

# Countryside Stewardship

## Mid Tier - 2017 applications

Applications for Countryside Stewardship (CS) Mid Tier agreements starting from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 can be submitted now. Application packs must be requested by **31 July 2017** by calling Natural England on **0208 026 1089**.

### Once you have your pack, follow these hints and tips to apply:

<p><b>Get some free advice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Book a free 1:1 clinic for <b>help with choosing the best options</b> and capital items for your farm; or for <b>help checking your application</b> prior to submission.           <table border="0" data-bbox="395 792 1426 976"> <tr> <td>In the <b>South West</b> contact:</td> <td>In the <b>rest of England</b> contact:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FWAG South West</td> <td>ADAS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>01823 663074</td> <td>0845 371 3399</td> </tr> <tr> <td><a href="mailto:csadvice@fwagsw.org.uk">csadvice@fwagsw.org.uk</a></td> <td><a href="mailto:bookings@adas.co.uk">bookings@adas.co.uk</a></td> </tr> </table> </li> <li>Request free <b>Catchment Sensitive Farming advice</b> - this is available where reducing diffuse pollution from agriculture is a priority. Call <b>0208 026 1089</b> or search 'Catchment Sensitive Farming' on GOV.UK for more info.</li> </ul>	In the <b>South West</b> contact:	In the <b>rest of England</b> contact:	FWAG South West	ADAS	01823 663074	0845 371 3399	<a href="mailto:csadvice@fwagsw.org.uk">csadvice@fwagsw.org.uk</a>	<a href="mailto:bookings@adas.co.uk">bookings@adas.co.uk</a>
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<p><b>Choose the best options in the best locations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applications are scored against local priorities. Use the <b>CS Options Finder Tool</b> on the Rural Payments service (<a href="http://www.gov.uk/rural-payments">www.gov.uk/rural-payments</a>) to identify the priority options best suited to your farm and location. This should increase your score making it more likely you'll be offered an agreement.</li> <li>Non-competitive <b>organic</b> conversion and management options are also available.</li> <li>Consider whether you will need to use any CS options to meet your <b>greening requirements</b>. If so, this can reduce the payment rates for some CS options.</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Apply by 30 September 2017</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural England must receive your completed application by <b>30 September 2017</b>.</li> <li><b>Apply as early as possible</b>. The sooner you apply, the greater the opportunity for us to check for obvious errors (i.e. unanswered questions or missing signatures) and, if time permits, ask you to provide any updated information before the deadline.</li> </ul>								

### Further information

- Look up 'Countryside Stewardship' on GOV.UK for full scheme guidance.
- Register for the Rural Payments service (at [www.gov.uk/rural-payments](http://www.gov.uk/rural-payments)) to use the CS Options Finder Tool or to give 'permission' for someone to submit an application on your behalf.
- To discuss your application contact Natural England Technical Services on: **0208 026 1089**.
- You may also wish to contact your membership organisation local representative or a professional adviser for advice or help with your application.



Before sending in your application, **use the checklist overleaf** to check you have carried out all the necessary steps.

## CS MID TIER APPLICATION CHECKLIST

<p><b>Check your land is registered correctly with the RPA</b></p> <p>NB - It is best to sort out any land issues before you request your application pack</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check your online maps - go to 'View land' on the Rural Payments service.</li> <li>• All land parcels where options are to be located <b>must be</b>:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Registered with the RPA</b>, including areas not eligible for BPS e.g. farmyards. To register land or request a mapping change, submit an RLE1 form to the RPA.</li> <li>- <b>Linked with your SBI</b> (Single Business Identifier), so the land parcel shows on your online maps. To establish a link between a registered land parcel and your SBI, an RLE1 form needs to be submitted to transfer that land to you. If the land needs to remain linked to another SBI at the same time because they claimed BPS 2017, write 'Dual use – maintain link to existing SBI' on the front page of the RLE1 form.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• To download an RLE1 form, search under 'BPS 2017' on GOV.UK. Put a cross in the Rural Development Programme scheme box on the RLE1 front page and clearly write 'RLE1 required to support Countryside Stewardship application'. Send the RLE1 form to the RPA <b>immediately</b> so it doesn't delay your CS application.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Check option compatibility with BPS 2017 land use</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some CS options can only be put on permanent grassland and some only on arable land. This compatibility is checked against the BPS <b>2017</b> land use codes used.</li> <li>• To check compatibility, go to the individual option or capital item details on GOV.UK – see the specific requirements under "Where to use this [option or item]".</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review your HEFER</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your Historic Environment Farm Record (HEFER) should arrive within 20 working days of your application pack.</li> <li>• Tick the relevant box on the application form to confirm you've reviewed the HEFER.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Complete your maps</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On your <b>Farm Environment Record map</b> remember to include all hedgerow trees and use correct colour codes for hedges (as shown on the map legend).</li> <li>• On your <b>Options map</b>, check all non-rotational options and capital items are marked on the map. You do <u>not</u> need to mark rotational options on the map.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Include all of the required evidence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain all necessary evidence to include with your application. NB: botanical assessments and/or planning consents can take a little time – so don't delay.</li> <li>• Refer to the checklists in your pack (annexes 4a and 4b) or the option / capital item details on GOV.UK to check what evidence must be included with the application.</li> <li>• <b>All required evidence must be received by Natural England by <u>30 Sept 2017</u>.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Double check your form</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check you've answered ALL the questions on the application form. Make sure that:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You've included your Vendor Number and SBI.</li> <li>- Each option or capital item meets any minimum area/length requirements.</li> <li>- You've included details of any land parcels at risk of runoff or soil erosion. These can be identified by using the 'Runoff and soil erosion risk assessment' document on GOV.UK.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Sign the form</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The form must be signed by person(s) with authority and capacity to complete the application.</li> <li>• Even though the application is on a paper form, an agent or someone submitting the application on behalf of the business must have 'Submit' permission under 'Countryside Stewardship (Applications)' on the Rural Payments service.</li> </ul>