

## The English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS): Forestry Commission

### Woodland Creation Grant

The Woodland Creation Grant forms part of the Forestry Commission's English Woodland Grant Scheme. It offers discretionary grants to create woodland that will benefit the public. If eligible you could receive in the region of £1,800 per hectare for broadleaved trees. If the land to be planted is currently in agriculture you could receive up to a further £300 per hectare per year to compensate for income forgone. If you chose other options, this amount may be topped up even more. This scheme offers the potential to receive up to £7,000 per hectare over 15 years.

For more information visit: [www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk) or contact your local Forestry Commission office.

## Environmental Stewardship: Rural Development Service (RDS)

### Higher Level Scheme (HLS)\*

This scheme, which forms part of the Environmental Stewardship scheme, offers grants for planting woodland on land currently in agricultural production. This option allows the woodland to be incorporated into an existing farm management plan. The area of woodland to be created must not exceed a one hectare 'block' or a total of three hectares over the whole farm. You could receive between £200-315 per hectare per year for 10 years. A capital works payment is also provided to help purchase trees, tree guards, stakes, fencing and other such items. You could receive up to £6,000 per hectare\*\*. Once the woodland has established you may also be eligible for a woodland management grant.

For more information visit: [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk) or contact your local RDS office.

\*To apply for this scheme you must also enter the Entry Level Scheme (ELS) and have your land listed on the Rural Land Register (RLR).

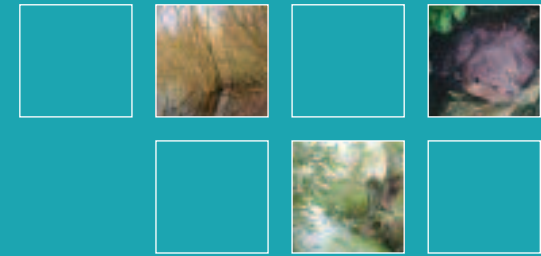
\*\* All calculations are approximate and will differ depending on specific circumstances.

## Case Study: Maxey Quarry, Peterborough



The Broadwalks © Abie Meddings

Tarmac Ltd has designed a restoration plan for Maxey Quarry that includes approximately 15ha of wet woodland. It is to be created as part of a mosaic of habitats, which together will be of great value for wildlife. This is a cost effective way of restoring such sites, as wet woodland requires relatively little management or maintenance.



Understanding and Creating

# Wet Woodland

## Case Study: Maxey Castle Farm

A small area of unused land (0.2ha) was planted up in 2004 on a meander of the River Welland at Maxey Castle Farm. The trees planted included alder and willows such as grey, goat and crack willows. Once established even small areas like this will provide a valuable habitat for otters and other wildlife.

### Contacting the project

We are working across the region liaising with landowners and tenants. If you would like further information, help or advice in creating or extending wet woodland on your land then please contact:

The Wet Woodlands Project Officer  
The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire  
Northamptonshire and Peterborough  
Tel: 01954 713500



## What is wet woodland?

Wet woodland is found on continuously and seasonally wet soils. It comprises mainly alder and willow, with ash and oak on the less waterlogged areas. Today these woodlands are often small and grow on the banks of rivers, streams, lakes, even large ponds and on marshy or boggy ground. They may form part of a larger 'dry' wood. Wet woodlands can eventually turn into dry woodland as the ground conditions change and new species grow, therefore little ancient wet woodland exists. You can find more information on wet woods at [www.ukbap.org.uk](http://www.ukbap.org.uk)



## Why is wet woodland important?

- It was once a widespread habitat in East Anglia particularly on the Fens. Wet woods still form a valuable part of the historic landscape.
- It provides shelter and food for animals. Such woods are often inaccessible to people encouraging otters and other shy animals to use them.
- It contains large amounts of dead wood that in turn supports a wide diversity of invertebrates. These invertebrates are an essential part of the ecosystem, as they break down waste matter and provide the nutrients for plants to grow.
- It often forms a mosaic with other habitats resulting in a large variety of species in a small area.
- It helps to stabilise river banks, can reduce the risk of flooding and helps to prevent the run off of fertilisers and pesticides into watercourses.

Above images (from left to right – Marsh Marigold © English Nature, Wet woodland © Matthew O'Brien, Otter © English Nature

Animals and plants found in wet woodlands include:

- mammals** – otter, pipistrelle, Natterer's, brown long-eared and noctule bats
- birds** – lesser spotted woodpecker, willow tit, redpoll, siskin
- invertebrates** – craneflies, netted carpet moth
- plants** – greater tussock sedge, celandine, marsh marigold
- mosses, liverworts, lichens.**

## Why does it need protecting?

Since the 1930s much of this region's wet woodland has been lost mainly due to agricultural drainage and intensification, but also to industrial and residential development, river management and the decline in the willow craft industry. Landscape, wildlife and water quality have all suffered as a result. Many wet woods in the region have been felled to create alternative habitats such as reedbeds. On some river stretches, next to arable land, there are now very few areas for otters to shelter because suitable trees with large root systems overhanging the water have been cut down.



You can see a good example of a relic wet woodland habitat at Ferry Meadows Country Park (Nene Park Trust) in Peterborough. This wet wood contains traditional osier beds and pollarded willows, which are still used in traditional craft industries today.

Another example is Flitwick Moor SSSI – the largest and most important wetland site in Bedfordshire. Wet alder woodland dominates large parts of this site along with areas of open acid mire and fen. The alder woodland seems to have been coppiced in the past probably to make charcoal for the manufacture of gunpowder. Flitwick Moor is fed by springs from the underlying

Above images (from left to right – Nene Park willow © Chris Haynes, Flitwick © BCNP Wildlife Trust

Lower Greensand aquifer and supports a range of rare plants and insects with *Sphagnum* mosses, ferns and craneflies of particular interest. It is one of the only remaining sites in Bedfordshire where you'll find wood club-rush and breeding water rails.

## What is the wet woodland project?

This project is working across Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough to:

- extend existing and create new areas of wet woodland to increase the habitat resource
- maintain and manage the existing wet woodland resource
- raise awareness of the importance of wet woodland for wildlife and the historic landscape.

## How can you help?

- Identify an area of land you think would be suitable for wet woodland, eg a meander of a river or an expanse of boggy waterlogged ground
- contact the Wet Woodland Project for help and advice (see over)
- decide on which grant scheme, if any, you want to enter the land into (see over) and apply for scheme
- You can also help by protecting existing wet woodland from development, drainage and agricultural intensification.

## How do you get funding?

Discretionary grants are available to landowners who want either to plant trees or create woodland through natural regeneration. These grants are explained overleaf.