



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE, DOCUMENT

Habitat Wales Scheme: outline

On the 21 July 2023, an interim agri-environment scheme was announced to maintain and increase the area of habitat land under management across Wales.

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Introduction

The new scheme, Habitat Wales, will provide an alternative offer of support to all eligible farmers, including Glastir Advanced, Commons and Organic farmers when their contracts end on 31 December 2023.

This document provides an outline of the Habitat Wales scheme, prior to the full guidance document becoming available.

Aims of the Habitat Wales scheme

- protect habitat land previously under management in 2023 up to the full introduction of the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) in 2025
- introduce additional habitat land, not currently under paid management, into sustainable land management prior to start of SFS
- maintain environmental support for common land

The scheme will be open to all eligible farmers and Grazing Associations.

Land classifications

There will be three eligible land classifications:

- land currently under a habitat option within a Glastir Advanced contract (including Glastir Commons)
- habitat land (excluding designated sites), not currently under management in 2023, as identified by published maps on [DataMapWales](#)
- land managed as habitat. (This land has potential to become habitat land

following management.)

Management payments for designated sites within existing Glastir contracts will be maintained, however, designated sites, not currently under a Glastir contract will not be eligible for payment under the Habitat Wales scheme.

Application process

The application window for the Habitat Wales scheme will open 29 September 2023 with 12 month contracts offered, commencing 1 January 2024.

Applications will be submitted via your RPW online account and will be farmer led, i.e. there will be no contract managers visiting farms.

Habitat areas will be pre-populated onto the on-line application form.

The contract will be an “all habitat” agreement; applicants will not be able to select which habitat areas to include in the contract.

Applicants can include additional land to be managed as habitat in the application.

There will be a competitive scoring and selection process; the scheme will target areas where we can achieve the greatest environmental benefits.

Management requirements

Land submitted within an EoI will be placed within 10 broad habitat classifications with minimum management requirements set for each habitat classification.

The broad habitat classifications are:

1. Arable Plants
2. Coastal and lowland Heath
3. Coastal Vegetated Shingle and Sand Dune
4. Enclosed Wetland Habitats
5. Existing trees, scrub and woodland
6. Saltmarsh
7. Grazing management of open Country
8. Permanent Dry Grassland with No inputs
9. Inland Rocks and Scree
10. Land Managed as Habitat

The following are examples of management requirements:

You agree not to:

- plough/cultivate, reseed or improve habitat
- apply any inorganic or organic fertilisers such as farmyard manure, slurry, sewage sludge or chicken manure
- apply pesticides (except for spot treatment of invasive species or notifiable weeds)
- allow the area to be poached (existing gateways, feeding and watering areas are acceptable, providing poached and bare areas are less than 5% cover)
- apply lime
- supplementary feed any livestock, except for existing feeding and watering areas
- cut or top more than 30% of rush or weed species in any one year

Claims and payment

The payment rates for habitat management are:

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For individual farm business

Habitat land	£69 / ha
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Woodland habitat	£62 / ha
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For common land

Common land management payment	£25 / ha
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Additional payment for stock management	£15 / ha
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Additional payment for mixed grazing	£12 / ha
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Additional payment for reduce stocking	£259 / LU
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The maximum payment to individual applicants will be capped.

Successful applicants will submit a claim via their SAF form in 2024.

No supporting capital works will be offered as part of the scheme, successful applicants will be eligible to apply for the Small Grants – Environmental scheme for capital support.

Full guidance will be published on our [Rural Grants and Payments pages](#) prior to the six-week application window opening.

Note: This scheme is under development and could be subject to change prior to

the final guidance being published.

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