



Forestry Grant Scheme

The Forestry Grant Scheme offers financial support for the creation and management of new woodland. There are nine woodland creation options tailored to different objectives and species choices.

For more information, visit:
www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/woodland-creation/

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Scottish Forestry is an agency of Scottish Government
S e Coilltearachd na h-Alba a' bhuidheann-ghnìomha aig Riaghaltas

Case study

Farm name – Lukestone Farm, Killochries Fold

Location – Inverclyde

Farm size – 92.23 ha

Farm type – Livestock farm (cattle)

Objective – Providing year round shelter for livestock on the most exposed areas of the farm, enabling highland cattle to be outwintered.

Result – Two shelterbelts to provide shelter to livestock and form a paddock for grazing, improving the grass.

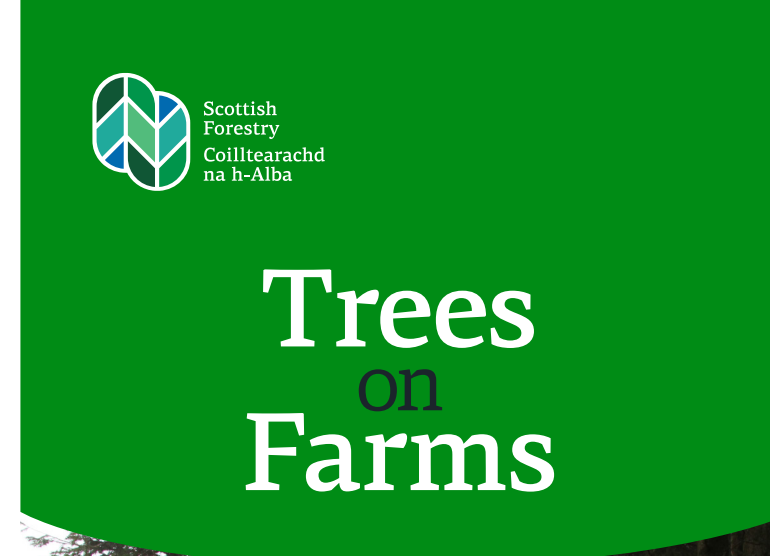
Land committed for tree planting – 4.55 ha

FGS Option – Small or Farm Woodland

After carrying out riparian planting along the Mill Burn and its tributaries, the benefits of trees to Killochries Fold's farm business and the local wildlife became clear. Identifying opportunities to further improve the land for the pedigree Highland cows grazing year round, the farm found that it could create paddocks using the shelterbelts. They noticed that trees improved the condition of the Highland cattle grazing the land, as well as the land itself, without reducing livestock capacity. With funding from Scottish Forestry's Small or Farm Woodland option, the farm has been able to plant new shelterbelts on the most exposed and least productive areas of the farm, which can be better protected and open up new areas for outwintering.

“ Planting shelterbelts has helped create new opportunities for grazing on land that previously had limited productivity, with no reduction in livestock capacity. ”

Iain Graham, Killochries Fold



Trees on Farms



Shelterbelts



What are shelterbelts?

Shelterbelts are strips of woodland providing protection to livestock and crops from extreme weather. They are often planted on the edge of fields on farmland.

Why plant shelterbelts?

Shelterbelts can strengthen and diversify farm businesses whilst supporting other farming operations. Strips of woodland can be incorporated in to field margins and utilise less productive land because trees can thrive in the places where crops and livestock otherwise wouldn't.

The benefits of shelterbelts

Improve animal welfare

Shelterbelts benefit livestock that are increasingly exposed to the threats of extreme weather events. They can provide shelter from wind and cold, and shade from heat. Increasing shelter and shade for livestock can reduce stress on the animals, which subsequently lowers feed costs, reduces lamb mortality, increases milk production and live-weight, whilst also improving and stimulating earlier grass growth. All these benefits contribute to a more efficient farming business.

Improving soil health

Wind and rain can erode exposed soils, resulting in the loss of soil fertility. Shelterbelts act as a wind break and catch runoff, protecting soils and crops. Trees also add organic matter and improve soil biodiversity. Mycorrhizal fungi and mycelium act to bind soil particles, strengthening soil structure, which in turn improves water retention and minimises soil nutrient loss.

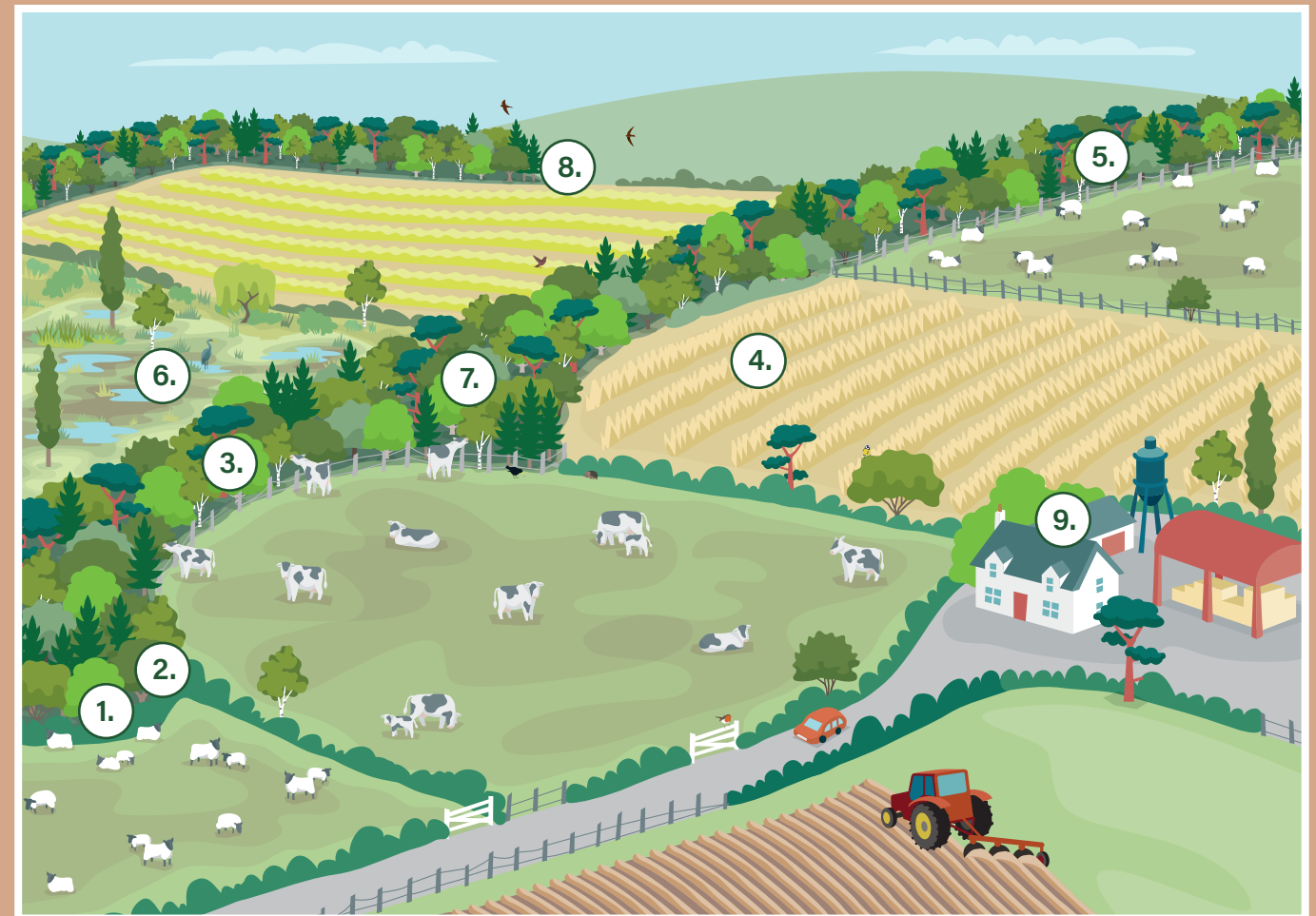
Tackle climate change and biodiversity loss

Farms can help to offset emissions through trees. By capturing and storing carbon, trees play a key role in the fight against climate change. Shelterbelts also provide habitat for wildlife and increase pollinators. They can be used to connect fragmented woodlands, creating wildlife corridors that support the movement of many species.

Generate future income

New woodland may provide a source of income soon after planting, through the sale of carbon units under the Woodland Carbon Code. At maturity, trees are also a valuable crop and, depending on the type of woodland created, can be a strong financial investment resulting in high returns.

Shelterbelts are both an investment in the present and the future, diversifying and strengthening farm businesses. They can be sensitively integrated into farms on less productive land and field margins, allowing for the many benefits of trees to livestock and crops without loss of livestock capacity or crop yields, whilst providing future income through the sale of carbon units and timber.



The benefits of shelterbelts

1. Protect livestock and crops from wind
2. Protect livestock from extreme temperatures
3. Provide fodder for livestock
4. Improve soil health and reduce soil erosion
5. Provide a physical barrier, increasing biosecurity
6. Utilise unproductive land
7. Store carbon
8. Improve biodiversity
9. Generate income through carbon units and timber