

Farm Advice Service Webinar Q&A:

How can I contact Catchment Sensitive Farming?

You can get in touch by emailing your local team:

[Get in touch | Farming Advice Service](#)

How long does it take to get a Catchment Sensitive Farming visit?

*CSF aims to respond to **requests for advice within 10 working days.***

If the request relates to the Capital Scheme approvals, CSF will endeavour to assess requests for its support and approval within 10 weeks, subject to demand.

If CSF is unable to assess requests within these timescales, applicants will be able to proceed with their application without the items which require CSF support and approval.

Are you going to employ more Catchment Sensitive Farming Advisers?

We will be reviewing our staffing numbers and deployment as a part of the overall planning for next year and beyond. This will depend on final funding which will be known later this year.

Are CSF able to help with bespoke applications for Sustainable Farming Incentive?

Catchment Sensitive Farming provide advice on improving water and air quality, soil health and natural flood management. SFI is one of the tools to help deliver changes to help improve farm sustainability, nature recovery and reduce pollution. CSF can signpost to funding opportunities such as SFI, Farm Equipment & Technology Fund, and Slurry Infrastructure Grant.

Whilst CSF cannot develop bespoke SFI applications, it can provide guidance on which actions are most appropriate for your farm for soil, water and air quality and local environmental priorities.

What are the criteria for prioritisation?

CSF prioritises advice to holdings which have the greatest potential to deliver clean water, clean air and a healthy environment. CSF delivery is underpinned by water quality and air quality monitoring which helps guide our work. CSF will also prioritise its advice to holdings which have been referred to CSF for advice by the Environment Agency.

Do you know when the Slurry Infrastructure Grant Round 3 is due to open for applications?

We are awaiting further information from DEFRA. We understand any announcement on a future round will be posted on the Defra Farming Blog. To receive notifications, sign up at <https://defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/subscribe> CSF can advise on the broader aspects of slurry and nutrient management to help guide practice changes, investments and appropriate use of schemes such as SIG.

Can CSF help with removing trees from watercourses?

No, please check the Environment Agency website for more information: www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits CSF can help with water resilience and natural flood management advice.

Can CSF help with IPM plans, Soil Management Plans or Nutrient Management Plans?

CSF can provide some advice around these topics, but is not able to produce the management plans for SFI applicants. There are consultants who could help with this work and there are templates available online.

The relevant SFI actions will include links to guidance and templates in 'Advice to help you do this action' section.

What advice do you have for non-intensive livestock farmers on SFI?

There are a number of new actions which can improve soil health and nutrient efficiency, such as the soil management plans and nutrient management review actions.

For low intensity grazing systems, the following actions can help with soil health:

- *Low input grassland*
- *Herbal leys*
- *Legumes in grassland*

And can be partnered with supplements such as hay making.

Further details on all actions can be found here: [Find funding for land or farms - GOV.UK](#)

Can I change from an existing scheme to a Sustainable Farming Incentive?

If farmers have a live agreement in a scheme, including the SFI, they can still apply for a separate agreement in the expanded SFI offer.

Guidance on transferring from existing schemes to the Sustainable Farming Incentive is likely to be released in 2025. Please sign up to the DEFRA farming blog to keep up to date with new announcements.

How do I get endorsement for GRH6?

Once you submit an application that includes an endorsed action, the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) will inform [Natural England](#) or [Historic England](#), who will then contact you to confirm that your land is suitable for the action to be included in your agreement.

www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms/grh6-manage-priority-habitat-species-rich-grassland-endorsed

Does Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) apply when establishing Herbal leys?

You need a screening decision before you increase the productivity of 2 hectares (ha) or more of uncultivated land or a semi-natural area.

Increasing productivity includes (but is not limited to):

- *disrupting the soil surface by ploughing, discing, harrowing or rotovating*
- *converting grassland to arable or whole-crop silage*
- *sowing seed that increases agricultural productivity*
- *draining land, drainage works or changing water levels*
- *introducing or increasing an agroforestry approach to land management which will increase the productivity of the land for agriculture (unless covered by EIA (Forestry) Regulations)*

- *smothering or clearing vegetation (including grassland and rush pasture) or scrub, with machines or chemicals, by animals, or by burning (excluding continued routine habitat management)*
- *increasing stocking density or changing stock type or grazing regime period (including introduction of supplementary feeding) that leads to the land being used more intensively for agriculture*
- *sowing seed to restore semi-natural grassland or heathland if the sowing of seed disrupts the soil surface and therefore leads to increased agricultural productivity*

You may need to provide information such as fertiliser/manure applications or history of management.

For more information: www.gov.uk/government/publications/changing-uncultivated-semi-natural-and-rural-land-when-you-need-permission