

# BN11: Planting new hedges

Find out about eligibility and requirements for the planting new hedges item.

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From: [Rural Payments Agency \(/government/organisations/rural-payments-agency\)](#) and [Natural England \(/government/organisations/natural-england\)](#)

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Grant type: [Capital item \(/countryside-stewardship-grants?grant\\_type=capital-item\)](#)

Land use: [Air quality \(/countryside-stewardship-grants?land\\_use=air-quality\)](#), [Biodiversity \(/countryside-stewardship-grants?land\\_use=biodiversity\)](#), [Boundaries \(/countryside-stewardship-grants?land\\_use=boundaries\)](#), [Priority habitats \(/countryside-stewardship-grants?land\\_use=priority-habitats\)](#) and [Uplands \(/countryside-stewardship-grants?land\\_use=uplands\)](#)

Tiers or standalone items: [Higher Tier \(/countryside-stewardship-grants?tiers\\_or\\_standalone\\_items=higher-tier\)](#) and [Mid Tier \(/countryside-stewardship-grants?tiers\\_or\\_standalone\\_items=mid-tier\)](#)

Funding (per unit per year): [Up to £100 \(/countryside-stewardship-grants?funding\\_amount=up-to-100\)](#)

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This item is part of Capital Grants. You must read the [Capital items: guidance for applicants and agreement holders](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/capital-items-guidance-for-applicants-and-agreement-holders>) to understand the rules and how to apply.

## **How much you'll be paid**

£22.97 per metre (m). The payment rate is for the total length of hedgerow under the item, not for each side of the boundary.

## How this item benefits the environment

Creating new lengths of hedgerow planted with locally occurring native species provides new habitat and food sources for bees, pollinators and birds. It also helps capture carbon.

This item can help you protect, recover and improve biodiversity on your land.

## Where you can use this item

You can only use this item where you have management control of both sides of the boundary:

- on former hedgerows (shown on historic maps or other records)
- where new planting extends hedgerows or links existing lengths of hedgerow
- where new planting reduces soil erosion and runoff
- where new planting helps capture ammonia emissions close to slurry or digestate stores, livestock housing or free-range areas for poultry or pigs
- to plant new hedges on earth and stone-faced hedge banks

## What you must do to use this item

You must:

- plant between 1 November and 31 March
- prepare a planting strip at least 1.5m wide with good soil conditions
- clear existing vegetation to remove competition for new planting
- only apply herbicides to the 1.5m strip in August or September before planting

- remove all individual guards and tree shelters once the plants are established
- replace all failed plants in the following planting season
- trim the newly planted hedge within the first 2 years of agreement to encourage bushy growth, allowing the hedge to become taller and wider at each cut
- prevent livestock and grazing animals from damaging the hedge by setting fencing at least 1.2m from the centre of the hedge or as close to the base of the bank as possible (if there's a bank)

## Planting requirements

Make sure plants are:

- 2-year-old transplants
- between 450 millimetres (mm) and 600mm high
- native species, with no single species making up more than 70% of the total
- planted in 2 rows 40 centimetres (cm) apart that are staggered with at least 6 plants per metre
- kept clear of weeds until they're established

You must not obstruct or block [entry points to open access land \(https://www.gov.uk/right-of-way-open-access-land/use-your-right-to-roam\)](https://www.gov.uk/right-of-way-open-access-land/use-your-right-to-roam).

## Evidence you must keep

You must keep and provide an historic map or other records with your application that shows:

- the proposed location of hedge planting is on the footprint of an original boundary line
- your planting will extend existing hedges
- new planting will contribute to the reduction of soil erosion and run-off – you can mark this on any

map including your Farm Environment Record

You must also keep photographs of the completed work and provide them with your claim.

You must also keep and provide on request:

- any consents or permissions connected with the work
- receipted invoices or bank statements where a receipted invoice is unavailable
- the date, location and method of any weed control undertaken
- the dates of planting the hedge
- details of age, height and species planted
- photographs to show the planned location for each length of hedge planting

Read the record keeping and site visit requirements in the [Agreement holder's guide: Capital Grants, Higher Tier capital grants and Protection and Infrastructure grants](#) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agreement-holders-guide-capital-grants-higher-tier-capital-grants-and-protection-and-infrastructure-grants-2025>) for more information.

## **Other items and actions you can use with this item**

### **Capital items**

You can use this item with these items:

#### **BN3: Earth bank creation**

[\(https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/earth-bank-creation-bn3\)](https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/earth-bank-creation-bn3)

#### **BN4: Earth bank restoration**

[\(https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/earth-bank-restoration-bn4\)](https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/earth-bank-restoration-bn4)

[BN9: Hedgerow supplement - substantial pre-work  
\(https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hedgerow-supplement-substantial-pre-work-bn9\)](https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/hedgerow-supplement-substantial-pre-work-bn9)

[TE1: Planting standard hedgerow tree  
\(https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/planting-standard-hedgerow-tree-te1\)](https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/planting-standard-hedgerow-tree-te1)

[TE3: Planting fruit trees \(https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/planting-fruit-trees-te3\)](https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/planting-fruit-trees-te3)

## **Sustainable Farming Incentive actions**

Once planted, the new hedge is compatible with these actions:

[CHRW1: Assess and record hedgerow condition  
\(https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/chrw1-assess-and-record-hedgerow-condition\)](https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/chrw1-assess-and-record-hedgerow-condition)

[CHRW2: Manage hedgerows \(https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/chrw2-manage-hedgerows\)](https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/chrw2-manage-hedgerows)

[CHRW3: Maintain or establish hedgerow trees  
\(https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/chrw3-maintain-or-establish-hedgerow-trees\)](https://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/chrw3-maintain-or-establish-hedgerow-trees)

## **Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier actions**

You can use this item with CHRW4: Manage hedgerows

## **Advice to help you use this item**

The following advice may help you to use this item, but you do not have to follow it to get paid. It's not part of this item's requirements.

### **When to plant**

You can plant any time between 1 November and 31 March unless:

- the ground is frozen or waterlogged – then plant when conditions are favourable
- you're planting in clay – then plant in March
- you're planting into a newly-restored earth bank – then plant the following autumn

## Planting

To plant a hedgerow successfully:

- prepare the ground so the soil becomes friable (has a crumbly texture) and is clear of other growth
- plant native species that already grow in the local area
- take care of roots before planting by keeping them always covered
- avoid opening more than one bag of plants at a time

If the landscape is characterised by single-species hedgerows, the planting mix should reflect this and one of the following species should make up to 70% of the planting mix:

- hawthorn
- blackthorn
- hazel

Use other native shrub species intermixed randomly with the main species, rather than planted in a block or blocks.

Consider planting new hedgerow trees if they're characteristic of the local landscape character.

## Controlling weeds

Control competitive weeds (including brambles, nettles and grasses) during the first growing season. You should not use a strimmer as these can damage the plants.

## Protecting the plants

Fence off the plants if sheep, cattle or horses graze the land. Keep fences far enough away so the hedgerow can grow at least 1.5m in width.

If there's a known problem with rabbits or hares you can use rabbit netting, either on its own or with stock fencing.

Avoid using spiral guards as they limit the amount of dense growth at the base of each plant, are unsightly and difficult to remove.

## Where to plant new hedgerows

New hedgerow planting can help control soil erosion and runoff. Hedgerows planted along contours will decrease slope length, reduce the force of surface flow and encourage infiltration. Hedges planted alongside watercourses are also effective.

Look out for signs of soil damage and erosion such as capping, rilling and brown water runoff on long or steep slopes (particularly on sandy soils). Prioritise areas of high erosion risk, in particular areas adjacent to watercourses.

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