

Countryside Management Scheme

The Countryside Management Scheme is funded under Axis 2 of the Rural Development Programme and delivered by DARD.

It provides financial support to farmers and landowners for adopting farming practices that enhance our countryside.

The key aims of the scheme are:

- To maintain and enhance biodiversity in line with the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy and the Northern Ireland Programme for Government 2008-2011 by maintaining species diversity through the positive management of farmland habitats and to protect and enhance ASSI/Natura 2000 sites;
- To assist implementation of the Water Framework Directive; and
- To enhance landscape and heritage features by integrating their management into the everyday workings of the farm.

Who can apply?



The Countryside Management Scheme is open to all farmers and land managers with a Business Identification Number (Business ID) and with at least three hectares of eligible land.

What funding is available?



Annual payments vary according to farm size, the farmland habitats and historic monuments that are present and the areas or length of habitat.

How do I apply?



Applications to the Scheme will be invited during specific periods.

The opening and closing dates for schemes/ programmes supported under the Rural Development Programme are advertised and promoted widely. The Rural Development Programme website www.rdpni.info provides a full list of what is currently open for applications together with further details of each scheme/ programme and how to apply.

If you are interested in participating in this scheme but do not have access to the Internet, please contact us using the details below.

To apply to the Countryside Management Scheme, you should contact us during the application period to check your eligibility. We will require the following information:

- Your Business Identification Number (Business ID); and
- Details of leased land (not conacre) you wish to enter into the Scheme.

We will use this information to create a report giving details of what land is eligible for the Scheme or, in cases where your land is ineligible, you will be provided with a reason(s) why.

If you are eligible and decide to proceed with your application, we will issue an acknowledgement and send you a detailed information pack.