ensure that the woodland is sustained and enhanced for the long-term.
- Consider the management responses to each threat identified in the woodland protection section.
- Explore options for re-designing the woodland, including its views, habitats, and access points.
- Take into account issues raised during stakeholder engagement (if it was undertaken).

### 5.1 Constraints and Opportunities

Complete the constraints and opportunities table to record your analysis. For example:

Feature/Issue	Constraint	Opportunity
<i>10 hectare PAWS compartment</i>	<i>Conifers are not at rotation age for economic clear felling</i>	<i>Site has good suitability for thinning</i>
<i>Red squirrels present</i>	<i>Grey squirrels present</i>	<i>Restock to improve habitat</i>
<i>Oak woodland SSSI</i>	<i>Deer present</i>	<i>Suppressed natural regeneration present</i>
<i>Core Path through woodland</i>	<i>Heavily used by local interest groups</i>	<i>Potential to improve views for users</i>
<i>Rhododendron abundant in compartment 2a</i>	<i>Large bushes on difficult terrain</i>	<i>Spread may be controlled on easier ground in other compartments</i>

### 5.1 Management Strategy

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The management strategy should address the constraints and opportunities analysis. This should include your strategy for any silvicultural improvements, and should consider such things as your silvicultural regime, direction of travel, desired species composition, productivity, rotation length, amenity, and long-term retention. If you are restocking you must detail the future species composition of the Management Plan area following implementation of the approved works, to ensure that species composition will meet the UKFS.

Give a concise statement of the strategy to achieve the desired outcome, for example:

*Manage woodland as a Continuous Cover (CCF) system to maintain habitat for Red squirrels. Encourage Douglas fir through either natural regeneration or underplanting.*

*Use conventional clear felling regime to maintain productivity. Restock with Sitka spruce, larch and broadleaved species to meet UKFS standards. Scots pine compartments to be retained as long-term retention.*

## 6. Management Proposals

This section should set out how you intend to achieve your management objectives. Give some detail about the operations you plan to carry out over the next 10 years. Include felling and restocking proposals, annual management (such as deer control), or planned capital works (such as fencing or scarification).

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## Annex 1: UK Forestry Standard Approval Criteria

Your Management Plan, and subsequent management, must be in accordance with the [UK Forestry Standard](#) (UKFS). The UKFS Requirements for forest planning are included below. We will assess your Management Plan against these criteria.

UKFS Requirement
State the objectives of management, and how sustainable forest management will be achieved.
Address the forest context and potential. Demonstrate how the relevant interests and issues have been considered and addressed.
In designated areas, for example national parks, particular account should be taken of landscape and other sensitivities in the design of forests and forest infrastructure.
At the time of felling and restocking, the design of existing forests should be re-assessed and any necessary changes made so that they meet UKFS Requirements.
Consultation on forest management plans and proposals should be carried out according to forestry authority procedures and, where required, the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.
Forests should be designed to achieve a diverse structure of habitat, and species and ages of trees, appropriate to the scale and context.
Forests characterised by a lack of diversity due to extensive areas of even-aged trees should be progressively restructured to achieve a range of age classes.
Management of the forest should conform to the plan, and the plan should be updated to ensure it is current and relevant.
New forests and woodlands should be located and designed to maintain or enhance the visual, cultural and ecological value and character of the landscape.