



SMALL WOODLANDS AWARD Rules & Guidelines

This Award is new for 2011. Its aim is to recognise and reward projects where smaller woodlands are managed on a multi-purpose basis with clearly stated objectives.

The Award will be made annually in England, Wales or Northern Ireland. Judging will take place on a regional basis. Entries are invited from woodland owners or managers from the private, public or voluntary sectors. There is no minimum area. The maximum is 20ha. The woodland would normally be one discreet block but exceptionally a group of neighbouring smaller units, such as new farm woodlands, would be eligible.

An entry must be under a sole ownership and management. Entries which form a discreet unit within a larger woodland block under multi-ownership are eligible.

It is expected that the day-to-day management will be done by the owner or under their guidance. Owners may have taken professional advice but the woodlands must not currently, or for at least five years previously, have been managed by a professional company. The woodlands may be recent or old but must have been established for at least ten years.

The Award is aimed principally at the hands-on owner.

The entry fee is £50 for each property.

Plantations established on former arable land under the Farm Woodlands Scheme may be entered, provided they satisfy the age and area requirements.

The Award is looking for good sustainable, holistic woodland management on a multi-purpose basis with clearly stated objectives. Those objectives must be listed on the entry form.

Important considerations include the quality and suitability of the management, the suitability of the species and internal and external landscape.

Entrants must submit a written statement with the accompanying form showing how their woodlands are managed and the clear objectives they are working towards. The completed entry form should be sent to Trefor Thompson, Plas Canol, Llanrhydd, Ruthin, Denbighshire, LL15 2UU; e-mail: rfscpetition@boyns.net.

The closing date for entries is **noon on Tuesday 8 March 2011**. Entrants should be aware of the best practices and guidelines produced by organisations such as the Forestry Commission, Natural England and other countryside agencies.

There will be a panel of two judges each year. They will visit the short-listed woodlands in order to select a winner. Should too many properties be entered for the judges to give proper consideration to them all, the RFS may appoint a panel of local judges to screen entries, visit appropriate woodlands and draw up a short list for the official national judges to consider. The judges will serve for four years on a rolling basis with one new judge being appointed every two years.

In making their selection, the judges will ensure that all woodlands will be given equal opportunities, regardless of their size and composition and that each property is evaluated in its own context.

It is particularly important that the judges should meet and be accompanied during the woodland inspection by those responsible for both deciding and implementing the forest management policies and practices. They should be well-briefed and prepared to answer wide-ranging questions about the woodlands.

Judging will usually take place in May and when completed, the Judges prepare a report. That comprehensive document is available to all entrants and is published in the RFS Quarterly Journal of Forestry. Individual reports on each woodland are **not** available.

The Award will consist of:-

First Prize: A trophy (to be held for one year) with a cash prize of £1,000, and a Certificate.

Second Prize: One second prize of £500, and a Certificate.

Certificates of Merit: These may be awarded at the judge's discretion.

Judging will take place in May and the awards will be presented at a high profile event in the summer.

The entry fee is £50 for each property.

Both the cash prizes and the entry fees may be modified as the RFS Management Committee sees fit to keep abreast of the general economic situation.

No member of any Judging Panel and no national RFS officer may enter their own woodlands for the Award during their term of office.

The Society reserves the right to:-

- (a) suspend the competition at its own discretion;
- (b) decide against awarding any or all of the prizes if it feels they are not warranted.

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