

English Woodland Grant Scheme

EWGS Woodland Creation Grant 2011: Additional Contribution and Score Form Guidance for East of England Region

Additional Contributions

This guidance explains how to apply for these regionally focussed grants:

1. Quality of Place
2. Native Woodland Expansion

It supplements the generic guidance on Woodland Creation Grant (WCG), which is available from the [EWGS web site](#).

The maximum total additional contribution available is £2000/ha.

Quality of Place (QoP) Additional Contribution

Introduction QoP Areas are based on data about population numbers, deprivation indices and existing woodland access provision. A map showing these areas is included in Annex 1 of this guide but the definitive areas are available in the Land Information Search facility on the FC website.

Eligibility In order to be eligible for this grant applicants must meet the following:

- The general criteria and conditions for Woodland Creation Grant (WCG) apply – refer to the WCG guidance for further details.
- Create new woodland within QoP Areas.
- Provide public access. The wood must be designed to provide high quality access, be accessible for free, quiet enjoyment by the public (including dogs on leads) during daylight hours for 11 months of each year, and access must be permitted for 30 years from first payment of grant.

Payment Rate An additional contribution of £2000/ha will be paid for agreements meeting these criteria.

Native Woodland Expansion Additional Contribution

Introduction Ancient woodland (i.e. native woodland with a continuous cover of tree species since at least c. 1600 AD) has the highest cultural and environmental importance; it is scarce and irreplaceable.

The East of England has approximately 19,000ha of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodlands (ASNW) and 8,000ha of Planted Semi-Natural Woodland Sites (PAWS), the majority of which is of small size and fragmented.

Research has demonstrated that higher levels of biodiversity benefits are realised when where there is a higher density of woodland. If ancient woodland can be expanded and/or linked there is an increase in the core area of woodland, which increases species resilience.

Eligibility In order to be eligible for this grant applicants must meet the following:

- At least 50% of the woodland must lie within the boundary of a cluster area (see below).
- The general criteria and conditions for Woodland Creation Grant (WCG) apply – refer to the [WCG Guidance](#) for further details.
- The new woodland must be close to an existing, well established ancient semi-natural woodland (normally within 30m, but up to 100m if the intervening land use is dominated by semi-natural habitat). At the discretion of the FC, we may allow the additional contribution to be applied to expanding sites of exceptionally high conservation value even if they are not categorised as ancient semi-natural woodland.
- New native woodland must meet the design principles set out in the [Ancient & Native Woodland Practice Guide](#) (which is also summarised in the EWGS 7 National WCG Guidance).

Applicants can check ancient and semi-natural woodland boundaries by using the [Land Information Search](#). Records are not comprehensive and other woodlands that include ancient woodland indicator species may be eligible at the discretion of FC Woodland Officers.

Clusters A project to map 19 clusters of “hot spots” of higher density ancient woodland in the region was undertaken by the County Wildlife Trusts overseen by Norfolk Wildlife Services. For convenience these clusters are identified with a 8km radius around a centre grid reference.

Name of cluster	County	Grid ref (centre point of 8km radius circle)
South Norfolk	Norfolk	TM 295 963
Waveney	Suffolk	TM 455 832
Suffolk coastal	Suffolk	TM 329 611
South Suffolk	Suffolk	TM 121 410
Bury East	Suffolk	TL 949 602

Bury West	Suffolk	TL 791 600
Haverhill	Cambridgeshire/Suffolk	TL 642 530
Gamlingay	Cambridgeshire/Bedfordshire	TL 274 522
Grafham	Cambridgeshire/Bedfordshire	TL 137 675
West Peterborough	Cambridgeshire/Peterborough	TF 125 027
Wittering	Cambridgeshire/Peterborough	TL 037 985
North Bedfordshire	Bedfordshire	TL 024 640
Leighton Buzzard	Bedfordshire	SP 957 316
Stevenage	Hertfordshire/Luton	TL 157 239
Welwyn	Hertfordshire	TL 266 160
Three Rivers	Hertfordshire	TQ 069 979
Saffron Walden	Essex/Cambridgeshire	TL 576 382
Rayleigh	Essex	TQ 826 911
Tendring	Essex	TM 091 216

Grant details Within the 19 clusters we can offer an Additional Contribution of £2000 per hectare.

Further information This guidance is supported by Forestry Commission East of England (01842 815544; east.fce@forestry.gsi.gov.uk).

General details on the English Woodland Grant Scheme are available in a pack that can be obtained from your local FC office, or downloadable from the FC website www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs.

Supplementary information on EWGS is also available in the EWGS document library on the FC website www.forestry.gov.uk/england-documents.

We recommend getting professional advice on woodland management and grants. A list of national and regional professional organisations is available at www.forestry.gov.uk/england-advice or from your local FC office.

Score Form Guidance

Background This guide is for applicants applying for Woodland Creation Grant (WCG) in the East of England only (i.e. the counties of Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk plus the Unitary Authorities of Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire, Luton, Peterborough, Southend and Thurrock). Other English regions will be using a different scoring system.

Note that that WCG is not available in the London boroughs, with the exception of those areas lying within the Thames Chase Community Forest area.

From the outset, the intention of the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) is to be responsive to the different priorities emerging from the development of Regional Forestry Frameworks. The East of England region published its framework as *Woodland for Life, the Regional*

Woodland Strategy in 2003 (www.woodlandforlife.net). The Strategy includes a detailed Action Plan that identifies priorities for trees and woodlands in providing public benefits.

The East of England WCG scoring form has been set out to reflect the 6 themes of the Regional Woodland Strategy. It allocates points according to the degree to which the proposed woodland would provide the public benefits that the Forestry Commission wishes to purchase with the grant.

Using this form Each line on the East of England Woodland Creation Grant Scoring Form (EWGS 7a) is numbered and those numbers refer back to this guidance. Each individual block of proposed woodland must be scored separately unless it has been agreed with your Forestry Commission Woodland Officer that several blocks can be grouped for scoring purposes. This can only happen by prior agreement and only where each block would be providing the same public benefits.

Application requirements Applications should only include Woodland Creation Grant proposals and should not mix other grants.

Applicants must complete the EWGS 7a score form (or more than one if necessary) and enclose it with the fully completed application, including the required Ordnance Survey MasterMap® map. The Forestry Commission must receive the fully completed application documents and score forms before the end of the application window. Requests for free OS MasterMap® prints must therefore be made in good time as the Forestry Commission cannot accept late applications for any reason.

Application Deadline Applications must score a minimum of 3 points to be accepted. Applications will be accepted and approved on this basis until the grant budget is fully committed. There is no application deadline for 2011.

Completing form EWGS 7a Applicants will find further advice and information on the FC website at www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs, including the Land Information Search facility that will help determine some scores that rely on being in specific areas of the country. Local Forestry Commission staff can also provide advice if applicants are still unsure, the maps at the back of this guide are only indicative at that scale.

Follow the instructions on the form about whether you can tick every score that applies or just one from a group of possible scores.

The following notes refer to the numbered section of the Form EWGS 7a and give further explanation where it may be needed.

1. Quality of life

Public Access 1.1 To score three points, the application must meet the specific criteria for the public access Additional Contribution. See Woodland Creation Grant Guide – EWGS 7 page 4.

Community Engagement 1.2 To score two points, the woodland must be designed and managed by a local community. Often such community involvement will be linked to public access (see 1.1).

Applicants should use the Forestry Commission's "Involving people in Forestry" toolbox to support the engagement. This is available from www.forestry.gov.uk/toolbox.

Applicants must tell us which communities will be involved in the design, creation, management and use of the woodland. We also need to know how and when the involvement will take place and how it will be monitored. For further guidance on community engagement see:

www.greenlighttrust.org (support to communities)

www.marstonvale.org, www.thameschase.org.uk,
www.HertsDirect.org/wccf (Community Forests)

<http://initiatives.smallwoods.org.uk> (for the Anglian Woodland Project)

www.woodland-trust.org.uk (Woodland Trust).

Improvement of the visual landscape 1.3 To score one point, the application must demonstrate the restoration of a documented Historic Landscape or demonstrate a visual improvement that meets an identified need expressed within one of the following appropriate landscape assessments:

- Landscape Character Assessments provided by local authority;
- Landscape Strategies;
- Restoration plans for historic parks and garden and designed landscapes;
- Plans for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs);
- Community Forest Plans;
- Historic Landscape Characterisation.

We will expect applicants to show how their proposals will contribute to the historic landscape or visual needs expressed in the assessment. For further information on Landscape see:

www.ccnetwork.org.uk (countryside character – click on "national database")

www.english-heritage.org.uk (Historic Landscape Character; historic parks and gardens)
www.countryside.gov.uk/LAR/Landscape/CC/jca.asp

(landscape character assessments)

Your local authority may be able to provide further information.

Green Exercise 1.4

To score one point, the woodland must cater for some form of physical and/or mental exercise. This includes woodland open to public access but which do not meet the public access Additional Contribution criteria. This provision must be available to all members of the public in a non-exclusive manner. Such exercise might include:

- Walking
- Orienteering
- Fitness trails
- Cycling
- Horse riding

Applicants must provide details of any facilities proposed along with information such as the expected usage, access, advertising and other relevant logistical details. You must also consider Health and Safety requirements and risk assessment. For further information on green exercise see:

www.forestry.gov.uk/activewoods ("Active Woods")

www.btcv.org/greengym ("Green Gym")

2. Spatial Planning

Expanding communities 2.1

To score two points under this category, the woodland must demonstrate the provision of public benefit to new housing or industrial developments built within the last 5 years or planned to be built within the next 5 years. Public access (see 1.1) is not a requirement, but if it is not a feature of the new woodland then other public benefits must be identified that contribute to improving the quality of the development and (peri-) urban life. A number of sub-regions now have "Green Infrastructure" or "Green Grid" masterplans. Each identifies areas of deficiency where new green space would be of benefit.

Applications can score two points if at least 50% of the proposed woodland lies within the boundary of such areas. For the latest green space masterplans see:

www.greengrid.co.uk/strategy.cfm (Thames Gateway South Essex)

www.greenarc.org/luc-report.html (Green Arc around the M25)

www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk and click on Publications (Cambridgeshire)

www.pect.net/green_grid.html (Peterborough)

www.bedsandlutongreeninfrastructure.org.uk (Bedfordshire & Luton)

Quality of Place priority areas 2.2

To score two points, at least 50% of the proposed woodland must lie within the boundary of a "Quality of place priority

area". An indicative map is shown in annex 1. Applicants can check these boundaries by using the Land Information Search at www.forestry.gov.uk/planting (and click on "Land Information Search") You must run a Report as instructed to determine if your application is within a Quality of place priority area.

The aim is to increase the percentage of the population in priority areas with access to woodland. These priority areas have the lowest "Index of Multiple Deprivation" and/or within a defined Growth Area.

Community Forests 2.3

To score one point, at least 50% of the proposed woodland must lie within the boundary of a Community Forest. The East of England has three Community Forests:

- Forest of Marston Vale – South of Bedford
- Thames Chase Community Forest – South Essex
- Watling Chase Community Forest – Hertfordshire

Applicants can check Community Forest boundaries by using the Land Information Search at www.forestry.gov.uk/planting (and click on "Land Information Search")

For further information on Community Forests see:

www.marstonvale.org

www.thameschase.org.uk

www.HertsDirect.org/wccf

www.communityforest.org.uk (the National partnership)

Previously Developed or Operational Land 2.4

To score one point under this category, the proposed woodland creation must take place on land that is either:

- Previously Developed Land (PDL) i.e. previously developed and damaged land where no restoration has yet taken place. This should also include poorly restored land where there is consensus amongst relevant local partners that further work is still required to bring it up to a satisfactory standard. A full definition of the Planning Policy Guidance 3 definition of PDL is at the note below.

or

- Operational Land (OL) i.e. land that is being, or has been, restored as a direct consequence of mineral extraction and/or landfill operations where provision for restoration to woodland has been made through development control procedures.

We will expect applicants to provide details/evidence of previous land usage. Woodland establishment can be an important means of regenerating urban and industrial wasteland, and it is considered one of the most cost-effective and technically successful 'soft' end-uses. There are circumstances where other habitats may be more appropriate.

"Previously developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent

structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development. Previously-developed land may occur in both built-up and rural settings. The definition includes defence buildings and land used for mineral extraction and waste disposal where provision for restoration has not been made through development control procedures. The definition excludes land and buildings that are currently in use for agricultural or forestry purposes, and land in built-up areas which has not been developed previously (e.g. parks, recreation grounds, and allotments –even though these areas may contain certain urban features such as paths, pavilions and other buildings). Also excluded is land that was previously developed but where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape in the process of time (to the extent that it can reasonably be considered as part of the natural surroundings), and where there is a clear reason that could outweigh the re-use of the site - such as its contribution to nature conservation - or it has subsequently been put to an amenity use and cannot be regarded as requiring redevelopment.”

(Planning Policy Guidance Note 3, ODPM 2000)

3. Economic Development

Tourism 3.1

To score one point, the proposed woodland must contribute to a tourism facility. Applicants must tell us the details of any facilities proposed, the expected usage, access, advertising and other relevant logistical details.

Public access to the proposed woodland is not a requirement. The contribution to a tourism facility may often be in addition to public access on foot, but this point is not dependent on it. Golf courses may be eligible to score a point under this category, but only if additional tourist usage can be demonstrated. If the applicant does not own, or is not responsible for, the tourism facility cited, then we will expect to see clear details of the tourism facility provider’s involvement in the proposals.

For further information on woodland tourism see:
www.naturallyactive.org (Commercial Recreation Toolkit)

High Yield Broadleaf Species 3.2

To score one point under this category, more than 70% of the proposed woodland must be planted with poplar or cricket bat willow.

We will expect applicants to consider, and provide details of silvicultural systems, spacing, protection, woodland design and clonal choice (for poplar).

For further information on high yield broadleaved species see:

www.forestresearch.gov.uk (Forest Research Agency)

www.poplartree.co.uk (Poplar)

www.cricketbatwillow.com (Cricket bat willow)

High Quality Timber 3.3

To score one point under this category, the applicant must demonstrate a long-term commitment to the production of quality timber. Applicants must consider, and provide details of silvicultural systems, (close i.e. a minimum of 2250 trees/ha) spacing, protection and the use of the improved tree strains.

A proven track record of producing quality timber would clearly

be an advantage. The proposed planting species can be broadleaved (other than poplar or Cricket Bat willow) or conifer, including high quality coppice crops (not Short Rotation Coppice energy crops).

For further information on high quality timber see:

www.forestresearch.gov.uk

www.woodlandheritage.org.uk

www.northmoortrust.co.uk (click on forestry)

www.bihip.com (British & Irish Hardwoods Improvement Programme)

www.iwsc.org.uk (Institute of wood science) (click on forestry)

4. Renewable Energy

Creation of new woodland for energy and biomass crops is not supported through EWGS.

Grants for planting of 'short rotation coppice' are available through the Energy Crops Scheme Tel: 0300 060 1115.

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/farming/funding/ecs/default.aspx>

5. Education and Learning

Forest School 5.1

To score two points, the proposed woodland must contribute to a specific and accredited Forest School. Applicants must be able to demonstrate the involvement of a qualified Forest School leader in the design, creation, management and use of the woodland. Details should be provided on how and when the woodland will be used as a Forest School.

Forest Schools provide a permanent, natural but safe setting in which children (and adults) have freedom to roam and to experience the natural world through practical activity. Sessions are organised and run by qualified Forest School leaders. Forest Schools East, a centre of excellence for Forest Schools in the East of England has been set up to demonstrate best practice and to "train the trainers".

For further information on Forest Schools see www.forest-schools-east.org

Play and Educational Facilities 5.2

To score one point, the proposed woodland must cater for some form of play or educational experience. This might include:

- Children's play facilities
- Adventure play area
- Information boards (over and above threshold boards)
- Talking posts
- Marked or guided trails
- Organised events

Sports facilities

Applicants must provide details of facilities or learning experiences to be provided, expected usage, access, advertising and other relevant logistical details, and to take account of Health and Safety requirements and risk assessment.

The provision of play or education facilities may be in addition to providing public access or supporting a Forest School but neither is a requirement for this point.

6. Natural Environment

New native woodland must meet the design principles set out in the [Ancient & Native Woodland Practice Guide](#) (which is also summarised in the EWGS 7 National WCG Guidance).

New native woodland should ideally be established by natural seeding and colonisation. The new woodland must be close to an existing, well established semi-natural woodland (normally within 30m, but up to 100m if the intervening land use is dominated by semi-natural habitat).

Wet Woodland 6.1

To score five points, over 80% of the proposed woodland must be created on land subject to seasonal flooding and/or with a high water table. The species used should be appropriate to National Vegetation Classification W1 to W7. The work should be planned and undertaken in accordance with the good practice specified under 'Natural Environment' above.

We will expect applicants to consider, and provide details of spacing and planting design, the use of natural regeneration, protection/control of problem species and possible change in hydrology. Land suitable for wet woodland may have existing or potential conservation interest for other habitats and species, so this should be taken into account.

Wet woodland scores more points than other native woodlands because it is a Habitat Action Plan priority for the region and the wet nature usually precludes other uses (e.g. it is unlikely to be suitable for public access).

For further information see: The management of semi-natural woodlands: 8. Wet Woodlands (Forestry Commission Practice Guide, 2003).

Expansion of semi-natural woodland 6.2

To score four points, the proposed woodland must use site native broadleaves in accordance with Forestry Commission "Guidance for the management of ancient and native woodlands". The work should be planned and undertaken in accordance with the good practice specified under 'Natural Environment' above.

Catchment Sensitive Farming 6.3

To score two points, the application must meet the objectives of the England Catchment Sensitive Farming Delivery Initiative, through planting on "high" or "very high" risk areas and/or with

written support of a Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer.

For further information on Catchment Sensitive Farming see:
<http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/environment/water/csf/index.htm>

**UK Biodiversity
Action Plan species** 6.4

To score two points, the proposed woodland must demonstrably benefit a named national, regional or local Biodiversity Action Plan species. The application must provide a specific woodland design or additional specific action (such as linkage or extension of existing woodland habitat) that is essential for the action plan for the species.

We will expect applicants to consider, and provide details of, silvicultural systems, spacing and planting design, and the use of natural regeneration, use of woody shrubs, protection and the use of open space. Applicants should seek expert advice in delivering action for species with a limited existing range or special habitat requirements. There should be evidence of the existence of the species within the dispersal range of the species, and/or the likelihood of that species colonising the area of new woodland.

Woodland species native to the region, for which woodland creation will be of benefit includes (but not limited to):

Species	Appropriate woodland creation
Heath fritillary butterfly Waved carpet moth Argent and sable moth	Extend and link lowland mixed deciduous woodland woodlands to build 200+ ha working circle of coppice areas linked by wide network of open rides and/or scrub
Lime bark beetle	Extend semi-natural small-leaved lime woods, with local provenance small-leaved lime
Dormouse	Extend and link small ancient woodlands, and ancient/large hedgerows with native woodland. Use a high proportion of woody shrubs and fruit and nut bearing species
Bull finch Linnet Turtle Dove Spotted fly catcher	Include 15m+ wide thicket shrub edges in new native woodland planting.
Lesser spotted woodpecker Marsh tit	Increase native woodland area to 30%+ land cover in target areas through new extensions and linkages and through the restoration of PAWS.

For further information on Biodiversity Action Plans see:
www.ukbap.org.uk (UK BAPs)
www.eastspace.net/biodiversity (regional targets)

**Semi-natural
woodland cluster
areas** 6.5

To score one point, the proposed woodland must be created in accordance to 6.1 or 6.2 above and at least 50% must lie within the 8km from the centre of one of the cluster

areas identified in page 2 of this guidance.

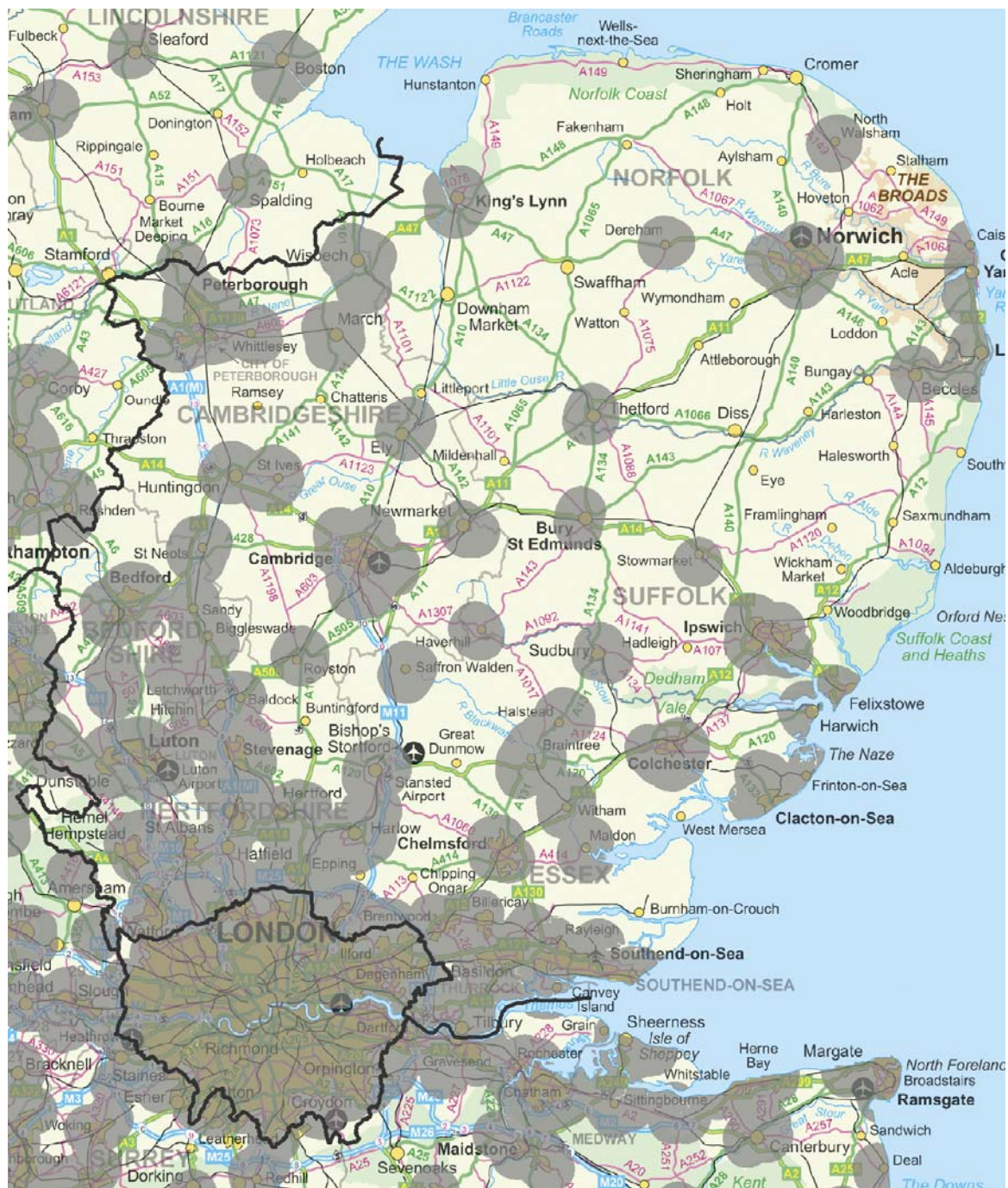
Applicants can check semi-natural woodland boundaries by using the Land Information Search at www.forestry.gov.uk/planting (and click on “Land Information Search”).

For further information of ancient woodland clusters see: www.woodlandforlife.net/wfl-woodbank

Versions Version 1: May 2009
Version 2: May 2010
Version 3: April 2011

Annex 1 – Quality of Place priority areas

The grey shaded areas are deemed priority areas. They are designated on the basis of population, deprivation indices and current woodland access provision.



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This document is for information only and does not constitute an agreement of any form nor does it confer any rights. It is intended as a guide to help applicants decide whether the grant is applicable to them and whether the main requirements of any grant agreement can be met. The information is subject to change. Full and current details of the grant scheme and the requirements of any EWGS grant contract that may be made between the applicant(s) and the Forestry Commission arising from an application to the grant scheme can be found at www.forestry.gov.uk/ewgs.