

8. Further advice and supporting information

Tree felling laws and grants

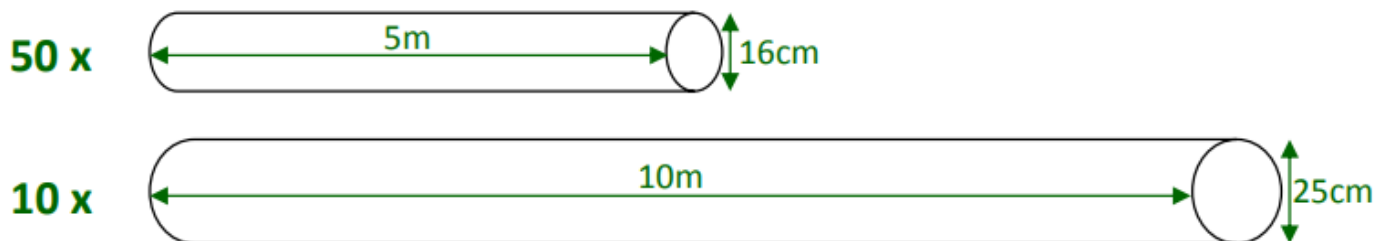
Most tree felling requires a felling licence from the Forestry Commission: see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-felling-licence-when-you-need-to-apply> for full details and guidance.

There are a number of exemptions, including:

- If you are felling less than 5m³
- Trees with a diameter at chest height of less than 8 cm, or 10 cm if thinning and 15 cm if the stems are on a coppice stool.
- Trees in gardens, but only in the immediate surroundings of a house.
- Dead trees, or those that pose an imminent hazard.

Some trees are covered by Tree Preservation Orders or are in Conservation Areas, designations administered by the local authority. Contact the local authority tree officer or planning department to check before you fell any trees.

As a rough guide... A tin can has a diameter of about 7.5 cm. So trees with the same or a smaller diameter at chest height are not subject to a felling licence. 5m³ is roughly 50 trees that are 5 m long with a diameter of 16 cm, or 10 trees that are 10 m long with a diameter of 25 cm



The main source of grant aid for woodland work, including improvements to existing woodlands, is the Forestry Commission's grant scheme; your local Forestry Commission office can send you further details and an applicant's pack. Some county councils and local authorities have grant schemes and woodland advisors. Contact individual councils for details.

8. Further advice and supporting information

Transferring obligations

If you buy a wood, you may find that there are already Forestry Commission grant schemes or felling licences in place. Your solicitor should inform you of these.

In the case of a felling licence (including felling done under a grant scheme), the conditions go with the land and not with the owner. So if your predecessor felled some trees on the condition that new trees were planted and maintained for ten years (a typical felling licence condition) then you, as the new owner of the land, will be responsible for maintaining the trees until the ten-year period is up.

In the case of grants, the obligation to repay if things go wrong goes with the person who received the first instalment of payments. So if your predecessor planted some trees and received the first instalment of grant, then sold the land, they would be liable to repay the grant with interest if you subsequently let the trees die. Most solicitors will advise vendors to transfer these obligations onto the purchaser, and you may be asked to sign a 'Transfer of Obligations' form. You should ensure before you sign that the trees in question are established and growing. If in doubt, check with your local Forestry Commission office.

Sources of further information and advice

Numerous organisations can help those embarking on woodland management, and your local Forestry Commission office can provide you with further contacts. The following are likely to be of relevance to many owners.

Forestry Commission

Offices throughout the country.

www.forestry.gov.uk/contactus

The Royal Forestry Society

www.rfs.org.uk

The Hay Barns, Home Farm Drive, Upton Estate, Banbury OX15 6HU

Telephone: 01295 678588

Email: rfsHQ@rfs.org.uk

<https://www.rfs.org.uk/learning/forestry-knowledge-hub/woodland-management/so-you-own-a-woodland/>

8. Further advice and supporting information

Small Woods Association

www.smallwoods.org.uk

Station Road, Coalbrookdale, Telford TF8 7DR

Telephone: 01952 432769

Email: office@smallwoods.org.uk

Tree Council

www.treecouncil.org.uk

71 Newcomen Street, London SE1 1YT

Telephone: 020 7407 9992

Email: info@treecouncil.org.uk

Woodnet (South East England)

www.woodnet.org.uk

Woodland Enterprise Centre, Hastings Road, Flimwell, Wadhurst, East Sussex TN5 7PR

Telephone: 01580 879552

Email: info@woodnet.org.uk

British Trust for Ornithology

www.bto.org

The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 2PU

Telephone: 01842 750050

Email: info@bto.org

The Wildlife Trusts

www.wildlifetrusts.org

Telephone: 01636 677711

Email: enquiry@wildlifetrusts.org

<https://www.rfs.org.uk/learning/forestry-knowledge-hub/woodland-management/so-you-own-a-woodland/>

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Publications and websites

Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission Practice Guides and Practice Notes offer a wealth of useful guidance. Their archive can be found at <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/>

Other publications

Caring for small woods by Ken Broad. Earthscan Publications.

Trees in Britain, Europe and North America by Roger Phillips. Ward Lock.

A field guide to the trees of Britain and northern Europe by Alan Mitchell.

Collins Field Guides series. Collins.

<https://www.rfs.org.uk/learning/forestry-knowledge-hub/woodland-management/so-you-own-a-woodland/>

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