

# WOODLAND CREATION IN ORKNEY 2023

## Background

The Orkney Woodland Project ran between 1998 and 2013, during which time free advice was given to anyone interested in planting or managing woodland. The project obtained grants for over 200 mostly small, new woodlands to be created.

After a period with no project and with new grants again available, the Woodland Trust Scotland began funding free advice and grant applications under their Croft Woodland Project. In Orkney, the local contact person is Jane Rawle (from Feb. 2019). Advice can be given to anyone, from farmers to people with just a small area of land which may be suitable for a new woodland. Community projects are welcomed too.

## Available Advice

The first step is a site visit to look at the site conditions, soil, exposure, existing vegetation and any sensitivities. Then, after discussion of your aspirations, a brief report and plan will be prepared for you to consider. Once you are happy with this, a costing/grant estimate will be prepared and may give you a comparison between the two available grants (see below). If you then want to proceed, a grant application can be done and once this is approved, you can start planting!

## Available Grants

There are currently two different grant streams available. Both these grants are aimed at creating mainly native woodland, although the choice of species may vary depending on the site and its context.

A Brief Comparison of the Available Grants	
1. Forestry Grant Scheme	2. Woodland Trust grant (MOREwoods)
A grant through Scottish Forestry.	The Woodland Trust's own grant scheme aimed at small, high quality schemes.
Available to anyone who is, or wants to become, registered with SGRPID - the application requires Main Location Code, LPID's and a Business Reference Number.	Available to anyone. No registration of land or business required.
Site visit, plan, plant schedule and other advice can be supplied at no cost.	Site visit, plan, plant schedule and other advice can be supplied at no cost.
Minimum area of 0.25 and maximum of 1.0 hectare. Minimum width of 15 metres. 15% open ground (unplanted) allowed. Minimum density of 3000 per hectare (though more may be needed in exposed locations).	Minimum area of 0.1 hectares or 300 trees Density 3000-3500 per hectare as appropriate to the site with high density in any exposed locations.
£4050 per ha plus £702 per annum for 5 years (maintenance payments). Possible additional grant for guards and/or fencing. Max. 1 hectare funded for North Isles.	60% of costs of trees, stakes and guards. There is no longer the option of 80% costs, should fencing be required.

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Proposal to be appropriate and have been approved by Orkney Woodland Group to ensure no conflicts with other biodiversity or archaeological interests.	Proposal to be appropriate and have been approved by Orkney Woodland Group to ensure no conflicts with other biodiversity or archaeological interests.
No adverse effects on neighbours - advisable to discuss with nearby neighbours in advance of application.	No adverse effects on neighbours - advisable to discuss with nearby neighbours in advance of application.
Up to 80%, Downy Birch, Rowan, Aspen, (grey and tea-leaved willow) to be of Orkney native provenance and other Scottish natives from appropriate seed zone. Up to 20% mixed broadleaves or conifers where appropriate.	Downy Birch, Rowan, Aspen (grey and tea-leaved willow) to be of Orkney native provenance. Other Scottish natives from appropriate seed zone.
Fairly complicated application process but would be done on your behalf with 80% of the agent's cost covered and may take 3-6 months to be approved. If client withdraws after FGS application approved, then a further 70% of agent's fees to be paid by client (so 90% total).	Much simpler application process which will be done on your behalf at no cost and should be processed within a few weeks.
Site owners order all materials as per specification in contract and pay suppliers (advice on sources and species list will be supplied). Grant claimed after work is completed.	Materials ordered for you and available for collection from a central point in Orkney. Site owners pay Woodland Trust on an invoice according to percentage grant agreed.
Site may be inspected and all must be exactly as in contract eg. boundaries in exact locations etc. Penalties apply if contract conditions are not met.	Agreed contract should be adhered to, but slightly more flexibility may be allowed if changes seem appropriate.
Contract period of 20 years. Minimum agreed stocking density must be maintained and the trees protected from animals during this time.	Simpler contract, but with intention of retaining area as woodland and protecting it from damage for 30 years.

#### Further Information :

1. Orkney Woodland Project website : <http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/WOODLAND>  
This will be updated with current information

2. Forestry Grant Scheme :

See <https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/woodland-creation> and look at the 'Native Broadleaves in the Northern and Western Isles' grant for rates and criteria.

**Contact:** Jane Rawle for further information.  
Tel: 07799331522

Email: [janerawle.owp@gmail.com](mailto:janerawle.owp@gmail.com).  
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