

Guidance: Higher Tier: Countryside Stewardship

Updated: Options, supplements and capital items PDF updated to show option SW12 cannot be used on land already receiving funding for Ecological Focus Areas declared for Basic Payment Scheme.

These documents apply to the 2018 application round for Countryside Stewardship (CS).

Higher Tier closed for applications on 13 April 2018.

Use the manual to understand:

- the payments you could receive and how this scheme benefits the environment
- eligibility requirements
- how to apply
- the rules and conditions

Use Higher Tier and Mid Tier guidance on options, supplements and capital items:

- to understand the rules for each option, supplement and capital item
- for advice on carrying out options, supplements and capital items

Use the conversion guidance if:

- you're in the final year of an Environmental Stewardship (ES) agreement and want to put the land into a Higher Tier agreement
- there's a risk of to a site caused by loss of management between the end of your ES agreement and the start of a Higher Tier agreement

The manual has portrait and landscape pages. Before printing, select 'auto rotate' in your printer settings.

Overlap of CS options with Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs) in 2019

You can no longer overlap the following CS options with EFAs declared on your Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) 2019 application:

- [AB1 Nectar flower mix](#)
- [AB3 Beetle banks](#)
- [AB4 Skylark plots](#)
- [AB5 Nesting plots for lapwing and stone curlew](#)
- [AB6 Enhanced overwinter stubble](#)
- [AB8 Flower rich margins and plots](#)

- [AB9 Winter bird food](#)
- [AB11 Cultivated areas for arable plants](#)
- [AB15 Two year sown legume fallow](#)
- [AB16 Autumn sown bumblebird mix](#)
- [HS2 Take historic and archaeological features out of cultivation](#)
- [OP2 Organic wild bird seed mixture](#)
- [SW1 4 to 6 metre buffer strip on cultivated land](#)
- [SW3 In-field grass strips](#)
- [SW4 12 to 24 metre watercourse buffer strips on cultivated land](#)
- [SW6 Winter cover crops](#)
- [SW12 Making space for water](#)
- [WD3 Woodland edges on arable land](#)
- [WT2 Buffering in-field ponds and ditches on arable land](#)

This is to avoid funding the same activity on the same land parcel under both CS and BPS, known as 'double funding'. You can continue to place CS options and EFAs in the same land parcel but they cannot overlap.

In 2018, your Ecological Focus Area (EFA) cover crops must be established by 1 October 2018 and retained until at least 15 January 2019. Natural England will not consider the retention of the EFA cover crops as an overlap with 1 January 2019 CS agreements. This assumes you'll move the cover crops to a different location in 2019.

Hedges can be used for EFA and for Entry Level Stewardship, Higher Level Stewardship and CS options without payment deductions.

Find out more about CS funding

See:

- [Wildlife Offers](#) for information on the 4 new CS Offers for Wildlife for 2018
- [Countryside Stewardship](#) for details of other funding

[Guidance: Mid Tier: Countryside Stewardship](#)

Updated: Mid Tier is closed for applications.

Mid Tier closed for applications on 31 August 2018.

Use the manual to understand:

- the payments you could receive and how this scheme benefits the

environment

- eligibility requirements
- the rules and conditions that apply to Mid Tier and the [4 Wildlife Offers](#)

Use the options, supplements and capital items document or [CS grant finder](#):

- to understand the rules for each of them
- for advice on how to carry them out

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Overlap of Countryside Stewardship (CS) options with Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs) in 2019

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- [AB1 Nectar flower mix](#)
- [AB3 Beetle banks](#)
- [AB4 Skylark plots](#)
- [AB5 Nesting plots for lapwing and stone curlew](#)
- [AB6 Enhanced overwinter stubble](#)
- [AB8 Flower rich margins and plots](#)
- [AB9 Winter bird food](#)
- [AB11 Cultivated areas for arable plants](#)
- [AB15 Two year sown legume fallow](#)
- [AB16 Autumn sown bumblebird mix](#)
- [HS2 Take historic and archaeological features out of cultivation](#)
- [OP2 Organic wild bird seed mixture](#)
- [SW1 4 to 6 metre buffer strip on cultivated land](#)
- [SW3 In-field grass strips](#)
- [SW4 12 to 24 metre watercourse buffer strips on cultivated land](#)
- [SW6 Winter cover crops](#)
- [WD3 Woodland edges on arable land](#)
- [WT2 Buffering in-field ponds and ditches on arable land](#)

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Hedges can be used for EFA and for Entry Level Stewardship, Higher Level Stewardship and CS options without payment deductions.

Find out more about CS funding

See [Countryside Stewardship](#) for details of other funding.

Contact

Contact Natural England if you have any queries:

Enquiries

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Find out about call charges at www.gov.uk/call-charges.

[Map: River Thames Scheme: key features map and channels](#)

Updated: we have updated the map to show the latest information

The map shows the area covered under the scheme of which the Environment Agency plans to reduce flood risk between Datchet and Teddington, the largest area of undefended floodplain in England.

Policy paper: River Thames Scheme: reducing flood risk from Datchet to Teddington

Updated: Updated to show the latest project progress

The River Thames Scheme will reduce flood risk to people living and working near the Thames, enhance the resilience of nationally important infrastructure, contribute to a vibrant local economy and maximise the social and environmental value of the river.

Collection: River Thames Scheme

Updated: We have updated the page with current information about the River Thames Scheme including updated maps.

The River Thames Scheme will reduce flood risk to people living and working near the Thames, enhance the resilience of nationally important infrastructure, contribute to a vibrant local economy and maximise the social and environmental value of the river.

Between 2020 and 2025 we will build a new flood channel alongside the River Thames to reduce flood risk to 15,000 properties in communities in Datchet, Wraysbury, Egham, Staines, Chertsey, Shepperton, Weybridge, Sunbury, Molesey, Thames Ditton, Kingston and Teddington.

The channel will be built in 3 sections and includes widening of the Desborough Cut and increasing the capacity of weirs at Sunbury, Molesey, and Teddington by installing additional weir gates.

15,000 homes and 2,400 business will be better protected from flooding. Road, rail, power and water networks will be more resilient. We will create 106 hectares of new public open space and 23km of new pathways. We will improve biodiversity for wildlife through the creation of 250 hectares of new habitat.

Construction of the new channel gives us the opportunity to create habitats for wildlife and recreation activities including walking, cycling, boating and angling.

As development work continues, we are working with communities between Datchet and Teddington to increase their resilience to flooding. This

includes working with emergency services, local councils and other organisations to co-ordinate their response during major floods.