

Hen Harrier Grassland Management

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Aim

The aim of this option is to benefit hen harriers by providing suitable habitat for their key prey species.

Managing areas to provide a dense cover of grass will encourage voles and other small mammals.

This option is only available in Orkney.

Eligibility

Any grassland or land in an arable rotation where you propose to create a grassland sward is eligible.

You should not include areas of land covering rocks, scree, water, dense bracken etc. We will check this using the same approach we use to check land for the Basic Payment Scheme.

[Assessing your land eligibility](#)

Spatial targeting



[Map of target area – Hen Harrier Grassland Management \(PDF, Size: 631.7 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpaymentsandservices.org/media/resources/19_Hen_Harrier_Grassland_Management.pdf This option is available within the target area shown on this map.

You can check if this option is available on your holding using the search targeting tool which can be found on any of the following AECS guidance pages:

[AECS Home](#)

[Eligibility](#)

[How to Apply](#)

[Management Options and Capital Items](#)

[Capital Items](#)

Application requirements

You must identify on a map the locations of the area to be managed.

Management requirements

You must manage the same location and extent each year for the duration of your contract:

- where no grassland exists, you must establish the grass by 1 June in the first year of your contract
- you must restrict grazing to no more than 0.15 livestock units per hectare from 1 May to 30 September
- you must exclude livestock from 1 October to 30 April, unless you have prior written approval
- do not carry out supplementary livestock feeding on the area subject to payment
- do not cut the grass sward with the exception of cutting to aid establishment during the first year
- do not plough, cultivate or use the area for regular vehicle access or storage
- do not allow the land to become poached or vehicle tracked
- you must maintain a diary

Payment

You can claim:

- for land converted from arable, or improved grassland: £270.13 per hectare per year subject to a maximum claim of two hectares per year for each business
- for unimproved grassland or rough grazing: £90.64 per hectare per year

There is a separate capital item to support the creation of grassland:

- [Creation of Species-rich Grassland](#)

Inspections

The inspectors will check:

- you have managed the same location and extent each year for the duration of your contract
- where no grassland existed, you have established the grass by 1 June in the first year of your contract
- you have restricted grazing to no more than 0.15 livestock units per hectare from 1 May to 30 September
- you have excluded livestock from 1 October to 30 April, unless you have prior written approval
- you have not carried out supplementary livestock feeding on the area subject to payment.
- you have not cut the grass sward with the exception of cutting to aid establishment during the first year
- you have not ploughed, cultivated or used the area for regular vehicle access or storage
- you have not allowed the land to become poached or vehicle tracked
- you have maintained a diary

Additional guidance

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