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| SFW dark blue | **Scotland’s Finest WoodsAwards** |

**Farm Woodland Award 2022**

**(all farm/croft woodlands and those where young people are the farmer/crofter and/or forester categories)**

**£2,000 of prize money available**

**Winners’ Prize for each category: a magnificent trophy and £1,000 cash**

**What is it for?**

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. [**SAC Consulting**](https://www.sruc.ac.uk/business-services/sac-consulting/) and [**Scottish Woodlands Ltd.**](https://www.scottishwoodlands.co.uk/) jointly support this Award.

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

**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](https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/all-schemes/new-entrants/young-farmers-and-new-entrants-start-up-grant-schemes/young-farmers-start-up-grant-scheme-full-guidance/)). 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 2016/17 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 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 any commended entries will receive a **certificate** and a **wooden display plaque** recording their achievement.

**Award ceremony**

**The 2022 prize-giving awards ceremony date and format will be advised after the end March 2022** closing date. **The Awards’ Ceremony may coincide with Friday of the Royal Highland Show i.e. 24th June 2022, 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** **2022 and will aim to safely-visit selected sites during April/May 2022**. 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 especially 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](http://www.sfwa.co.uk) and should be submitted electronically unless otherwise agreed in advance.

Please provide **supporting information especially 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. All visual supporting material must be in short, small file sizes ideally provided as website or YouTube links. 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 on Thursday 31st March 2022 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**](http://www.sfwa.co.uk) **or contact:**

Angela Douglas, Scotland's Finest Woods Awards, c/o A Douglas Consultancy, Bramblewood, Munlochy, Ross-shire, IV8 8PF. Tel: 07969 327015. Email: [admin@sfwa.co.uk](mailto:admin@sfwa.co.uk)

**You can now follow us on** [**Twitter**](https://twitter.com/ScFinestWoods) **!**

**Scotland's Finest Woods** is a company limited by guarantee registered in Scotland (SC294388) and a Scottish Charity (SC039099

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**Name of farm/croft: ……………………………………………………………………………...................**

**Location: ............................................................................................................................................**

**Farm/croft owners name & type of ownership: ..……………………………………………………….**

**How did you hear about the Award: ………………………………………………………………..........**

**BRN: …………………………………………………………………………………………………..............**

*It is important that a contact point is provided who will be responsible for liaising with us on important aspects such as arranging any judging visit.* ***The farm/croft and owner, as well as their forester if applicable, stated on this application form will be used on any certificates, or other records, in event of winning.*** *Therefore please ensure these are correct. Do include details of an additional contact if you are likely to be unavailable for significant periods.*

**Name of Contact(s): …………………………………………………………………………………….…**

**Contact Address: ……………………………………………………………………………………………**

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**Phone Numbers: ……………………………………………………………………………………………..**

**Email address: ……………………………………………………………………………………………….**

*Please include a map showing the farm/croft location, where the farm/croft woodlands are and the meeting point with directions as necessary. You may provide us with a revised meeting point at a later date but it saves time for us to have this information at the time you make your entry.*

**Meeting point for judging visit: …………………………………………………………………………...**

**Please mark the competition category that you are entering:**

* **Farm/croft woodlands** - entry is open to active farmers/crofters or their forester with the active farmer/crofter’s support, anywhere in Scotland. The farm/croft must have a Rural Payments’ Business Reference Number (BRN) and 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. There is **no need to give your age.** The woodlandmust be at least 2ha (4.9 acres) with a tree canopy of at least 20% with a minimum of five years growth.
* **Young people** - entry is open to the farmer/crofter and/or 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](https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/all-schemes/new-entrants/young-farmers-and-new-entrants-start-up-grant-schemes/young-farmers-start-up-grant-scheme-full-guidance/)). By entering you are confirming this is fact. 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/crofting 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. The other criteria above must also be met.

**For the Young People category only, your age(s) on 31st March 2022, role(s) and applicant**

**Farmer/Crofter** Age:……………………… Name: ………………………………………………………

**Forester/Woodland Manager** Age: ……. Name: ………………………………………………………

**Who is applying**: the Farmer/Crofter, or the Forester/Woodland Manager, or both.

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| 1. **Please provide a brief summary of your farm/croft woodland(s)’s background, aims, woodland management objectives, farming/crofting activities and how you are integrating the woodland with the farm/croft. State the area of both the farm/croft and woodland(s) being entered in hectares.**   **Important Additional Note for Young People entrants:** judges will also be interested in the extent to which you have considered the options for the land and its management demonstrating the integration of farming/crofting and woodlands/forestry. If you have encouraged others to also manage farm/croft woodlands in a positive way please outline how you have done this**.** |

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| **2. In no more than 500 words please describe what you have achieved through your integrated farm/croft woodland management and highlight the progress made towards meeting your objectives, state why you think your entry would make a worthy winner of this prestigious award. Clearly explain your existing farm/crofting practice and state how the woodland improves your farming/crofting activities and ideally your productivity.** |
| **3. You must include a location map showing the meeting point and directions to the meeting point for the judging visit.**  Please list any other supporting material you are submitting that will help our judges make their decision. For example: a summary management plan, woodland composition – species/age/type map(s), soils maps, any publicity or information document(s) and ideally by weblinks or YouTube links up to 15no. photographs and/or videos (3no. max of 60 seconds length maximum each) that will help our judges make their decision. These should all be supplied by email unless otherwise agreed in advance and must not in total exceed 10MB – you may send 2-3 emails if necessary. |

Your entry form and any supporting information should be submitted as early as possible and **at the very latest by midnight on Thursday 31st March 2022.**

Any entries received after 31st March 2022 will not be considered**.**

Submit this entry form electronically to [admin@sfwa.co.uk](mailto:admin@sfwa.co.uk) with any supporting material (see page 3 ‘How to Enter’ earlier) unless otherwise agreed in advance. Three hard copies of any supporting material can be sent to:

Angela Douglas, Scotland's Finest Woods Awards,

c/o A Douglas Consultancy, Bramblewood, Munlochy, Ross-shire, IV8 8PF.

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