**Woodland Challenge Fund**

The main way to source funding for woodland creation is through the [Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme](https://forestry.gov.scot/support-regulations/forestry-grants). This has been critical to the success of woodland creation schemes across Scotland, however some people are put off applying because of the potential cost of preparing an application. Help is at hand…

The Cairngorms National Park Authority with the support of partners - Scottish Forestry, Scottish Natural Heritage and Woodland Trust - is offering grants of up to £3,000 to help reduce the cost barriers to developing woodland creation proposals within the Cairngorms National Park.

This preparatory funding is to encourage planting proposals of native species within target areas identified in the [Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy](https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CairngormsNationalParkForestStrategy2019Final.pdf) using one or more of the following woodland creation options in the Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS):

* Diverse Conifer (predominantly Scots pine)
* Native Scots Pine
* Native Upland Birch
* Native Broadleaves
* Native Low-density Broadleaves

**Who can apply?**

The grant can be applied for by owners, or tenants, of land in the Cairngorms National Park.

**What will it cover?**

The grant contributes towards all or some of the costs reasonably incurred in the development of a woodland creation proposal including gathering information, surveys, landscape assessments and discussing proposals as part of due diligence, e.g. forestry agent and other professional fees. This work should provide the information required to develop a proposal suitable for a FGS application.

Proposed woodlands less than 10ha could receive a maximum grant of £1,500 (inclusive of any irrecoverable VAT).

Proposed woodlands greater than 10ha could receive a maximum grant of £3,000 (inclusive of any irrecoverable VAT).

**Assessment**

Funding support will be judged according to whether the proposed scheme helps to deliver one or more of the following strategic objectives as set out in the [Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy](https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CairngormsNationalParkForestStrategy2019Final.pdf):

* Promotes the creation of new woodlands that complement other land uses
* Restore lost or vulnerable forest ecosystems
* Encourage the natural regeneration of native forests
* Promote the creation of productive woodlands
* Promote access and active enjoyment
* Promote community involvement

In addition the funding support will be judged against the extent to which the proposed scheme may contribute towards:

* Landscape enhancement
* Woodland connectivity
* Expanding Capercaillie habitat
* Natural flood management
* Improved water shading and water quality

**Applications**

Applicants should fill out the Woodland Challenge Fund Application Form.

Successful applications will receive a grant offer specifying the maximum amount awarded.

Applications may be made at any time until 29th February 2020, but funding is limited so it is important to contact us as soon as possible.

**Payment**

Payment will be made on the receipt of invoices for costs incurred as indicated in the application and approved in the grant offer. CNPA will pay grant as quickly as possible to minimise any cash flow issues for applicants.

**For more information**

Please contact:

David Hetherington, Woodland Advisor for CNPA

01479 870516 davidhetherington@cairngorms.co.uk