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Your step by step guide to

# Uplands Entry Level Stewardship

New funding for hill farmers

[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)



**Join over 3,500 farmers who have already applied for the scheme and on average secured £22,500 for their farm business. Apply now to get the funding available for your farm.**

## What is Uplands ELS?

A new 5 year scheme to support hill farmers with regular payments, in return for simple environmental management that works alongside sound hill farming practices. The scheme follows on from Hill Farm Allowance (HFA) which makes its final payments to farmers in 2010 – no further payments will be made under HFA ever again.

## What do I have to do under the scheme?

You will need to choose from a wide range of environmental management options suited to your farm, along with a number of standard requirements. With over 80 different options to choose from (including capital works), such as cattle grazing, stone wall restoration and haymaking there is enough flexibility to select the right options for your farm.

## Why should I apply for Uplands ELS?

The majority of hill farmers will have to apply for Uplands ELS in order to continue funding for their business. With a standard payment rate of £62 per hectare, per year (£23 per ha for parcels of land over 15 ha above Moorland Line), this scheme will provide you with regular payments into your farm business for 5 years. Once the application is complete and accepted, the paperwork is minimal. **The HFA has ended and if you want to continue funding for your farm, you should apply.**

## What if I am already in an environmental scheme?

If you are already in Environmental Stewardship you can still apply to join Uplands ELS and benefit from the higher payment rate. Your agreement will either be re-started or amended depending upon the type you have.

If you have an existing Countryside Stewardship Scheme or Environmentally Sensitive Area agreement, you will have to wait for the agreement to end before joining Uplands ELS. In the meantime, you may be able to claim the Uplands Transitional Payment and should check with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA).

## How do I join Uplands ELS?

The scheme is open to all farmers who have management control of land in Severely Disadvantaged Areas (SDA), regardless of the size or sector of your holding. Provided you meet a points target and agree to carry out simple but effective environmental management (including some standard requirements) on your land, you will be accepted into Uplands ELS. We have rolling monthly start dates – the sooner you apply, the sooner you can secure funding for your farm business and the smaller the gap between final HFA payment and new Uplands ELS payment. If your tenancy has less than 5 years to run, you will also need your landlord to sign the application form.

Whether you have an existing Environmental Stewardship agreement or are new to environmental schemes you will need to follow these simple steps to apply:

- 1 Call us on 0300 060 1117 for a paper application pack or more information. Alternatively you can apply quickly and easily via the internet at [www.naturalengland.org.uk/es](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/es) and click on the 'apply online' banner.
- 2 Make sure your farmland is registered correctly on the Rural Land Register with RPA.
- 3 Agree to the standard requirements for moorland and arable/grassland on your farm – these will go towards your points target.
- 4 Complete a 'Farm Environment Record' – a map detailing all the environmental features on your farm.
- 5 Select the options to meet the points target required for your farm – these are based on the size of your farm and land type.
- 6 Complete the forms and send the application pack to your regional Natural England office – **you have to apply to get into the scheme.**

## Help and information

Natural England is currently offering a wide range of advice and support to help you into Uplands ELS – we can offer free farm visits from an adviser to discuss the scheme or you can book places on Uplands ELS training events. To book a visit or training event call **0300 060 1695**.

For more information about Uplands ELS and to request an application pack call **0300 060 1117**.

To apply online call **0300 060 1482** and we'll help you get started or go to [www.wholefarm.defra.gov.uk](http://www.wholefarm.defra.gov.uk)

For Rural Land Register & Uplands Transitional Payment queries call RPA on **0845 603 7777**

For further information visit [www.naturalengland.org.uk/es](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/es)



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