Section 3
Option directory for OELS and Uplands OELS

All new text, including new options and changes to existing options, is highlighted in blue.

The text of each prescription has been colour-coded as follows:

- Black text – these instructions must be followed irrespective of whether the land is eligible for Organic Entry Level Stewardship (OELS) or Entry Level Stewardship (ELS).
- Green highlighted text – this refers to OELS options and prescriptions that must be followed on your OELS-eligible land only. OELS option codes are prefixed with an 'O' and Uplands OELS options start with 'UO'.
- Orange highlighted text – this refers to ELS options and prescriptions that must be followed on your ELS-eligible land only. ELS option codes are prefixed with an 'E' and Uplands ELS options start with a 'U'.

Please note: if you experience any difficulty distinguishing between the various colours, please contact your Natural England regional office for a black-and-white copy of the OELS (including Uplands OELS) and ELS (including Uplands ELS) requirements.

3.1 Introduction to compulsory requirements and options

To join OELS you must make a commitment to carry out certain environmental management options, on both your OELS-eligible land and where appropriate your ELS-eligible land, which you can choose from a wide-ranging menu. Each option is worth a certain number of points per unit of area (eg buffer strip options), length (eg hedge management options) or number (eg in-field tree options). If you agree to deliver enough OELS points on your OELS-eligible land and ELS points on your ELS-eligible land to meet (or exceed) your separate OELS and ELS points target, you will be guaranteed entry into the scheme.

Table 3 below is a list of all the OELS, ELS, Uplands OELS and Uplands ELS compulsory requirements and management options with their corresponding points allocations. This table includes icons which indicate which objective each option is a priority for (see below). Details about each requirement and option can be found in Sections 3.3 to 3.5 after the summary table.

Table 3 shows which options are a priority for the different OELS objectives (see Section 2 for more details) using a series of icons. The icons represent the objectives as follows:

Table 2 Priority, objectives and icons

	Climate change adaptation		Birds
	Climate change mitigation		Biodiversity (wildlife and upland birds)
	Historic environment		Water quality
	Landscape		Soil quality

Some options can only be applied on or across a limited area of land. This is known as an Area Constraint. If you fail to keep to the stated limits, you are liable to be penalised if you are inspected. The options that have Area Constraints are identified in Section 3.4, and you should read and understand all of the detailed management requirements for each option you select.

The Uplands OELS options are only available within the Severely Disadvantaged Area (SDA) as part of an Uplands OELS application. You may also use OELS or ELS options within the SDA where the relevant eligibility conditions are met. You must have either UOX2, UX2, UOX3 or UX3 on each land parcel within the SDA.

There are several new options in 2013. They have been added as part of the programme, *Making Environmental Stewardship More Effective*. They are highlighted in the table. Some of the existing options have also been amended as part of the programme.

Table 3 Summary table of OELS, ELS, Uplands OELS and Uplands ELS compulsory requirements, options and points

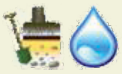
Code	Option	Unit	Points	Priority option for...	Page
Conversion aid payments					
	Top fruit orchard	ha	600		42
	Improved land category	ha	175		42
Compulsory requirements for OELS					
OU1	Organic management	ha	30		42
OA1/ EA1	Farm Environment Record ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	1		43
Compulsory requirements for SDA land in Uplands OELS					
UOX2 /UX2	Upland grassland and arable requirements	ha	11		43
UOX3 /UX3	Moorland requirements	ha	15		44
Options for OELS					
B Options for boundary features					
OB1 /EB1	Hedgerow management for landscape (on both sides of a hedge) ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	16		47
OB2 /EB2	Hedgerow management for landscape (on one side of a hedge) ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	8		47
OB3 /EB3	Hedgerow management for landscape and wildlife ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	42		48
OB4 /EB4	Stone-faced hedgebank management on both sides	100 m	16		49
OB5 /EB5	Stone-faced hedgebank management on one side	100 m	8		49
OB6 /EB6	Ditch management	100 m	24		49
OB7 /EB7	Half ditch management	100 m	8		50
OB8 /EB8	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating OB1/ EB1 Hedgerow management for landscape [on both sides of a hedge]) ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	38		51
OB9 /EB9	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating OB2/ EB2 Hedgerow management for landscape [on one side of a hedge])	100 m	26		51
OB10 /EB10	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating OB3/ EB3 Hedgerow management for landscape and wildlife) ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	56		51

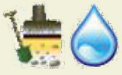
Code	Option	Unit	Points	Priority option for...	Page
OB11 /EB11	Stone wall protection and maintenance ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	15		52
OB12 /EB12	Earth bank management on both sides ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	14		53
OB13 /EB13	Earth bank management on one side ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	7		53
OB14 /EB14	Hedgerow restoration ***NEW in 2013*** *Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission*	m	10		54
C Options for trees and woodland					
OC1	Protection of in-field trees on rotational land ***UPDATED in 2013***	tree	16		56
EC1	Protection of in-field trees on arable land ***UPDATED in 2013***	tree	16		56
OC2	Protection of in-field trees on organic grassland ***UPDATED in 2013***	tree	11		56
EC2	Protection of in-field trees on grassland ***UPDATED in 2013***	tree	11		56
OC3 /EC3	Maintenance of woodland fences	100 m	4		57
OC4 /EC4	Management of woodland edges ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	380		57
OC23 /EC23	Establishment of hedgerow trees by tagging ***UPDATED in 2013***	tree	1		59
OC24	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on rotational land	ha	500		60
EC24	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on cultivated land	ha	400		60
OC25	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on organic grassland	ha	500		61
EC25	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on grassland	ha	400		61
D Options for historic and landscape features					
OD1 /ED1	Maintenance of weatherproof traditional farm buildings ***UPDATED in 2013***	m^2	2		62

Code	Option	Unit	Points	Priority option for...	Page
OD2	Take out of cultivation archaeological features currently on rotational land	ha	600		64
ED2	Take out of cultivation archaeological features currently on cultivated land	ha	460		64
OD3 /ED3	Reduced-depth, non-inversion cultivation on archaeological features (minimum till)	ha	100/60		65
OD4 /ED4	Management of scrub on archaeological features	ha	120		66
OD5 /ED5	Management of archaeological features on grassland	ha	16		66
E Options for buffer strips					
OE1	2 m buffer strips on rotational land ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	340		69
EE1	2 m buffer strips on cultivated land ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	255		69
OE2	4 m buffer strips on rotational land ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	425		69
EE2	4 m buffer strips on cultivated land ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	340		69
OE3	6 m buffer strips on rotational land ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	425		70
EE3	6 m buffer strips on cultivated land ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	340		70
OE4	2 m buffer strips on organic grassland ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	340		70
EE4	2 m buffer strips on intensive grassland ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	255		70
OE5	4 m buffer strips on organic grassland ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	425		70
EE5	4 m buffer strips on intensive grassland ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	340		70
OE6	6 m buffer strips on organic grassland ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	425		70

Code	Option	Unit	Points	Priority option for...	Page
EE6	6 m buffer strips on intensive grassland ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	340		70
OE7	Buffering in-field ponds in organic grassland	ha	500		71
EE7	Buffering in-field ponds in improved permanent grassland	ha	400		71
OE8	Buffering in-field ponds in rotational land	ha	500		71
EE8	Buffering in-field ponds in arable land	ha	400		71
OE9	6 m buffer strips on rotational land next to a watercourse ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	500		70
EE9	6 m buffer strips on cultivated land next to a watercourse ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	400		70
OE10	6 m buffer strips on organic grassland next to a watercourse ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	500		70
EE10	6 m buffer strips on intensive grassland next to a watercourse ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	400		70
OE12 /EE12	Supplement to add wildflowers to field corners and buffer strips on cultivated land ***NEW in 2013*** *Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission*	ha	63		73
F Options for arable and rotational land					
OF1 /EF1	Management of field corners ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	500/ 400		73
OF2 /EF2	Wild bird seed mixture ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	550/ 450		75
OF4 /EF4	Nectar flower mixture ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	550/ 450		76
OF6 /EF6	Overwintered stubble ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	150/ 120		77
OF7 /EF7	Beetle banks	ha	750/ 580		78
OF8 /EF8	Skylark plots	plot	5		79

Code	Option	Unit	Points	Priority option for...	Page
EF9	Cereal headlands for birds ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	100		80
EF10	Unharvested cereal headlands for birds and rare arable plants ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	330		81
OF11 /EF11	Uncropped cultivated margins for rare plants	ha	460/ 400		81
OF13	Uncropped cultivated areas for ground-nesting birds	ha	360		82
EF13	Uncropped cultivated areas for ground-nesting birds on arable land	ha	360		82
EF15	Reduced herbicide cereal crops followed by overwintered stubble ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	195		83
EF22	Extended overwintered stubble	ha	410		84
OF23 /EF23	Supplementary feeding in winter for farmland birds ***NEW in 2013*** *Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission*	tonne	612/ 630		85
G Options to encourage a range of crop types					
OG1 /EG1	Undersown spring cereals	ha	150/ 200		86
OG4 /EG4	Cereals for whole-crop silage followed by overwintered stubble ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	250/ 230		86
J Options to protect soil and water					
OJ2 /EJ2	Management of maize crops to reduce soil erosion	ha	18		88
OJ5 /EJ5	In-field grass areas to prevent erosion and run-off ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	454		89
OJ9	12 m buffer strips for watercourses on rotational land ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	500		90
EJ9	12 m buffer strips for watercourses on cultivated land ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	400		90
EJ10	Enhanced management of maize crops to reduce soil erosion and run-off	ha	94		91

Code	Option	Unit	Points	Priority option for...	Page
OJ11 /EJ11	Maintenance of watercourse fencing	100 m	4		91
OJ13 /EJ13	Winter cover crops	ha	65		92
K Options for grassland outside the Severely Disadvantaged Areas (SDAs)					
OK1 /EK1	Take field corners out of management	ha	500/ 400		93
OK2 /EK2	Permanent grassland with low inputs	ha	115/ 85		94
OK3 /EK3	Permanent grassland with very low inputs	ha	180/ 150		95
OK4 /EK4	Management of rush pastures	ha	180/ 150		96
OK20 /EK20	Ryegrass seed-set as winter/spring food for birds ***NEW in 2013*** *Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission*	ha	190/ 80		97
OK21 /EK21	Legume-and herb-rich swards ***NEW in 2013*** *Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission*	ha	250/ 200		97
Option for mixed stocking on grassland					
OK5 /EK5	Mixed stocking	ha	9		98
L Options for grassland and moorland inside Severely Disadvantaged Areas (SDAs)					
OL1 /EL1	Take field corners out of management in SDAs	ha	100		100
OL2 /EL2	Permanent grassland with low inputs in SDAs	ha	35		100
OL3 /EL3	Permanent grassland with very low inputs in SDAs	ha	60		102
OL4 /EL4	Management of rush pastures in SDAs	ha	60		103
OL5 /EL5	Enclosed rough grazing	ha	35		104
EL6	Unenclosed moorland rough grazing	ha	5		105

Code	Option	Unit	Points	Priority option for...	Page
Options for Uplands OELS					
UOB Options for boundary features in the uplands					
UOB4 /UB4	Stone-faced hedgebank management on both sides on or above the Moorland Line	100 m	24		106
UOB5 /UB5	Stone-faced hedgebank management on one side on or above the Moorland Line	100 m	12		106
UOB11 /UB11	Stone wall protection and maintenance on or above the Moorland Line ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	32		106
UOB12 /UB12	Earth bank management on both sides on or above the Moorland Line ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	18		107
UOB13 /UB13	Earth bank management on one side on or above the Moorland Line	100 m	9		107
UOB15 /UB15	Stone-faced hedgebank restoration	m	55		107
UOB16 /UB16	Earth bank restoration	m	12.5		109
UOB17 /UB17	Stone wall restoration	m	30		110
UOC Options for trees and woodlands in the uplands					
UOC5 /UC5	Sheep fencing around small woodlands	100 m	50		111
UOC22 /UC22	Woodland livestock exclusion ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	75		112
UOD Options for historic and landscape features in the uplands					
UOD12 /UD12	Maintenance of weatherproof traditional farm buildings in remote locations ***UPDATED in 2013***	m^2	4		113
UOD13 /UD13	Maintaining visibility of archaeological features on moorland ***UPDATED in 2013***	feature	53		115
UOJ Options to protect soils and water in the uplands					
UOJ3 /UJ3	Post and wire fencing along watercourses ***UPDATED in 2013***	100 m	50		116
UOJ12 /UJ12	Winter livestock removal next to streams, rivers and lakes ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	35		117

Code	Option	Unit	Points	Priority option for...	Page
UOL Options for upland grassland and moorland					
UOL17 /UL17	No supplementary feeding on moorland ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	4		117
UOL18 /UL18	Cattle grazing on upland grassland and moorland ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	30		118
UOL20 /UL20	Haymaking ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	60		119
UOL21 /UL21	No cutting strip within meadows ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	250		119
UOL22 /UL22	Management of enclosed rough grazing for birds ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	35		120
UOL23 /UL23	Management of upland grassland for birds ***UPDATED in 2013***	ha	37		121

3.2 Conversion aid payments

These payments are made for the conversion of conventional land to organic production. They are additional to the payments you will receive for meeting your points target. To be eligible for these payments, the land must be registered as 'in conversion' with an Organic Inspection Body. The land must be in its first year of conversion; land in its second year of conversion when the application is submitted is not eligible. Land that has previously received conversion aid is also ineligible as is land that has previously converted to full organic production at any time since 10 August 1993. It is possible to combine conversion payments with other OELS options provided that the requirements for conversion and the option prescriptions can be met.

Top Fruit Orchard £600/ha per year for 3 years

This payment is for the conversion of top fruit orchards planted with pears, plums, cherries and apples. Eligible orchards must be fully stocked at the appropriate spacing for the species and variety of fruit tree. Orchards used for the production of alcoholic drinks are not eligible. There is no minimum or maximum size of block.

Improved Land Category £175/ha per year for 2 years

To be eligible for this payment, land must have been ploughed or have received artificial fertiliser in the 20 years ending on the date of application to OELS. Land that is planted with mature trees, shrubs, woodland or coppice is not eligible unless it is used for grazing or keeping livestock. Top fruit orchards are not eligible for this option.

3.3 Compulsory requirements for OELS and upland management

OU1 Organic management 30 points per ha

This option must be located on all of your OELS and Uplands OELS-eligible land; it cannot be located on ELS and Uplands ELS-eligible land. The option must be applied to whole parcels of land.

Managing the land according to organic standards provides biodiversity benefits – both within fields and around field margins. You must register with an approved Organic Inspection Body and adhere to the standards of organic management. These include:

- Do not apply synthetic nitrogen fertilisers, pesticides or any herbicides.
- Use diverse crop rotations (this will contribute to soil fertility and biodiversity on both a macro-scale and a micro-scale).
- Limit applications of nitrogen sourced from animal manures to an average of 170 kg per ha per year (not exceeding 250 kg/ha on any one field parcel).
- Only use substances that are permitted by European Union (EU) Regulation 834/2007, implementing Regulation 889/2008 and Defra's Compendium of Organic Standards, as interpreted by the Organic Inspection Body you register with.
- Undertake organic management on all of the land for which you claim OELS points.
- Maintain continuous registration of the land (as fully organic or in conversion) with an Organic Inspection Body licensed by Defra.

UPDATED in 2013

OA1/EA1 Farm Environment Record 1 point per ha

As part of your application, you must identify and map the features listed and described on the FER Map key that are present on your land. Follow the instructions in Section 4.3.3, Step 5, to do so. The completed map(s) must be submitted with your application form. As long as the markings you make are clear and understandable, we will be able to accept your map(s).

You must retain all features marked on your FER Map for the duration of your agreement.

Compulsory requirements for SDA land in Uplands OELS

The management requirements UOX2, UX2, UOX3 and UX3 are compulsory. Depending on the category of land, either UOX2, UX2, UOX3 or UX3 must be located on each SDA land parcel.

Fenced and ungrazed woodland in the SDA is not eligible for UOX2, UX2, UOX3 or UX3.

UOX2/UX2 Upland grassland and arable requirements 11 points per ha

This requirement must be located on all SDA parcels below the Moorland Line. It can only be used on whole-fields. Please note that OELS buffer strip options OE1–10 and OJ9 cannot be located next to watercourses on land in UX2 or UOX2.

You must comply with the following:

- Do not supplementary feed within 6 m of the top of a bank of a watercourse (as defined in the Glossary). This requirement must not overlap with the cross compliance requirement (within 1 m of the top of the bank of a watercourse).
- Do not apply any fertiliser within 6 m of the top of a bank of a watercourse. Selective mechanical control of weeds is permitted. This requirement must not overlap with the cross compliance requirement (within 1 m of the top of the bank of a watercourse) and, within Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs), any NVZ requirements. The spreading of organic manures within 10 m of surface water is already restricted within the NVZ Action Programme and the Code of Good Agricultural Practice.
- Do not apply any fertiliser, or boom spray herbicides, within 6 m of the top of a bank of a watercourse. Selective control of weeds is permitted using weed wipers and/or spot treatment. This requirement must not overlap with the cross compliance requirement (within 1 m of the top of the bank of a watercourse) and, within Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, any NVZ requirements. The spreading of organic manures within 10 m of surface water is already restricted within the NVZ Action Programme and the Code of Good Agricultural Practice, see Appendix 2 for details.
- Retain any traditional features such as stiles, sheep creeps and stone gateposts when any maintenance or restoration of dry-stone walls is undertaken, following the style characteristic of the local landscape and using appropriately shaped and sized local natural stone. Stone should not be taken from archaeological/historical features such as lime kilns, historic industrial sites, walls, hedgebanks, ruins or buildings. Where it is impractical to retain stone gateposts, wooden posts should be installed.

- Any maintenance, restoration and repair of hedgebanks must be carried out in the traditional materials used in the original construction, including appropriately shaped and sized local natural stone, following the style characteristic to the local landscape.
- Any management of hedgerows must be carried out in the style traditional to the local landscape.
- Do not supplementary feed in native woodland except when shelter is required during periods of extreme weather, where access to forage is severely restricted and the welfare of livestock might otherwise be compromised. Extreme weather is defined as more than two consecutive days of snow cover or continuous hard frost, prolonged drought or prolonged heavy rainfall. Native woodland, for the purpose of this requirement, is defined as a group of trees with overlapping canopies covering at least 0.1 ha (1,000 m^2), at least half of which are native species.
- Retain existing areas of native scrub (except on archaeological features) by:
  - no supplementary feeding within or adjoining these areas;
  - no application of fertilisers or manures within these areas; and
  - no application of herbicides and pesticides except for the spot treatment of weeds as indicated under cross compliance (GAEC 11).

Scrub is defined, for the purpose of this requirement, as areas greater than 100 m^2 dominated by native shrubs and tree saplings, usually less than 5 m tall, occasionally with a few scattered trees. It includes juniper, willow, birch, elder, hazel, spindle, thorn and other native woody shrubs but excludes common gorse, broom and invasive non-native species including rhododendron and snowberry.

The encroachment of scrub can be controlled beyond the existing areas by cutting and/or by spot treatment using approved herbicides in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Where scrub covers archaeological features, options OD4 and ED4 (Management of scrub on archaeological features) can be used.

- Do not remove any boulders and rock outcrops. Boulders are often remnants of historic features and should be left undisturbed. Rock outcrops, including disused quarries, may also be historic features and often support valued plants and wildlife.
- Prevent the spread of bracken on land that allows the use of a conventional tractor with mower. You should regularly review the extent of bracken. It can be controlled by cutting and/or crushing. In some circumstances, bracken areas provide valuable wildlife habitats. However, the spread of bracken can reduce biodiversity, damage archaeological features and change the character of the landscape.
- Prevent the spread of bracken on land that allows the use of a conventional tractor with mower. You should regularly review the extent of bracken. It can be controlled by cutting, rolling and/or the application of an approved herbicide in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. In some circumstances, bracken areas do provide valuable wildlife habitats. However, the spread of bracken can reduce biodiversity, damage archaeological features and change the character of the landscape.
- Collect all plastic waste associated with farming activities from the banks of watercourses, including that which has arrived on the farm from elsewhere (eg from another farm in a storm).

UOX3/UX3 Moorland requirements — 15 points per ha

This requirement must be located on all SDA parcels above the Moorland Line. It can only be used on whole-fields.

- Avoid overgrazing and undergrazing and, in any case, maintain a minimum stocking rate of 0.05 livestock units (LUs) per hectare for a period of 4 months between 1 June and 30 September. Grazing livestock can include cattle, sheep and ponies but all stock must be acclimatised to the conditions of the moor. Sheep must consist of hardy native breeds and/or their crosses.

  The minimum level of grazing as specified above equates with 0.5 ewe/ha plus lambs at foot based on LU conversion factors shown at Appendix 4. The list of hardy native breeds of sheep is shown at Appendix 5.

  The minimum level of grazing must be maintained throughout the period 1 June to 30 September except when stock are removed for routine husbandry operations such as lambing, calving, dipping and clipping.

  Where the moorland consists of a number of parcels, not necessarily grazed at the same time, calculate the number of LUs based on the number of animals that will graze all of the parcels.

The Environmental Information Map for your farm will indicate any areas of deep peat (defined as 50 cm or more) or blanket bog and areas that lie above 600 m. A level of stocking at or above 0.05 LU per hectare on this ground could be damaging. Therefore, moorland grazing units that are dominated (more than 75 per cent by area) by blanket bog and/or mountain grazing above 600 m are likely to benefit from more refined grazing management and are a high priority for Higher Level Stewardship – please contact your Natural England adviser in these circumstances.

- Maintain wetlands including peat bogs, other mires and hillside flushes. Where you have the legal right to control land drainage, do not install any new land drainage or modify any existing drainage that would increase run-off. The maintenance of existing working field drains is permitted, except on areas of deep peat (> 0.5 m), provided that its capacity is not increased beyond the initial installation.

  Where there are areas of deep peat, do not maintain existing grips/drains except along tracks or boundaries. Allow drain blocking (that might, for example, be undertaken by the landowner). If, as a result, increasingly wet ground conditions develop, additional shepherding may be required to prevent animal welfare concerns.

- Manage any supplementary feeding sensitively to avoid damaging habitats such as blanket bog, heather, bilberry and other heath, species-rich grassland and mires. Move all feeding sites regularly to minimise damage to vegetation and soils. Do not supplementary feed using silage but the feeding of haylage (as defined in Appendix 6) is permitted, provided that the plastic is removed from the feeding sites. Do not feed on or next to archaeological features, steep slopes, footpaths or watercourses.

  The practice of supplementary feeding may be restricted under the terms of a statutory designation eg Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It may also be restricted on common land by the landowner or by custom as declared by a Commoners Association/group.

- Where you have the legal right to carry out burning, and intend to do so, you must follow the Defra Heather and Grass Burning Code. You may obtain a copy of *The Heather and Grass Burning Code* (Defra, 2007) from your Natural England office or download it from the Natural England website, details in Appendix 2.

- Do not apply fertilisers or manures.

- Do not plough, cultivate, re-seed or harrow.

- Retain and protect native woodland. Do not supplementary feed in native woodland except during periods of extreme weather, where access to forage is severely restricted and the welfare of livestock might otherwise be compromised. Extreme weather is defined as more than two consecutive days of snow cover or continuous hard frost, prolonged drought or prolonged heavy rainfall. Native woodland, for the purpose of this requirement, is defined as a group of trees with overlapping canopies covering at least 0.1 ha (1,000 m^2), at least half of which are native species.

3.4 Detailed management prescriptions

B Options for boundary features

Boundary management options

Field boundaries are important elements of the countryside as landscape and historic features; for wildlife habitat and for stock management and shelter. Hedges across long, steep slopes may reduce soil erosion as they intercept and slow surface run-off water before it builds into damaging flow, particularly where there is a margin or buffer strip alongside.

Which hedges are eligible for these options?

Hedgerow management options may be applied to any boundary line of shrubs (a woody plant where the distance between the ground and the base of the leafy layer is less than 2 m) which is **over 20 m long and less than 5 m wide between major woody stems at the base**. Features which are tall trees over most of their length with no shrub layer are not eligible for these options.

In addition, eligible hedgerows must:

- be under your management control. For management options that apply to both sides of the hedge, you must have management control of both sides of the hedge and of the land adjacent to the hedge. If you do not have management control of both sides of the hedge and the land adjacent, you must use the one-sided management options;
- be in management by regular trimming or on a traditional hedge-laying or coppicing cycle; and
- be predominantly composed of native shrubs (at least 80 per cent).

Where the hedgerow includes gaps or gates, these may be included in the length entered into an option, providing they comprise less than 10 per cent of the total length of the particular hedge. Gaps above this 10 per cent threshold should be deducted from the length included **unless you intend to plant up the gaps in the first two years of your agreement to achieve a hedge with no more than 10 per cent gaps**. A gap is a complete break in the canopy. Where a tree canopy overlaps the hedgerow canopy, this is not counted as a gap (see **Figure 1** below).

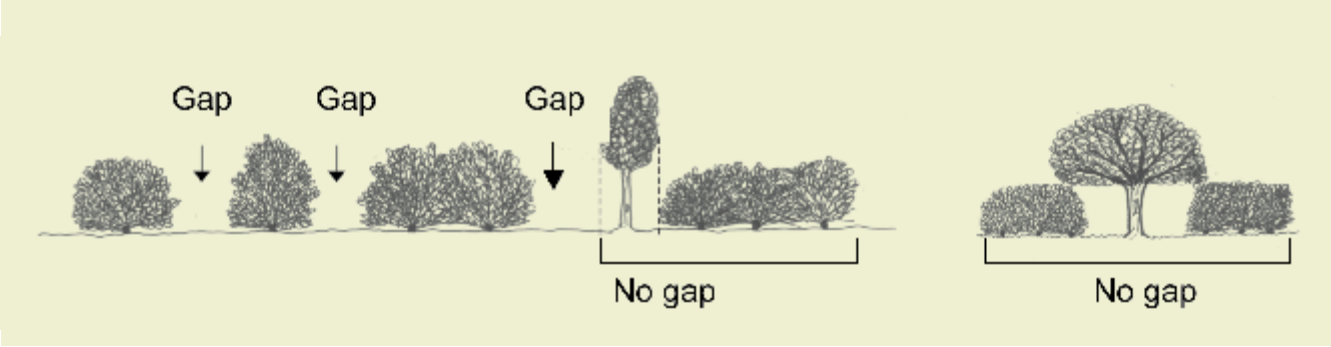


Figure 1 – Defining gaps in a hedgerow

You may use these options on newly planted, laid or coppiced hedgerows or hedgerows that are below the minimum heights required at the start of the agreement. However, the hedges must meet the required height by the end of the agreement. The minimum height requirement does not apply to sections of hedge which are laid, coppiced or gapped up during the term of the agreement; however, all other prescriptions should be followed.

Although maximum trimming frequencies are stated (once every two years, or once in every three years), there is no requirement to trim at all during the agreement term. Instead, hedgerows can be left to grow unchecked then managed in a long-term coppicing or laying rotation. To achieve the best range of hedgerow habitats on your farm, you should aim to have a mixture of hedges of different heights and widths, all with thick bushy bases.

Road and trackside hedgerows that require annual or more frequent trimming for public safety are not eligible for options OB1/EB1 (two-sided management) **or** OB3/EB3 (hedgerow management for landscape and wildlife). However, the non-road side of the hedge may be entered into option OB2/EB2 (one-sided management).

Where a hedge is directly adjacent to a woodland edge, only OB2/EB2 (one-sided management) can be included.

Where a ditch runs alongside the hedge and you wish to manage both features, use options OB8, OB9, OB10, EB8, EB9 and EB10, rather than the separate hedge and ditch options (OB1,OB2, OB3, OB6, EB1, EB2, EB3 and EB6).

Hedges, or lengths of hedges managed under options OB1, OB2, OB3, OB8, OB9, OB10, EB1, EB2, EB3, EB8, EB9 and EB10 can also be entered into OB14 or EB14 or be eligible for Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) capital item payments if you make an HLS application. With the exception of OB14 or EB14, you cannot use more than one hedgerow management option on the same length of hedgerow.

Where there is woody growth on top of an earth bank or stone-faced bank which meets the necessary criteria for options OB4, OB5, OB12, OB13, EB4, EB5, EB12 or EB13, you may also apply for one of the hedgerow options OB1, OB2, OB3, OB14, EB1, EB2, EB3 or EB14. The specified height of the hedgerow is measured from the top of the bank.

For more information on hedgerow cutting, refer to the Natural England pamphlet NE36, entitled *Hedge Cutting: answers to 18 common questions*. A copy of this can be downloaded from the Natural England website, details in Appendix 2.

Further information about hedge laying and coppicing can be found in the Hedgelink pamphlet *The Hedgerow Management Cycle and Scale*, details in Appendix 2

Combining OELS/ELS hedgerow management with cross compliance requirements
Cross compliance conditions include a requirement to maintain 'protection zones' by not cultivating or applying fertilisers, manures or pesticides to land within 2 m of the centre of a hedgerow or watercourse. This requirement also applies to all land within 1 m of the top of the bank of a watercourse.

Hedge and ditch options have been designed to be compatible with this cross compliance requirement. The 'protection zone' requirement for cross compliance is incorporated within the option rules.

UPDATED in 2013

OB1/EB1 Hedgerow management for landscape (on both sides of a hedge)	16 points per 100 m
OB2/EB2 Hedgerow management for landscape (on one side of a hedge)	8 points per 100 m

© Defra/Nicola Stone

For these options, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain hedgerows to a height of no less than 1.5 m (except when laid or coppiced as part of a regular management cycle).
- Do not cultivate or apply fertilisers, manures or pesticides to land within 2 m of the centre of the hedge.
- Maintain hedgebanks in a style that is customary to the area. Where a bank is present, measure the height of the hedgerow from the top of the bank.
- Cut each hedgerow no more than once every two calendar years. Do not cut all hedgerows managed under this option in the same year.
- Do not cut hedgerows during the bird-breeding season (1 March to 31 August).
- Where already present, you may leave saplings to grow into hedgerow trees at intervals, for example four trees randomly spaced over 200 m, where this fits in with the local landscape character.
- Where a length of hedge managed under the option has more than 10 per cent gaps, in the first two years of the agreement plant up gaps with locally native shrubs typical of the hedge to achieve a hedge which has no more than 10 per cent gaps.

- Take care to minimise poaching by livestock and any channelling of surface run-off along the side of the hedgerow.
- Hedge laying and coppicing are permitted in a style customary to the local landscape, but should be completed before 1 March. However, in exceptional circumstances, work may continue up to 1 April, provided you conduct a survey to ensure that there are no nesting birds present.

UPDATED in 2013

OB3/EB3 Hedgerow management for landscape and wildlife

42 points per 100 m

©NHLS/Nigel Adams

This option is only available where you have control of the management of both sides of the hedge and of the land adjacent. The option is designed to introduce a cutting regime which promotes increased blossom availability for invertebrates and allows fruits and berries to ripen and provide a vital source of food for over-wintering birds.

In addition to the conditions for OB1/EB1 and OB2/EB2 (see above), you must also comply with the following:

- Maintain hedgerows to a height of no less than 2 m (except when laid or coppiced as part of a regular management cycle).
- Cut each hedgerow no more than once every three calendar years, cutting no more than a third of your hedgerows each year **or**, cut each hedgerow no more than once every two calendar years between 1 January and 28 February only, cutting no more than half of your hedgerows each year.

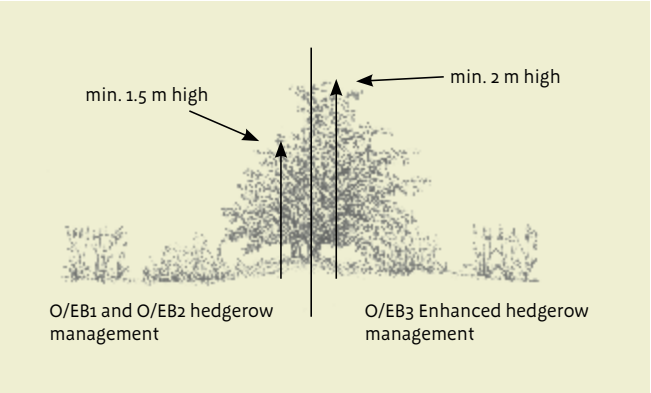


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Figure 2 – O/EB1 and O/EB2 hedgerow management on left and O/EB3 Enhanced hedgerow management shown on right, results in a taller and bushier hedge.

OB4/EB4 Stone-faced hedgebank management on both sides — 16 points per 100 m
OB5/EB5 Stone-faced hedgebank management on one side — 8 points per 100 m

Where there is hedge growth on top of the bank, you may also apply for options OB1, OB2, OB3, OB14, EB1, EB2, EB3 and EB14 where they meet the necessary criteria.

© Natural England/Kerry Smith

As well as supporting a range of wildlife, stone-faced hedgebanks are important landscape features

For these options, you must comply with the following:

- Protect stone-faced banks from deterioration and repair gaps where these occur during the course of the agreement.
- Prevent damage to stone-faced gateways and to banks by machinery or by stock climbing. Where stock have damaged such features, prevent further damage by making the features stock-proof.
- Do not remove any in situ stone from banks.
- All repair and maintenance work must be carried out in the traditional materials used in the original hedgebank construction, following the style characteristic to the local landscape.
- Do not cast up ditch dredging or spoil over stone-faced banks.

OB6/EB6 Ditch management — 24 points per 100 m

This option is intended for ditches forming field boundaries in their own right and aims to establish both a varied bank-side and aquatic vegetation, and an undisturbed wildlife habitat adjacent to the ditch. Eligible ditches must regularly contain standing or flowing water. They must contain vegetation typical of wet ditches, for example common reed, yellow flag, reed canary grass, water mint, fools watercress and marsh-marigold. You must be responsible for the management of both sides of the ditch. Ditches managed by third parties, such as internal drainage boards, are not eligible. Streams that are unmanaged (or occasionally managed) natural features are not eligible. Moorland grips are not eligible. Where the ditch runs alongside a hedge and you intend to apply OELS or ELS options to both, you must use option OB8, OB9 or OB10, or EB8, EB9 or EB10 (see below).

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- You must not cultivate or apply fertilisers or pesticides to land within 2 m of the centre of the ditch. This rule also applies to all land within 1 m of the top of the ditch bank.
- You may only cut the vegetation on your ditch banks in the period between 15 September and 28 February. In each such period, you may only cut the vegetation on up to half your length of ditch bank.
- Where you are cutting vegetation growing on ditch banks, cut it in rotation so that the vegetation is not cut more than once every two years.
- Where necessary to prevent flooding, up to 50 per cent of the vegetation in the bottom of the ditch may be cut every year between 15 September and 28 February.
- You must clean ditches no more than once during your agreement. You must do so only in the period between 15 September and 31 January, and in any such period you must clean only up to half your length of ditches.
- Only use mechanical means (including hand tools) to clean your ditches or trim vegetation on the ditch bank.

- Any dredgings or spoil must be spread evenly across the adjacent field, at least 2 m from the centre of the ditch and 1 m from the top of the bank (to comply with cross compliance rules) and the bank-side vegetation re-established by natural regeneration. Wherever practicable, avoid disposing of dredgings or spoil on areas managed under Environmental Stewardship. If it is spread on land managed under an Environmental Stewardship option, you must make sure the management requirements for the option are still met.
- Do not move or re-profile or increase the width or depth of the ditch.

© Natural England/James LePage

Leaving one ditch bank uncut provides essential cover for species such as water voles

OB7/EB7 Half ditch management

8 points per 100 m

This option is available for ditches as described above for option OB6 or EB6 where you only have control over the management of one side of the ditch.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- You may only cut the vegetation on your ditch banks in the period between 15 September and 28 February.
- In each such period, you may only cut the vegetation on no more than half the length of ditch bank.
- You must not cultivate or apply fertilisers or pesticides to land within 2 m of the centre of the ditch. This rule also applies to all land within 1 m of the top of your ditch bank.
- Only use mechanical means (including hand tools) to clean your ditches or trim the vegetation on the ditch bank.
- Any dredgings or spoil must be spread evenly across the adjacent field, at least 2 m from the centre of the ditch and 1 m from the top of the bank (to comply with cross compliance rules) and the bank-side vegetation re-established by natural regeneration. Wherever practicable, avoid disposing of dredgings or spoil on areas managed under Environmental Stewardship. If it is spread on land managed under an Environmental Stewardship option, you must make sure the management requirements for the option are still met.

Combined hedge and ditch management options

UPDATED in 2013

OB8/EB8 (incorporating OB1/EB1 hedgerow management for landscape)	38 points per 100 m
OB9/EB9 (incorporating OB2/EB2 hedgerow management for landscape)	26 points per 100 m
OB10/EB10 (incorporating OB3/EB3 Enhanced hedgerow management for landscape and wildlife)	56 points per 100 m

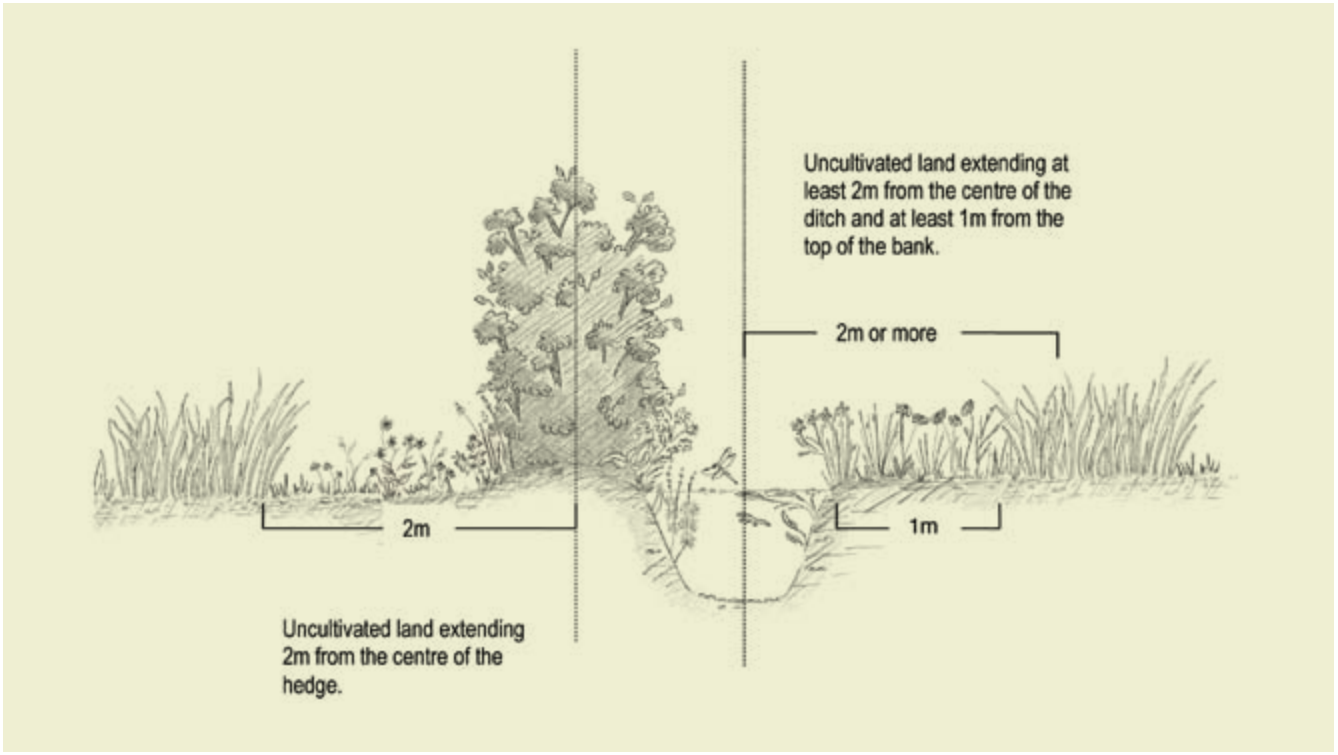

Figure 3 – Combined hedge and ditch management

These options are available for hedgerows with a ditch that meets the eligibility criteria of OB6/EB6 or OB7/EB7 immediately alongside. For OB8/EB8 and OB10/EB10, you must have control over the management of adjacent land on both sides of the hedge and ditch. If you have control of the land adjacent to only one side of the hedge and ditch, you must use OB9/EB9. The aim is to establish a diverse hedgerow, bank side and aquatic vegetation.

You must apply for these options (OB8, OB9 and OB10 and EB8, EB9 and EB10) where you have a hedge alongside a ditch and you wish to manage both under the scheme (ie you cannot combine individual hedge or ditch options).

For these options, you must follow the conditions for:

- OB1, OB2 or OB3, depending on whether you are managing one side of your hedge or both sides, and OB6.
- EB1, EB2 or EB3, depending on whether you are managing one side of your hedge or both sides, and EB6.

In addition, you must comply with the following:

- On the non-hedgerow side of the ditch, you must not cultivate or apply fertilisers or pesticides to the land within 2 m of the centre of the ditch. This rule also applies to all land within 1 m of the top of the ditch bank.
- If you are managing both sides of the hedgerow, you must leave uncultivated land extending 2 m from the centre of the hedgerow on the non-ditch side of the hedgerow. You must not apply fertilisers, manures or pesticides to this land.
- Take care to minimise hedge trimmings entering the ditch. Ensure that all hedge trimmings that would otherwise restrict flow are removed.

UPDATED in 2013

OB11/EB11 Stone wall protection and maintenance

15 points per 100 m

Stone walls are important features in many parts of the country

You must have control over the management of both sides of the wall. Stone walls of all types are important for stock management and as landscape and historic features. They are also potentially important habitats for lichens, mosses and ferns, invertebrates, reptiles, birds and small mammals.

This option can only be applied to complete walls in good condition. A wall in good condition is at its original height to below the top stones with at least 75 per cent of top stones in place (where they formed part of the original construction) and no gaps along the entire length. A wall is measured between two end points. An end point includes connections between two or more walls, or connections to other features, for example, fences, gateways, buildings, roads, ditches, and hedgerows, or the point at which there is a change in management/ownership. This option can also be applied to livestock enclosures such as sheep folds and walls which end mid-field.

Stone walls must be built of natural materials and must be of traditional dry-stone wall construction. Mortar may be used when it is the traditional method of stone walling.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Protect stone walls from deterioration. Undertake a visual inspection of the walls to check their condition and identify any sections that need repair at least once a year. Keep a record (written or photographic) of the problems identified and the repair work undertaken.
- Where gaps occur during the course of the agreement carry out the necessary repairs.
- Carry out all repair and maintenance work in the traditional materials used in the original wall construction, following the style characteristic of the local landscape and using appropriately shaped and sized local natural stone. Any existing features such as sheep creeps and stone gate posts must be retained.
- Do not remove any in situ stone from walls.

UPDATED in 2013

OB12/EB12 Earth bank management on both sides 14 points per 100 m

OB13/EB13 Earth bank management on one side 7 points per 100 m

Earthbanks provide a valuable wildlife habitat as well as being important historic and landscape features

These options aim to maintain and protect earth and turf-faced banks. These banks are important landscape and historic features, often containing valuable below-ground archaeological deposits. They also provide potentially important habitats for invertebrates, reptiles, birds and small mammals.

These options only apply to complete sections of earth and turf-faced banks that are at least 1 m in height. For OB12/EB12, you must have control over the management of both sides of the bank. If you have control of the land adjacent to only one side of the bank, you must use OB13/EB13. Flood banks and warp banks are not eligible for these options.

Where there is hedge growth on top of the bank, you may also apply for options OB1, OB2, OB3, OB14, EB1, EB2, EB3 or EB14 where they meet the necessary criteria.

For these options, you must comply with the following:

- Protect earth banks from deterioration. Repair gaps where these occur during the course of the agreement.
- Do not repair gaps using earth from an existing boundary or any other archaeological feature.
- Prevent damage to gateways and banks by machinery or stock. Where stock have damaged such features, prevent further damage by making the features stock-proof.
- All repair and maintenance work must be carried out in the traditional style characteristic of the local area and used in the original earth bank construction.

NEW in 2013

OB14/EB14 Hedgerow restoration 10 points per m

Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission.

The aim of this option is to rejuvenate hedgerows on the farm to encourage the development of thick, dense, continuous hedges, which link other hedges and habitats, such as ponds and woodlands to benefit wildlife and improve the historic landscape character.

Hedges that are a priority for restoration

- Short, overtrimmed and gappy hedges, or tall, thin and gappy hedges.
- Hedges connected to woods or adjacent to ponds, or other watercourses, to link habitats.
- Hedges adjacent to other management options such as buffer strips, field corners and nectar mixes, as this will add value to the habitat.
- Hedges alongside public rights of way or in conspicuous parts of the farm where landscape and access improvements can be best appreciated.
- Hedges of particular historic interest such as parish boundaries.

You must have management control over both sides of the hedge and of the land adjacent to the hedge, and the hedge must fit the eligibility criteria for all hedge options (see page 45).

How can a hedge be restored?

There are two methods of restoration available under this option:

- Hedge laying. This involves the complete rejuvenation of the hedge by partially cutting through the woody stems close to ground level and laying them over to create a dense barrier, from which re-growth should shoot. Hedges or sections of hedge suitable for laying are those comprising shrubs at least 3 m in height with frequent stems up to 25 cm in diameter. There must be sufficient suitable stems to make a laid hedge of living pleachers (the laid stems).
- Hedge gapping up. This involves establishing new plants into gaps in an existing hedge. It can also be combined with laying to ensure the development of a continuous hedge. To be eligible for gapping up at least one-quarter of the hedge must still consist of shrubs and/or trees.

You can enter up to 40 m on your application form. This represents the annual commitment. Hence, if you enter 40 m on your application form, you will be required to complete 200 m over the full 5 years of your agreement (or 400 m if you have a 10-year OELS/HLS agreement).

You can complete the work ahead of schedule but you must have completed at least as much as the annual commitment for each agreement year completed. Points earned will be based on the annual commitment, not the actual amount of work completed in any single year.

For example, where the annual commitment is 40 m					
End of agreement year	1	2	3	4	5
Minimum total length restored	40	80	120	160	200
Maximum total length restored	200	200	200	200	200
Points earned	400	400	400	400	400

Hedges, or lengths of hedges, in this option can also be entered into the hedge management options (OB1, OB2, OB3, OB8, OB9, OB10, EB1, EB2, EB3, EB8, EB9 and EB10).

Management requirements

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Obtain current, dated photographs of the hedge to be restored as evidence of its condition when you joined the scheme, retain these photographs and submit a copy with your application.
- At the end of the agreement at least 90 per cent of the restored hedge must be continuous with no gap (other than gateways) more than 1 m wide. If sections, more than 1 m wide, of laid hedge die after restoration then these gaps should be planted with new hedge plants, following the gapping up prescriptions.
- Following restoration, prevent damage by livestock and other animals such as rabbits.
- Any fences must be sited at least 1.2 m from the centre of the hedge.
- Retain all historic boundary features eg stone gate posts.
- Retain any existing hedgerow trees where they are a characteristic feature of the local landscape. They must not be damaged by fencing wire or used as fence posts.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicide to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).

In addition, for hedge laying, you must comply with the following:

- Before work starts, all old fencing must be removed and disposed of appropriately. Also, cut and pull out bramble and other scrambling plants where these will hinder laying the cut stems.
- Lay when the hedge is dormant, between 1 November and 1 March, in the style customary to the local landscape. However, in exceptional circumstances, work may continue up to 1 April provided you conduct a survey to ensure that there are no nesting birds present.
- Twiggy material may be placed over the cut stems to provide some protection to the re-growth from grazing animals. Wood may be stacked to provide valuable dead wood habitat for wildlife.
- Cut material may be chipped and used as a mulch to control weeds.
- Site any fires to minimise environmental damage. Material should either be burnt immediately or left until the end of the bird breeding season (ie September) as piles of brash are attractive nesting sites for birds. Bonfire sites must not be sited on low-intensity grassland, other wildlife-rich areas or areas of historic or archaeological interest.

In addition, for gapping-up you must comply with the following:

- Thoroughly clear gaps of existing vegetation
- Plant dormant two-year-old bare rooted stock (45 cm–60 cm) between 1 November and 1 March, avoiding periods when the ground is frozen or waterlogged. Plant a minimum of six plants per metre in a double staggered row with at least 30 cm between rows.
- Plant in line with the existing hedgerow. Plant species to match those in the existing hedge. Single species planting can be used eg to restore hawthorn enclosure hedges. Plants should be of British native origin.
- Any newly planted hedge plants that die must be replaced in the following planting season.
- You may control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive alien species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by use of a mulch.

UPDATED in 2013

OC1/EC1 Protection of in-field trees on arable land 16 points per tree

OC2/EC2 Protection of in-field trees on grassland 11 points per tree

Trees are of historic and landscape significance in both arable and grassland situations. They also provide habitat for many invertebrates and birds. To be eligible for these options, trees must have a trunk diameter of over 30 cm at breast height and the trunk must be entirely within the field and not part of a field boundary. A tree in a remnant boundary is eligible, provided that it is not attached to a current boundary feature.

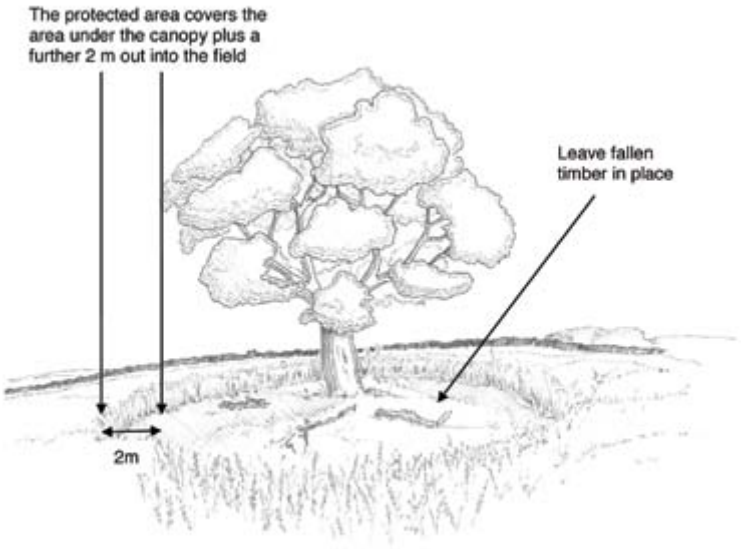

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Figure 4 – Illustration of the protected area around an in-field tree

Trees that form a group or line of more than four trees whose canopies overlap are not eligible for these options, but one of the 6 m buffer strips or field corner options can be used to protect them. If the canopies do not overlap at the start of the agreement, each individual tree can earn the specified number of points.

Dead trees are eligible for these options with the requirement that a '10 m radius from the base of the tree' must be used as a minimum where the prescription refers to the 'tree canopy'. Trees that die or fall during the course of the agreement must remain in position and the prescriptions must continue to be followed.

Where you have another management option in the same field, this must not overlap with an area managed under OC1/EC1 or OC2/EC2. The area of the other in-field option must be reduced by the area covered by OC1/EC1 or OC2/EC2, ie the area of the tree canopy plus 2 m. This is to prevent double payments. The exception to this is OK5/EK5, which can be co-located (overlapped) with OC1/EC1 and OC2/EC2.

© Natural England/Pete Johnstone

Fallen dead wood is an important habitat for invertebrates

For these options, you must comply with the following:

- Do not carry out any cultivations, supplementary feeding of stock, storage of materials or machinery, or weed control (apart from spot treatment) under the canopy of the tree and the area extending 2 m beyond the edge of the canopy.
- Leave fallen timber in situ within the protected area.
- Do not spread lime, fertilisers or manures beneath the tree canopy and the area extending 2 m beyond the edge of the canopy.

OC3/EC3 Maintenance of woodland fences 4 points per 100 m

The aim of this option is to protect woodland flora and to encourage natural regeneration. Woodlands are features of historic interest and make significant contributions to the local landscape character. The option should only be placed adjacent to predominantly native woodlands, in particular ancient woodlands, and where animals are likely to graze.

Only woodlands on your land are eligible for this option. The option may not be used for woodlands that border, but do not form part of, the farm.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain fences in a stock-proof condition to ensure exclusion of livestock without damaging woodland boundary banks.
- Exclude stock from the woodland.

UPDATED in 2013

OC4/EC4 Management of woodland edges 380 points per ha

The option is for the management of the strip of land adjacent to the woodland and not the woodland itself. The development of scrub along the edges of woodland provides important habitats for a range of wildlife, including invertebrates, birds and small mammals. This option is designed to encourage the woodland edge to grow out into the field and requires 6 m to be left uncultivated from the edge of the wood. A scrub and grass mosaic should be allowed to develop. The option should only be placed adjacent to predominantly native woodlands, particularly ancient woodlands. The woodlands can be under active or passive management. It may be used to enhance woodlands on your land, as well as those that border the farm but do not form part of the farm.

This option must be located on agricultural land adjacent to woodland, to allow development of the woodland edge. Therefore, where woodland covers an entire land parcel, this option should be located in the adjoining field.

The option is also eligible adjacent to woodlands where a ditch runs between the woodland and the field. However, it may not be practical to use this option if the ditch requires ongoing management or maintenance. This option may be located immediately adjacent to woodland receiving Forestry Commission funding, but there must be no overlap.

Buffer strip options may be located adjacent to these woodland-edge areas.

Woodland fringe habitat

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Do not cultivate within 6 m of the woodland edge. Allow the woodland edge to grow out for up to 6 m.
- Cover of scrub growth must not exceed 50 per cent of the area.
- Cutting is only permitted to maintain the scrub and grass mosaic and for the control of the weeds listed below.
- Trim no more than a third of the shrubby growth in any one calendar year. Do not cut during the bird-breeding season (1 March to 31 August).
- Do not supplementary feed or locate water troughs and mineral licks in such a way as to cause poaching on the woodland edge.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping, spear and field thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- Do not apply fertilisers or manures.

Please note that any areas containing scrub may become ineligible for Single Payment Scheme (SPS) payments and would have to be removed from your SPS claim form. Please refer to the *SPS Handbook* and any supplements for more information, details in Appendix 2. Scrub areas are still eligible for OELS or ELS points. Please see Appendix 6 for a definition of scrub for SPS purposes.

Options for hedgerow trees

Hedgerow trees are distinctive historic and landscape features in many areas. They are also particularly important for wildlife, providing several habitats in one location for a broad range of wildlife, in particular birds and invertebrates.

Many hedgerow trees have been lost over the latter half of the 20th century partly because of the intensification of agriculture alongside outbreaks of diseases such as Dutch elm disease. Currently we have an ageing hedgerow tree population and need to take action to establish new trees and conserve young trees already growing in hedgerows. However, the establishment of new hedgerow trees may not be suitable in areas that provide habitat for breeding waders, for example lapwing, which prefer wide open landscapes.

© Natural England/Paul Glendell

View of the edge of Exmoor, showing the importance of hedgerow trees in the landscape

For detailed guidance on the creation of hedgerow trees and their management, please refer to the Natural England publication NE69, entitled *Hedgerow Trees: answers to 18 common questions*. A copy of this can be obtained from the Natural England website, details in Appendix 2.

UPDATED in 2013

OC23/EC23 Establishment of hedgerow trees by tagging 1 point per tree

To be eligible for this option:

- Hedgerow trees must already be a feature on the holding or in the immediate landscape.
- A maximum number of three trees per 100 m of hedge can be established under this option. Each tree established will earn the specified number of points.
- Hedges that are subject to this option must also be managed under one of the OELS or ELS hedgerow management options: OB1, OB2, OB3, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14, EB1, EB2, EB3, EB8, EB9, EB10 or EB14.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Within the first 12 months of your agreement, select a sapling with a single straight stem, ideally when the hedge has been left uncut for at least a year. Select only locally native tree species that are already successful in the hedge or immediate landscape, with the exception of elm due to the risk of Dutch elm disease.
- Alternatively, if you cannot identify any suitable saplings, plant a sapling into an existing gap in the hedgerow. The sapling must be at least 2 m tall. Follow the species guidance detailed above.
- Saplings should be far enough apart (at least 20 m) to allow them to develop full crowns without competing with one another. Keep trees at an irregular spacing.
- Do not select or plant saplings beneath or within 20 m of overhead power lines, other overhead or underground services.

- Tag each new hedgerow tree using a brightly coloured, durable material. If a tree is difficult to reach, put a tagged stick near it – in the ground or hedge. Alternatively, consider putting a permanent clearly visible stake in the hedge next to the tree.
- Make a record of the tagged trees and show the person cutting the hedge where the trees are to ensure they are not cut or damaged for the length of the agreement.
- Revisit the trees annually to check tags are in place, replacing the tags as necessary.
- At the end of the agreement, there must be a living undamaged tree for each tree established under this option.

Options for hedgerow tree buffer strips

These options are only available adjacent to hedgerows entered into an OELS or ELS hedgerow management option (OB1, OB2, OB3, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14, EB1, EB2, EB3, EB8, EB9, EB10 or EB14), which also have on average at least one eligible tree per 100 m. For example, a hedgerow of 400 m would need to have at least four eligible trees along its length. Eligible trees are those that are native species, standing within 1 m of a hedgerow and over 30 cm diameter at breast height. These buffer strips must not overlap with the cross compliance requirement not to cultivate land within 2 m of the centre of a hedgerow or watercourse (and within 1 m or the top of the bank of a watercourse).

It is desirable that eligible hedgerows have buffer strips on both sides, using either the hedgerow tree buffer strip on arable land or the hedgerow tree buffer strip on grassland option as appropriate. Hedgerows alongside roads or ownership boundaries, where it is not possible to protect both sides, are also eligible for these options.

OC24/EC24 Hedgerow tree buffer strips on rotational/cultivated land 500/400 points per ha

Fallen timber must be retained but can be stacked to allow management of the margin

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Establish or maintain a 6 m-wide grassy strip during the first 12 months of your agreement, either by sowing or, ideally, by natural regeneration. Remove any compaction in the topsoil if you need to prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features. Regular cutting in the first 12–24 months may be needed to control annual weeds and encourage grasses to tiller. Avoid cutting when the soil is moist to prevent further compaction.
- After the first 12–24 months of your agreement, cut the 3 m next to the crop edge annually after mid-July. Only cut the other 3 m to control woody growth, and no more than once every 2 years.

- Do not use buffer strips for regular vehicular access, turning or storage. There should be no tracks, compacted areas or poaching.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping, spear and field thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broadleaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- Do not remove tree limbs, including the lower limbs, other than for health and safety reasons where adjacent to a public highway or right of way.
- Leave fallen timber beneath the canopy. Stack if necessary to allow management of the buffer strip.

OC25/EC25 Hedgerow tree buffer strips on organic grassland/grassland 500/400 points per ha

This option is only available on permanent grassland.

For this option, you must comply with the following:
- On fields that will be mown, leave an uncut 6 m buffer strip around the edge. Graze this buffer strip along with the aftermath, following the final cut.
- Do not allow livestock to poach or overgraze the buffer strip.
- Do not use buffer strips for regular vehicular access, turning or storage. There should be no tracks, compacted areas or poaching.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping, spear and field thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broadleaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- After the first 12 months of the agreement, cut buffer strips only to control woody growth, and no more than once every 2 years.
- Do not remove tree limbs, including the lower limbs, other than for health and safety reasons where adjacent to a public highway or right of way.
- Leave fallen timber beneath the canopy. Stack if necessary to allow management of the buffer strip.
- Do not allow stock to damage the trunks of any hedgerow trees adjacent to the buffer strip.

D Options for historic and landscape features

Archaeological features, traditional buildings and designed landscapes, such as parkland, give the countryside its local character and interest, as well as providing a record of human activity over centuries. Changes in agriculture have damaged or destroyed many of these features or resulted in their dereliction. Beneficial management can protect these important sites and help to retain and enhance the distinctive and varied character of the local landscape and wider countryside for generations to come.

Before considering these options, please look carefully at your Environmental Information Map, supplied as part of your application pack. This may show some of the historic features on your farm. If you are aware of additional features, you must also mark these on your FER Map. You can obtain information about historic features on your land from the Historic Environment Record (HER) at www.heritagegateway.org.uk (see Appendix 2 for the full web address).

Further information and guidance is available in a leaflet entitled *Farming the Historic Landscape: Entry Level Stewardship*, available from www.helm.org.uk or Natural England (see Appendix 1 for contact details and Appendix 2 for a link).

Protection of archaeological features

Archaeological features – from individual sites, such as barrows, settlement sites or hill forts, to more extensive landscape features, such as ridge and furrow and ancient field systems – are often our only record of past human activity. They cannot be replaced, and once destroyed, they are gone forever.

Cultivation can be particularly destructive. Taking these features out of cultivation is an essential step in conserving them for present and future generations to see and understand.

If you have historic features (including archaeological features and traditional farm buildings) on your farm, it is a requirement of joining OELS that you mark them on your FER and retain and protect them. This includes meeting the relevant scheme conditions detailed at Sections 5.5.4 and 5.5.5 of this handbook.

If you wish to carry out works (other than those specified in the measures below) that affect Scheduled Monuments, you must consult English Heritage.

UPDATED in 2013

OD1/ED1 Maintenance of weatherproof traditional farm building 2 points per m^2 of ground floor area

© Natural England/James LePage

Weatherproof traditional farm building

Please be aware that the cash equivalent of points gained through use of this option are classified as non-agricultural de minimis State Aid. See Section 5.5.11 for more information about State Aid payments.

A traditional farm building is a building or part of a building constructed before 1940 for a use associated with agriculture, and built using traditional methods and materials such as timber, brick, stone, tile and slate. Their construction, layout and function provide information about the rural economy and past farming practices. While many traditional farm buildings (TFBs) are not suited to modern agriculture, they are often valued features in the landscape and make a major contribution to local character. The annual active maintenance of weatherproof TFBs prevents the onset of serious structural problems that might otherwise need expensive restoration in the future.

'Maintenance' refers to the routine work that is necessary to protect the fabric of a building and to keep it weatherproof. It does not include any work to put right significant defects or decay, or anything required to bring a building in poor repair back to good condition. This sort of restoration work may be funded

under HLS. Some maintenance works will be required annually. Others, such as clearing of gutters and vegetation, may need to be undertaken several times per year.

Typical maintenance work includes:

- undertaking a regular inspection of the building to check its condition and identify any problems that need attention;
- ensuring that all services are working properly, such as making sure that gutters are free of debris;
- undertaking minor repairs to the external fabric of the building, such as replacing slipped or broken roofing slates and tiles to prevent rainwater penetration, renewing cast iron gutters and drainpipes, painting woodwork and metalwork, replacing broken glass, pointing walls, clearing vegetation; and
- inspecting the building regularly to identify areas needing maintenance work, such as checking downpipes and gutters for leaves in the autumn, noting slipped slates, and checking the condition of paintwork and other areas requiring rectification.

Eligible buildings include TFBs that:

- are in a sound and weatherproof condition;
- were built for a purpose associated with agriculture, such as housing machinery or animals, or storing or processing crops and food; and
- are still used for an agricultural purpose, whether or not it was the original one (for example, a barn built to house animals which is now being used for storage of feedstuffs or equipment).

TFBs that meet the above conditions but which are currently unused or empty are also eligible. It is not a requirement for buildings to be on land registered on the Rural Land Register (RLR) (see Section 5.4.1), but you must record them on the FER.

Ineligible buildings include:

- metal-framed Dutch barns;
- farmhouses, residential or domestic buildings;
- buildings already converted to a non-agricultural use, ie to a residential or non-agricultural business use;
- TFBs already in receipt of funding from another scheme, such as the England Rural Development Programme (ERDP) or Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE);
- TFBs that you intend to convert to a non-agricultural use during the life of your agreement; and
- TFBs that will not be in your ownership or control for the life of your agreement.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Continue to protect and maintain in weatherproof condition the specified TFBtfb(s) (including fixtures and fittings and adjacent associated features, such as mounting blocks or stack/stook bases).
- Carry out maintenance works and minor repairs on a 'like for like' basis, using traditional materials and methods, to retain the character of the building in its local setting.
- Where a non-traditional material has previously been used to repair or re-clad the building (such as corrugated iron sheeting to cover roofs), this may be retained and should be maintained appropriately.
- Obtain current photographs of all elevations of the building as evidence of its condition when you joined the scheme. This should include photographs of any areas where non-traditional materials have previously been used to repair or re-clad the building. Retain these photographs and submit a copy of them with your application.
- Keep a record of work done, and carry out and record a brief visual inspection at least once a year.
- Retain the building in your ownership or control for the life of your agreement.
- Ensure that the building is not converted to a non-agricultural use during the life of your agreement.

OD2/ED2 Take out of cultivation archaeological features currently on rotational/cultivated land

600/460 points per ha

© Bob Middleton

A barrow showing as a crop mark

© English Heritage, NMR 21405-24

A prehistoric enclosure overlain by medieval ridge and furrow

This option is available on cultivated land and on temporary grass leys that are re-sown at least once every five years. Land that is being managed under this option in an existing OELS or ELS agreement may stay in this option in a renewed agreement, provided that there has been continuity of management and that there has been no cultivation.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Take archaeological features out of cultivation.
- Choose a boundary that encompasses the feature and provides a sensible and practical field division where necessary. This may be on the whole or part of the field where the archaeological feature is located, depending on what is practical on your farm.
- The area can be sown or left to regenerate and you must then carry out the following management:
  - Do not plough or cultivate. Re-seeding is only allowed by slot-seeding into the sward (without destruction of the existing sward).
  - Manage the area as permanent grassland, by grazing or mowing.
  - Maintain a continuous grass sward and do not allow bare patches of soil to develop (for example, by considering carefully the regular routing and rotation of stock movements, and gathering points such as water troughs).
  - Do not supplementary feed, or site water troughs, on or next to the archaeological feature.
  - Prevent scrub development.
  - Minimise the use of heavy vehicles on the feature, particularly in wet weather, to prevent damage caused by wheel rutting and compaction.
  - Do not tip or dump any material on the feature.
  - Avoid obvious earthworks, if you are harrowing or rolling.

OD3/ED3 Reduced-depth, non-inversion cultivation on archaeological features (minimum till)

100/60 points per ha

Where removal of archaeological features from cultivation is not practicable, reducing cultivation depth is a 'next-best' option. Shallow cultivation reduces the risk of damage to archaeological features on farmland. This option may be applied to the whole, or part, of the field where the archaeological feature is located, depending on what is practical on your farm. The reduction in cultivation depth must be achieved by using non-inversion (minimum tillage) machinery – not standard inversion ploughing equipment.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Avoid deep soil disturbance by using shallow, non-inversion cultivations to a maximum depth of 10 cm (4 inches) or by using no-till practices.
- Do not sub-soil or mole-plough.
- Do not use machinery under conditions likely to cause rutting or compaction.
- Do not grow maize, root and tuber crops (excluding non-harvestable root crops such as grazed fodder beet and forage turnips), short rotation coppice or miscanthus.
- If sowing a spring crop, maintain the previous overwintered stubble until 14 February.
- Do not use the area as farm access.

© Neil Harris

This Roman mosaic was discovered a few inches under cultivated land

© English Heritage

An example of a site that would benefit from scrub clearance

OD4/ED4 Management of scrub on archaeological features — 120 points per ha

Trees and shrubs can be very damaging to archaeological features, particularly buried deposits, as a result of disturbance by root penetration, by wind throw or by attracting burrowing animals or sheltering stock. This option helps to prevent expansion of scrub.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Where scrub is present on an archaeological feature, prevent its further encroachment by grazing and/or mowing.
- To avoid disturbance to nesting birds, do not remove scrub between 1 March and 31 August.
- Prevent the spread of weeds, shrubs, saplings or scrub, to avoid damage by roots.
- Avoid using heavy machinery and ensure that works do not disturb the ground.
- If you are carrying out scrub clearance, do not grub out stumps and roots, but cut (or grind down) stumps level with the land surface. Prevent vegetation regrowth.
- Remove cuttings or brash from the feature.
- Do not tip, dump or burn any material on the feature.
- Do not plough or re-seed.

OD5/ED5 Management of archaeological features on grassland — 16 points per ha

© Catherine Burgess

Maintaining land as permanent pasture preserves archaeology

Well-managed permanent grassland is the best agricultural management option for archaeological features and pastoral landscapes, such as ridge and furrow, to conserve them for present and future generations. This option may be claimed on the whole field even where the archaeological feature covers only a part of the field. This option is not available on land parcels larger than 15 ha above the Moorland Line.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain a continuous grass sward and do not allow bare patches of soil to develop (for example, by considering carefully the regular routing and rotation of stock movements and gathering points such as water troughs).
- Do not supplementary feed on, or next to, the archaeological feature.
- Control weed growth and prevent scrub development.
- Minimise the use of heavy vehicles on the feature, particularly in wet weather, to prevent damage caused by wheel rutting and compaction.
- Do not tip or dump any material on the feature.
- Do not harrow or roll earthworks (including ridge and furrow).
- Do not locate water troughs, mineral licks etc, in such a way as to cause poaching on, or next to, the archaeological feature.
- Do not plough or re-seed.

E Options for buffer strips

Buffer strips, managed as low-intensity grassland, can be used for a wide variety of purposes, such as creating new habitats and protecting existing ones, protecting archaeological features and capturing surface water run-off. Although normally sited around the edges of fields, they can also be used within fields, for example to protect a group of in-field trees.

You can use whichever width of buffer strip best suits your field shape, farm machinery and purpose. However, the strip must always be at least the minimum width specified for the particular option. They may exceed the width but any additional area will not be included in the payment area. Generally speaking, wider buffer strips will provide greater protection and improved wildlife habitat.

The options in this section are designed to be used adjacent to existing features on the margins of fields. There are other options available that can serve similar purposes within fields or are designed to protect particular features:

- OC4/EC4 Management of woodland edges
- OC24/EC24 Hedgerow tree buffer strips on rotational/cultivated land
- OC25/EC25 Hedgerow tree buffer strips on organic grassland/grassland
- OD2/ED2 Take out of cultivation archaeological features currently on cultivated land
- OJ5/EJ5 In-field grass areas to prevent erosion and run-off
- OJ9/EJ9 12m buffer strips for watercourses on rotational/cultivated land.

See also options for arable land in Section OF/EF for options for cultivated field margins.

Where to locate buffer strips

To protect watercourses: When placed next to a watercourse a buffer strip can help to intercept potential pollutants such as sediment and nutrients transported in surface water run-off. However, take care to minimise any channelling of water along the edge of the buffer strip. On long, steep slopes, buffer strips can be placed across the slope (using option OJ5/EJ5 In-field grass areas to prevent erosion and run-off) to intercept and slow run-off before it builds to damaging flow.

To benefit wildlife: Buffer strips offer particular benefit to wildlife, if placed adjacent to watercourses, hedgerows (particularly those hedges containing mature hedgerow trees), stone walls, remnant boundary tree lines, groups of in-field trees and woodland edge strips. They may also be used to create habitat and to form links between areas of wildlife habitat. On intensive grassland, buffer strips managed as uncut margins in meadows are likely to provide the greatest benefits for wildlife as the longer vegetation that develops provides habitat for insects and small mammals.

To protect archaeological features: Buffer strips can be used to protect above-ground archaeology and other historic features, such as historic buildings, and metal parkland fencing. Below-ground archaeological features can be protected using the option OD2/ED2 Take out of cultivation archaeological features currently on cultivated land. Consider the impact on the local landscape character when deciding on the width, extent and location of buffer strips.

Other considerations

Buffer strip options in OELS and ELS must not overlap with:

- the cross compliance requirement not to cultivate land within 2 m of the centre of a hedgerow or watercourse (and within 1 m of the top of the bank of a watercourse);
- any other buffer strips or uncultivated strips required under other OELS or ELS options, such as OELS and ELS options for field boundaries, trees and woodland;
- public rights of way (eg footpaths or bridleways) along field edges; or
- a 6 m strip adjacent to any watercourse on land covered by the Uplands OELS or ELS compulsory requirement UOX2/UX2. (This is because UOX2/UX2 prohibits the application of fertilisers and herbicides adjacent to watercourses.)

You must start your OELS or ELS buffer strip options where your other uncultivated land ends (ie 2 m from the centre of a hedge or ditch, and at least 1 m from the top of a ditch bank).

If you are locating your OELS or ELS buffer strip next to a hedge that extends further than 2 m from the centreline of the hedge, it is acceptable for part of your OELS or ELS buffer strip to be covered by the hedge, provided the land would otherwise be eligible as a buffer strip. You may establish 2 m or 4 m OELS or ELS buffer strips alongside 2 m Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) grass margins, but you must not establish any OELS or ELS buffer strip options alongside 6 m CSS grass margins.

Buffer strips that have already been established are eligible if their management is not being paid for under another scheme. However, a buffer strip must be located on land that could, in practice, be cultivated (so for example very steeply banked strips alongside boundaries are not eligible). Buffer strips established under a previous OELS agreement can continue to be managed within OELS under a renewed agreement.

For land that is part of an arable/grass ley rotation, you must manage land in buffer strip options OE1-OE3, OE9, EE1–EE3 or EE9 according to the prescriptions of options OE4-OE6, OE10, EE4–EE6 or EE10 during the years when the buffer strips are adjacent to a temporary grass ley.

How to record buffer strip measurements

On your application form, you must enter the amount of each buffer strip option as an area measurement in ha for each field. This will give you a figure, which you will need in order to complete your SPS return. It will also help you to work out the remaining field area available for other uses, for example cropping or other OELS or ELS options.

How to calculate the area of buffer strip options

You may find it helpful to use the following worksheet to record how you have calculated the area of each buffer strip option in each of your fields. This can also be used for options OC4/EC4 Management of woodland edges; OC24/EC24 and OC25/EC25 Hedgerow tree buffer strips on cultivated land or grassland and OJ9/EJ9 12 m buffer strips for watercourses on cultivated land.

For each buffer strip, measure the length of the option in metres, and convert this to ha (to the nearest 0.01 ha (100 m^2)).

Table 4 How to calculate the area of buffer strip options

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
RLR field no	Option code	Option description	Width (m)	Length (m)	Area in m^2 (width x length)	Area in ha (divide area in m^2 by 10,000)	Area in ha to the nearest 0.01 ha
XY23456789	EE3	6 m buffer strips on cultivated land	6	238	(6 x 238) 1428	0.1428	0.14

UPDATED in 2013

OE1 2 m buffer strips on rotational land	340 points per ha
EE1 2 m buffer strips on cultivated land	255 points per ha
OE2 4 m buffer strips on rotational land	425 points per ha
EE2 4 m buffer strips on cultivated land	340 points per ha

For these options, you must comply with the following:

- Establish or maintain a grassy strip during the first 12 months of your agreement, either by sowing or, ideally, by natural regeneration. Remove any compaction in the topsoil if you need to prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features. Regular cutting in the first 12–24 months may be needed to control annual weeds and encourage grasses to tiller. Avoid cutting when the soil is moist, to prevent further compaction.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistle, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by cutting in the first year and by selective trimming or manual removal thereafter.

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2m margin to buffer the hedge

- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- After the first 12–24 months of your agreement, cut buffer strips only to control woody growth, and no more than once in every 2 years.
- Do not use buffer strips for regular vehicular access, turning or storage. There should be no tracks, compacted areas or poaching.

UPDATED in 2013

OE3 6 m buffer strips on rotational land	425 points per ha
EE3 6 m buffer strips on cultivated land	340 points per ha
OE9 6 m buffer strips on rotational land next to a watercourse	500 points per ha
EE9 6m buffer strips on cultivated land next to a watercourse	400 points per ha

OE9/EE9 should always be used when a 6 m buffer on cultivated land is placed alongside a watercourse.

OE9/EE9 can also be placed adjacent to farm trackways or roads that channel run-off water and sediment directly into a watercourse.

For these options, you must follow the management for options OE1/OE2 or EE1/EE2 and in addition comply with the following:

- After the first 12–24 months of your agreement, cut the 3 m next to the crop edge annually after mid-July. Only cut the other 3 m to control woody growth, and no more than once every 2 years.

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6 m margin against a watercourse buffers this river from arable operations

UPDATED in 2013

OE4 2 m buffer strips on organic grassland	340 points per ha
EE4 2 m buffer strips on intensive grassland	255 points per ha
OE5 4 m buffer strips on organic grassland	425 points per ha
EE5 4 m buffer strips on intensive grassland	340 points per ha
OE6 6 m buffer strips on organic grassland	425 points per ha
EE6 6 m buffer strips on intensive grassland	340 points per ha

UPDATED in 2013

OE10 6m buffer strips on organic grassland next to a watercourse	500 points per ha
EE10 6 m buffer strips on intensive grassland next to a watercourse	400 points per ha

OE10/EE10 should always be used when a 6m buffer on intensive grassland is placed alongside a watercourse.

Option OE10/EE10 can also be placed adjacent to farm trackways or roads that channel run-off water and sediment directly into a watercourse.

The OELS options are only available on grassland stocked at more than 1.00 LU/ha (see Appendix 4). The ELS options are only available on improved grassland receiving more than 100 kg/ha of nitrogen per year in fertilisers or manures.

© Natural England/Emily Ledder

4 m margin between access track and hedge

For these options, you must comply with the following:

- On fields that will be mown, leave an uncut 2 m/4 m/6 m buffer strip around the edge. Graze this buffer strip along with the aftermath, following the final cut.
- Do not allow livestock to poach or overgraze the buffer strip.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistle, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by cutting in the first year and by selective trimming or manual removal thereafter.

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6 m grass margin on intensive grassland provides valuable small mammal habitat

- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- It is not a requirement to fence these buffer strips.
- After the first 12 months of your agreement, cut buffer strips only to control woody growth, and no more than once every 2 years.
- Do not use buffer strips for regular vehicular access, turning or storage. There should be no tracks, compacted areas or poaching.

OE7 Buffering in-field ponds in organic grassland	500 points per ha
EE7 Buffering in-field ponds in improved permanent grassland	400 points per ha
OE8 Buffering in-field ponds in rotational land	500 points per ha
EE8 Buffering in-field ponds in arable land	400 points per ha

Area Constraints apply to these options.

To maintain their value to wildlife, the water quality of ponds needs to be protected. In areas of improved grassland management and on arable land, the creation of unfertilised grass buffers around in-field ponds will help to protect them from nutrient leaching and run-off and will provide additional habitat for pond wildlife. Buffers will be less effective where field drains discharge directly into the pond. The buffer areas may be designed to link two nearby ponds or to link ponds to copses or other boundary features.

The OELS options are only available on grassland that is stocked at more than 1.00 LU/ha (OE7) or on rotational land (OE8) (see Appendix 4).

The ELS options are only available on grassland that is currently receiving over 50 kg/nitrogen per ha (EE7) or on arable land (EE8).

For these options, you must comply with the following:

- Buffer areas should be no more than 0.5 ha, although areas can be linked where there are several ponds in a field.
- Buffer areas must extend at least 10 m between the pond edge and the intensively managed part of the field within which it lies.
- On arable or rotational land, establish buffer areas during the first 12 months of your agreement, either by sowing or, ideally, by natural regeneration. Remove any compaction in the topsoil if you need to

prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features. Regular cutting in the first 12–24 months may be needed to control annual weeds and encourage grasses to tiller. Avoid cutting when the soil is moist to prevent further compaction.

- After establishment, cut no more than once every 5 years to allow the development of tussocky grass and low scrub. Do not cut between 1 March and 31 August. Do not allow scrub to develop on archaeological features.
- You may allow some scrub to develop, but this must be around less than half of the pond margin.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistle, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by cutting in the first year and by selective trimming or manual removal thereafter.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- Where the field is grazed, limit livestock access so that less than half of the pond edge is poached.
- Do not use buffer areas for regular vehicular access, turning or storage. There should be no tracks, compacted areas or poaching.

Please note that any areas containing scrub may become ineligible for SPS payments, and would have to be removed from your SPS claim form. Please refer to the *SPS Handbook* and any supplements for more information, details in Appendix 2. Scrub areas are still eligible for OELS or ELS points. Please see Appendix 6 for a definition of scrub for SPS purposes.

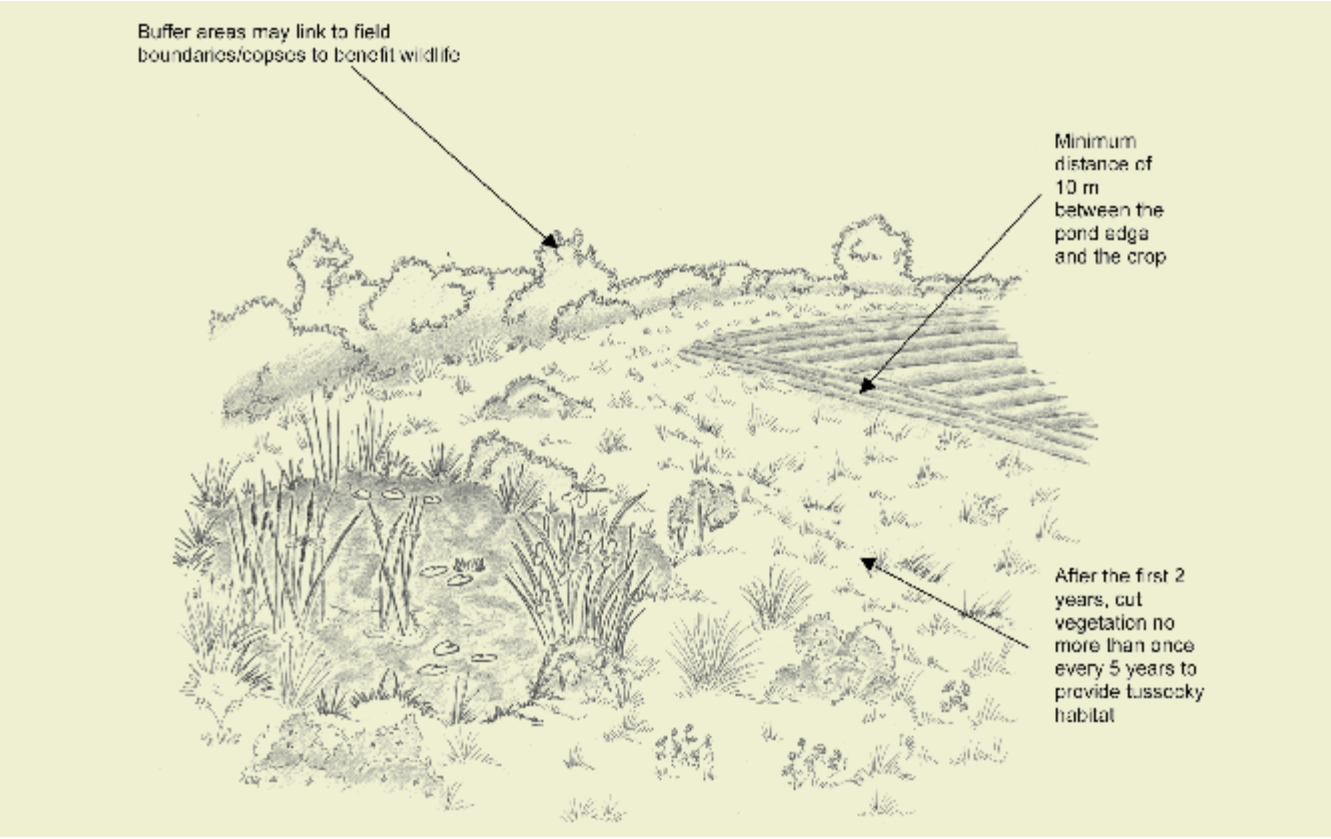

Figure 5 – Buffering in-field ponds

NEW in 2013

OE12/EE12 Supplement to add wildflowers to field corners and buffer strips on cultivated land 63 points per ha

Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission.

The aim of this supplement is to create flower-rich areas on cultivated land that will provide valuable sources of food for invertebrates and birds and a greater diversity and structure of vegetation compared to grass only areas.

This supplement can only be used with options OC24, OE1-OE3, OE9, OF1, OJ5, OJ9, EC24, EE1-EE3, EE9, EF1, EJ5 and EJ9. It must not be used to sow wildflowers into established buffer strips, field corners and in-field grass areas unless the areas are present at the start of the agreement and will be managed to ensure successful flower establishment in the first year.

You must follow the management for the base option except the sowing and cutting requirements and in addition comply with the following:

- Use only organic seed mixes on OELS-eligible land. Where this is not possible, you must contact your Organic Inspection Body for a derogation.
- By the end of the first 12 months of the agreement, establish a mix or maintain existing areas containing fine-leaved grasses (such as crested dog's tail, chewings fescue, slender red fescue, smooth stalked meadow grass and common bent) and flowers (such as knapweed, bird's-foot trefoil, self-heal, oxeye daisy, yarrow, wild red clover and wild carrot).
- Where sown, the flower component must be included at a minimum seed rate of 1.0 kg/ha.
- Do not sow tussock-forming grasses such as cocksfoot, meadow foxtail and meadow fescue, as these can swamp the wild flowers.
- By the beginning of year three, there must be at least five flower species (excluding injurious weeds) and three fine-leaved grass species present frequently across the flower-rich area. Maintain this floristic area for the duration of your agreement.
- Regular cutting and removal of cuttings in the first 12 months after sowing may be needed to ensure successful establishment of sown species.
- After establishment, cut the whole area to 10 cm between 1 August and 30 September, removing cuttings to avoid patches of dead material developing. If excess vegetation threatens to suppress the flowers, cut again the following March or April providing no birds are nesting in the flower-rich area.

F Options for arable land

These options are only available for arable or rotational land (see Appendix 6 for definition).

UPDATED in 2013

OF1/EF1 Management of field corners 500/400 points per ha

Area constraints apply to this option.

The provision of a grassy area will greatly increase the wildlife interest of an arable field. These areas are often awkward to reach with machinery and are less productive. However, the provision of a natural grassy corner, containing some grassland flowering plants and scrub, will benefit wildlife, including invertebrates, birds, reptiles and amphibians (if located near a water feature). This option must not be located on archaeological features.

Although this option is designed for field corners, if you have small areas within the field that would be beneficial to take out of production, you may do so. Strategic placement of this option may help to reduce the movement of sediment, nutrients and pesticides by wind and water erosion within fields and from field to field. This option could also help to buffer sensitive habitats at risk from soil erosion and from the direct impact of agricultural activities.

Addition of the OE12/EE12 Supplement for wildflowers will greatly increase the value of field corners/areas for farmland biodiversity.

You can apply option OF1/EF1 to a whole field provided it is no greater than 2 ha in size. This is important in landscapes where fields have often been left uncropped (eg as set-aside or Campaign for the Farmed Environment (CFE) voluntary measures) and continue to deliver valuable wildlife areas in a production landscape.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Establish or maintain a field corner during the first 12 months of your agreement, either by sowing or, ideally, by natural regeneration. Remove any compaction in the topsoil if you need to prepare a seedbed. Regular cutting in the first 12–24 months may be needed to control annual weeds and encourage grasses to tiller. Avoid cutting when the soil is moist to prevent further compaction.
- Patch size must be no more than 2 ha and there must be a maximum of 1 paid patch per 20 ha of arable land to ensure that patches are well distributed across the land.
- After establishment, cut no more than once every 5 years to allow the development of tussocky grass and low scrub. Do not cut between 1 March and 31 August.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistle, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by cutting in the first year and by selective trimming or manual removal thereafter.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- After controlling weeds you may surface seed patches with a tussocky grass mix.
- Do not use field corners for regular vehicular access, turning or storage. There should be no tracks, compacted areas or poaching.

Please note that any areas containing scrub may become ineligible for SPS payments, and would have to be removed from your SPS claim form. Please see the *SPS Handbook* and any supplements for more information, details at Appendix 2. Scrub areas are still eligible for OELS or ELS points. Please see Appendix 6 for a definition of scrub for SPS purposes.

UPDATED in 2013

OF2/EF2 Wild bird seed mixture 550/450 points per ha

© Natural England/ Miranda Gardner

Wild bird seed mixture placed against woodland

Area constraints apply to this option.

This option is available on arable land or temporary grassland (sown to grass for less than five years).

This option will provide important food resources for farmland birds, especially in winter and early spring, on arable and mixed farms. The aim is to maximise the production of small seeds suitable as bird food in either annual or annual/biennial mixtures, while also providing a source of invertebrates for birds.

This option is a 'rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year. Relocating these blocks or strips will help to avoid the build-up of weeds or soil-borne disease. Rotating them with OF4/EF4 Nectar flower mixtures makes use of any residual fertility from that option.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Use only organic seed mixes on OELS-eligible land. Where this is not possible, you must contact your Organic Inspection Body for a derogation.
- Sow a balanced combination of at least three small-seed bearing crops chosen from barley, triticale, kale, quinoa, linseed, millet, mustard, fodder radish and sunflower. No single species should make up more than 70 per cent by weight of the mix and the combination must cover a range of crop groups to minimise any pest and disease impacts. Large-seeded crops (maize) and game covers (giant sorghum or sweet clover) are not allowed.

- Sow in blocks and/or strips at least 6 m wide at the edges of fields. Both should be between 0.4 ha and 3 ha in size. Ensure that the strips or blocks are well distributed across your farm and that food is always available for seed-eating birds.
- In the first year, sow at the optimum time for the chosen species mixture, which may be autumn or spring, ensuring that any areas of soil compaction are removed prior to establishment, except on archaeological features. Avoid sowing too early in the spring, when seedbeds may be dry, cold and of poor quality.
- To help with weed and pest management, the seed can be sown in separate drill widths or blocks within the option area.
- On sandy soils, strips must be sown along contours.
- Retain the crop mixture until at least 1 March before re-establishment in spring, which could be annually or every other year (biennial crops), to maintain sufficient seed production to feed birds during the late autumn/early winter.
- Fertilisers or manures (but not within 10 m of watercourses) and seed treatments may also be used to aid establishment and ensure sufficient seed production during that period.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by cutting in the first year and by selective trimming or manual removal thereafter.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- Non-residual, non-selective herbicides may be used prior to sowing to help re-establishment.
- Apply environmentally sympathetic insecticides during establishment where there is a strong risk of crop failure due to severe pest attack (identified through monitoring and use of thresholds). Advice must be taken from a British Agrochemical Standards Inspection Scheme (BASIS) professional before any insecticides are used.
- Do not use the area for access, turning or storage.
- Do not graze.

UPDATED in 2013

OF4/EF4 Nectar flower mixture

550/450 points per ha

This option is available on arable land or temporary grassland (sown to grass for less than five years).

Sowing an area of flowering plants into the farmed landscape will boost the availability of essential food sources for a range of nectar-feeding insects, including butterflies and bumblebees. This option provides valuable benefits to wildlife at a landscape scale and is ideally suited to larger blocks and small fields.

© Natural England/ Rebecca Pitt

Nectar flower mixtures increase numbers of beneficial insects, such as bees

This option is a 'rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year. Relocating these blocks or strips will help to avoid the build up of weeds or soil borne disease and can be rotated with OF2/EF2 Wild bird seed mixture to utilise any residual fertility left behind.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Remove any compaction in the topsoil if you need to prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features.
- Use only organic seed mixes on OELS-eligible land. Where this is not possible, you must contact your Organic Inspection Body for a derogation.
- Sow a mixture of at least four nectar-rich plants (eg red clover, alsike clover, bird's-foot-trefoil, sainfoin, musk mallow, common knapweed), with no single species making up more than 50 per cent of the mix by weight.
- Sow in blocks and/or strips at least 6 m wide in early spring or late summer.
- Re-establish the mix as necessary, to maintain a sustained nectar supply (this is typically after three years).
- Regular cutting and removal of cuttings in the first 12 months after sowing may be needed to ensure successful establishment of sown species.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by cutting in the first year and by selective trimming or manual removal thereafter.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed). Non-residual, non-selective herbicides may be applied prior to sowing, to help re-establishment.
- Do not apply any other pesticides, fertilisers, manures or lime.
- To stimulate valuable late flowering to meet the peak demand from bees, cut half the area to 20 cm between mid-June and the end of the first week of July. Do not cut if ground-nesting birds are present.
- Cut the whole area to 10 cm between 15 September and 31 October, removing or shredding cuttings to avoid patches of dead material developing.
- Do not graze in the spring or summer. Late autumn/early winter grazing of areas is allowed and will benefit legumes, but take care to avoid poaching damage and compaction, particularly when conditions are wet.
- Do not use the area for access, turning or storage.

UPDATED in 2013

OF6/EF6 Overwintered stubble 150/120 points per ha

Overwintered stubble provides an important winter food source for seed-eating birds, which feed on spilt grain and the seeds of broad-leaved weeds. They are also a habitat for brown hare, and the spring-grown crops that follow can provide breeding sites for ground-nesting birds, such as lapwing and skylark. This option manages stubble following the harvest of combinable crops, such as oilseed rape, linseed, cereals or field beans (but not maize), until 14 February in the following year. It should not be located where there is a high risk of soil erosion or run-off (ie land identified in your FER as at risk of soil erosion and where rills are regularly seen in wet weather).

© Natural England/Charlotte Lemmon

Overwintered stubble

This is a 'rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Bale (or chop and spread) straw after harvest.
- Where the stubble is predominantly clean after harvest, a light surface cultivation can be made before the end of September or within the first month following harvest if later, to encourage establishment of green cover through natural regeneration and loosen any surface compaction or capping. If the stubble is already weedy, do not cultivate.
- Beneficial seed and nectar-producing plants such as mustard, fodder radish or oilseed rape can be broadcast or sown on small areas (no more than 0.5 ha per 10 ha stubble) in the autumn to enhance feeding and foraging value. Do not cultivate areas at high risk of soil erosion and run-off as identified on your FER.
- In sloping fields the tramlines, headlands and other areas of severe compaction should always be sub-soiled following harvest (except where there are archaeological features or when conditions are wet), to reduce the risk of run-off and erosion.
- Do not apply any pesticides, fertilisers, manures (including manure heaps) or lime to the stubble.
- Do not top or graze.
- Do not apply pre-harvest desiccants or post-harvest herbicides.
- From 15 February, the stubble can be returned to the farm rotation.

OF7/EF7 Beetle banks 750/580 points per ha

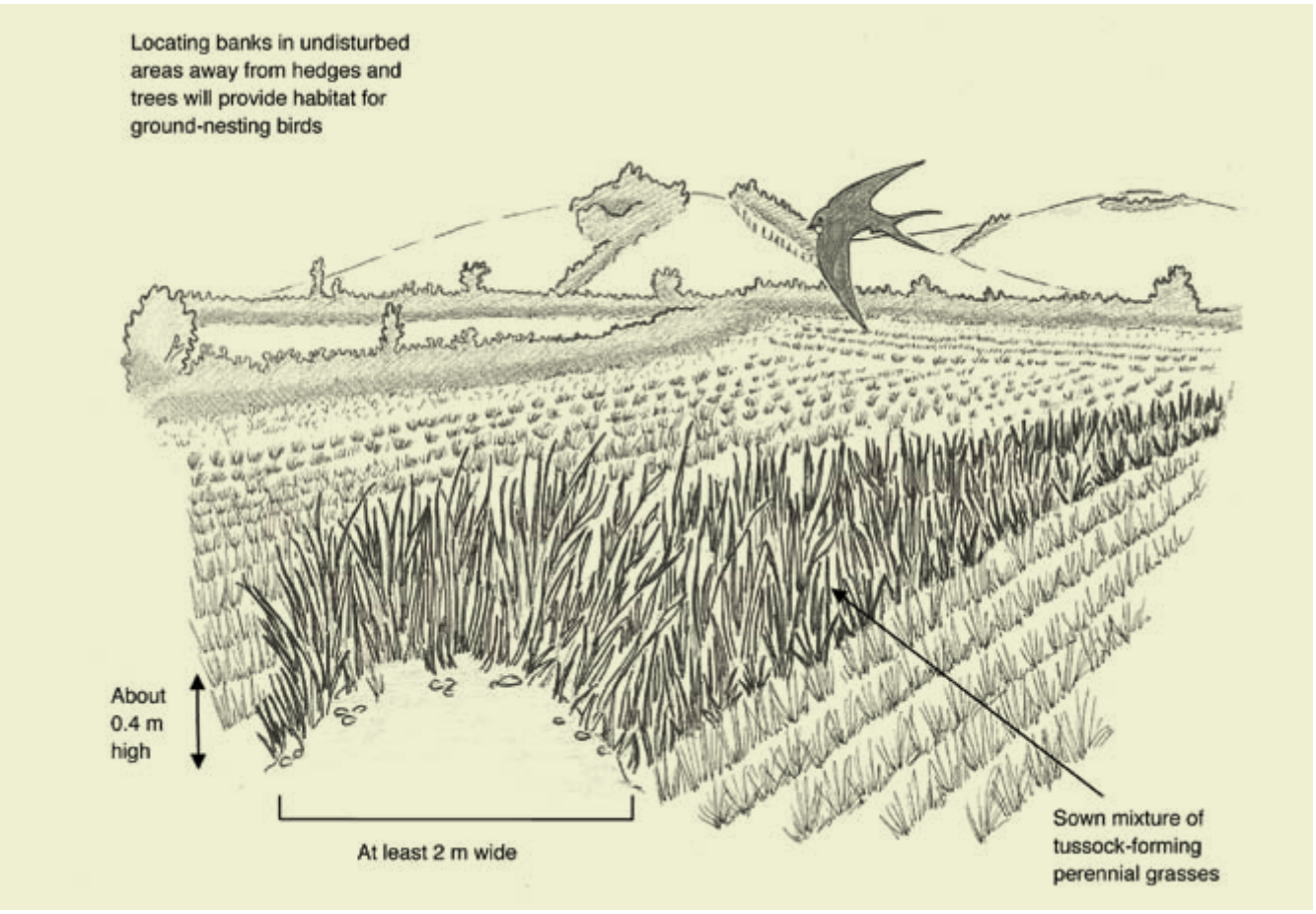

Figure 6 – Beetle bank

Beetle banks are tussocky grass ridges, generally about 2 m wide, which run from one side of a field to the other, while still allowing the field to be farmed. They provide habitat for ground-nesting birds, small mammals and insects (including those that feed on crop pests).

When carefully placed across the slope, such banks can help reduce run-off and erosion. However, you must ensure that they do not channel water instead and make existing problems worse. Do not locate beetle banks where their creation would cause damage to an archaeological feature.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Create or maintain an earth ridge between 2 m and 4 m wide and about 0.4 m high. This can be created by careful two-directional ploughing. Alternatively, bed-forming equipment can be used, if available (except on archaeological features).
- You may leave working gaps at each end of not more than 25 m, to allow machinery access.
- Sow with a mixture of perennial grasses, including some tussock-forming varieties, such as cocksfoot or timothy.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by cutting in the first year and by selective trimming or manual removal thereafter.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- You may need to cut the grass several times during the first summer to help establishment. Thereafter, only cut as necessary to prevent the encroachment of woody and suckering species. To avoid causing soil compaction, do not cut when wet.
- Do not apply any other pesticides, fertilisers or manures.

OF8/EF8 Skylark plots 5 points per plot

Area constraints apply to this option.

Figure 7 – Creating low, open vegetation provides access to foraging and nesting habitats

The number of breeding skylarks has halved since the mid-1970s, due largely to the switch from spring to autumn sowing of cereals and the intensification of grassland management. Arable fields support more breeding skylarks than any other habitat. Large, open fields are preferred, where the birds nest on the ground in vegetation less than 50 cm high, so winter cereals soon become unsuitable for breeding. Up to three nesting attempts are made in a long breeding season that extends from April to August.

This option will provide suitable habitat for skylarks in winter cereal crops throughout the breeding season.

This is a 'rotational option'. This means that the plots can move around the farm within the normal arable rotation, but the same total number of plots must be maintained each year.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Select a field that is more than 5 ha in area, has an open aspect and will be drilled with winter cereals. A good guide is the presence of skylarks singing over the field in previous years.
- Avoid fields bounded by tree lines or adjacent to woods, unless the field is greater than 10 ha.
- Create the plots by turning off the drill during sowing to leave an unsown area. Alternatively, use cultivation to produce a bare area within the crop by 31 December.
- Create the plots either by turning off the drill during sowing to leave an unsown plot, or by sowing the crop as normal and spraying out the plots by 31 December with an appropriate herbicide.
- The plots should be at least 3 m wide and have a minimum area of 16 m^2 (eg 3 m x 6 m or 4 m x 4 m).
- Locate the plots away from tramlines (a middle spot between two sets of tramlines is best) and field boundaries/margins (at least 50 m into the field), to minimise nest predation.
- Space skylark plots across the field at a minimum density of two plots per ha.
- After drilling, there is no requirement to manage plots differently to the remainder of the field (they can be oversprayed and can be fertilised).
- You are not required to keep the plots weed-free.
- There must be no mechanical weeding of plots.

UPDATED in 2013

EF9 Cereal headlands for birds 100 points per ha

This option provides an important food supply for birds, and habitat for arable plants and insects, within any arable field during the cropping year. It will deliver most benefit when sited next to a buffer strip, stubble or area planted for wild bird seed or nectar flower mixtures.

Unfertilised cereal headlands can be difficult to manage where grass weeds are a problem, particularly where herbicide resistance is present. If an unexpected weed infestation occurs and becomes unmanageable, select a less weedy location in following years.

This is a 'rotational option'. This means that the headlands can move around the farm within the normal arable rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year. The headlands can also remain in the same place in the field. This will be especially beneficial where scarce arable plants are present.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Do not apply fertilisers or manures to the headland between harvest of the previous crop and resuming normal management.
- Sow and manage a 3 m–24 m wide cereal headland along the edge of an arable crop.
- Do not apply insecticides between 15 March and the following harvest.
- Only the following herbicides can be applied to control problem grass and broad-leaved weeds:

- for broad-leaved weeds, only use amidosulfuron, and only between 1 February and 31 March; and
- for grass weeds, use the following active ingredients only – tri-allate, fenoxaprop-P-ethyl, tralkoxydim, clodinafop-propargyl or pinoxaden.

- Where weed growth threatens harvest, you may use a pre-harvest desiccant, unless you plan to use this area as overwintered stubble (see Options EF22 or EF6).

UPDATED in 2013

EF10 Unharvested cereal headlands for birds and rare arable plants 330 points per ha

This option provides a year-round food supply for birds, and habitat for arable plants and insects, within any arable field over two cropping years. It will deliver most benefit when sited next to a buffer strip, stubble or area managed for wild bird seed or nectar flower mixtures.

Unharvested cereal headlands can be difficult to manage where grass weeds are a problem, particularly where herbicide resistance is present. If an unexpected weed infestation occurs and becomes unmanageable, select a less weedy location in following years.

© Natural England/James LePage

This open and herb-rich headland will provide feeding habitat through the summer and winter

This is a 'rotational option'. This means that the headlands can move around the farm within the normal arable rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year. The headlands can also remain in the same place in the field. This will be especially beneficial where scarce arable plants are present.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Do not apply fertilisers or manures to the headland between harvest of the previous crop and resuming normal management.
- You can sow the headland in either autumn or spring (do not leave as bare ground over the winter) and leave it unharvested until the following spring (1 March), before resuming normal management.
- Sow and manage a 3 m–24 m wide cereal headland along the edge of any arable crop, ensuring that any areas of soil compaction are removed prior to establishment, except on archaeological features.
- Sow a cereal or cereal mixture at a reduced seed rate, to encourage a more open headland structure. On more difficult or weedy sites, conventional seed rates can be used.
- Do not apply insecticides between 15 March and the following harvest.
- Only the following herbicides can be applied to control problem grass and broad-leaved weeds:
  - for broad-leaved weeds, only use amidosulfuron, and only between 1 February and 31 March; and
  - for grass weeds, use the following active ingredients only – tri-allate, fenoxaprop-P-ethyl, tralkoxydim, clodinafop-propargyl or pinoxaden.

OF11/EF11 Uncropped cultivated margins for rare plants 460/400 points per ha

These margins will provide beneficial management for rare arable plants, insects and foraging sites for seed-eating birds. It is better to avoid locating these margins where you have a grass weed problem. Where run-off is a problem, a grass buffer should be considered. The option will provide greatest benefits on sandy, shallow, chalky or stony soils.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Cultivate an arable field margin annually in either spring or autumn to a depth of about 15 cm (6 inches).
- Varying the depth and time of cultivation may help prevent the build-up of undesirable weeds, but should always be managed according to the requirements of the target species.
- Margins should be 3 m–6 m wide. They can be relocated within the same field to avoid the build-up of pernicious weeds.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by manual removal.
- Where a severe pernicious weed burden has developed, targeted broad-spectrum herbicides can be used, once annual species have set seed (typically in September). Before then, only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam or Japanese knotweed).

Uncropped cultivated margin, on the right of the picture, with an unfertilised headland in the edge of the crop

OF13 Uncropped, cultivated areas for ground-nesting birds	360 points per ha
EF13 Uncropped, cultivated areas for ground-nesting birds on arable land	360 points per ha

Area constraints apply to this option.

This option provides breeding sites for ground-nesting farmland birds such as lapwing. In addition, it can provide foraging habitats for other declining birds such as grey partridge, turtle dove, skylark, yellow wagtail, linnet, yellowhammer and corn bunting. Brown hare may also benefit from this option in predominantly arable areas. It will deliver most benefit when sited next to a buffer strip, stubble or area planted with wild bird seed or nectar flower mixtures. Although lapwings nest on cultivated land, they feed their chicks on extensively managed grassland so placing this option next to a suitable grass field

should improve their breeding success. This option should be used in large arable fields, ideally in areas where these species have been known to nest. Fields should be chosen carefully, avoiding those with pernicious weeds and those that are prone to waterlogging. This option must not be located on parcels at risk of soil erosion or run-off (as identified on your FER) or where there are archaeological features.

This option can be used in a sequence with the overwintered stubble (OF6/EF6) to provide a continuity of habitat for species such as skylark and corn bunting.

This is a 'rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal arable rotation or stay in a fixed location but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- The cultivated area must be located on level, or slightly sloping ground; in fields larger than 5 ha with an open aspect and at least 100 m away from woods, in-field and hedgerow trees, overhead power-lines and public rights of way in order to minimise nest disturbance and predation. Do not place in fields bounded by tree lines or adjacent to woods, unless the field is larger than 10 ha.
- The cultivated area must be at least 1 ha and no more than 2.5 ha in size and at least 100 m wide. It must be located so as not to generate erosion and provide run-off pathways for sediment.
- Create rough cultivated areas using tines or discs between 1 February and 20 March, to make sure they are in place for the first breeding attempts of the farmland birds. Avoid cultivating in wet conditions.
- If the regeneration is dense and exceeds 10 cm high in early spring, and no nesting birds are present, spray or re-cultivate to restore suitable nesting habitat.
- The cultivated areas must be retained until 31 July.
- Undesirable weed species such as blackgrass, sterile brome and wild oats can be controlled using mechanical means. Work must take place in a single 3-day window, so that any disturbed ground-nesting birds can return to nest. If cutting, start from the centre and work outwards. This will allow any birds or mammals in the crop to seek refuge at the margins of the field.
- Undesirable weed species such as blackgrass, sterile brome and wild oats must be controlled prior to creating the rough fallow, by spraying off these areas with a non-selective herbicide.
- The area must not be used for regular vehicular access, turning or storage. There should be no tracks, compacted areas or poaching.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.

UPDATED in 2013

EF15 Reduced herbicide cereal crops followed by overwintered stubble 195 points per ha

This option provides a valuable food source for farmland birds, especially during the winter. The restricted herbicide programme will allow arable plants to flourish and set seed in the crop. Overwintering the stubble will provide winter food for farmland birds.

This option should not be located on sites at risk of soil erosion and run-off (as identified on your FER). Where possible, it should be located in areas where arable plants or or farmland birds, such as corn bunting, cirl bunting, grey partridge, reed bunting, tree sparrow, turtle dove, yellowhammer or yellow wagtail are known to be present.

This is a 'rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal arable rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Sow a cereal (but not maize) crop in the autumn or spring.
- Do not apply insecticides between 15 March and the following harvest.

- Only the following herbicides can be applied to control problem grass and broad-leaved weeds:
  - for broad-leaved weeds, only use amidosulfuron, and only between 1 February and 31 March; and
  - for grass weeds, use the following active ingredients only – tri-allate, fenoxaprop-P-ethyl, tralkoxydim, clodinafop-propargyl or pinoxaden.
- Not all herbicides are suitable for all cereal crops or for undersown crops. Always read the product label.
- There are no restrictions on the use of fungicides or growth regulators.
- Do not apply pre-harvest desiccants or post-harvest herbicides.
- Bale (or chop and spread) straw after harvest.
- Where the stubble is predominantly clean after harvest, a light surface cultivation can be made before the end of September (or within the first month following harvest if later) to encourage weed germination and loosen any surface compaction or capping. If the stubble is already weedy, do not cultivate.
- Beneficial seed and nectar-producing plants such as mustard, fodder radish or oilseed rape can be broadcast or sown on small areas (no more than 0.5 ha per 10 ha stubble) in the autumn to enhance feeding and foraging value. Do not cultivate areas at high risk of soil erosion and run-off as identified on your FER.
- In sloping fields, the tramlines, headlands and other areas of severe compaction should always be sub-soiled following harvest (except on archaeological features or when conditions are wet), to reduce the risk of run-off and erosion.
- Do not apply any pesticides, fertilisers, manures (including manure heaps) or lime to the stubble.
- Do not top or graze the stubble.
- From 15 February, the stubble can be returned to the farm rotation.

EF22 Extended overwintered stubble 410 points per ha

Area constraints apply to this option.

This option covers the whole cropping year using overwintered stubble followed by natural regeneration to provide vital winter food sources for seed-eating birds and spring and summer foraging and nesting habitat for other farmland birds. It also provides valuable habitat for other farmland wildlife and can help to improve water quality through reduced erosion and run-off on vulnerable areas.

This option is targeted at whole or part fields that are left uncropped to produce naturally regenerated cover. This should provide suitable nesting conditions for skylark and other ground-nesting birds throughout the breeding season. The winter stubble is also a beneficial habitat for brown hare.

This option must follow a combinable crop, such as oilseed rape, linseed, cereals or field beans (but not maize). Care must be taken to avoid fields with a known weed or flooding problem. It should not be located where there is a high risk of soil erosion or run-off (ie land identified in your FER as at risk of soil erosion and where rills are regularly seen in wet weather).

This option is a 'rotational option', which means it can be moved around the farm within the normal arable rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year. It can be left in a fixed location for up to two years.

For this option, you must comply with the following:
- This option must be in arable fields of 2 ha or over. It can be part or whole-field, but if part-field, the area must be at least 2 ha in size.
- Do not apply pre-harvest desiccants or post-harvest herbicides.
- Bale (or chop and spread) straw after harvest.

- Where the stubble is predominately clean after harvest, a light surface cultivation can be made before the end of September (or within the first month of harvest if later), to encourage weed germination and loosen any surface compaction or capping. If the stubble is already weedy, do not cultivate.
- In sloping fields the tramlines, headlands and other areas of severe compaction should always be sub-soiled following harvest (except where there are archaeological features or when conditions are wet) to reduce the risk of run-off and erosion.
- Do not apply any pesticides, fertilisers, manures (including manure heaps), waste materials (including sewage sludge) or lime to the stubble, except to control blackgrass (see below for details).
- Beneficial seed and nectar-producing plants, such as mustard, fodder radish or oilseed rape, can be broadcast or sown on small areas (no more than 0.5 ha per 10 ha stubble) in either autumn or spring, to enhance the feeding and foraging value.
- Do not top or graze.
- Undesirable weed species such as blackgrass, sterile brome and wild oats can be controlled by spraying the affected areas from 15 May.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive alien species (eg Himalayan balsam or Japanese knotweed).
- The stubble and any subsequent natural regeneration must be left undisturbed until 31 July of the following year, except for the treatment of weed problems, as specified above.
- From 1 August, you may apply herbicides to destroy the green cover.
- From 15 August, the option area is returned to normal farm management.
- Do not use the area for regular vehicular access, turning or storage.

NEW in 2013

OF23/EF23 Supplementary feeding in winter for farmland birds

612/630 pts/tonne

Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission.

Many farmland birds, including yellowhammer, grey partridge, tree sparrow, corn bunting, linnet and skylark, require seed food throughout the year. A decline in seed availability during the non-breeding season has been a major cause of decline in many seed-eating species. Overwinter stubbles and wild bird seed mixtures provide winter food for seed eaters, but this has typically run out by mid-winter, leaving these birds with a 'hungry gap' before natural food resources become available again in spring.

Providing cereal, oilseed and specialised grains will help farmland birds both survive through this hungry gap and also enter the breeding season in much improved condition.

This is a rotational option. This means it can move around the farmed area but the same total tonnage of feed must be maintained each year.

(OF23 only) This option can only be used with option OF2 Wild bird seed mixture. The maximum amount of OF23 Supplementary feeding in winter for farmland birds that can be entered into the agreement is 0.5 tonnes per hectare of OF2 Wild bird seed mixture.

(EF23 only) This option can only be used with options EF2 Wild bird seed mixture and/or EF22 Extended overwintered stubble. The maximum amount of this option that can be entered into the agreement is 0.5 tonnes per hectare of EF2 Wild bird seed mixture and/or 0.2 tonnes per hectare of EF22 Extended overwintered stubble.

Please note, where the option is located on areas ineligible for SPS (for example, an area of hard standing), the SPS eligibility rules will still apply and the feeding area cannot be claimed for SPS.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Select a feeding area/s **either** on firm free-draining farm tracks or hard standing areas close to existing areas of overwintered stubbles or wild bird seed mixtures **or** on overwintered stubbles or

wild bird seed mixtures. Selecting areas next to hedges, bushes or trees (shelter belts) to provide a safe haven for the feeding birds would be beneficial.

- Spread the food on the ground at least once a week from 1 January until 31 March. Hoppers (feed distributors) may be used to support ground feeding but should not be the sole method of supplementary feeding. Move hoppers regularly and/or protect them by guards or cages to reduce the impact of vermin.
- **(OF23 only)** Use only organic seed mixes on OELS-eligible land. Where this is not possible, you must contact your Organic Inspection Body for a derogation.
- **(OF23 only)** The food must be a mixture of wheat, barley and oats (75%) and red millet, white millet and canary seed (25%). Tailings (small seeds removed from the harvested crop) are not permitted.
- **(EF23 only)** The food must be a mixture of wheat and oilseed rape (75%), red millet, white millet and canary seed (25%). Tailings (small seeds removed from the harvested crop) are not permitted.
- Distribute enough food to match consumption, ensuring a fresh supply of food is maintained without leaving seed unconsumed. This is especially important where ground feeding is undertaken.
- A 'feeding diary' must be kept to include details of:
  - mixture (weight of components and cost)
  - date of feeding
  - amount fed
  - location of feeding.

In addition, all receipts for the purchase of seed must be retained and made available on inspection.

G Options to encourage a range of crop types

The decline of mixed farming is one of the causes of the falling number of farmland birds in England.

OG1/EG1 Undersown spring cereals — 150/200 points per ha

The addition of a grass/legume mix as an understorey to the cereal crop will reduce the need for agrochemical inputs, increase the diversity of habitat provided in the field and benefit farm wildlife.

This is a 'rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal arable rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Undersow a spring cereal crop (but not maize) with a grass ley, including at least 10 per cent legume by weight but no more than 30 per cent.
- Establish the cereal crop between 14 February and 20 April.
- Keep the undersown plant growth until the cereal crop is harvested. This must not be before 1 July or before the cereal crop is fully ripe.
- Do not destroy the grass ley before 15 July of the following year.

UPDATED in 2013

OG4/EG4 Cereals for whole-crop silage followed by overwintered stubble — 250/230 points per ha

The benefit of this option is the provision of a seed source in the winter stubble and from the unripe grain. This is a 'rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal arable rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Sow a cereal (but not maize) crop in the autumn or spring.
- Use only organic seed mixes on OELS-eligible land. Where this is not possible, you must contact your Organic Inspection Body for a derogation.
- Do not apply insecticides between 15 March and the following harvest.
- Only the following herbicides can be applied to control problem grass and broad-leaved weeds:
  - for broad-leaved weeds, only use amidosulfuron, and only between 1 February and 31 March; and
  - for grass weeds, use the following active ingredients only: tri-allate, fenoxaprop-P-ethyl, tralkoxydim, clodinafop-propargyl or pinoxaden. Not all herbicides are suitable for all cereal crops or for undersown crops. Always read the product label.
- There are no restrictions on the use of fungicides or growth regulators.
- Harvest as whole-crop silage.
- Where the stubble is predominantly clean after harvest, a light surface cultivation can be made before the end of September (or within the first month following harvest if later) to encourage weed germination and loosen any surface compaction or capping. If the stubble is already weedy, do not cultivate.
- In sloping fields, the tramlines, headlands and other areas of severe compaction should always be sub-soiled following harvest (except where there are archaeological features or when conditions are wet) to reduce the risk of run-off and erosion.
- Do not apply any pesticides, fertilisers, manures (including manure heaps) or lime to the stubble.
- Beneficial seed and nectar-producing plants, such as mustard, fodder radish or oilseed rape, can be broadcast or sown on small areas (no more than 0.5 ha per 10 ha stubble) in the autumn, to enhance feeding and foraging value. *Do not cultivate areas at high risk of soil erosion and run-off as identified on your FER.*
- Do not top or graze the stubble.
- Do not apply post-harvest herbicides.
- From 15 February, the stubble can be returned to the farm rotation.

J Options to protect soil and water

Examples of run-off due to poor farm management

Soil and water are vital resources. The way land is managed can have a huge impact on both our soils and water resources. Damage to soils through poor land management can cause problems on the farm, such as loss of productivity through removal of topsoil and blocked drains and ditches. There are also more far-reaching effects, such as impacts on water quality and aquatic life and on how flooding is managed, or prevented.

The options available under this section will allow you to take management action to minimise run-off and erosion. Options in other sections, particularly for buffer strips, arable land, grassland and some upland options, can also help manage water flows across farmland and help reduce the incidence of run-off and erosion. Figure 8 provides an illustration of how these options can combine to minimise the risks of soil erosion and run-off.

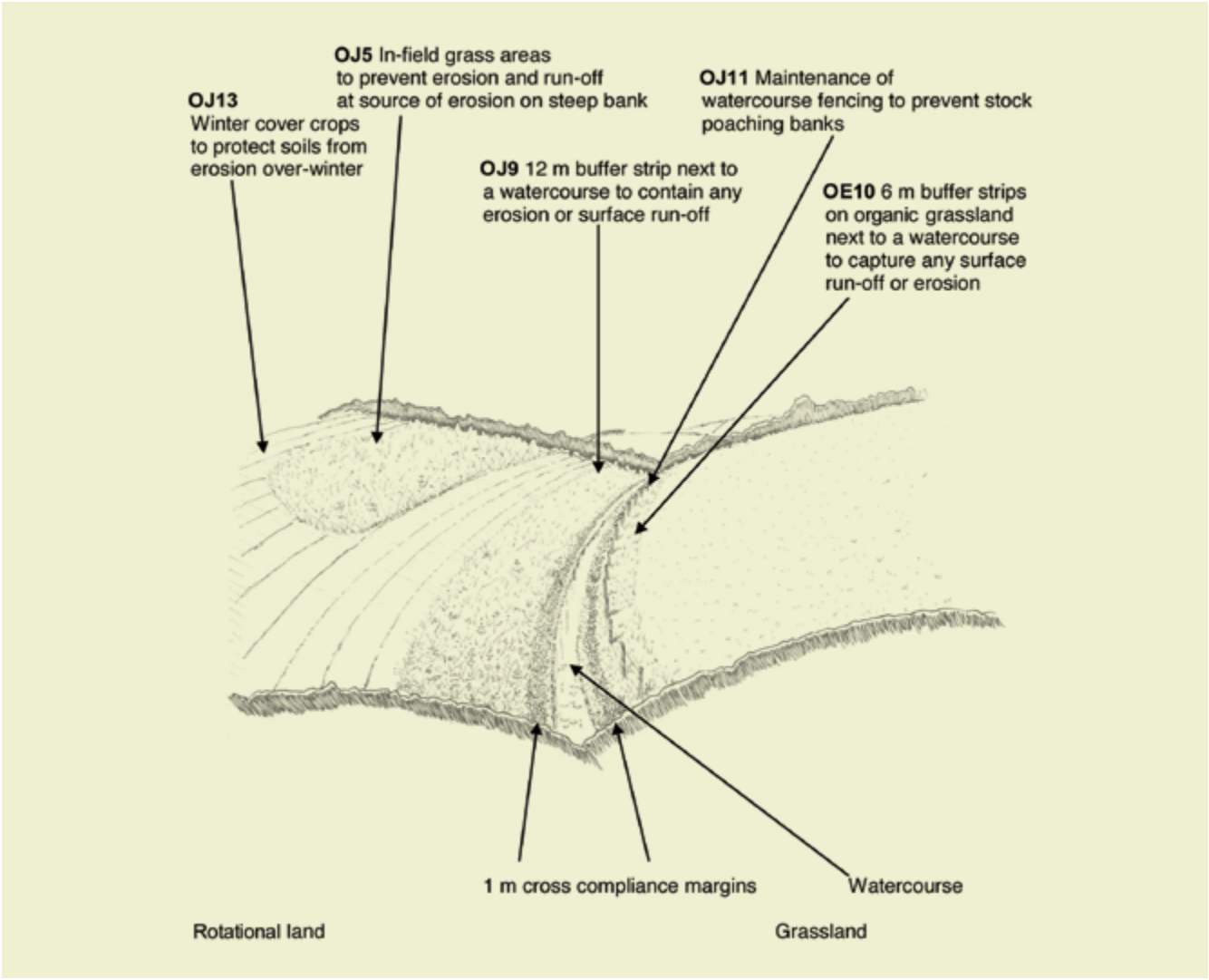

Figure 8 – How OELS options can be used to protect soil and water

OJ2/EJ2 Management of maize crops to reduce soil erosion

18 points per ha

This option must not be located on fields at risk of soil erosion or run-off (as identified on your FER). It is only available on other land where you are growing maize.

This is a 'rotational option'. It can move around the farm with the normal rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Harvest by 1 October and plough or cultivate to leave a rough surface, ideally within two weeks of harvest, to reduce subsequent soil erosion; or harvest by 1 October and establish an autumn-sown crop; or undersow the maize with a grass- or clover-based mixture and after harvest (ideally within two weeks), remove any areas of soil compaction.

- Do not sub-soil areas on sites of archaeological interest.
- You must not apply more than the recommended amount of slurry or manure for either the maize or the following crop to be grown on this land (see guidance in Appendix 3 for a recognised fertiliser recommendation system). Any such slurry or manure must be applied at appropriate times, to minimise the risk of run-off.

UPDATED in 2013

OJ5/EJ5 In-field grass areas to prevent erosion and run-off 454 points per ha

This option aims to reduce the movement of sediment, nutrients and pesticides by wind and water erosion, both within fields and from field-to-field, through the careful location of permanent grass areas. It can also contribute to flood management by reducing surface run-off.

This option can be used to achieve a number of different objectives depending on the type of pollution and the pollutant pathway. For example:

- grassing areas vulnerable to erosion, such as light soils on steep slopes, can reduce the amount of erosion of soil, organic material, nutrients and pesticides; and
- grassing natural drainage pathways (eg valley bottoms) will help to reduce the channelling of run-off water that can produce rills and gullies.

Fields susceptible to erosion can have both in-field grassed areas to minimise the development of erosion and buffer strips at the field margins to capture any erosion or surface run-off. This option is suitable for land that has been identified in your FER as being at risk of causing erosion or run-off. It applies to part-fields only, up to a maximum permissible area of 30 per cent of the field.

These areas are more efficient at trapping sediment when they do not receive large volumes of overland flow channelled from surrounding land. Therefore, it is important to manage your adjacent land to maximise water infiltration.

While this option may help protect specific down-slope field boundaries features, the extent and location of the option should take into account potential impacts on field boundary patterns, especially in open landscapes.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Establish or maintain a dense grassy area during the first 12 months of your agreement, either by sowing or, ideally, by natural regeneration. Remove any compaction in the topsoil if you need to prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features. Regular cutting in the first 12–24 months may be needed to control annual weeds and encourage grasses to tiller. Avoid cutting when the soil is moist to prevent further compaction.
- The width of the area must not be less than 10 m along its entire length.
- After the first 12–24 months, cut the entire area annually after mid-July.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by cutting in the first year and by selective trimming or manual removal thereafter.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistle, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort), or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- Do not use the grass area for regular vehicular access, turning or storage. There should be no tracks, compacted areas or poaching.
- Do not graze the grass area.

UPDATED in 2013

OJ9/EJ9 12 m buffer strips for watercourses on rotational/cultivated land 500/400 points per ha

A wide buffer strip

This option aims to reduce the risk of transport of potential pollutants, such as sediment, nutrients (principally phosphate) and pesticides, to watercourses.

This option is intended for land adjacent to ditches, rivers or streams where it can intercept and remove sediment, organic material, nutrients and chemicals carried in run-off water. These buffer strips must not overlap with the cross compliance requirement not to cultivate land within 2 m of the centre of a hedgerow or watercourse (and within 1 m of the top of the bank of a watercourse). This option is only available on arable or rotational land that has been identified (and recorded on your FER) as at risk of soil erosion or run-off.

The payment for this option is based on the area of the buffer, but if it exceeds 24 m in width at any point, the additional area cannot be included in the payment area. You will need to measure the payment area with care to ensure you claim the correct number of points. You may find mapping software such as MAGIC (www.magic.gov.uk) helpful.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Establish or maintain a grassy strip during the first 12 months of your agreement, either by sowing or, ideally, by natural regeneration. Remove any compaction in the topsoil if you need to prepare a seedbed, except on archaeological features. Regular cutting in the first 12–24 months may be needed to control annual weeds and encourage grasses to tiller. Avoid cutting when the soil is moist to prevent further compaction.
- The width of the strip may vary between 12 m and 24 m along its length but must not be less than 12 m wide at any point.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by cultivation before establishment, by cutting in the first year and by selective trimming or manual removal thereafter.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).

- After the first 12–24 months, cut the 6 m next to the crop edge annually after mid-July. Only cut the remainder to control woody growth, and no more than once every 2 years.
- Do not use buffer strips for regular vehicular access, turning or storage. There should be no tracks, compacted areas or poaching.
- Do not graze the buffer strip.

EJ10 Enhanced management of maize crops to reduce soil erosion and run-off 94 points per ha

This option aims to reduce the risk of soil erosion and run-off on fields where maize is grown preceding a spring-sown crop. It aims to deliver more than EJ2 Management of maize crops to reduce soil erosion by requiring both early harvest and the establishment of a cover crop. The cover crop will provide winter protection from soil erosion and run-off on fields that would otherwise be left bare.

This option must not be located on fields at risk of soil erosion or run-off (as identified on your FER). It is only available on other land where you are growing maize. This option is suitable where it precedes a spring-sown crop.

This is a 'rotational option'. It can move around the farm with the normal rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Harvest the maize crop by 1 October and remove any areas of soil compaction (ideally within two weeks of harvest). Do not sub-soil on features of archaeological interest.
- Establish an autumn-sown cover crop. Drill or broadcast a quick-growing cover crop, such as rye, barley, or mustard, at an effective seed rate so as to provide good erosion protection.
- You must not apply more than the recommended amount of slurry or manure for either the maize or the following crop to be grown on this land (see guidance in Appendix 3). Any such slurry or manure must be applied at appropriate times to minimise the risk of run-off.
- The cover crop must remain for a minimum of six weeks before establishment of the following spring-sown crop.

OJ11/EJ11 Maintenance of watercourse fencing 4 points per 100 m

© Natural England/Peter Wakely

Maintenance of this bankside fence allows taller streamside vegetation to develop

The aim of this option is to support the maintenance of existing watercourse fencing where fields are grazed. Watercourse fencing may help to reduce faecal contamination, stream bank damage and have a significant impact upon water quality. It can also help to protect the bankside vegetation and encourage natural regeneration.

It can be used where watercourses (as defined in Appendix 6) form one or more boundaries of the field, or are present within the field, and livestock are grazed for at least three months of the year. The existing fencing must be sufficient to exclude stock. This option can be used alongside buffer strips or margins next to a watercourse.

This is not a payment for new fencing and cannot be placed on new fencing funded under Environmental Stewardship. However, it could be placed on new fencing funded by other means.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain fences in a stock-proof condition to ensure exclusion of livestock from the ditch, river or stream bank and/or buffer strip or margin.

OJ13/EJ13 Winter cover crops 65 points per ha

This option aims to significantly reduce nitrate leaching on land where soil would normally be left bare during winter. In addition, in certain situations, cover crops may provide protection against soil erosion and loss of other pollutants carried in surface run-off water.

Any land that is vulnerable to nitrate leaching, particularly light sandy soils, is eligible for this option. Heavy soils are not eligible.

This is a `rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal farm rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year.

To be effective, cover crops have to be established early in order to take up sufficient soil nitrate before winter drainage leaches it below the depth of the developing plant roots. The cover crops should be destroyed in late January or February before they are too well developed. Delaying destruction of the cover crop has the potential to increase nitrate leaching the following winter.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Establish a cover crop by 15 September.
- Drill or broadcast a quick-growing cover crop. The cover crop can be a mixture of seeds. Suitable species to include are rye, vetch, phacelia, barley and mustard. The choice of cover crop will be dependent upon herbicide choice and rates of application in the previous crop.
- Sow at a seed rate that will provide a dense cover and protect from soil erosion.
- Do not apply any fertilisers or manures.
- Destroy the cover crop by cultivation in late January or early February, immediately before establishing the following spring crop, to minimise any nitrate losses. When weather conditions delay establishment of a spring crop, the cover crop can be left until mid-March.

K Options for grassland outside the Severely Disadvantaged Areas (SDAs)

These options are designed to manage grassland in a way that benefits wildlife and landscape, protects archaeological features and reduces impacts on natural resources.

Grassland should be managed in a way that promotes good soil structure and infiltration of rainwater to reduce run-off. Good general management includes managing livestock densities to avoid soil compaction or reducing or avoiding grazing when the soil is wet. You may also consider reducing existing compaction, for example, by sub-soiling or spiking, provided there are no buried earthworks or archaeological remains.

Unless stated otherwise, for the purposes of these options, 'grassland' is defined as land that is used to grow grasses or other herbaceous forage naturally or through cultivation and which has not been subject to cultivation for at least five years.

Patches of scrub can add to the structure and wildlife value of grasslands, but they should not be allowed to extend across more than 10 per cent of the field or beyond its existing cover where this is greater than 10 per cent. Scrub should not be allowed to develop on archaeological features.

Inter-tidal habitats are not eligible for these options.

OK1/EK1 Take field corners out of management 500/400 points per ha

Area constraints apply to this option.

This option is only available outside SDAs and below the Moorland Line.

The provision of unmanaged areas will increase the biodiversity of the farm. This option must not be located on archaeological features. Although this option is designed for field corners, if you have small areas within the field, which it would be beneficial to take out of production, you may do so. Field corners do not need to be fenced off, provided the prescriptions are met.

OK1 is only available on improved grassland that is stocked at more than 1.00 LU/ha.
EK1 is only available on improved grassland that is receiving over 50 kg/ha nitrogen per year as organic or inorganic fertilisers.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Patch size must be no more than 0.5 ha. You may have no more than one patch for every 10 ha of land eligible for this option and, as far as possible, patches must be distributed evenly across your farm.
- Do not apply any fertilisers, manures or lime.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- After establishment, cut no more than once every five years to allow the development of tussocky grass and low scrub. Do not cut during the bird breeding season (1 March to 31 August).
- Do not graze.

Please note that any areas containing scrub may become ineligible for SPS payments and would have to be removed from your SPS claim form. Please refer to the *SPS Handbook* and any supplements for more information, details in Appendix 2. Scrub areas are still eligible for OELS or ELS points. Please see Appendix 6 for a definition of scrub for SPS purposes.

OK2/EK2 Permanent grassland with low inputs

115/85 points per ha

© Natural England/Matt Wilmot

Low input permanent pasture can have a wide range of benefits for biodiversity, archaeology and resource protection

This option is only available outside SDAs and below the Moorland Line.

Permanent grassland managed with low inputs of fertiliser and sprays will sustain a greater variety of plants and wildlife. The development of a varied sward structure is of particular value to insects. Permanent grassland is an important feature of riparian and pastoral landscapes and can help protect buried archaeological features. This option may deliver benefits to resource protection where placed on fields that are at risk of soil erosion or run-off. This option can be used on a whole- or part-field basis.

For this option you must comply with the following:

- Maintain as grass. Do not plough, cultivate or re-seed.
- Manage by grazing and/or cutting, but do not cut between 1 April and 31 May. You must remove any cuttings.
- Maintain a sward with a range of heights during the growing season so that at least 20 per cent of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm, to allow plants to flower and to provide a more varied habitat. You do not need to maintain this height variation when the field is closed or shut up for a cut of hay or silage.
- Do not top at any time, except in patches to control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); bracken or areas dominated by rushes.
- Where scrub is present prevent further encroachment by grazing, mowing or topping.
- Do not harrow or roll between 1 April and 31 May.
- Supplementary feeding is allowed, but move feeders as often as required to avoid poaching. Do not feed on or next to archaeological features, steep slopes, footpaths or watercourses.
- You may apply up to 12.5 tonnes/ha (5 tonnes/acre) of Farm Yard Manure (FYM) a year, but only where the grassland is regularly cut for hay, haylage or silage. Only apply FYM during the growing season, provided no birds are nesting in the field, and ground conditions are dry enough to prevent soil compaction. No other type of fertiliser or manures may be applied. If your current manure and fertiliser regime is less than this, you must not increase applications. You may find it useful to refer to the table in Appendix 3 showing average total N (nitrogen) supplied by various manures.
- You can only apply lime with the written consent of your Organic Inspection Body.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear field thistles, curled broad-leaved docks and common ragwort), invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Do not apply more than 50 kg/ha nitrogen per year as inorganic fertiliser. Where animal manures are applied, either alone or in addition to inorganic fertilisers, the total rate of nitrogen must not exceed 100 kg/ha nitrogen per year. Only apply during the growing season, provided no birds are nesting in the field and ground conditions are dry enough to prevent soil compaction. If your current manure and fertiliser application rates are less than this, you must not increase applications. You may find it useful to refer to the table in Appendix 3 showing average total nitrogen supplied by various manures.
- You may continue adding lime, where this is your regular practice.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); or bracken.

OK3/EK3 Permanent grassland with very low inputs

180/150 points per ha

© Natural England/James Le Page

Permanent pasture with very low inputs of fertiliser and herbicide provides better wildlife habitats

This option is only available outside SDAs and below the Moorland Line.

Grassland managed with no fertiliser has a higher value for wildlife. Much species-rich grassland has been lost to agricultural intensification, so it is important to maintain and, where possible, increase this resource. This option may also deliver benefits to resource protection where placed on fields that are at risk of soil erosion or run-off. It can be used on a whole- or part-field basis. If your field has more than a third of its area covered by rushes, it must be entered into option OK4/EK4 (Management of rush pastures) rather than this option.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain as grass. Do not plough, cultivate or re-seed.
- Manage by grazing and/or cutting, to remove the year's grass growth, but do not cut between 1 April and 30 June. You must remove any cuttings.
- Maintain a sward with a range of heights during the growing season so that at least 20 per cent of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm, to allow plants to flower and to provide a more varied habitat. You do not need to maintain this height variation when the field is closed or shut up for a cut of hay or silage.
- Do not top at any time, except in patches to control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); bracken or areas dominated by rushes.
- Where scrub is present prevent further encroachment by grazing, mowing or topping.
- Do not harrow or roll between 1 April and 30 June.
- Do not supplementary feed.
- You may apply up to 12.5 tonnes/ha (5 tonnes/acre) of Farm Yard Manure (FYM) a year, but only where the grassland is regularly cut. Only apply FYM during the growing season, provided no birds are nesting in the field and ground conditions are dry enough to prevent soil compaction. No other type of fertilisers or manures may be applied. If your current manure and fertiliser regime is less than this, you must not increase applications. You may find it useful to refer to the table in Appendix 3 showing average total nitrogen supplied by various manures.
- You can only apply lime with the written consent of your Organic Inspection Body.
- You may continue adding lime where this is your regular practice.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); or bracken.

OK4/EK4 Management of rush pastures

180/150 points per ha

Damp pasture is a valuable habitat for nesting birds

This option is only available outside SDAs and below the Moorland Line.

This option is available for fields where at least a third of the field area is covered by rushes. Damp pasture on farmland is a very important potential habitat for lapwing, curlew, redshank, snipe and reed bunting. Different types of waders like different vegetation heights, so a variety in the sward structure is most beneficial. Rush pastures may also contain a wide range of plant and invertebrate species.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain as grass. Do not plough, cultivate or re-seed.
- Cut rush-dominated areas each calendar year, but not between 15 March and 31 July. Cut no more than a third of the area of rushes in each field (or a third of the fields if they are small) in rotation. It may be impractical to cut rushes in the wettest flushes, and therefore these can be left. Cattle trampling may help to control these areas.
- Once cut, if aftermath grazing does not control rushes, a second cut should be carried out within eight weeks, but not between 1 April and 31 July.
- Where possible, graze the aftermath with cattle.
- Do not harrow or roll between 1 April and 30 June.
- Do not supplementary feed.
- You may apply up to 12.5 tonnes/ha (5 tonnes/acre) of FYM a year, but only where the grassland is regularly cut. Only apply FYM during the growing season, provided no birds are nesting in the field and ground conditions are dry enough to prevent soil compaction. No other type of fertiliser or manures may be applied. If your current manure and fertiliser regime is less than this, you must not increase applications. You may find it useful to refer to the table in Appendix 3 showing average total nitrogen supplied by various manures.
- You can only apply lime with the written consent of your Organic Inspection Body.
- You may continue adding lime where this is your regular practice.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort), invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); or bracken.

NEW in 2013

OK20/EK20 Ryegrass seed-set as winter/spring food for birds 190/80 points per ha

Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission.

The aim of this option is to allow silage fields to go to seed in autumn, providing a food resource throughout winter and into the 'hungry gap' in February for buntings (such as yellowhammer) and other granivorous birds. It may also increase abundance of invertebrates and small mammals.

This option is only available on swards containing at least 50 per cent ryegrass (perennial, Italian or hybrid). Temporary grassland (sown to grass or other herbaceous forage for less than 5 years) and grassland that has been cultivated and re-sown within the last 5 years are eligible for this option. It can be applied on whole- or part-fields. If used on part-fields the area should be at least 10 m wide. For most birds it will be beneficial to site next to a hedge but for skylark it should be sited away from trees and hedges.

This is a 'rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal farm rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year.

(EK20 only) There is no restriction on use of lime, fertiliser, manure, fungicides, insecticides or selective herbicides prior to taking the silage cut(s).

(OK20 only) There is no restriction on use of lime, manure, or other inputs permitted by your organic registration body prior to taking the silage cut(s).

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Close the field for at least 5 weeks and take a silage cut by 31 May.
- On swards containing at least 70 per cent Italian or hybrid ryegrass, you may also take a second cut of silage (or hay) by 30 June.
- After cutting and removal, close the field, allowing the sward to flower and set seed in the autumn. Leave the sward undisturbed with no harrowing, rolling, cultivation, application of manure or fertiliser until at least 1 March. You may then destroy the sward or restore it by harrowing or grazing. (This may be helped by the establishment of fallen seeds.)

NEW in 2013

OK21/EK21 Legume- and herb-rich swards 250/200 points per ha

Please note this option is subject to approval by the European Commission.

This option will provide habitat and food for invertebrates including crop pollinators, benefit soil structure, mitigate climate change by reducing nitrogen fertiliser use and provide productive high-quality forage for livestock.

This option is only available on temporary grassland (sown to grass or other herbaceous forage for less than five years) or grassland that has been cultivated and re-sown within the last five years. It can be applied on whole- or part-fields.

This is a 'rotational option'. This means that it can move around the farm within the normal farm rotation, but the same total hectarage must be maintained each year.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Use only organic seed mixes on OELS-eligible land. Where this is not possible, you must contact your Organic Inspection Body for a derogation.

- In the first 12 months of the agreement, establish a mixed sward of grasses, legumes and herbs/ wildflowers (eg chicory, yarrow, ribwort plantain, forage burnet, black knapweed, common sorrel). This is usually most reliably achieved by sowing into a clean seedbed, but could be done by oversowing existing grassland following creation of 50 per cent bare ground.
- For the remainder of the agreement the sward must contain a minimum cover of 10 per cent red clover and an additional 10 per cent other legumes plus herbs, plus wildflowers (cover does not include white clover, creeping buttercup or injurious weeds). The sward must include at least five species of grass, three species of legume (including bird's-foot trefoil) and five species of herb/wildflower.
- Re-establish, if necessary, on the same or a different field, to maintain these minima.
- Manage by cutting or grazing but allow to flower by resting for a 3-5 week period between 1 May and 31 July. You must delay cutting until the majority of red clover plants have started to flower.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort), invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Do not apply pesticides except herbicides to spot treat or weed-wipe for control of injurious weeds (ie. creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); or bracken.
- You may apply lime and organic manures.
- You may apply inorganic fertilisers provided they do not contain nitrogen.

K Option for mixed stocking on grassland

OK5/EK5 Mixed stocking 9 points per ha

Mixed stocking encourages a diversity of sward structure and species

This option is available on eligible parcels both outside and inside SDAs.

Mixed stocking encourages a diversity of sward structure and plant and invertebrate species, which in turn can be beneficial to a variety of ecological and historic features. It also contributes to the distinctive colour and patterning of local landscapes through mixed grazing systems. This option is only available on land that is grazed by both cattle and sheep, either in the same year or in alternate years, as part of a clean grazing system. This option may be co-located with up to two other options from the list of permitted combinations at Table 6.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain as grass. Do not plough, cultivate or re-seed.
- A minimum of 30 per cent of the Livestock Units (LUs) must be grazing cattle.
- A minimum of 15 per cent of the LUs must be grazing sheep.
- Supplementary feeding is allowed, but move feeders as often as required to avoid poaching. Do not feed on or next to archaeological features, steep slopes, footpaths or watercourses.
- Keep a record of all livestock grazing the land covered by this option.

You may not wish to graze both types of livestock in the same year. For this reason, the percentage of cattle and sheep LUs grazing the land is calculated over a two-year period. This allows you either to graze both types of livestock on the land parcel in the same year or to graze each type in alternate years.

If you choose to graze them on the land in alternate years, at least 60 per cent of the LUs on the land parcel must be cattle in one year and at least 30 per cent must be sheep in the other. The remaining 40/70 per cent of the LUs can be made up of the same, or other types of livestock, such as horses or domesticated deer. For details of LU conversion factors, please refer to Appendix 4.

L Options for grassland and moorland inside the Severely Disadvantaged Areas (SDAs)

These options are designed to manage grassland and moorland in a way that benefits wildlife and landscape, protects archaeological features and reduces impacts on natural resources. Other options for the uplands are available through Uplands OELS.

Grassland should be managed in a way that promotes good soil structure and infiltration of rainwater to reduce run-off. Good general management includes managing livestock densities to avoid soil compaction, or reducing or avoiding grazing when the soil is wet. You may also consider reducing existing compaction, for example, by sub-soiling or spiking, except on archaeological features.

Patches of scrub can add to the structure and wildlife value of grasslands but they should not be allowed to extend across more than 10 per cent of the field or beyond its existing cover where this is greater than 10 per cent. Scrub should not be allowed to develop on archaeological features.

For the purposes of these options, grassland is defined as land that is used to grow grasses or other herbaceous forage naturally or through cultivation and which has not been subject to cultivation for at least five years. Inter-tidal habitats are not eligible for these options.

All other options may also be used in an SDA (where the option eligibility and management rules can be met) except those for lowland grassland (OK1 to OK4, OK20, OK21, EK1 to EK4, EK20 and EK21).

The availability of the grassland options within each area is summarised in Table 5.

Table 5 Availability of upland and lowland grassland options

Options	Land outside SDAs	Land in an SDA		
		Below the Moorland Line	Above the Moorland Line	
			Parcels of less than 15 ha	Parcels of 15 ha or more
OK/EK1–4, OK/EK20, OK/EK21	✓			
OK/EK5	✓	✓	✓	✓
OL/EL1–3		✓		
OL/EL4		✓	✓	
OL/EL5			✓	
OL/EL6				✓

OL1/EL1 Take field corners out of management in SDAs — 100 points per ha

Area constraints apply to this option.

This option is only available on land inside the SDAs and below the Moorland Line.

Although this option is designed for corners of grass fields, it may also be applied to small areas within the field, which it would be beneficial to take out of production. The provision of unmanaged areas will increase the biodiversity of the farm. Field corners do not need to be fenced off, provided the prescriptions are met. This option must not be located on archaeological features (see options OD4, OD5, ED4 and ED5 for options for historic features).

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Patch size must be no more than 0.5 ha. You may have no more than one patch for every 10 ha of land eligible for this option and, as far as possible, they must be distributed evenly across your farm.
- Do not apply lime, fertilisers or manures.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort), invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken.
- After establishment, cut no more than once every five years to allow the development of tussocky grass and low scrub. Avoid cutting between 1 March and 31 August, if nesting birds are thought to be present.
- Do not graze.

OL2/EL2 Permanent grassland with low inputs in SDAs — 35 points per ha

This option is only available on land inside the SDAs and below the Moorland Line.

Permanent grassland managed with low inputs of fertiliser and sprays will sustain a greater variety of plants and wildlife. The development of a varied sward structure is of particular value to insects. Permanent grassland is an important feature of pastoral landscapes and can help to protect buried archaeological features. This option may deliver benefits to resource protection where placed on fields that are at risk of soil erosion or run-off. This option can be used on a whole or part-field basis.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain as grass. Do not plough, cultivate or re-seed.
- Manage by grazing and/or cutting, but do not cut between 1 April and 31 May.
- Maintain a sward with a range of heights during the growing season so that at least 20 per cent of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm, to allow plants to flower and to provide a more varied habitat. You do not need to maintain this height variation when the field is closed or shut up for a cut of hay or silage.
- Do not top at any time, except in patches to control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); bracken or areas dominated by rushes.
- Where scrub is present, prevent further encroachment by grazing, mowing or topping.
- Do not harrow or roll between 1 April and 31 May.
- Supplementary feeding is allowed, but move feeders as often as required to avoid poaching. Do not feed on or next to archaeological features, steep slopes, footpaths or watercourses.

- You may apply up to 12.5 tonnes/ha (5 tonnes/acre) of FYM a year, but only where the grassland is regularly cut. Only apply FYM during the growing season, provided no birds are nesting in the field and ground conditions are dry enough to prevent soil compaction. No other types of fertiliser or manure may be applied. If your current manure and fertiliser regime is less than this, you must not increase applications. You may find it useful to refer to the table in Appendix 3 showing the average total nitrogen supplied by various manures.
- Do not apply more than 50 kg/ha nitrogen per year as inorganic fertiliser. Where animal manures are applied, either alone or in addition to inorganic fertiliser, the total rate of nitrogen must not exceed 100 kg/ha nitrogen per year. Only apply during the growing season, provided no birds are nesting in the field, and ground conditions are dry enough to prevent soil compaction. If your current manure and fertiliser regime is less than this, you must not increase applications. You may find it useful to refer to the table in Appendix 3 showing average total nitrogen supplied by various manures.
- You can only apply lime with the written consent of your Organic Inspection Body.
- You may continue adding lime where this is your regular practice.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort), invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); or bracken.

Low input permanent pasture can have a wide range of benefits for biodiversity, archaeology, and resource protection

OL3/EL3 Permanent grassland with very low inputs in SDAs

60 points per ha

Permanent pasture with very low inputs of fertiliser and herbicide provides better wildlife habitats

This option is only available on land inside the SDAs and below the Moorland Line.

Permanent grassland managed with no fertiliser has a higher value for wildlife. Much species-rich grassland has been lost to agricultural intensification and it is important to maintain and, where possible, increase this resource. This option may also deliver benefits to resource protection where placed on fields that are at risk of soil erosion or run-off. This option can be used on a whole- or part-field basis. If your field has more than a third of its area covered by rushes, it must be entered into option OL4/EL4 Management of rush pastures in an SDA, rather than this option.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain as grass. Do not plough, cultivate or re-seed.
- Manage by grazing and/or cutting, to remove each year's grass growth, but do not cut between 1 April and 30 June. You must remove any cuttings.
- Maintain a sward with a range of heights during the growing season so that at least 20 per cent of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent is more than 7 cm, to allow plants to flower and to provide a more varied habitat. You do not need to maintain this height variation when the field is closed or shut up for a cut of hay or silage.
- Do not top at any time, except in patches to control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); bracken or areas dominated by rushes.
- Where scrub is present prevent further encroachment by grazing, mowing or topping.
- Do not harrow or roll between 1 April and 30 June.
- Do not supplementary feed.
- You may apply up to 12.5 tonnes/ha (5 tonnes/acre) of FYM a year, but only where the grassland is regularly cut. Only apply FYM during the growing season, provided no birds are nesting in the field, and ground conditions are dry enough to prevent soil compaction. No other type of fertilisers or manures may be applied. If your current manure and fertiliser regime is less than this, you must not increase applications. You may find it useful to refer to the table in Appendix 3 showing average total nitrogen supplied by various manures.
- You can only apply lime with the written consent of your Organic Inspection Body.
- You may continue adding lime where this is your regular practice.

- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort), invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); or bracken.

OL4/EL4 Management of rush pastures in SDAs — 60 points per ha

© Natural England/Dave Key

Damp pasture is a valuable habitat for breeding birds

This option is available inside the SDAs and below the Moorland Line and above it on parcels less than 15 ha.

Fields where at least a third of the field area is covered by rushes are eligible for this option. Damp pasture on farmland is a very important potential habitat for lapwing, curlew, redshank and snipe. Different types of waders prefer different vegetation heights, so a variety in the sward structure is most beneficial. Rush pastures may also contain a wide range of plant and invertebrate species.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain as grass. Do not plough, cultivate or re-seed.
- Cut rush-dominated areas each year, but not between 1 April and 31 July. Cut no more than a third of the area of rushes in each field, or a third of the fields if they are small (ie less than 3 ha), in rotation. It may be impractical to cut rushes in the wettest flushes; therefore these can be left. Cattle trampling may help to control these areas.
- Once cut, if aftermath grazing does not control rushes, a second cut should be carried out within 8 weeks, but not between 1 April and 31 July.
- Where possible, graze the aftermath with cattle.
- Do not harrow or roll between 1 April and 30 June.
- Supplementary feeding is allowed, but move feeders as often as required to avoid poaching. Do not feed on or next to archaeological features, steep slopes, footpaths or watercourses.
- You may apply up to 12.5 tonnes/ha (5 tonnes/acre) of FYM a year, but only where the grassland is regularly cut. Only apply FYM during the growing season, provided no birds are nesting in the field and ground conditions

are dry enough to prevent soil compaction. No other type of fertiliser or manure may be applied. If your current manure and fertiliser regime is less than this, you must not increase applications. You may find it useful to refer to the table in Appendix 3 showing average total nitrogen supplied by various manures.

- You can only apply lime with the written consent of your Organic Inspection Body.
- You may continue adding lime where this is your regular practice.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort), invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) or bracken by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); or bracken.

OL5/EL5 Enclosed rough grazing

35 points per ha

This option is only available inside the SDAs on parcels of less than 15 ha above the Moorland Line.

Commonly known as 'allotments', 'intakes' or 'newtakes', these are areas of enclosed rough land of less than 15 ha used exclusively for grazing, of which the majority has not been drained, re-seeded or regularly cultivated. They have received only minimal applications of fertilisers, lime, slag or pesticides. They will contain predominantly semi-natural vegetation, usually moorland grasses and rushes, and sometimes rocky and very wet areas. They may also contain small areas of agriculturally improved land.

For this option you must comply with the following:

- Do not plough, cultivate or reseed.
- Protect permanently waterlogged wetlands, including peat bogs and other mires, and hillside flushes. Do not install any new land drainage or modify any existing land drainage, or remove any peat or sediment.
- Leave rocks, scree and mineral spoil in place.
- Do not increase your existing stocking level.
- Do not supplementary feed.
- Do not apply any fertilisers, manures, lime or slag.
- Take action to contain bracken and common gorse so that they do not spread to new areas of land, where this is within your control. Wherever possible, control of bracken should be by mechanical means. Otherwise, to chemically control bracken, only an approved herbicide may be used and care must be taken not to apply it to other ferns. For common gorse, control should be by cutting or burning in manageable blocks. If the land is in a water catchment area or scheduled monument, you must seek consent from the appropriate authority.
- Prevent the spread of rhododendron and other invasive non-native species to new areas of land, where this is within your control, by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks, or common ragwort) by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Rhododendron and other invasive non-native species must be cut and the stumps treated immediately with herbicide to prevent spread to new areas of land, where this is within your control. At least one follow-up treatment will be required in subsequent years to control re-growth.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks, or common ragwort).

Enclosed rough grazing

EL6 Unenclosed moorland rough grazing

5 points per ha

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Moorland rough grazing

This option is only available inside the SDAs on land parcels of 15 ha or more above the Moorland Line.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Do not plough, cultivate or reseed.
- Protect permanently waterlogged wetlands, including peat bogs and other mires, and hillside flushes. Do not install any new land drainage or modify any existing land drainage, or remove any peat or sediment from drainage channels.
- Leave rocks, scree and mineral spoil in place.
- Where you have the legal right to carry out burning, and intend to do so, you must follow the Heather and Grass Burning Code. You may obtain a copy of The Heather and Grass Burning Code (Defra, 2007) from your Natural England regional office or download it at **www.naturalengland.org.uk.**
- Do not supplementary feed using silage or other forage wrapped in plastic. Do not use ring feeders or troughs. Move feeding areas as often as required to avoid poaching. Do not feed on or next to archaeological features, steep slopes, footpaths or watercourses.
- Do not apply any fertilisers, manures, lime or slag.
- Take action to contain bracken and common gorse so that they do not spread to new areas of land, where this is within your control. Wherever possible, control of bracken should be by mechanical means. Otherwise, to chemically control bracken only an approved herbicide may be used and care must be taken not to apply it to other ferns. For common gorse, control should be by cutting or burning in manageable blocks. If the land is in a water catchment area or scheduled monument, you must seek consent from the appropriate authority.
- Rhododendron and other invasive non-native species must be cut and the stumps treated immediately with herbicide to prevent spread to new areas of land, where this is within your control. At least one follow-up treatment will be required in subsequent years to control re-growth.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort).

Options for Uplands OELS

UOB Options for boundary features in the uplands

These options are available for boundary features above, or that form the boundary of, the Moorland Line.

UOB4/UB4 Stone-faced hedgebank management on both sides on or above the Moorland Line — 24 points per 100 m

UOB5/UB5 Stone-faced hedgebank management on one side on or above the Moorland Line — 12 points per 100 m

Where there is hedge growth on top of the bank, you may also apply for one of the options OB1, OB2, OB3, OB14, EB1, EB2, EB3 or EB14 where they meet the necessary criteria.

For these options, you must comply with the following:

- Protect stone-faced banks from deterioration and repair gaps where these occur during the course of the agreement.
- Prevent damage to stone-faced gateways and to banks by machinery or by stock climbing. Where stock have damaged such features, prevent further damage by making the features stock-proof.
- Do not remove any in situ stone from banks.
- All repair and maintenance work must be carried out in the traditional materials used in the original hedgebank construction, following the style characteristic to the local landscape.
- Do not cast up ditch dredging or spoil over stone-faced banks.

UPDATED in 2013

UOB11/UB11 Stone wall protection and maintenance on or above the Moorland Line — 32 points per 100 m

You must have control over the management of both sides of the wall. Stone walls of all types are important for stock management and as landscape and historic features. They are also potentially important habitats for lichens, mosses and ferns, invertebrates, reptiles, birds and small mammals.

This option can only be applied to complete walls in good condition. A wall in good condition is at its original height to below the top stones with at least 75 per cent of top stones in place (where they formed part of the original construction) and no gaps along the entire length. A wall is measured between two end points. An end point includes connections between two or more walls, or connections to other features for example; fences, gateways, buildings, roads, ditches, and hedgerows, or the point at which there is a change in management/ownership. This option can also be applied to livestock enclosures such as sheep folds and walls which end mid-field.

Stone walls must be built of natural materials and must be of traditional dry-stone wall construction. Mortar may be used when it is the traditional method of stone walling.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Protect stone walls from deterioration. Undertake a visual inspection of the walls to check their condition and identify any sections that need repair at least once a year. Keep a record (written or photographic) of the problems identified and the repair work undertaken.
- Where gaps occur during the course of the agreement carry out the necessary repairs.

- Carry out all repair and maintenance work in the traditional materials used in the original wall construction, following the style characteristic of the local landscape and using appropriately shaped and sized local natural stone. Any existing features such as sheep creeps and stone gate posts must be retained.
- Do not remove any in situ stone from walls.

UPDATED in 2013

UOB12/UB12 Earth bank management on both sides on or above the Moorland Line 18 points per 100 m

UOB13/UB13 Earth bank management on one side on or above the Moorland Line 9 points per 100 m

This option aims to maintain and protect earth and turf-faced banks. These banks are important landscape and historic features, often containing valuable below-ground archaeological deposits. They also provide potentially important habitats for invertebrates, reptiles, birds and small mammals.

These options only apply to complete sections of earth and turf-faced banks that are at least 1 m in height.

For UOB12/UB12, you must have control over the management of both sides of the bank. If you have control of the land adjacent to only one side of the bank, you must use UOB13/UB13. Flood banks and warp banks are not eligible for these options.

Where there is a hedge on top of the bank that meets the necessary criteria, you may also apply for one of the hedgerow options OB1, OB2, OB3, OB14, EB1, EB2, EB3 or EB14. The specified height of the hedge is measured from the top of the bank.

For these options, you must comply with the following:

- Protect earth banks from deterioration. Repair gaps where these occur during the course of the agreement.
- Do not repair gaps using earth from an existing boundary or any other archaeological feature.
- Prevent damage to gateways and banks by machinery or by stock. Where stock have damaged such features, prevent further damage by making the features stock-proof.
- All repair and maintenance work must be carried out in the traditional style characteristic of the local area and used in the original earth bank construction.

UOB15/UB15 Stone-faced hedgebank restoration 55 points per m

This option is only available on land within the SDA.

This option supports the restoration of these banks to maintain them as features in the landscape, and to benefit wildlife. It is available for existing stone-faced banks that remain substantially intact but are losing stones and have some unstable sections. You must have management control over both sides of the hedgebank.

You can enter up to 40 m on your application form. This represents the annual commitment. Hence, if you enter 40 m on your application form, you will be required to complete 200 m over the full 5 years of your agreement (or 400 m if you have a 10-year Uplands OELS/HLS agreement).

You can complete the work ahead of schedule, but you must have completed at least as much as the annual commitment for each agreement year completed. Points earned will be based on the annual commitment, not the actual amount of work completed in any single year.

For example, where the annual commitment is 40 m					
End of agreement year	1	2	3	4	5
Minimum total length restored	40	80	120	160	200
Maximum total length restored	200	200	200	200	200
Points earned	2200	2200	2200	2200	2200

Banks in this option may not be entered in options OB4, UOB4, OB5, UOB5, EB4, UB4, EB5 and UB5.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Obtain current, dated, photographs of the bank to be restored as evidence of its condition when you joined the scheme, retain these photographs and submit a copy with your application.
- At the end of the agreement, the restored bank must be complete and in good condition.
- Carry out all restoration work in the traditional materials used in the original bank construction, following the style characteristic of the local landscape and using appropriately shaped and sized local natural stone.
- Before work starts, all old fencing must be removed and disposed of appropriately.
- Avoid undermining the original historic bank. Foundation stones must not be disturbed unless it is necessary to create a firm base. Often the lower courses of field boundaries are of considerable age and archaeological importance.
- Avoid restoring stone-faced banks in adverse weather conditions, such as drought or very wet weather, as this will result in instability. Using machinery in wet weather may damage land adjacent to the bank.
- Strip loose stone back by hand until there are firm stones to build on.
- On completion of each course, backfill with earth and small stones. Tamp down well to form a solid core before continuing with the next course.
- The top should be finished off with a row of large flat stones, vertical stones or a layer of turf, depending on local traditions.
- Where the original stone is no longer available or is not in good enough condition to be re-used, replacement stone must be sourced locally and must be of the type used in the local area. Stone must not be taken from other hedgebanks, walls or buildings.
- Hauling stone should be done when ground conditions are firm enough to prevent soil damage.
- Old features, such as creep holes or built granite troughs, should be restored and retained.
- Do not carry out restoration work on a bank with a hedge between 1 March and 31 August (the main bird-breeding season).
- Where a hedge already exists, do not bury a newly laid hedge in deep earth as this will prevent effective regrowth.
- Where the bank is crossed by a public right of way, any stiles and gates must be restored to their original form using traditional materials.

UOB16/UB16 Earth bank restoration

12.5 points per m

This option is only available on land within the SDA.

This option aims to restore banks to maintain them as features in the landscape. It is available for existing earth banks that are substantially intact but have some unstable and/or collapsed sections. You must have management control over both sides of the hedgebank.

You can enter up to 40 m on your application form. This represents the annual commitment. Hence, if you enter 40 m on your application form, you will be required to complete 200 m over the full 5 years of your agreement (or 400 m if you have a 10-year Uplands OELS/HLS agreement).

You can complete the work ahead of schedule, but you must have completed at least as much as the annual commitment for each agreement year completed. Points earned will be based on the annual commitment, not the actual amount of work completed in any single year.

For example, where the annual commitment is 40 m					
End of agreement year	1	2	3	4	5
Minimum total length restored	40	80	120	160	200
Maximum total length restored	200	200	200	200	200
Points earned	500	500	500	500	500

Banks in this option may not be entered in options OB12, UOB12, OB13, UOB13, EB12, UB12, EB13 and UB13.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Obtain current, dated, photographs of the bank to be restored as evidence of its condition when you joined the scheme, retain these photographs and submit a copy with your application.
- At the end of the agreement, the restored bank must be complete and in good condition.
- All repair and maintenance work must be carried out in the traditional materials used in the original earth bank construction, following the style characteristic to the local landscape. The shape and height of the bank must be consistent with other banks that are in good condition in the immediate vicinity.
- Avoid undermining the original historic bank. Often the lower courses of field boundaries are of considerable age and archaeological importance.
- Do not carry out restoration work on a bank with a hedge between 1 March and 31 August (the main bird-breeding season).
- Do not use machinery beneath the canopy of hedgerow trees to avoid soil compaction.
- Before work starts, all old fencing must be removed and disposed of appropriately.
- Avoid restoring earth banks in adverse weather conditions such as drought or very wet weather as this will result in instability. Using machinery in wet weather may damage land adjacent to the hedgebank.
- Use original soil to build up the bank where possible. Do not use earth from an existing boundary or any other archaeological feature.
- Where a hedge already exists, do not bury a newly laid hedge in deep earth as this will prevent effective regrowth.
- To ensure stability, the finished face of the bank should slope inwards to create a 'batter', such that the base of the bank is wider than the top. Settlement must be allowed at each stage to stabilise the bank.
- Where the bank is faced with turves, take to the full height of the bank and finish off with loose soil or turf, depending on local traditions and whether or not a hedge is to be planted.
- Where the earth bank is crossed by a public right of way, any stiles and gates must be restored to their original form using traditional materials.

UOB17/UB17 Stone wall restoration — 30 points per m

This option is only available on land within the SDA.

This option aims to retain and enhance the pattern of enclosure by stone walls where it is a characteristic of the local landscape. It is available for walls that require major rebuilding, where sections of the wall are unstable and may collapse and/or where sections of the wall have slumped. Within field walls, such as sheep folds, are also eligible. You must have management control over both sides of the stone wall.

You can enter up to 40 m on your application form. This represents the annual commitment. Hence, if you enter 40 m on your application form, you will be required to complete 200 m over the full 5 years of your agreement (or 400 m if you have a 10-year Uplands OELS/HLS agreement).

You can complete the work ahead of schedule, but you must have completed at least as much as the annual commitment for each agreement year completed. Points earned will be based on the annual commitment, not the actual amount of work completed in any single year.

For example, where the annual commitment is 40 m					
End of agreement year	1	2	3	4	5
Minimum total length restored	40	80	120	160	200
Maximum total length restored	200	200	200	200	200
Points earned	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200

Walls in this option may not be entered into options OB11, UOB11, EB11 and UB11.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Obtain current, dated photographs of the wall to be restored as evidence of its condition when you joined the scheme, retain these photographs and submit a copy with your application.
- At the end of the agreement, there must be a complete wall in good condition.
- Carry out all work in the traditional materials used in the original wall construction, following the style characteristic of the local landscape and using appropriately shaped and sized local natural stone, including coping and through stones where appropriate.
- Dismantle existing structures by hand, back to sound construction with minimal disturbance to wildlife, in particular breeding and hibernating animals.
- Copings, through stones and building stone, must be separated and sorted for re-use.
- Foundation stones must not be disturbed unless it is necessary to create a firm base.
- Existing wall-side trees can be maintained. Gaps in the wall to allow for tree growth are permitted and the gap made stock-proof with wooden rails.
- Do not use soil or other debris to infill the wall.
- Where the original stone is no longer available, or is not in good enough condition to be re-used, replacement stone must be sourced locally and must be of the type used in the local area. Stone must not be taken from other walls, hedgebanks or buildings.
- Hauling stone should be done when ground conditions are firm enough to prevent soil damage.
- No concrete is to be used. Mortar may be used when it is the traditional method of stone walling.
- Stone features such as sheep creeps should be re-built into the wall where there is evidence that they previously occurred.
- Where the restored wall is crossed by a public right of way, stiles and gates must be restored to their original form using traditional materials.

UOC5/UC5 Sheep fencing around small woodlands

50 points per 100 m

© Natural England/Peter Dullaghan

Fencing is important for the establishment of new woods as well as maintaining existing ones

This option is only available on SDA land below the Moorland Line.

This option is for the provision of new fencing to prevent access to woodland by livestock. It must only be placed adjacent to small areas of predominantly native woodlands, in particular ancient woodlands. These are defined as woodland parcels less than 3 ha in size comprising at least 50 per cent native species. You must have management control of the woodland. The whole woodland must be enclosed following completion of this option, preventing all livestock access.

You may enter a maximum of 500 m of this option into an agreement. The fencing must be erected in the first year of the agreement. You may not add this option to your agreement after the first year. This option will contribute to your points target for a maximum of 5 years. The new fencing must result, or contribute to, the effective exclusion of stock. Woodland parcels that are already in woodland grant schemes requiring the exclusion of livestock are not eligible.

If you are a tenant, you may need consent from the landowner for establishing new boundaries and, in the case of common land, the Secretary of State/Defra. You are advised to contact the relevant authority prior to submitting an application. In some circumstances, a covenant restricting the erection of new fencing may be attached to the land.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Avoid features of historic or archaeological importance.
- Before work starts, all old fencing must be removed and disposed of appropriately.
- Erect fencing in straight lines between strainer posts. The fence must be at least 1.05 m high. If extra height is required, this should be obtained by fixing additional strands of wire.
- Strainer posts must be used at each end of the fence and at each corner or turning point. Strainer posts should be at least 125 mm top diameter or 100 mm x 100 mm cross-section if sawn; 2.15 m long if not set in concrete, or 1.85 m if in concrete. The spacing between the strainer posts should not exceed 150 m where mild steel line wire is used, or 300 m for high tensile wire.
- Struts should be at least 80 mm top diameter, or 75 mm x 75 mm if sawn; 1.9 m long if not set in concrete and at least 1.6 m where set in concrete. Struts should be notched into the strainer post at an angle of no more than 45 degrees.
- Intermediate posts should be at least 65 mm top diameter, or 75 mm x 75 mm if sawn; 1.7 m long; and spaced no further than 3.5 m apart.
- All softwood timber must be fully peeled and treated with an appropriate preservative.
- Stock netting used should be 80 cm high and fastened with galvanised staples.
- Two top lines of wire 100 mm apart should be stapled to the upright posts. Do not use barbed wire where new fencing is erected alongside public rights of way. Line wire should comply with BS 4102 and be properly strained and fastened with galvanised staples.

UPDATED in 2013

UOC22/UC22 Woodland livestock exclusion 75 points per ha

Area constraints apply to this option.

This option is only available on SDA land below the Moorland Line. It can only be used on whole-fields.

This option aims to exclude all livestock from woodland. Preventing livestock access to woodland may allow more trees and shrubs to become established and the woodland flowers to flourish.

You must have management control of the woodland.

Only small areas of predominantly native woodlands are eligible. These are defined as woodland parcels below 3 ha in size occupied by trees and shrubs consisting of at least 50 per cent native species. Woodland parcels that are already in woodland grant schemes requiring the exclusion of livestock are not eligible.

© Natural England

Ungrazed woods are able to regenerate naturally and provide a better wildlife habitat

Where new fencing, or the maintenance of existing fencing, is required to exclude livestock, you may also apply for options UOC5, UC5, OC3 and EC3.

If you are a tenant, you may need consent from the landowner for establishing new boundaries. Consent may also be required where the woodland is located on common land or within statutory designations such as SSSI. In some circumstances, a covenant restricting the erection of new fencing may be attached to the land.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Make the boundaries of the woodland stockproof during the first year of the agreement, either by restoring or repairing existing boundaries, or by the provision of new fencing (avoiding any historic or archaeological features).
- Exclude all livestock from the woodland for the remaining period of the agreement.

UOD Options for historic and landscape features in the uplands

UPDATED in 2013

UOD12/UD12 Maintenance of weatherproof traditional farm buildings in remote locations — 4 points per m^2 of ground floor area

© Natural England/Dave Key

Remote buildings get a higher maintenance payment under Uplands O/ELS

This option is only available on land within the SDA.

Please be aware that the cash equivalent of points gained through use of this option are classified as non-agricultural de minimis State Aid. See Section 5.5.11 for more information about State Aid payments.

A traditional farm building (TFB) is a building or part of a building constructed before 1940 for a use associated with agriculture, and built using traditional methods and materials such as timber, brick, stone, tile and slate. Their construction, layout and function provide information about the rural economy and past farming practices. While many TFBs are not suited to modern agriculture, they are often valued features in the landscape and make a major contribution to local character. The annual active maintenance of weatherproof TFBs prevents the onset of serious structural problems, which may need expensive restoration in the future.

'Maintenance' refers to the routine work that is necessary to protect the fabric of a building and to keep it weatherproof. It does not include any work to put right significant defects or decay, or anything required

to bring a building in poor repair back to good condition. This sort of restoration work may be funded under HLS. Some maintenance works will be required annually. Others, such as clearing of gutters and vegetation, may need to be undertaken several times per year.

Typical maintenance work includes:

- undertaking a regular inspection of the TFB to check its condition and identify any problems that need attention;
- ensuring that all services are working properly, such as making sure that gutters are free of debris;
- undertaking minor repairs to the external fabric of the building, such as replacing slipped or broken roofing slates and tiles to prevent rainwater penetration, renewing cast iron gutters and drainpipes, painting woodwork and metalwork, replacing broken glass, pointing walls and clearing vegetation; and
- inspecting the building regularly to identify areas needing maintenance work, such as checking downpipes and gutters for leaves in the autumn, noting slipped slates and checking the condition of paintwork and other areas requiring rectification.

Eligible buildings include TFBs that:

- are in a sound and weatherproof condition;
- were built for a purpose associated with agriculture, such as housing machinery or animals, or storing or processing crops and food;
- are still used for an agricultural purpose, whether or not it was the original one (for example, a barn built to house animals that is now being used for storage of feedstuffs or equipment); and
- are at least 400 m from the main steading and 200 m from a metalled public road.

Ineligible buildings include:

- metal-framed Dutch barns;
- farmhouses, residential or domestic buildings;
- buildings already converted to a non-agricultural use, for example, to a residential or non-agricultural business use;
- TFBs already in receipt of funding from another scheme, such as the England Rural Development Programme (ERDP) or Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE);
- TFBs that you intend to convert to a non-agricultural use during the life of your agreement; and
- TFBs that will not be in your ownership or control for the life of your agreement. TFBs that meet the above conditions, but which are currently unused or empty, are also eligible. It is not a requirement for buildings to be on land registered on the RLR, but you must record them on the FER (see Section 5.4.1).

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Continue to protect and maintain in weatherproof condition the specified TFB(s) (including fixtures and fittings and adjacent associated features, such as mounting blocks or stack/stook bases).
- Carry out maintenance works and minor repairs on a 'like-for-like' basis, using traditional materials and methods, to retain the character of the building in its local setting.
- Where a non-traditional material has previously been used to repair or re-clad the building (such as corrugated iron sheeting to cover roofs), this may be retained and should be maintained appropriately.
- Obtain current, dated, photographs of all elevations of the building as evidence of its condition when you joined the scheme. This should include photographs of any areas where non-traditional materials have previously been used to repair or re-clad the building. Retain these photographs and submit a copy with your application.
- Keep a record of work done, and carry out and record a brief visual inspection at least once a year.
- Retain the building in your ownership or control for the life of your agreement.
- Ensure that the building is not converted to a non-agricultural use during the life of your agreement.

UPDATED in 2013

UOD13/UD13 Maintaining visibility of archaeological features on moorland

53 points per feature

A Roman bank south of Hadrian's Wall

This option is only available on SDA land above the Moorland Line. It can only be used on part-fields.

This option aims to retain archaeological features in the uplands as visible features in the landscape: ie the features should already be visible at the start of the agreement. Archaeological features in the uplands are often better preserved than their lowland counterparts as they have not suffered the same intense activity. The uplands are therefore important reservoirs of information about our past, how humans have interacted with their environment and how they have adapted to change over the centuries, including past climate change.

This option can only be used on archaeological features shown on your Environmental Information Map or your FER. You can obtain information about archaeological features on your farm from your local Historic Environment Record (HER). For further information on HERs, see Appendix 2

This option is not a whole parcel option but is intended to encompass an area large enough to include the whole of the archaeologically sensitive area and may include a suitable buffer. The total size of the feature and buffer should be no more than 50 m in radius. If scrub is present, use ELS option OD4/ED4 Management of scrub on archaeological features instead.

A feature can either be a single item on its own or a number of the same/related items in close proximity to each other (within the 50 m radius). A number of features may be recognised in the same parcel of land. Linear features, such as a historic ditch, can be represented in lengths of 50 m. Stockproof walls and banks are not eligible.

Top: Wheel ruts and supplementary feeding are damaging the stone circle
Bottom: Changing the grazing management has improved the feature condition

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Obtain current, dated, photographs of the feature as evidence of its condition when you joined the scheme, retain these photographs and submit a copy with your application.
- Maintain the visibility of the archaeological feature.
- Do not allow poaching or other activities that result in bare ground or ground disturbance on the feature.
- Do not cause damage to the feature, for instance creating ruts by driving or allowing anyone else to drive over undamaged parts of the archaeological feature with any vehicle, including quad bikes and ATVs (All Terrain Vehicles).
- Do not supplementary feed on or next to the feature.
- Do not allow any scrub or bracken growth on the feature.
- Do not cut vegetation between 1 March and 31 August to avoid the nesting season. Remove cuttings and brash from the site. Cutting by hand may be necessary to prevent damage.

UOJ Options to protect soils and water in the uplands

UPDATED in 2013

UOJ3/UJ3 Post and wire fencing along watercourses

50 points per 100 m

This option is only available on SDA land below the Moorland Line.

This option is for the provision of fencing to protect watercourses from grazing livestock. Watercourse fencing will help to reduce faecal contamination and prevent stream bank damage and therefore will have a significant impact upon water quality and will minimise damage to wildlife habitats. It will also create a buffer zone to help reduce sedimentation and pollution of the watercourse from surface run-off of water following heavy rainfall.

It can be used where watercourses form one or more boundaries and livestock are present for at least three months of the year and currently have access to the watercourse.

You may enter a maximum of 500 m of this option into an agreement. The fencing must be erected in the first year of the agreement. You may not add this option to your agreement after the first year. This option will contribute to your points target for a maximum of five years. The new fencing must result in, or contribute to, the effective exclusion of stock.

© Natural England/Peter Wakely

Fencing off of watercourses maintains the stability of banks and helps prevent erosion

If you are a tenant, you may need consent from the landowner and, in the case of common land, the Secretary of State/Defra. You are advised to contact the relevant authority prior to submitting an application. You should ensure any relevant consents are gained before carrying out the work (eg Scheduled Monument consent from English Heritage). In some circumstances, a covenant restricting the erection of new fencing may be attached to the land.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Avoid features of historic or archaeological importance.

- In the first year of the agreement erect fencing in straight lines between strainer posts. The fencing must be 1–4 m from the top of the watercourse bank. The fence must be at least 1.05 m high. If extra height is required, this should be obtained by fixing additional strands of wire.
- Strainer posts should be used at each end of the fence and at each corner or turning point. They should be at least 125 mm top diameter or 100 mm x 100 mm cross-section if sawn; 2.15 m long if not set in concrete or 1.85 m if set in concrete. The spacing between the strainer posts should not exceed 150 m where mild steel line wire is used, or 300 m for high tensile wire.
- Struts should be at least 80 mm top diameter, or 75 mm x 75 mm if sawn; 1.9 m long if not set in concrete and at least 1.6 m where set in concrete. Struts should be notched into the strainer post at an angle of no more than 45 degrees.
- Intermediate posts should be at least 65 mm top diameter, or 75 mm x 75 mm if sawn; 1.7 m long; and spaced no further than 3.5 m apart.
- All softwood timber must be fully peeled and treated with an appropriate preservative.
- At least three lines of wire 350 mm apart should be stapled to the upright posts. Do not use barbed wire where new fencing is erected alongside public rights of way. Line wire should comply with BS 4102 and be properly strained and fastened with galvanised staples.

UPDATED in 2013

UOJ12/UJ12 Winter livestock removal next to streams, rivers and lakes 35 points per ha

This option is only available on SDA land below the Moorland Line. It can only be used on whole-fields.

The aim is to enhance water quality by reducing the input of nutrients and sediment to streams, rivers and lakes caused by surface water run-off and the leaching of nutrients from adjacent farmland.

The option can only be used on land parcels that drain directly into a watercourse and are prone to water-logging, compaction or poaching, where it is important to remove livestock during the winter. In particular, it can be used where archaeological features are at risk by soil erosion.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Remove livestock between 1 December and 15 March each year.
- Do not spread fertilisers or manures between 1 December and 15 March each year.
- Do not store manures on these parcels.

UOL Options for upland grassland and moorland

UPDATED in 2013

UOL17/UL17 No supplementary feeding on moorland 4 points per ha

This option is only available on SDA land above the Moorland Line. It can be used on part- or whole-fields, the area must be marked on the Options map.

Ceasing supplementary feeding on moorland can maintain and improve the quality of habitat.

Supplementary food is generally required where the grazing does not meet the body condition of stock and the development of foetuses in late pregnancy. This could be due to high levels of stocking and/or higher than normal lambing/calving rates. In some circumstances, routine feeding on the moor can be avoided by reducing levels of grazing and/or removing stock off the moor well before lambing/calving, particularly those animals found to be carrying twins.

If feeding management is changed by using this option, it is recommended that checks are made to the body condition of the stock grazing the moor and action is taken to avoid animal health problems.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- There must be no supplementary feeding of any kind except as follows:
  - During periods of extreme weather where access to forage is severely restricted and the welfare of livestock might otherwise be compromised. Extreme weather is defined as more than two consecutive days of snow cover or continuous hard frost, prolonged drought or prolonged heavy rainfall.
  - Feeding of non-molassed mineral blocks where a deficiency problem has occurred.
- Feeders and troughs must not be used at any time.

UPDATED in 2013

UOL18/UL18 Cattle grazing on upland grassland and moorland 30 points per ha

© Natural England/James LePage

Cattle grazing can help maintain a good mix of sward heights

This option is only available on permanent grassland within the SDA. It can only be used on whole-fields.

Cattle grazing encourages a diversity of sward structure and plant and invertebrate species, which in turn can be beneficial to a variety of ecological and historic features, in particular several important farmland bird species. It also contributes to the distinctive colour and patterning of local landscapes through mixed grazing systems. Cattle grazing on moorland can help to protect the growth of heather by controlling bracken and the development of coarse grassland.

This option is only available on land that is grazed by a significant number of cattle, expressed as a minimum proportion of the total grazing LUs. The remaining proportion of the grazing LUs can be made up of the same types of livestock or other types of livestock, such as sheep, ponies, goats and domesticated deer. The grass cover must be in place for the full duration of the agreement.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- A minimum of 30 per cent of the LUs must be grazing cattle.
- Supplementary feeding is allowed, but move feeders as often as required to avoid poaching. Do not feed on or next to archaeological features, steep slopes, footpaths or watercourses.
- Keep a record of all livestock grazing the parcels in this option.

You may not wish to graze cattle on the same land each year. Therefore, the percentage of cattle LUs grazing the land is calculated over a two-year period. This allows you to graze cattle on the selected parcels of land entered into this option in alternate years. If you choose to graze them on the land in alternate years, at least 60 per cent of the LUs on the land parcel must be in the form of cattle in one of the two years.

Grazed woodlands can be included provided that most of the woodland (ie over 50 per cent of the area) consists of moorland and grassland that is accessible for grazing **and** that the compulsory requirements (UOX2/UX2 and/or UOX3/UX3) can also be applied.

A year-round record must be made of the stock actually grazing the land. LUs are calculated on a field-by-field basis using the LU conversion factors shown in Appendix 4.

UPDATED in 2013

UOL20/UL20 Haymaking 60 points per ha

This option is only available on SDA land below the Moorland Line. It can only be used on whole-fields.

This option aims to ensure the continuation, or re-introduction, of haymaking on fields which are, or were, cut for hay each year. Hay meadows generally have a greater diversity of wildflowers, and associated wildlife, than fields cut for silage because they receive smaller amounts of manure and inorganic fertiliser and are cut at a later stage of growth, enabling flowers to set seed.

© Natural England/Dave Key

The later cutting dates associated with haymaking allow more wildflowers to set seed

This option can also help to reduce diffuse pollution, as well as reinforcing the landscape character of the area. It will also help ensure haymaking techniques and traditions are not lost to future generations.

To obtain maximum benefits for wildlife, this option should be co-located with OL3 Permanent grassland with very low inputs in an SDA.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Cut and remove hay or haylage once every year.
- Do not cut before 5 July.
- If you make haylage, you must turn the swath at least once and wilt for at least 48 hours.
- Graze the aftermath to achieve an average sward height of no more than 8 cm by the end of the grazing season.
- Where spring grazing of meadows is a traditional practice, exclude livestock for at least 7 weeks before cutting and by 30 May at the latest.

UPDATED in 2013

UOL21/UL21 No cutting strip within meadows 250 points per ha of strip

Area constraints apply to this option.

This option is only available on SDA land below the Moorland Line. It can only be used on part-fields.

This option is designed to improve habitats for small mammals, invertebrates and birds in meadows by leaving uncut areas. These can be strips against boundaries, awkward field corners, or infield areas such as damp hollows as these are key habitats for nesting and foraging wading birds. These uncut areas must be located in fields that are mown each year. They must not overlap with a public right of way but they can overlap with the cross compliance protection zone.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Leave a 1 m margin against a wall, hedgebank, earth bank or hedge, or leave a field corner/in field area uncut each year. Patch size must be no more than 0.5 ha.
- Graze these areas along with the aftermath, following the final cut.
- Do not cultivate or re-seed.

UPDATED in 2013

UOL22/UL22 Management of enclosed rough grazing for birds 35 points per ha

© Natural England/ Mervyn Edwards

This mixture of short grass and taller tussocks provides good nesting habitat and shelter for ground-nesting birds

This option is only available on SDA land in parcels of less than 15 ha above the Moorland Line. It can only be used on whole-fields.

This option will benefit breeding birds on smaller moorland enclosures, commonly known as 'allotments', 'intakes' or 'newtakes'. It can also help to promote good soil conditions and maintain and strengthen the diverse vegetation mosaics characteristic of upland landscapes.

These are areas of enclosed grazing, of which the majority has not been drained, re-seeded or regularly cultivated. They have received only minimal applications of fertiliser, lime, slag or pesticides and will contain predominantly semi-natural vegetation, usually moorland grasses and rushes, and sometimes rocky and very wet areas. They may also contain small areas of agriculturally improved land.

Wading birds, such as lapwing, snipe, redshank and curlew or other priority species, such as whinchat and grasshopper warbler, must be known to breed on, or in close proximity to (ie within a 2 km radius), the site. Bird distribution maps can be found at www.natureonthemap.org.uk.

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Do not plough, cultivate or re-seed.
- Do not increase your existing stocking level and limit the daily level of stocking between 1 April and 30 June to a maximum of 0.4 LUs per hectare. This equates with 5 ewes plus lambs at foot or 0.4 beef cow and calf.
- Do not harrow or roll between 1 April and 30 June.
- Protect permanently waterlogged wetlands, including peat bogs and other mires, and hillside flushes. Do not install any new land drainage or modify any existing land drainage, or remove any peat or sediment.
- Leave rocks, scree and mineral spoil in place.
- Do not apply fertiliser, manure, lime or slag.
- Do not supplementary feed using silage, but the feeding of haylage is permitted, provided that the plastic is removed from the feeding sites. Do not feed on or next to archaeological features, steep slopes, footpaths or watercourses. Move all feeding sites regularly to minimise damage to vegetation and soils, and take care to avoid damage by vehicles.
- Take action to contain bracken, rhododendron, common gorse or similar infestation so that they do not spread to new areas of land. Wherever possible control of bracken should be by mechanical means. For common gorse, control should be by cutting or burning in manageable blocks. Control should not take place in the bird-breeding season from 1 April to 31 August. If the land is in a water catchment area or on a Scheduled Monument, you must seek consent from the appropriate authority.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping, spear and field thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks, and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by selective trimming or manual removal.
- Take action to contain bracken, rhododendron, common gorse or similar infestation so that they do not spread to new areas of land. Wherever possible, control of bracken should be by mechanical means, but to chemically control bracken, only an approved herbicide may be used and care must be taken not to apply it to other ferns. For common gorse, control should be by cutting or burning in manageable blocks. Control should not take place in the bird breeding season from 1 April to 31 August. If the land is in a water catchment area or scheduled monument, you must seek consent from the appropriate authority.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broadleaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed).
- Cut rush-dominated fields each year, but not between 1 April and 31 July. Cut no more than a third of the area of rushes in each field, or a third of the fields if they are small (ie less than 3 ha), in rotation. It may be impractical to cut rushes in the wettest flushes, and therefore these can be left. Cattle trampling may help control these areas.
- Once cut, if aftermath grazing does not control rushes, a second cut should be carried out within 8 weeks, but not between 1 April and 1 August.

UPDATED in 2013

UOL23/UL23 Management of upland grassland for birds 37 points per ha

This option is only available on SDA land below the Moorland Line. It can only be used on whole-fields.

This option will benefit breeding birds and other wildlife on upland grassland. Permanent grassland managed with no fertiliser has a higher value for wildlife. Different types of birds prefer different vegetation heights, so a variety in the sward structure is most beneficial. This option may also deliver benefits to resource protection where placed on fields that are at risk of soil erosion or run-off.

Wading birds, such as lapwing, snipe, redshank and curlew, or other priority species such as whinchat and grasshopper warbler, must be known to breed on, or in close proximity to, the site. Bird distribution maps can be found at www.natureonthemap.org.uk.

Diverse sward provides opportunities for feeding and breeding birds

For this option, you must comply with the following:

- Maintain as grass. Do not plough, cultivate or reseed.
- Manage by grazing only. Limit the daily level of stocking between 1 April and 30 June to a maximum of 0.6 LUs per hectare. This equates with 7.5 ewes plus lambs at foot or 0.6 beef cow and calf.
- Maintain a sward with a range of heights during the growing season. At least 20 per cent of the sward should be less than 7 cm and at least 20 per cent should be more than 7 cm to allow some plants to flower and to provide a more varied habitat.
- Do not top at any time, except in patches to control injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistle, curled and broad-leaved docks or common ragwort); invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); or bracken.
- Do not harrow or roll between 1 April and 30 June.
- Supplementary feeding is permitted. Do not feed on or next to archaeological features, steep slopes, footpaths or watercourses. Move all feeding sites regularly to minimise damage to vegetation and soils.
- Do not apply fertiliser, manure or slag.
- You can only apply lime with the consent of your Organic Inspection Body. You must not apply lime between 1 April and 1 August.
- Control injurious weeds (ie creeping, spear and field thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks and common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed) by selective trimming or manual removal.
- You may continue adding lime, where this is your regular practice, but not between 1 April and 1 August.
- Only apply herbicides to spot-treat or weed-wipe for the control of injurious weeds (ie creeping and spear thistles, curled and broadleaved docks or common ragwort) or invasive non-native species (eg Himalayan balsam, rhododendron or Japanese knotweed); or bracken.
- Cut rush-dominated fields each year, but not between 1 April and 31 July. Cut no more than a third of the area of rushes in each field, or a third of the fields if they are small (ie less than 3 ha), in rotation. It may be impractical to cut rushes in the wettest flushes, and therefore these can be left. Cattle trampling may help to control these areas.
- Once cut, if aftermath grazing does not control rushes, a second cut should be carried out within 8 weeks, but not between 1 April and 1 August.

3.5 Combinations of OELS options, including Uplands OELS options, that can occupy the same land

As a general rule, an OELS or Uplands OELS land management option cannot occupy the same area of land at the same time as another land management option.

However, there are exceptions for certain combinations of options. Each row of Table 6 shows combinations of options that may be located in the same place at the same time. Only combinations of options shown in this table are permitted. For combinations of ELS and Uplands ELS options, please refer to Table 7.

In OELS, no more than two land management options may occupy the same area of land at the same time. The only exceptions to this rule are:

- In Uplands OELS, you can have up to **three** land management options overlapping on the same area of land at the same time, provided the parcel is within the SDA, ***and*** there is at least one Uplands OELS option on the parcel (excluding compulsory requirements and UOL18). .
- The Uplands OELS compulsory requirements (UOX2 and UOX3) do not count towards this limit. Hence within Uplands OELS, you can have up to three options on the same area of land plus the relevant compulsory requirements. **But, please note**, buffer strip options (OE1 - OE10 and OJ9) cannot be located next to watercourses on land in UOX2.
- OK5 Mixed stocking and UOL18 Cattle grazing, do not count towards these limits of two options (OELS) or three options (Uplands OELS).
- Supplements do not count towards the limit of two or three options.

When co-locating options you must follow the prescriptions of all options. In the event that prescriptions of co-located options contradict each other, you must follow the more restrictive of them. For instance, OK5 (Mixed stocking) states: 'Supplementary feeding is allowed, but move feeders as often as required to avoid poaching'. OL3 (Permanent grassland with very low inputs in the SDA) states: 'Do not supplementary feed'. Where these are co-located, no supplementary feeding is allowed.

More than two/three options may be placed in the same land parcel, as long as they do not overlap on the ground.

Table 6 Co-location of OELS and Uplands OELS options

Option code	OELS/Uplands OELS option title	OELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column	Uplands OELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column
OB1	Hedgerow management for landscape (on both sides of a hedge)	OB4, OB5, OB12, OB13, OB14	UOB4, UOB5, UOB12, UOB13, UOB15, UOB16
OB2	Hedgerow management for landscape (on one side of a hedge)	OB4, OB5, OB12, OB13, OB14	UOB4, UOB5, UOB12, UOB13, UOB15, UOB16
OB3	Hedgerow management for landscape and wildlife	OB4, OB5, OB12, OB13, OB14	UOB4, UOB5, UOB12, UOB13, UOB15, UOB16
OB4	Stone-faced hedgebank management on both sides	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
OB5	Stone-faced hedgebank management on one side	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
OB6	Ditch management	OB4, OB5, OB12, OB13, OB14	UOB4, UOB5, UOB12, UOB13, UOB15, UOB16, UOB17

Option code	OELS/Uplands OELS option title	OELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column	Uplands OELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column
OB7	Half ditch management	OB4, OB5, OB12, OB13, OB14	UOB4, UOB5, UOB12, UOB13, UOB15, UOB16, UOB17
OB8	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating OB1)	OB4, OB5, OB12, OB13, OB14	UOB4, UOB5, UOB12, UOB13, UOB15, UOB16
OB9	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating OB2)	OB4, OB5, OB12, OB13, OB14	UOB4, UOB5, UOB12, UOB13, UOB15, UOB16
OB10	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating OB3)	OB4, OB5, OB12, OB13, OB14	UOB4, UOB5, UOB12, UOB13, UOB15, UOB16
OB12	Earth bank management (on both sides)	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
OB13	Earth bank management (on one side)	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
OB14	Hedgerow restoration	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB4, OB5, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB12, OB13	UOB4, UOB5, UOB12, UOB13, UOB15, UOB16
OC2	Protection of in-field trees on organic grassland	OK5	UOL18
OC24	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on rotational land	OE12	
OC25	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on organic grassland	OK5	
OD2	Take out of cultivation archaeological features currently on rotational land	OK5	
OD3	Reduced-depth, non-inversion cultivation on archaeological features (minimum till)	OF8, OG1, OG4, OF13, OJ13	
OD4	Management of scrub on archaeological features	OK4, OK5	UOJ12, UOL18
OD5	Management of archaeological features on grassland	OE4, OE5, OE6, OE7, OE10, OK2, OK3, OK5, OL2, OL3	UOJ12, UOL17, UOL18, UOL20, UOL21, UOL22, UOL23
OE1	2 m buffer strip on rotational land	OE12	
OE2	4 m buffer strip on rotational land	OE12	
OE3	6 m buffer strip on rotational land	OE12	
OE4	2 m buffer strips on organic grassland	OD5, OK5	UOL18

Option code	OELS/Uplands OELS option title	OELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column	Uplands OELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column
OE5	4 m buffer strips on organic grassland	OD5, OK5	UOL18
OE6	6 m buffer strips on organic grassland	OD5, OK5	UOL18
OE7	Buffering in-field ponds in organic grassland	OD5, OK5	UOL18
OE9	6 m buffer strips on rotational land next to a watercourse	OE12	
OE10	6 m buffer strips on organic grassland next to a watercourse	OD5, OK5	UOL18
OE12	Supplement to add wildflowers to buffer strips and field corners	OC24, OE1, OE2, OE3, OE9, OF1, OJ5, OJ9	
OF1	Management of field corners	OE12	
OF2	Wild bird seed mixture	OF23	
OF8	Skylark plots	OD3	
OF13	Uncropped, cultivated areas for ground-nesting birds	OD3	
OF22	Extended overwintered stubble	OF23	
OF23	Supplementary feeding in winter for farmland birds	OF2, OF22	
OG1	Undersown spring cereals	OD3	
OG4	Cereals for whole-crop silage followed by overwintered stubble	OD3	
OJ5	In-field grass areas to prevent erosion and run-off	OE12	
OJ9	12 m buffer strips for watercourses on rotational land	OE12	
OJ13	Winter cover crops	OD3	
OK2	Permanent grassland with low inputs	OD5, OK5	
OK3	Permanent grassland with very low inputs	OD5, OK5	
OK4	Management of rush pastures	OD4, OK5	
OK5	Mixed stocking	OC2, OC25, OD2, OD4, OD5, OE4, OE5, OE6, OE7, OE10, OK2, OK3, OK4, OK21, OL2, OL3, OL4, OL5	UOD13, UOJ12, UOL17, UOL20, UOL21, UOL22, UOL23

Option code	OELS/Uplands OELS option title	OELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column	Uplands OELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column
OK21	Legume- and herb-rich swards	OK5	
OL2	Permanent grassland with low inputs in SDAs	OD5, OK5	UOJ12, UOL18, UOL20, UOL21
OL3	Permanent grassland with very low inputs in SDAs	OD5, OK5	UOJ12, UOL18, UOL20, UOL21
OL4	Management of rush pastures in SDAs	OK5	UOD13, UOJ12, UOL17, UOL18
OL5	Enclosed rough grazing	OK5	UOD13, UOL18
UOB4	Stone-faced hedgebank management on both sides on or above the Moorland Line	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
UOB5	Stone-faced hedgebank management on one side on or above the Moorland Line	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
UOB12	Earth bank management on both sides on or above the Moorland Line	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
UOB13	Earth bank management on one side on or above the Moorland Line	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
UOB15	Stone-faced hedgebank restoration	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
UOB16	Earth bank restoration	OB1, OB2, OB3, OB6, OB7, OB8, OB9, OB10, OB14	
UOB17	Stone wall restoration	OB6, OB7	
UOD13	Maintaining visibility of archaeological features on moorland	OK5, OL4, OL5	UOL17, UOL18, UOL22
UOJ12	Winter livestock removal next to streams, rivers and lakes	OD4, OD5, OK5, OL2, OL3, OL4	UOL18, UOL20, UOL21, UOL23
UOL17	No supplementary feeding on moorland	OD5, OK5, OL4	UOD13, UOL18, UOL22
UOL18	Cattle grazing on upland grassland and moorland	OC2, OD4, OD5, OE4, OE5, OE6, OE7, OE10, OL2, OL3, OL4, OL5	UOD13, UOJ12, UOL17, UOL20, UOL21, UOL22, UOL23
UOL20	Haymaking	OD5, OK5, OL2, OL3	UOJ12, UOL18, UOL21
UOL21	No cutting strip within meadows	OD5, OK5, OL2, OL3	UOJ12, UOL18, UOL20
UOL22	Management of enclosed rough grazing for birds	OD5, OK5	UOD13, UOL17, UOL18
UOL23	Management of upland grassland for birds	OD5, OK5	UOJ12, UOL18

Table 7 Co-location of ELS and Uplands ELS options

Option code	ELS/Uplands ELS option title	ELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column	Uplands ELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column
EB1	Hedgerow management for landscape (on both sides of a hedge)	EB4, EB5, EB12, EB13, EB14	UB4, UB5, UB12, UB13, UB15, UB16
EB2	Hedgerow management for landscape (on one side of a hedge)	EB4, EB5, EB12, EB13, EB14	UB4, UB5, UB12, UB13, UB15, UB16
EB3	Hedgerow management for landscape and wildlife	EB4, EB5, EB12, EB13, EB14	UB4, UB5, UB12, UB13, UB15, UB16
EB4	Stone-faced hedgebank management on both sides	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	
EB5	Stone-faced hedgebank management on one side	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	
EB6	Ditch management	EB4, EB5, EB12, EB13, EB14	UB4, UB5, UB12, UB13, UB15, UB16, UB17
EB7	Half ditch management	EB4, EB5, EB12, EB13, EB14	UB4, UB5, UB12, UB13, UB15, UB16, UB17
EB8	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating EB1)	EB4, EB5, EB12, EB13, EB14	UB4, UB5, UB12, UB13, UB15, UB16
EB9	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating EB2)	EB4, EB5, EB12, EB13, EB14	UB4, UB5, UB12, UB13, UB15, UB16
EB10	Combined hedge and ditch management (incorporating EB3)	EB4, EB5, EB12, EB13, EB14	UB4, UB5, UB12, UB13, UB15, UB16
EB12	Earth bank management (on both sides)	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	
EB13	Earth bank management (on one side)	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	
EB14	Hedgerow restoration	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB4, EB5, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB12, EB13	UB4, UB5, UB12, UB13, UB15, UB16
EC2	Protection of in-field trees (grassland)	EK5	UL18
EC24	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on cultivated land	EE12	
EC25	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on grassland	EK5	
ED2	Take out of cultivation archaeological features currently on cultivated land	EK5	

Option code	ELS/Uplands ELS option title	ELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column	Uplands ELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column
ED3	Reduced-depth, non-inversion cultivation on archaeological features (minimum till)	EF8, EF9, EF10, EG1, EG4, EF13, EF15, EJ13	
ED4	Management of scrub on archaeological features	EK4, EK5	UJ12, UL18
ED5	Management of archaeological features on grassland	EE4, EE5, EE6, EE7, EE10, EK2, EK3, EK5, EL2, EL3	UJ12, UL17, UL18, UL20, UL21, UL22, UL23
EE1	2 m buffer strip on cultivated land	EE12	
EE2	4 m buffer strip on cultivated land	EE12	
EE3	6 m buffer strip on cultivated land	EE12	
EE4	2 m buffer strips on intensive grassland	ED5, EK5	UL18
EE5	4 m buffer strips on intensive grassland	ED5, EK5	UL18
EE6	6 m buffer strips on intensive grassland	ED5, EK5	UL18
EE7	Buffering in-field ponds in improved permanent grassland	ED5, EK5	UL18
EE9	6 m buffer strips on cultivated land next to a watercourse	EE12	
EE10	6 m buffer strips on intensive grassland next to a watercourse	ED5, EK5	UL18
EE12	Supplement to add wildflowers to buffer strips and field corners	EC24, EE1, EE2, EE3, EE9, EF1, EJ5, EJ9	
EF1	Management of field corners	EE12	
EF2	Wild bird seed mixture	EF23	
EF8	Skylark plots	ED3	
EF9	Cereal headlands for birds	ED3	
EF10	Unharvested cereal headlands for birds and rare arable plants	ED3	
EF13	Uncropped, cultivated areas for ground-nesting birds on arable land	ED3	

Option code	ELS/Uplands ELS option title	ELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column	Uplands ELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column
EF15	Reduced herbicide cereal crops followed by overwintered stubble	ED3	
EF22	Extended overwintered stubble	EF23	
EF23	Supplementary feeding in winter for farmland birds	EF2, EF22	
EG1	Undersown spring cereals	ED3	
EG4	Cereals for whole-crop silage followed by overwintered stubble	ED3	
EJ5	In-field grass areas to prevent erosion and run-off	EE12	
EJ9	12 m buffer strips for watercourses on cultivated land	EE12	
EJ13	Winter cover crops	ED3	
EK2	Permanent grassland with low inputs	ED5, EK5	
EK3	Permanent grassland with very low inputs	ED5, EK5	
EK4	Management of rush pastures	ED4, EK5	
EK5	Mixed stocking	EC2, EC25, ED2, ED4, ED5, EE4, EE5, EE6, EE7, EE10, EK2, EK3, EK4, EK21, EL2, EL3, EL4, EL5, EL6	UD13, UJ12, UL17, UL20, UL21, UL22, UL23
EK21	Legume- and herb-rich swards	EK5	
EL2	Permanent grassland with low inputs in SDAs	ED5, EK5	UJ12, UL18, UL20, UL21
EL3	Permanent grassland with very low inputs in SDAs	ED5, EK5	UJ12, UL18, UL20, UL21
EL4	Management of rush pastures in SDAs	EK5	UD13, UJ12, UL17, UL18
EL5	Enclosed rough grazing	EK5	UD13, UL18
EL6	Unenclosed moorland rough grazing	EK5	UD13, UL17, UL18
UB4	Stone-faced hedgebank management on both sides on or above the Moorland Line	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	

Option code	ELS/Uplands ELS option title	ELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column	Uplands ELS option codes that may be located on the same land as those listed in the first column
UB5	Stone-faced hedgebank management on one side on or above the Moorland Line	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	
UB12	Earth bank management on both sides on or above the Moorland Line	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	
UB13	Earth bank management on one side on or above the Moorland Line	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	
UB15	Stone-faced hedgebank restoration	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	
UB16	Earth bank restoration	EB1, EB2, EB3, EB6, EB7, EB8, EB9, EB10, EB14	
UB17	Stone wall restoration	EB6, EB7	
UD13	Maintaining visibility of archaeological features on moorland	EK5, EL4, EL5, EL6	UL17, UL18, UL22
UJ12	Winter livestock removal next to streams, rivers and lakes	ED4, ED5, EK5, EL2, EL3, EL4	UL18, UL20, UL21, UL23
UL17	No supplementary feeding on moorland	ED5, EK5, EL4, EL6	UD13, UL18, UL22
UL18	Cattle grazing on upland grassland and moorland	EC2, ED4, ED5, EE4, EE5, EE6, EE7, EE10, EL2, EL3, EL4, EL5, EL6	UD13, UJ12, UL17, UL20, UL21, UL22, UL23
UL20	Haymaking	ED5, EK5, EL2, EL3	UJ12, UL18, UL21
UL21	No cutting strip within meadows	ED5, EK5, EL2, EL3	UJ12, UL18, UL20
UL22	Management of enclosed rough grazing for birds	ED5, EK5	UD13, UL17, UL18
UL23	Management of upland grassland for birds	ED5, EK5	UJ12, UL18

Silver-studded Blue