

Control of Scrub or Woody Vegetation – Primary Treatment – Light Vegetation

Date published: 21 December, 2015

To see recent changes to this guidance, [check the bottom of this page](#).

Note: In September 2023, references to Scottish Natural Heritage and Natura Sites have been updated to NatureScot and European Sites respectively.

Aim

The aim of this item is to benefit a variety of habitats where scrub is invading a sensitive site.

Although scrub is a valuable habitat, there are cases where it can have a negative effect on the underlying habitats.

Scrub can draw water out of the peatlands and wetlands, and intercept rainfall further drying out the habitat. It can also shade out plants in species-rich grasslands.

Control can be undertaken by cutting, flailing, hand pulling, spraying or stem injection.

Eligibility

Any land where light scrub is invading a sensitive habitat, or where the work will benefit a Scheduled Monument, is eligible.

This item must be combined with one of the following options, unless you have prior approval otherwise from NatureScot:

- [Lowland Bog Management](#)
- [Moorland Management](#)
- [Wetland Management](#)
- [Species-rich Grassland Management](#)
- [Heath Management \(Coastal, Serpentine, Lowland and Special Interest\)](#)
- [Habitat Mosaic Management](#)

Application requirements

You must prepare a scrub control plan.

The plan must include a map showing

- the extent of the scrub
- the density of the scrub (light, medium or heavy – for definitions, see the [supporting guidance](#))
- the areas to be treated
- the type of management you propose (chemical, mechanical or manual)
- the timing of treatment

The plan must also detail any proposed follow-up control.



[Scrub Control Plan \(MS Word, Size: 143.4 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpaymentsandservices.org/media/resources/Scrub-Control-Plan-AECS-April-2015.docx> [Plan template]

Requirements

- you must control the scrub by either:
 - cutting the scrub as low as possible to the ground level, or

- treating the scrub with glyphosate, or
- manually pulling, if you have prior approval to do this in your plan
- if cutting conifers, treatment with glyphosate is not required on stumps cut below the bottom whorl of branches
- if cutting broadleaves, you must treat cut stumps greater than 1.5 centimetres in diameter with glyphosate
- if spraying within one metre of the top of the bank of a watercourse, near water, you, or your spray operator must have Scottish Environment Protection Agency authorisation. You must retain a copy of this authorisation
- if cutting you must undertake scrub control work between 1 August and the end of February
- you must maintain a diary
- you must keep photographic evidence of the site before and after treatment as part of your claim

Payment

You can claim £900 per hectare that is treated.

You may apply for payment on an actual cost basis for this item if the work you are proposing to carry out will benefit the notified features of a designated site, and where there are exceptional circumstances. This can include works which offer a dual benefit to both the environment and the long term management of a Scheduled Monument located within the designated site (Sites of Special Scientific Interest and European sites)

This item may be combined with the following item:

- [Control of Scrub – Follow-up Treatment](#)

Inspections

The inspectors will check:

- the location and extent of the work
- you must control the area as detailed in your scrub control plan
- if cutting you have undertaken scrub control work between 1 August and the end of February
- you have maintained a diary which includes photographic evidence of the site before and after treatment

Additional guidance

[Supporting guidance is available for this option.](#)

Recent changes

Section	Change	Previous text	New text
Eligibility	Addition of information on Scheduled Monuments.	Any land where light scrub is invading a sensitive habitat is eligible.	Any land where light scrub is invading a sensitive habitat, or where the work will benefit a Scheduled Monument, is eligible.
Requirements	Clarification on cutting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if cutting, you must treat cut stumps greater than 1.5 centimetres diameter with glyphosate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if cutting conifers, treatment with glyphosate is not required on stumps cut below the bottom whorl of branches • if cutting broadleaves, you must treat cut stumps greater than 1.5 centimetres in diameter with glyphosate

Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)

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