



Scotland's Finest Woods Awards 2021

Farm Woodland Award Information Sheet

£2,000 of prize money

Delivery Partners:



Two competition categories: young people (farmers/crofters and/or foresters) and all farm/croft woodlands

Introduction

Farm and croft woodlands are an important part of Scotland's landscape including old shelterbelts, cherished native woodlands, productive conifer woods and young woodlands. Scotland's Finest Woods Awards recognises the very best of woodland management and is delighted to be able to add this new category for farm/croft woodlands. We aim to show how woodland on farms or crofts, of whatever type, can contribute to the economic viability and a healthy environment of the overall farming business. Please note where 'farm' or 'farming' is used this also applies to 'croft' or 'crofting'.

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Please note where 'farm' or 'farming' is used this also applies to 'croft' or 'crofting'.

There is also **new for 2021, an optional extra Award** you may enter for Climate Change related activities in addition to the Farm Woodland Award. Please refer to the **Climate Change Champion Award** information sheet, guidance and entry form at www.sfw.co.uk.

Who can enter?

Entry is open to active farmers/crofters and for the Young People category only their forester/woodland manager may also apply. The farm/croft can be anywhere in Scotland and must have a Rural Payments' Business Reference Number (BRN). The farmer/crofter must be directly involved, to a greater or lesser extent, with the farm/croft woodland management that forms part of the farming business and is to its benefit. For the Young People competition so long as the farmer/crofter has a BRN and the entry is made with their prior agreement the Young Person may be the forester/woodland manager only where they are different to the farmer/crofter. Entries for this competition where both the farmer/crofter and forester are younger is especially welcomed.

There are two prize categories and entrants can enter the one applicable to them:

- **Young people** where entry is open to the farmer/crofter and/or their forester/woodland manager who at the time of the closing date is/are **aged 16 years and under 41 years of age** (i.e. the same age eligible for the [Scottish Government Rural Payments – "Young Farmers" Scheme](#)). One person may fulfil both roles or there may be one or both of these roles where the person is 16-40 years old. Whilst you will be younger you will be the person(s) considering the options for the land and its management demonstrating the integration of farming and woodlands/forestry by young people. You will have significant influence on the way the farm/croft woodland is managed, ideally encouraging others to also manage farm/croft woodlands in a positive way.

- **All farm/croft woodlands** that are located in Scotland that may be managed by one or more people and there is **no need to give your age!**

What type of farm/croft woodland(s)?

The area of woodland must be 2 hectares (4.9 acres) or more in size, with tree canopy cover (or the potential to achieve this if a young woodland) of at least 20%. It can be of any established tree species or woodland type and contain integral open space and/or woody shrubs or other farm crops/ground cover. If the woodland is younger or of mixed age it may have been established by planting or natural regeneration on previously bare or cropped land or on land that has previously had tree cover.

Any young woodland must have had at least five years minimum of growth and can be of any older age. Therefore if planted, that happened in, or before, the 2015/16 planting season. There may be one or more woodland areas on the farm/croft that are included in the entry.

There must be benefits to the farming/crofting operations, ideally improving productivity and the wood(s) should form part of the financial sustainability of the farm/croft holding. The farm/croft's woodland(s) will be used in a sustainable and potentially enterprising way with responsible management providing direct farming benefits. For example: generating income from sustainably managed woods; using biomass, fuelwood or wood chips on site or selling these as a renewable, clean, Carbon neutral energy; or creating new woodlands to off-set carbon produced from agricultural operations; or for livestock shelter, sporting interests, amenity or other objectives. The farm/croft must be actively managed with a BRN.

Prizes

A £1,000 cash prize is awarded to each winning farm/croft at the discretion of the judges and other high quality entries may receive a judges' commendation. For young people there is either one cash prize or it can be split between two people where the farmer/crofter and/or forester/woodland manager are different with each receiving £500. In either case the payment is in this category only made payable to the individual entrant(s) personally.

In addition, the prestigious **Lilburn Trophy** and new for 2019 the striking **Scottish Woodlands Ltd. Trophy for Young People** will be awarded at the discretion of the judges with custody for one year. The winner(s) and commended entries will receive a **certificate** and a **wooden display plaque** recording their achievement.

Award ceremony

Details are to be confirmed, however **it is expected the 2021 Awards' Ceremony will be held virtually to keep everyone safe during the 2nd half of June. The Awards' Ceremony may coincide with Friday of the Royal Highland Show i.e. 18th June 2021, in case it may be possible to get together in person.**

Judging

The safety of Judges and entrants is paramount. The judges expect to directly notify shortlisted entries in April 2021 and will aim to safely-visit selected sites during April/May 2021. If you do not hear from the judges by early May unfortunately your entry has not been short-listed. However, you are encouraged to re-apply in future years!

Our judges' task will be to find and reward the pursuit of excellence. Judges will assess entries against the following criteria:

- Quality of entry form and supporting information
- Clarity of management objectives clearly delivering direct farming/crofting benefits with good woodland practice
- Quality of project design and implementation
- The degree of progress and necessary adaptation(s) since inception
- Likelihood of achieving the project's original objectives.

Aspects that the judges will be looking for include:

- An innovative and/or enterprising approach
- Successful integration of the woodland(s) with the farming/crofting activities ideally improving productivity

- How the woodland benefits contribute to the farm/croft's financial sustainability
- Woodland type appropriate to the site with natural heritage and any historic environment safeguarded
- Maximising overall biodiversity benefits
- Direct or indirect economic benefits to those on the farm/croft and/or nearby
- Ideally how peers are encouraged to also manage farm woodlands in a positive way.

Keeping safe

It is requested that **only one person on behalf of the entrant is available to meet the judge(s) on-site**. Each person attending will **need to keep a safe distance** and wear an appropriate face mask (unless exempt)/use hand sanitiser/wear suitable protective gloves. Judges will provide their own PPE. The entrant is to **have a pre-arranged route for the judging** where any travel is on foot or on a surface reasonable enough to allow the judge(s) to use their own vehicles (road cars unless advised otherwise) or that does not require any vehicles/transport and that has **suitable, specified viewpoints**.

Judges are to be specific with entrants in advance of the visit about what they want to see and/or have made available before or at the site visit.

Entrants must provide the most relevant supporting information including images in the form of photographs, site-based or aerial based video. All visual supporting material must be in short, small file sizes ideally provided as website or YouTube links.

How to enter

Simply complete a short entry form with basic location, contact details and state in no more than **500 words** why you think your entry would make a worthy winner of this prestigious award and be an exemplar to others. Copies of this entry form can be downloaded from the Scotland's Finest Woods Awards' website www.sfwa.co.uk and should be submitted electronically unless otherwise agreed in advance.

Please provide **supporting information such as visuals** e.g. up to 15no. photographs, promotional material and/or up to 3no. short videos of up to 60 seconds maximum length and in a small file size (maximum 5MB), a summary management plan, woodland composition – species/age/type map(s), soils maps, any publicity or information document(s) to help our judges make their decision. If agreed in advance, to ensure ease of data transfer, larger or longer specialist audio-visual material may be accepted. Emailed versions of all material are to be provided though must not in total exceed 10MB – you may send 2-3 emails if necessary. If material needs to be sent by post three copies are needed.

Closing date for entries

Please submit your application as early as possible and by midnight Wednesday 31st March 2021 at the latest. Late entries will not be considered.

Publicity

An objective of Scotland's Finest Woods and its partners is to showcase entrants as exemplars of good practice so as to encourage others. By entering the competition, entrants are accepting that their woodland may be used as an example of good practice in post-competition publicity and, as may be agreed with the entrant, in other ways.

In order to maximise the potential for obtaining publicity entrants are requested to provide publication quality photography as well as up to 3no. videos of up to a maximum 60 seconds length each, if available.

For more information please see www.sfwa.co.uk or contact:

Angela Douglas, Scotland's Finest Woods Awards, c/o A Douglas Consultancy, Bramblewood, Munloch, Ross-shire, IV8 8PF. Tel: 07969 327015. Email: admin@sfwa.co.uk **You can now follow us on [Twitter](#) !**

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