

Croft Woodlands Project

The Croft Woodlands Project is an initiative which commenced in 2015. It aims to engage crofters in the creation and management of woodlands on their holdings; thus delivering multiple benefits in terms of shelter, agricultural diversification, forest products, landscape and the environment.

The Project is a partnership between the Scottish Crofting Federation, Woodland Trust Scotland, Scottish Forestry, Point & Sandwick Trust, Shetland Amenity Trust, the Orkney Woodlands Project, Communities Housing Trust and the Woodland Croft Partnership.

Woodland Trust Scotland employs 5 regional project advisers on behalf of the Partnership.

The Project offers free support to crofters, common grazings committees and smallholders within the crofting counties. Project advisers carry out site assessments, offer technical advice and assist with access to funding. Advice is mainly focussed on new native woodland planting, but can also include management of existing woodland on the croft.

Where a site has clear potential to succeed as an application to the Scottish Government Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS), the Croft Woodlands Project will engage an independent forestry agent to develop a funding proposal on behalf of the crofter.

Small sites, or sites which are suitable for woodland creation but for which the FGS is inappropriate, will be offered direct assistance via the Woodland Trust's MOREwoods schemeⁱ. The MOREwoods scheme also offers support for planting hedgerows.

The CWP offers a bridging loan, administered by our partner the Communities Housing Trust, to ease cashflow problems for FGS schemes during the period between expenditure on establishment works and receipt of grant.

A programme of training events and knowledge transfer is delivered as part of the project, and existing resources and publications relating to croft woodland are being reviewed and updated.

The CWP has published the [Highlands and Islands Woodland Handbook](#) by Bernard Plantrose.

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ⁱ MOREwoods offers tree and protection measures (excluding fencing) at reduced or no cost to the crofter.

