

CS & SFI Scheme updates

DEFRA update available here: [Environmental Land Management \(ELM\) update: how government will pay for land-based environment and climate goods and services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/environmental-land-management-elms-update-how-government-will-pay-for-land-based-environment-and-climate-goods-and-services)

Key points summary

- By 2024 CS changing to and SFI paid in quarterly payments
- Changing to an annual declaration for CS and SFI instead of revenue claim process
- SFI 3 year agreements
- SFI will pay to all entrants a £20 per hectare (ha) management payment per year, for up to the first 50 hectares entered into SFI actions to recognise the management costs and time involved for farmers in participating in SFI. This will represent a maximum payment of up to £1,000 per year.
- Three years to complete CS capital works activity and submit claims:
 - ⇒ for any new applications after 1 January 2023
 - ⇒ existing agreements can request an extension
- Application windows:
 - ⇒ Higher Tier window: 7th February to 28th April
 - ⇒ Mid Tier and Wildlife Offer: 21st March to 18th August.
 - ⇒ SFI year round applications from later in 2023
- Investigations underway to replace the cross compliance buffer strip with legislation to protect the same area

Holdings with a CS agreement can also have a SFI agreement, so long as payment is not made for the same actions twice on the same piece of land, and the actions are compatible.

As the schemes evolve SFI and CS will be a single, integrated online service, where farmers and land managers are able to select a combination of actions in SFI and CS that works for them.

Therefore, total payments for hedgerow management will be the same if entering just SFI or CS with additional SFI actions as:

- CS BE3 Management of Hedgerows and SFI Manage Hedgerows both pay £10/100m per side
- The additional SFI Assess Hedgerow Condition and SFI Manage Hedgerow Trees actions can be 'stacked' with either SFI or CS Hedgerow Management payments

Action	CS BE3 payment 1 side	SFI Payment for 1 side	CS/SFI for 2 sides
Management of hedgerows / 100m per side	£10	£10	£20
SFI Assess hedgerow condition	£3	£3	£6
SFI Manage Hedgerow Trees (whole hedge)	£10	£10	£10
TOTAL / 100m	£23	£23	£36

Successive hedgerow capital works applications can be made in separate years to address different sections of hedgerow that require laying, coppicing etc

For further information on hedges, see hedgeline.org.uk, devonhedges.org or contact your local FWAG South West adviser on 01823 660684, alternatively email info@fwagsw.org.uk or visit our website www.fwagsw.org.uk

Countryside Stewardship Updated Rates

Jan 2023

The [new revenue rates](#) will be introduced for all new and existing Mid Tier and Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship agreements from 1 January 2023.

Capital payment rate changes will apply to new Countryside Stewardship agreements only and not to existing agreements.

Details here: [Introducing SFI Management Payments and changes to Countryside Stewardship rates - Future Farming \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

Revenue Payment

Code	Action	OLD rate	NEW Rate 2023
BE3	Management of hedgerows / 100m per side	£9.00	£10.00

Capital Grants

Code	Action	OLD rate	NEW Rate 2023
BN1	Stone-faced bank repair / m	£31.00	£67.25
BN2	Stone-faced bank restoration / m	£86.00	£163.26
BN3	Creation of new earth banks / m	£13.50	£20.59
BN4	Earth bank restoration / m	£7.00	£10.54
BN5	Hedgerow laying / m	£9.40	£13.52
BN6	Hedgerow coppicing / m	£4.00	£5.33
BN7	Hedgerow gapping up / m	£9.50	£17.22
BN8	Hedgerow supplement - casting up / m	£3.00	£4.39
BN9	Hedgerow supplement – substantial pre-work / m	£4.10	£7.06
BN10	Hedgerow supplement – top binding / m	£3.40	£5.82
BN11	Hedgerow planting – new hedges / m	£11.60	£22.97
BN12	Stone wall restoration / m	£25.00	£31.91
BN13	Stone wall supplement – difficult sites / m	£3.60	£5.54
BN14	Stonewall supplement – stone from quarry / m	£44.00	£164.50
BN15	Stonewall supplement – difficult sites / m	£7.90	£15.91
TE1	Plant hedgerow tree / tree	£8.80	£19.06
TE3	Plant fruit tree / tree	£22.50	£28.07
TE6	Tree guard – tube and mesh / guard	£4.00	£3.95
TE7	Tree guard – post and rail / guard	£59.50	£109.64
TE8	Tree guard (wood post and wire) / guard	£84.00	£132.16

Now eligible:

- hedgerows which are less than 10 metres (m) wide (instead of less than 5m wide in CS)
- Earth or stone-faced banks with woody growth, i.e. Devon or Cornish hedges

Assess and record hedgerow condition

- assess the condition of all the hedgerows entered into this action
- produced a written hedgerow condition assessment record for those hedgerows
- complete the written hedgerow condition assessment record within the first 12 months of the SFI agreement
- Each subsequent year of the agreement:
 - ⇒ review the condition of the hedgerows
 - ⇒ update the written hedgerow condition assessment record

Payment: £3 per 100 metres – one side

Manage hedgerows

Manage fully established hedgerows by doing one of the following:

- cut each hedgerow incrementally
- on a rotation, cut each hedgerow no more than once every 3 years in the autumn and winter, cutting no more than one third of hedges each year
- on a rotation, cut each hedgerow no more than once every 2 years in late winter, cutting no more than half the hedges each year
- leave them uncut and manage them in a coppicing or laying rotation for the duration of your SFI agreement

Manage newly planted, or not fully established (up to 5 years old), hedges by light incremental trimming in the autumn and winter each year until they're fully established.

Payment: £10 per 100 metres – one side

Hedgerows entered into this action will be eligible for the following CS Capital Grants:

- BN5: Hedgerow laying
- BN6: Hedgerow coppicing
- BN7: Hedgerow gapping up

Maintain existing hedgerow trees, or establish new ones

- make sure there's an average of at least 1 hedgerow tree per 100m length of hedgerows entered into this action.
- averaged over the entire length of hedgerows so there may be some 100m lengths with no trees and others with more than one tree, provided overall there is an average of 1 tree per 100m.

By:

- maintaining existing trees growing within the hedgerow
- establishing new hedgerow trees
 - ⇒ select an existing sapling in the hedgerow with a single straight stem
 - ⇒ plant a new sapling
- Each newly established hedgerow tree must be tagged, so it can be avoided when cutting the hedgerow.
- Include dead and dying trees when counting how many hedgerow trees are in a given length as habitat for invertebrates, nesting birds and bats.
- Do not cut or damage the hedgerow trees that are being maintained or established under this action.

Payment: £10 per 100 metres - both sides (i.e. whole hedge)