

Trees for the crofting community

Craobhan do chroitèaran

Help with planting and managing
trees and woods in the crofting counties.



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Growing trees in the crofting counties brings unique challenges and benefits. Our croft woodland advisors are here to help you create and manage woodlands that will flourish in local conditions and enhance your croft or smallholding.

Woodland can be integrated into productive in-bye land to support agricultural and horticultural productivity, as well as a range of croft diversification enterprises.

On the hill there is the potential to work at a landscape scale with common grazings schemes or individual apportionments. Existing woodland can be brought into management to deliver long term benefits.

Trees can:

- Provide essential shelter, improving livestock and crop performance.
- Offer a sustainable source of firewood.
- Protect soils from wind and water erosion and improve water quality.
- Help reduce animal health issues, such as hypothermia and liver fluke.
- Create natural insulation around houses, polytunnels and outbuildings.
- Attract pollinators to improve cropping.
- Enhance the environment for people and wildlife.

Thig iomadh feum don chroit agus don àrainneachd gu leir bho craobhan a chur. Mar eiseimpleir, bheir bann-fasgaidh àrdachadh air àireamh uain, dìon do thaighean agus bidh cosgais teasachaidh nas ìsle



John MacPherson

Can I get help?

All crofters and smallholders in the crofting counties of Scotland are eligible for assistance from the Woodland Trust. The crofting counties are: Argyll & Bute, Arran, Highland, Moray, Orkney Isles, Shetland Isles and Western Isles.

We can give you free advice on:

Woodland and hedge planting – We will visit your site, offer advice on design, species selection, planting, protection and maintenance.

Woodland management – If you have existing woodland which you plan to expand or regenerate, we can advise on on-going management.

Costs and sources of funding – We will put together an outline budget for your project, which will help you make informed choices and decide which funding option best suits your needs.

Funding

MOREwoods

A simple scheme for creating small, new, native woodlands; ideal for in-bye plantings and shelterbelts.

We will arrange delivery of trees and protective guards to your croft or smallholding. You are responsible for the planting of the trees and fencing if it is needed.

Advisor: our local advisor will visit your croft or smallholding and help you plan your woodland

Species: we will help you choose the best species for your site and your objectives

Size: usually between 0.1 (or 300 trees) and 3 hectares but we can be flexible to suit your needs

Protection: we will help you choose the correct guards to protect your trees, and we will advise on any fencing requirements

Cost: we will contribute at least 60% of the cost of trees and protective guards

Additional subsidy may be available if your new planting neighbours an important woodland or other natural habitat.



MOREhedges

Straightforward support for planting hedges and hedgerow trees. Hedges are ideal protection for horticulture and livestock, and provide valuable links between habitats. Allowing a few hedgerow trees to grow on to full size gives an added bonus for wildlife, shelter, and future firewood potential.

We will arrange delivery of trees and protective guards to your croft/smallholding. You are responsible for fencing, if it is needed.

Advisor: our local advisor will visit your croft or smallholding and help you plan your hedgerow

Species: a hedgerow mix of hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, crab apple, dog rose, elder, plus your choice of species for full-height, hedgerow trees

Size: at least 100m of hedging, including one hedgerow tree every 4-6m

Protection: spirals and canes or voleguards. Tubes and stakes for hedgerow trees

Cost: we will contribute 60% of the costs of trees and protective guards

Access to the Forestry Grant Scheme

We can help you access funding from the Scottish Government for tree planting, fencing and maintenance, as well as management of existing woodland. Grants are also available to help neighbours who want to work together on woodland projects.

We will help you with initial planning; then we will engage an independent forestry agent to prepare and submit a funding application on your behalf.

To qualify for our assistance, your site and your objectives must be suitable for Forestry Grant Scheme funding, and your plans should include some woodland creation.

Advisor: our local advisor will assess your site for suitability, appoint an agent, and be on hand with advice and support throughout the process

Species: we will agree the most suitable Forestry Grant Scheme planting model with you

Protection: the Forestry Grant Scheme offers funding for fencing or protective guards

Size: the minimum size for the Forestry Grant Scheme is 0.25ha

Cost: we will cover up to 80% of the agent's fee to prepare and submit your funding application



Case study

Sandy Murray, Sutherland

Sandy Murray from Auchumore in northern Sutherland has been planting trees on his croft since 1992. He has combined native woodland planting with shelter belts, timber and Christmas trees. The woodlands not only provide shelter for sheep and a sustainable source of wood fuel but they have also led to an increase in wildlife.

Now that trees are well established, Sandy is managing the woods for firewood and is considering thinning work to increase the amount of shelter available for livestock.

“Well-planned woodland integrated with other activities can work really well. Seeing more wildlife as the trees grow and watching sheep take refuge in rough weather has been very satisfying.”



John MacPherson



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Case study

Donald Fletcher, Islay

Donald Fletcher started planting hedgerows on his smallholding at Persabus on Islay in 2002 to provide shelter around the steading and adjacent fields. Donald soon realised that the hedgerows provided ideal fenced enclosures for his chickens, so he installed portable henhouses. Not only were the hens protected from predators and the weather, but they kept the weeds down and fertilised the establishing hedge.

“Persabus was a challenging area to establish shrubs and trees but with perseverance and a big help from our hens we now have a fantastic shelterbelt. It provides a haven for wildlife and insects and shelter for our livestock. We get a lot of positive comments from visiting tourists.”



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Lynbreck Croft

For more information on planting trees or managing woodland in the crofting counties please contact Woodland Trust Scotland:



01738 635 544



Email crofting@woodlandtrust.org.uk



To find out more about how we can help you plant trees, visit woodlandtrust.org.uk and search 'croft woodlands'

The Croft Woodlands Project is a partnership between Point and Sandwick Trust, Scottish Forestry, Scottish Crofting Federation, Shetland Amenity Trust, Orkney Woodlands Project, Communities Housing Trust and Woodland Trust Scotland.

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