



Isle of Man Government

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Countryside Care Scheme

Cross Compliance Standards

Statutory Management Requirements and Standards of
Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition

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Introduction

This document outlines the Cross Compliance Standards for the Countryside Care Scheme.

The Cross Compliance standards will affect anyone who is applying to the Countryside Care Scheme, which is a voluntary scheme.

There are two main parts to Cross Compliance and, in order to receive payments under the Countryside Care Scheme, you must meet both sets of standards:

Statutory Management Requirements (SMR's)

These are domestic requirements relating to EC Directives and Regulations which are specified by the European Commission. Under Protocol 3, all of these conditions are legally binding on farmers in the Isle of Man.

Standards of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC's)

These are rules of the scheme which define management standards and reflect good practice which applicants may already be following.

Cross Compliance applies to **all** land within an agricultural business, even if it is not used to activate Countryside Care Scheme entitlements.

The claimant remains responsible for Cross Compliance for 12 months, whether the land is held permanently, seasonally let or sub let.

If applicants do not meet the requirements and standards of the Countryside Care Scheme, their payment may be reduced in part or in full.

Cross Compliance requirements do not replace or alter existing legislation, they simply represent the rules of this voluntary scheme.

Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs)

SMR 1 - Conservation of Wild Birds

Wild birds are legally protected and you must follow the requirements set out in relevant nature conservation legislation. You should pay particular attention to potential impacts on protected sites, including Ramsar sites, Areas of Special Protection for Birds and Bird Sanctuaries and to important bird habitats in the wider countryside. In addition to any Cross Compliance penalties, you may face criminal charges if you damage protected sites or harm protected wildlife. Contact Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Wildlife and Conservation Division for further advice on nature conservation matters, contact details on page 34 and 35.

Some of the most important responsibilities on farmers are mentioned below. Please note that this guidance does not provide a definitive statement of the law surrounding wild birds.

You must:

- Meet the terms of any management agreement with DAFF Wildlife and Conservation Division (W&CD) relating to bird conservation.
- Meet the terms of any Agri-environment agreement relating to bird conservation.
- Obtain consent from DAFF (W&CD) before carrying out certain operations on land within any Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) which is important for wild birds. The particular operations relevant to your holding will have been notified to you by DAFF (W&CD).
- Meet the terms of any restoration order under Section 28 on an ASSI.
- Take necessary steps to minimise the spread of non-native bird species in the wild.
- Meet the terms of any licence under which you are permitted to take action against wild birds (e.g. to prevent serious damage to crops).
- Meet other formal nature conservation conditions intended to protect wild birds or areas with statutory conservation protection (e.g. conditions imposed in connection with planning consent).

You must not:

- Intentionally or recklessly damage a protected site (such as an Area of Special Protection for Birds, a Ramsar site or an ASSI which is of importance for wild birds).
- Intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, take, keep or sell any wild bird without authorisation; or intentionally or recklessly disturb specially protected bird species.
- Hunt, take or kill quarry species (e.g. game birds or wildfowl) during the close season.
- Commit other criminal offences involving birds, such as destroying nests, taking eggs or using illegal traps or poisons.
- Cause or permit criminal offences involving birds, even if you do not yourself commit the illegal act.

SMR 2 - Conservation of Flora and Fauna

Various wild animals and wild plants are specially protected and you must meet the requirements set out in relevant nature conservation legislation. You should pay particular attention to potential impacts on protected sites such as Ramsar sites and Areas of Special Protection for Plants or Animals. In addition to any Cross Compliance penalties, you may face criminal charges if you damage protected sites or harm protected wild animals and plants. For further advice on nature conservation matters contact DAFF (W&CD), see page 36 for contact details.

Some of the most important responsibilities for farmers are mentioned below. Please note that this guidance does not provide a definitive statement of the law regarding protected wild animals and plants.

You must:

- Meet the terms of any management agreement that you have with DAFF (W&CD) that relates to plant or animal conservation.
- Meet the terms of any Agri-environment Scheme agreement.
- Get consent from DAFF (W&CD) before carrying out certain operations on land within a relevant ASSI. DAFF (W&CD) will have informed you which operations are relevant to your holding. You must also meet the terms of any restoration order under Section 28 on an ASSI.
- Take necessary steps to minimise the spread of non-native plant and animal species in the wild.
- Meet the terms of any licence that gives you permission to take action against protected wild animals or carry out operations which affect certain plants.
- Meet other formal nature conservation conditions that are in place to protect wild animals and plants, or areas with statutory conservation protection (e.g. conditions imposed in connection with planning consent).

You must not:

- Intentionally or recklessly damage a protected site (such as an Area of Special Protection for Animals or Plants, a Ramsar site or a relevant ASSI).
- Commit criminal offences involving protected fauna and flora, such as deliberately or recklessly killing, injuring or taking wild animals, cutting, uprooting or destroying wild plants.
- Cause or permit criminal offences involving protected animals or plants, even if you do not yourself commit the illegal act.

SMR 3 - Protection of groundwater and surface water against pollution

For the purposes of Cross Compliance, "groundwater" means all water below the surface of the ground that is in the zone of saturation (that is below the water table) and in direct contact with the land or subsoil. Surface water is that water which flows above ground but is often fed by groundwater from springs and seepages.

Land managers are expected to observe The Water Act of 1991 and The Water Pollution Act of 1993. There is a statutory obligation to avoid water pollution. Farmers should also ensure that water is not polluted when dipping and spraying operations are being carried out, or when applying slurries or manures to the land.

The Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Water is a practical reference guide for land managers and can be obtained from DAFF, see contact details on page 36.

The EC Dangerous Substances Directive lists certain toxic persistent substances, the discharge of which should be carefully controlled. Where these substances are used, manufactured, stored or handled, farmers will be expected to comply with relevant legislation, codes of practice or other relevant good practice.

Examples of listed dangerous substances are:

- Spent sheep dip and pesticide washings.
- Mineral oils and hydrocarbons such as diesel, petrol and heating oil.
- Lead.
- Copper.

The full list of dangerous substances and further advice can be gained from DLGE Environmental Protection Unit, see contact details on page 34 and 35.

SMR 4 - The use of sewage sludge in agriculture

Sewage sludge contains nitrogen, phosphorus, trace elements and organic matter. As a fertiliser, it can have a similar value to that of animal manure and slurries. However, untreated sewage sludge can also contain pathogens and heavy metals which, if in high concentrations, could be harmful to human, animal and plant health.

Sludge producers and the farmers applying sludge or sludge products on their land must follow the **Safe Sludge Matrix**. Note that the application of sludge pellets to land is not licensed by DLGE as the pellets are deemed by DLGE to be a product and not a waste. The Matrix covers the testing of the sludge products and the receiving soils. Where untreated sludge is applied to land, this will require licensing through DLGE and will be subject to withdrawal periods for grazing animals or harvesting of crops. DLGE is the licensing and monitoring authority. See contact details on page 34 and 35.

Normally, the treatment of agricultural land with sewage sludge will be supported by professional advice from DAFF as to the nutrients supplied, timing and method of application etc. Further guidance is provided in the Prevention of Environmental Pollution from Agricultural Activity (PEPFAA) code, the Scottish code of good practice which can be obtained from DAFF. Please see contact details on page 34 and 35.

SMR 5 - Protection of water in Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZS)

The Isle of Man does not currently have any areas subject to Nitrate Vulnerable Zones under current EU criteria.

This SMR is a domestic requirement relating to EC Directives and Regulations which are specified by the European Commission. Under Protocol 3, all of these conditions are legally binding on farmers in the Isle of Man and must therefore be included for future reference if NVZ's were required on the Isle of Man.

SMR 6 - Identification and registration of animals

You must comply with the domestic legislation regarding the identification, registration and traceability of animals, including sheep, goats, pigs, cattle and meat products, including where appropriate:

- keeper registration
- registration of animals
- ear tag identification
- record keeping
- the recording of animal movements.

By following the existing or subsequently amended animal identification, registration and traceability legislation, you are complying with this SMR.

For cattle:

DAFF's Cattle Passport Centre operates the Bovine Identification and Tracing System (BITS). Requirements for the identification and traceability of cattle are set out in the guidance leaflets issued to all keepers.

For further information or advice, you can call the Cattle Passport Centre on 685616.

For sheep and goats:

Guidance on the requirements you must meet for sheep and goat identification and traceability is available from the Animal Health Division on 685844.

For pigs:

Guidance concerning the identification and traceability of pigs can be obtained from the Animal Health Division on 685844.

SMR 7 - Restrictions on the use of plant protection products

These requirements apply if you use Plant Protection Products on your holding.

You **must not** use any plant protection product unless:

- it has been approved under the Plant Protection Products Regulations 2005 ("PPPR") or the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986;
- it is used in accordance with any requirement or condition which is:
 - specified in the approval or in any extension of use; or
 - required by the approval or extension of use to be on the labelling.
- it is used in accordance with the principles of good plant protection practice; and
- whenever possible, it is used in accordance with the principles of integrated control.

Details of approved products are all recorded by the Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD) under the pesticide product names at www.pesticides.gov.uk.

"**Good plant protection practice**" is the practice whereby the treatments with plant protection products applied to a given crop, in conformity with the conditions of their approved uses, are selected, dosed and timed to ensure optimum efficacy, taking due account of local conditions and of the possibilities for cultural and biological control.

Good plant protection practice is explained in the Pesticides Code of Practice for using plant protection products, (previously The Safe use of Pesticides on farms and holdings or The Green Code), a copy of which can be found at:

www.pesticides.gov.uk/safe_use.asp?id=64

"**Integrated Control**" means the rational application of a combination of biological, biotechnological, chemical, cultural or plant-breeding measures whereby the use of chemical plant protection products is limited to the minimum strictly necessary to maintain harmful organisms below levels above which economically unacceptable damage or loss would occur.

For further information on integrated control, see the "**Pesticides and Integrated Control**" publication available at www.pesticides.gov.uk

There are record keeping requirements for pesticides which are included under SMR 9.

Further advice on pesticides and their regulation can be obtained from the DAFF Agricultural Advisory Service, contact details on page 34 and 35.

SMR 8 - Restrictions on the use of substances having hormonal or thyrostatic action and Beta-Agonists in farm animals

Domestic legislation prohibits most uses of such substances in all species of farm animals. However, administration of some of these substances is permitted under veterinary control for a very limited range of uses.

You must not:

- Store substances related to beta-agonists that are for induction purposes in the treatment of tocolysis, or products containing these substances on the farm.
- Use hormonal substances for growth promotion.

You must:

- Use only authorised veterinary medicinal products for their authorised purposes.
- Obtain 'Prescription Only Medicines - Veterinarian' (POM-V) through a veterinary surgeon or a registered pharmacy.
- Follow the instructions for use.
- Update medicines records whenever these substances are used on the farm.
- Follow the withdrawal periods as laid out in the product's instructions for use or veterinary prescription.

The types of substances whose uses are limited by SMR 8 include:

- androgens, such as testosterone.
- gestagens, such as melengestrol acetate.
- beta-agonists, such as salbutamol and clenbuterol.

Examples of products that might contain these substances include - PRID, Planipart and Ventipulmin. Your veterinarian will be able to advise you on where use of these might be allowed.

Useful Publications: The Compendium of Data Sheets for Animal Medicines 2007 lists nearly all authorised veterinary medicinal products. It is published by the National Office of Animal Health, ISBN 0 9548037-0-1.

SMR 9 - Food and feed legislation

For the purposes of Cross Compliance, you must comply with Articles 14, 15, 17(1), 18, 19 and 20 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 (which lays down the requirements of food law) covered by the Food Act 1996, as far as they relate to an agricultural activity which you carry out, or to agricultural land on your holding.

The main requirements:

- You must not place food on the market if it is unsafe.
- You must not place unsafe feed on the market or feed it to food producing animals.
- You must have in place, and maintain, traceability systems and procedures in the form of adequate records and documentation of both inputs *to* and outputs *from* your business. In summary you will need to be able to supply evidence of:
 - any person or business from whom you have been supplied with a food, a feed, a food-producing animal or any substance that will be incorporated into a food or feed; and
 - any businesses that you have supplied with any of your products.
- If you consider or have reason to believe that a food that you have produced does not satisfy food safety requirements and it has left your control, you shall immediately initiate procedures to withdraw that food from the market and inform the competent authorities of your actions.
- If you consider or have reason to believe that a feed that you have produced does not satisfy the feed safety requirements you shall immediately initiate procedures to withdraw that feed from the market and inform the competent authorities of your actions. In addition, where any such feed is part of a batch, lot or consignment of feed of the same class or description, you must destroy the batch, lot or consignment unless the competent authority is satisfied otherwise.
- You must inform the competent authorities immediately if you consider or have reason to believe that a food, which you have placed on the market, may be injurious to human health or if a feed, which you have placed on the market, may not satisfy the feed safety requirements. You must also inform the competent authorities of the action you have taken to prevent risks to the final consumer or risks arising from the use of that feed. You must not prevent or discourage any person from co-operating with the competent authorities where this may prevent, reduce or eliminate a risk arising from a food or feed.
- As a food or feed business operator you must ensure that you comply with all Food Law as it relates to your agricultural land or agricultural activities.

Food Hygiene Regulations:

The European Communities (Food Hygiene laws) (Application) Order 2007 which lays down the general principles of food hygiene legislation will extend to **all farms** engaged in the production of food and feed. The new Food Hygiene Regulations include obligations covered by Cross Compliance which mean that you will need to take steps to prevent contamination arising from water, soil, feed, veterinary products, pesticides, waste etc. You will need to prevent animals and pests from causing contamination and you will need to take account of results from tests relevant to animal and human health.

Feed Hygiene Regulations:

The Feed Hygiene regulation will apply to all feed businesses that make, use or market animal feed, which amount, in the main, to fairly basic hygiene procedures. The Feed Hygiene Regulation includes obligations which are covered by Cross Compliance, for example, controlling hazards relating to contamination, keeping appropriate records in relation to feed, the nature and origin of your animal feedstuffs.

Further information:

Any queries on the Food and/or Feed Hygiene Regulations and the information contained should be directed to DLGE or DAFF, see contact details on page 34 and 35.

SMR 10 - Prevention and control of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE)

You must:

- Immediately notify the Chief Veterinary Officer of any animal suspected of being infected by a TSE e.g. BSE or Scrapie.
- On notification of a TSE suspect or confirmed case, fully comply with movement restrictions, including any order to slaughter and destroy the animal(s), or any other notices served by an inspector imposing measures concerning that animal or animals under the TSE Regulations 2007.
- Not feed to ruminants, any animal protein or any feeding stuff, which contains animal protein, except (subject to required processing):
 - milk, milk-based products and colostrum,
 - eggs & egg products,
 - gelatine from non-ruminants,
 - hydrolysed proteins derived from non-ruminants or from ruminant hides and skins.
- Not feed products containing the following to farmed animals (ruminants or non-ruminants), directly or in feedstuffs:
 - processed animal protein (includes mammalian meat and bone meal, poultry meal, feather meal etc);
 - gelatine from ruminants.
- Use the following proteins for non-ruminant use only for feed production, or use or store complete feed containing them:
 - fishmeal;
 - blood products;
 - blood meal, only where fed to farmed fish;
 - dicalcium phosphate and tricalcium phosphate of animal origin, (mineral-derived versions are permitted for all livestock and are most commonly used - feed labels not specifying 'animal origin' can be taken to be mineral).

and only use them where:

- authorised by DLGE to use derogated proteins to produce non-ruminant feed (e.g. on-farm mixers - authorisation is always required where ruminants are present);
- registered by DLGE to use derogated proteins to produce non-ruminant feed where no ruminants are present (e.g. on-farm mixers).
- registered by DLGE to use feed products containing derogated proteins on premises where ruminants are present.

The registration referred to in the final bullet will require farmers to confirm adequate on-farm measures, including storage and feeding arrangements, to ensure that feed containing derogated proteins are not fed to ruminants and kept adequately separated from ruminant feed. Following registration, a DAFF Animal Health Division inspection will confirm permission to use such products on the premises in line with EU requirements.

SMR 11 - Control of Foot and Mouth Disease

You must notify the Chief Veterinary Officer if you know or suspect that an animal or carcass in your possession or under your charge is infected with foot and mouth disease.

You must keep animals infected with foot-and-mouth disease or animals suspected of being infected, away from places where other animals of susceptible species are at risk of infection or contamination.

SMR 12 - Control of certain animal diseases

You must notify the Chief Veterinary Officer if you know or suspect that an animal or carcass is infected with any of the following diseases or any other notifiable disease:

- Rinderpest, peste des petits ruminants, swine vesicular disease, epizootic haemorrhagic disease of deer, sheep and goat pox (capripox), vesicular stomatitis, lumpy skin disease and rift valley fever.

Information and advice can be obtained from the Animal Health Division on 685844.

SMR 13 - Control of Bluetongue

You must notify the Chief Veterinary Officer if you know or suspect that an animal or carcass is infected with Bluetongue.

SMR 14 - Welfare of farmed animals

You are required to comply with relevant national legislation, the Welfare of Farmed Animals Order 2002 [as amended].

Further information on your legal obligations and advice on animal husbandry can be found in the DAFF *Codes of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock*, details of which can be downloaded from the Animal Health section of the DAFF website or obtained from the Animal Health Division, Rose House, Circular Road, Douglas IM1 1AZ.

You are required by law to ensure that whoever directly attends to the animals is familiar with the provisions of the relevant welfare code and can readily refer to them as necessary.

Standards of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition

Some of the Standards of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition will only be relevant in certain environments — for example, standards relating to cultivation will not be relevant to upland rough grazing. For the most part, the relevance of particular measures to particular environments should be self-evident, but the 'guidance' sections aim to clarify the action necessary to comply with the standards.

The standards have been developed with regard both to ensuring that they are reasonable for land managers and to ensuring that we adequately safeguard the land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC). In doing so we have:

- Followed existing codes of good practice (e.g. Good Farming Practice and the General Environmental Conditions for participants in Agri-environment Schemes) where these fit within the prescribed European framework;
- Incorporated standards of management which we believe most farmers would regard as reasonable good practice; and
- Used the framework flexibly so that we do not artificially constrain changes in land use and land condition where these are environmentally benign.

The Standards of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition of agricultural land are intended to be as comprehensible as possible. We recognise, however, that land managers may wish to take advice from DAFF on whether their current practice fits within Cross Compliance standards.

Standards to reduce soil erosion

Management behaviour is a key factor in minimising soil erosion as soil erosion can:

- Cause damage to crops.
- Block waterways with silt and contaminate them with soil nutrients.
- Cause public nuisance through soil deposition on roads.
- Lead to gradual loss of top soil.
- Damage aquatic life and diminish water quality.
- Cause damage to archaeological heritage sites.

Reducing the risk of soil erosion can be achieved by following the appropriate GAEC requirements.

Standard 1 - Post-harvest management of land

Requirement

Over winter, all previously cropped land must, where post harvest conditions allow, have either crop, grass or stubble cover; or have a ploughed or roughly cultivated surface. Fine seedbeds must only be created very close to sowing.

Guidance

A roughly cultivated surface is a surface created by the use of discs or tines (or equivalent machinery).

For the purpose of this Standard, winter is the period that begins on the day after harvest and ends on the last day of February in the following year.

Cultivating land and planting crops before the end of the winter period e.g. growing early potatoes is allowed under this measure, provided the prevailing agronomic or weather conditions and the condition of the soil are favourable.

Turfing operations are likely to leave a fine soil surface which will be prone to erosion. Where turfing occurs, there must either be crop, grass or stubble cover, or a ploughed or roughly cultivated surface created, as soon as practical after the turf is lifted.

Field operations should be carried out under favourable weather conditions especially in late autumn and early spring.

Benefits:

- Crop cover, retention of stubbles or a roughly cultivated surface can significantly reduce the risk of erosion, siltation of drains and nutrient loss to streams and ditches.
- The risk of soil erosion is reduced.
- Nutrient leaching is reduced.
- Soil structure is improved/maintained.

Standard 2 - Wind erosion

Requirements

In areas prone to wind erosion you must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of soil loss in the spring by maintaining a crop cover, using coarse seedbeds, shelter belts, nurse crops, or take other appropriate measures that have an equivalent effect.

Guidance

You should apply all or some of these measures if there is a risk of soil erosion by the wind. You should consider using minimum cultivation techniques and mulches. In addition, using a Cambridge roller instead of a flat roller could help to reduce wind blow.

Benefits:

- Soil erosion is reduced.
- Soil fertility is maintained.
- Soils maintain structure.
- Soil fertility and rooting depth is maintained.
- Avoids the need to re-sow crops, saves money and later sowing usually results in reduced yields.

Standard 3 - Soil capping

Requirement

On sites where capping is a problem, you must form a coarse seedbed or break any cap that forms, to avoid erosion.

Guidance

A capped surface is the result of soil particles running together when wet and drying out to form a crust. This is more likely in fine sandy and silty soils and results in water infiltration being reduced to the extent where there is an observable run-off, the formation of rills and gullies and/or soil deposition at the sides of fields, on roads or in watercourses and ditches.

As well as increasing the risk of erosion, capping can lead to poor crop establishment and reduced yields.

When the soil dries out the cap can be broken by light harrowing or the use of a Cambridge roller.

Benefits:

- Free draining well structured soils improve crop performance.
- Soil remains free draining therefore reducing the risk of flooding and the loss of soil particles.
- Reduces the risk of capping.
- Soil fertility and rooting depth is maintained.
- Avoiding the need to re-sow crops saves money and later sowing usually results in reduced yields.

Standards to maintain soil structure

Soils can be physically damaged, perhaps irreversibly, by livestock trampling, compaction, topsoil removal and erosion.

Compaction of both topsoil and subsoil can seriously damage overall structure, restrict root growth and reduce the air and water carrying capacity of the land. Physical damage to the soil can be reduced or even avoided completely by taking appropriate steps.

Soil compaction can be seen in various forms e.g. water standing in tramlines would indicate capping or compaction of the soil, pools of water on headlands and areas of high machinery traffic would indicate compaction. Heavy poaching around feeders would also suggest damage to the soil structure by smearing and compaction.

Sustainable soil management can be achieved by following the appropriate GAEC requirements.

Standard 4 - Waterlogged soils

Requirements

You must not carry out (or allow) any mechanical field operations on an area of waterlogged soil unless exceptions apply.

Guidance

Mechanical field operations includes any harvesting, cultivation or spreading operations, including those for manures or slurry, and all other vehicle activity; and normal common-sense definitions of 'waterlogged' apply.

You must not carry out (or allow) any mechanical field operations on an area of water-logged soil unless one or more of the following exceptions applies:

- The area of waterlogged soil subject to mechanical operations is within 20 metres of a gateway or other access point and access is required to an area of land that is not waterlogged.
- The area is an established track to land that is not waterlogged.
- Mechanical operations are necessary to improve the drainage of the land.
- Mechanical operations are necessary for the safety of humans or animal welfare.
- It is essential to harvest a crop to meet contractual deadlines, or where the quality of the produce would deteriorate if not harvested / lifted.

Saturation is indicated by the appearance of water from the soil when pressure is applied e.g. from the equivalent of a footprint.

Low ground pressure tyres or dual wheels should be used when necessary.

The repeated use of power driven cultivation equipment, especially when the soil is wet, should be avoided.

Benefits:

- Soil structure is maintained.
- Free draining well structured soils produce higher yields.
- The availability of plant nutrients is greater on soils showing good structure and the possibility of run off and pollution is reduced.
- Extra cultivations which may be needed to level out the soil are avoided.
- Flooding risks are reduced by avoiding erosion.
- Soil fertility and rooting depth is maintained.
- Avoiding the need to re-sow crops saves money and later sowing usually results in reduced yields.

Standard 5 - Burning of crop residues

Requirements

Prior approval must be sought from DAFF before burning these residues: cereal straw, cereal stubble, residues of oilseed rape, residues of field beans harvested dry or residues of peas harvested dry

Guidance

You must not burn any of these crop residues unless the burning is for:

- Education or research;
- Disease control;
- The elimination of plant pests where a notice has been served under the Plant Health (Isle of Man) Order 1999; or
- The disposal of straw stack remains or broken bales.

Any farmer with a need to burn crop residue must gain permission from DAFF and must have a sound agricultural requirement. Further information can be obtained from DAFF, see contact details on page 34 and 35.

Benefits:

- Air pollution is reduced.
- Soil organic matter is retained.
- Reduced risk of damage / destruction to neighbouring crops and habitats.

Standard 6 - The Heath Burning Code

Requirements

You must follow the latest edition of The Heath Burning Code on Registered Heath (available from DAFF) and follow the Heath Burning Code guidelines as best practice elsewhere.

Guidance

Guidance can be found in the 'Heath Burning Code' issued by DAFF Forestry, Amenity and Lands Division, see contact details on page 34 and 35.

Burning of Registered Heath is only allowed between 1st of September and 15th of March, except by special agreement with DAFF.

Before burning:

- Identify areas that are exempt from burning such as sites used for nesting by legally protected birds of prey;
- Produce a plan of where and how burning will be carried out;
- Ensure that staff are adequately trained and that emergency plans are in place.

Once all preparatory work has been completed:

- Avoid burning when it is too dry - when the moss and plant litter on the ground surface has completely dried out;
- Avoid burning uphill on steep slopes;
- Avoid burning on blanket bogs, in exposed areas or in areas with thin soils;
- Consult with DAFF as necessary, if protected species are present in an ASSI or other protected designation.

Benefits

- Compliance with the Heath Burning Code including guidance on the statutory controls on heather burning will help to avoid extensive erosion on steep sites through burning.
- Periodic burning of heather and grass can be advantageous for agriculture and wildlife conservation but it can be dangerous to those involved and to others if it is not carried out correctly and responsibly. Protected species and habitats can be harmed significantly by improperly controlled heather burning.
- Well managed hill lands that contain a mosaic of heathers at different growth stages adds to an attractive environment both visually and ecologically for the benefit of users of the countryside and wildlife alike.

Standard 7 - Erosion caused by livestock

Requirement

You should prevent the erosion of land and in particular banks of watercourses, at watering points and feeding areas from overgrazing, heavy trampling or heavy poaching by livestock.

Where erosion occurs, action should be taken to rectify the problem anytime during the growing season in the calendar year that follows the date that the problem has occurred. This may involve, for example, reducing stock numbers or removing stock altogether for a period of time.

Where erosion is identified, by DAFF or the farmer, a management regime to deal with the erosion must be approved by DAFF and observed on the site in question.

Guidance

This condition does not apply to areas that are within 10 metres of a gateway and 3 metres of farm tracks necessarily used during wet-periods. However, every effort should be made to minimise any effect of soil erosion. For example, in severe weather conditions, consideration should be given to the use of an alternative gateway.

Livestock should be managed appropriately according to ground and climate conditions to ensure soil erosion does not occur. Remove livestock from any area which starts to show signs of severe trampling or poaching. Some areas of watercourses that are prone to erosion by livestock may need fencing off.

Areas of conservation interest should not be used for feeding sites. Sacrificial feeding areas may be more desirable on improved grassland/arable land provided that the risk of soil erosion is very low.

When supplementary feeding outdoors, it is preferable to rotate feeding sites and make sure feed rings are suitably positioned, in other words well away from water courses and not on ground sloping towards a watercourse.

Grazed forage cropped fields, e.g. stubble turnips or kale that has been grazed to destruction should be ploughed or sown as soon as ground conditions allow. On peaty soils this action will need to be taken earlier than on other soils due to the fragile nature and increased susceptibility of the soil to erosion.

Where action involves works that may affect a watercourse (whether or not designated as a 'Main River'), e.g. riverbank engineering/protection; installation of bridges and pipes, consent must be sought from the Department of Transport (DoT) Land Drainage Section. Consent must also be sought from DoT Land Drainage Section before constructing anything or planting trees/shrubs within 30' either side of a watercourse designated a 'Main River' under the Land Drainage Act 1934.

'Water course' includes all rivers, streams, ditches, open drains, cuts, culverts, dykes, sluices, sewers (other than sewers under the control of a local authority) and passages through which water flows.

Benefits

- Flooding risks are reduced by avoiding erosion.
- Avoiding the need to re sow grass swards saves money and later sowing usually results in reduced yields and performance.
- Extra cultivations which may be needed to level out the soil are avoided.
- Soil fertility and rooting depth is maintained.
- Soil structure is maintained.
- The risk of damage to the freshwater environment through sedimentation is minimised.

Standards to maintain soil organic matter

Maintaining soil organic matter in the topsoil influences its physical, chemical and biological properties, particularly its ease of cultivation, water retention capacity and nutrient availability to plants. If the level of organic matter falls, it can restrict the soil's ability to support plant growth. Conditions to maintain soil organic matter levels can be achieved by following the appropriate GAEC requirements.

Standard 8 - Arable crop rotation standards

Requirements

On Arable Land:

- Use suitable break crops in an arable rotation; and/or
- Optimise the use of organic materials by basing the rate of application on soil and crop needs.
- Where you do not use break crops a record must be kept for 5 years of organic materials and the quantities applied to arable land.

Guidance

Cultivation increases the rate of decomposition of organic matter. Therefore, organic matter levels are most likely to fall under continuous cropping where there is little return of plant residues or animal manures.

Adding manures, incorporating crop residues or sowing out in grass can increase the levels of organic matter.

Where organic manure is applied, the spreading rate should be matched to the nutrient requirement of the crop and the needs of the planned crop rotation.

Where straw is to be incorporated, it should be done evenly, and it should be chopped. Where it is chosen to introduce a rotation then typically the proportion of your acreage required to be in a rotation would be 16%, which is a one year in six rotation.

Benefits

- The organic matter of soil is a key indicator of soil quality. It is a food supply and habitat for micro organisms, maintains soil structure, holds and recycles nutrients.
- It also retains pesticides such as sheep dip and other chemicals allowing some to be broken down biologically.
- If levels of organic matter fall, it can restrict the soil's ability to support plant growth.
- Land that is continually cropped may be at risk from the loss of soil organic matter. Adding animal manures, incorporating crop residues or sowing out in grass can increase the levels of organic matter.

Standard 9 - Arable stubble management

Requirements

All organic manures applied to stubble must be done in such a way as to minimise the risk of pollution. Please refer to **SMR 3 - protection of groundwater and surface water against pollution**.

Use correctly sited field middens to reduce the risk of pollution.

Guidance

The Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Water gives further guidance on the use of livestock manures and siting of middens.

Benefits

- Well timed incorporation of livestock manures can help to maintain soil organic matter and guard against nutrient loss and minimise environmental pollution.
- Timely incorporation of manures and slurry can reduce fertiliser use and help in matching those requirements to plant needs.
- The use of correctly sited field middens provides an inexpensive storage means that reduce potential nutrient loss and minimise environmental pollution.

Standards of Minimum Levels of Maintenance

Many of the wildlife areas, birds and other animals on the Isle of Man are dependant on grazing livestock, field boundaries and other species rich semi-natural habitats, all of which contribute to both the landscape character and the wildlife value of the Isle of Man. Archaeological features also provide a link to the past within the countryside.

Due to the variations in conditions that occur in the Isle of Man, land managers are required to manage the land according to land type and climatic conditions specific to the land that will ensure the history, character, wildlife and agricultural production capability is maintained. Following the appropriate GAEC requirements, the minimum levels of maintenance required can be achieved.

Standard 10 - Undergrazing

Requirements

Land abandonment is not permitted under Cross-Compliance.

You must use appropriate grazing or cutting management (for the purposes of harvesting livestock feed) to avoid undergrazing to a level where the growth of scrub or coarse vegetation is detrimental to the environmental or agricultural interest in the field.

The land must be capable of returning to agricultural production anytime during the growing season in the following calendar year. Land must be able to be grazed by livestock or mowed/cut using a tractor.

Under-grazing or encroachment of scrub will only be permitted where it is required for environmental benefit, for example, as part of an Agri-environment Scheme.

Avoid infestation by species such as Gorse, Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and injurious weeds. Injurious weeds include all weeds listed under Weeds Act of 1957.

Guidance

Undergrazing may be identified as allowing the growth, quality or species composition of grazed vegetation to deteriorate significantly through the lack of, or insufficient grazing management. Invasive scrub such as Rhododendron, Gorse, Giant Hogweed, Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and/or other injurious weeds may take over the whole field, making it inaccessible for grazing livestock and impossible to cut the underlying grass sward.

Under grazing must be avoided by using appropriate grazing or cutting management (for the purposes of harvesting livestock feed), except where it is deemed necessary for environmental management, for:

- Areas of Special Scientific Interest.
- Agri-environment Scheme agreement.
- Section 30 Management agreements from DAFF (W&CD).

Control the spread of injurious weeds by cutting before they set seed. Injurious weeds can be treated with appropriate approved chemicals; spot spraying is recommended. Japanese Knotweed must not be cut as this enhances its ability to spread. Advice on appropriate control measures should be sought from DAFF.

Graze livestock in sufficient numbers to prevent land being taken over by, for example, Scrub or Bracken, but ensure livestock are not causing overgrazing. If your stock numbers decrease significantly, then your land may be at a greater risk from under grazing and you may need to increase grazing or cutting.

It is important to consult with DAFF (W&CD) where any land affected by under grazing forms part of an ASSI. Changes in stocking density in such areas require prior DAFF agreement. Support may be available for certain grazing regimes which are of conservation benefit.

Keep scrub encroachment from extending beyond current levels by grazing or cutting/mowing. Scrub should not be cut or burnt during the bird nesting season from 1 March to 31 August. Gorse can be controlled by cutting and treating stumps with an appropriate herbicide. Burning of Gorse is not recommended as this causes seed germination and leads to the further spread of new growth of Gorse.

If land is not being grazed, the land may need to be cut/mowed for the purposes of harvesting livestock feed at least once a year. In such a case, the cut material must only be of a level that allows the land to return to agricultural production in the following year.

Benefits

Many of the wildlife areas, birds and other animals in the Isle of Man are dependent on grazing livestock, particularly cattle. Continuing to graze and/or cut your grass will also avoid land being infested by weeds and/or scrub to such an extent that it could no longer be farmed.

Standard 11 - Overgrazing

Requirements

You must not overgraze with livestock in such numbers as to adversely affect the growth, structure or species composition of vegetation on the land. The only exception to this is where vegetation is normally grazed to destruction to a significant degree (e.g. grazed forage brassicas).

Guidance

Land will not be considered to be overgrazed provided the land is capable of returning to agricultural production anytime during the growing season in the following calendar year. Where overgrazing is as a result of an unexpected and unpredictable incursion of wild or feral animals (e.g. rabbits, geese) and it can be shown that appropriate action had been taken to deal with the problem, you will not be held accountable for overgrazing caused as a result of this infringement.

Where overgrazing is attributable to wild or feral animals you will be expected to provide evidence of the use of available control methods.

Where overgrazing is identified a management regime to be observed on that site must be approved by DAFF.

It is important to consult DAFF (W&CD) where any land affected by overgrazing forms part of an ASSI or is part of an Agri-environment Scheme. Changes in stocking density in such areas may require DAFF (W&CD) agreement and may affect payments due under management agreements. Support may be available for certain grazing regimes which are of conservation benefit.

The common indicators of overgrazing are:

- Clear evidence due to grazing pressure that the growth, quality or species composition of the vegetation is deteriorating to a measurable extent e.g. signs of overgrazing include: vegetation chewed back to the previous year's growth; heavily trampled; absence of flowering; large bare patches of poached soil; a lack of regeneration; or visible damage to trees and saplings in woods.
- Evidence of poor condition of the vegetation combined with evidence of poor animal condition.
- Over-reliance on supplementary feed.

Benefits:

- Maintains habitats in good condition which benefits wildlife and stock.
- Maintaining adequate vegetation will help prevent soil erosion.
- Animal welfare and nutrition problems less likely to occur.

Standard 12 - Supplementary feeding

Requirements

Supplementary feeding sites must be managed to prevent land, and especially semi-natural vegetation, from excessive trampling, poaching or vehicle rutting to minimise soil erosion and to avoid run off to water ways.

Feeder locations must be situated more than 10 metres from watercourses.

You must not put supplementary feed on vegetation that is sensitive to poaching damage e.g. on wet areas and blanket bog and woodland.

You must rotate feed locations on a regular basis.

You must not leave surplus feed on the ground to rot.

On enclosed rough grazing you must feed loose hay rather than silage.

Guidance

Supplementary feeding is a traditional part of stock management providing essential nutrients at certain times of the year and would include feed blocks, mineral licks, forage (hay, straw, silage, etc.) in ring feeders or feed trailers and creep feeders.

Where a management prescription has been set as part of an Agri-environment Scheme or other Management Agreement with DAFF (e.g. Section 30 agreements) you must not breach that prescription.

Severe poaching is defined as the cutting up of turf by the trampling of livestock to the destruction of the underlying vegetation leading to a predominately muddy surface.

'Water course' includes all rivers, streams, ditches, open drains, cuts, culverts, dykes, sluices, sewers (other than sewers under the control of a local authority) and passages through which water flows.

The grass/vegetation must be capable of returning to agricultural production anytime during the growing season in the following calendar year.

Exceptions from the above measure will only be permitted where it is necessary for the protection of animal welfare during periods of extreme weather conditions.

Benefits

- Vegetation will recover within a growing season, providing more livestock feed.
- Maintains habitats in good condition to the benefit of wildlife.
- Reduced risk of overgrazing.
- Reduced risk of poaching, damage to soil structure and soil erosion.

Standard 13 - Landscape, litter, waste and scrap

Requirements

Do not discard (or store) waste: plastic, paper, wood, timber, wire, fencing materials, feed containers, scrapped machinery or vehicles, building materials or any other litter, waste or scrap on agricultural land or in woodlands, ponds and other areas of habitat.

Guidance

Discarded machinery or vehicles (plus any other metal), old silage wrappings and old fencing materials pose a risk to animal welfare and can damage habitats and wildlife, as well as being unsightly and reducing the landscape value of the Isle of Man

Waste plastics, containers, paper and other wastes should be disposed of in an environmentally sound manner, and recycled where possible.

Contact DLGE for further information on waste disposal and recycling, see contact details on page 34 and 35.

Benefits

- The scenic value of the Isle of Man is very important to everyone living in the Island, as well as visitors to the Island. The countryside is enjoyed and utilised by all.
- Waste, such as discarded farm machinery or vehicles, old silage wrappings, old fencing materials are unsightly and pose a risk to animal and human welfare and can damage habitats and wildlife.
- A tidy, safe and visually attractive countryside for everyone.

Standard 14 - Protection of habitats, wildlife areas, non-productive landscape features and archaeological sites

Requirements

You must:

- Retain all semi-natural habitats (rough grazing, woodland, scrub, moorland, wetlands, species-rich grasslands), ponds, shelterbelts, trees protected under the Tree Preservation Act and archaeological features.
- Ensure that you have identified the location and extent of all recorded archaeological heritage sites on your land and that all (or any part of) are not demolished, destroyed, removed, damaged, altered, added to or flooded etc unless authorised by Manx National Heritage or any other appropriate body or an exceptional circumstance occurs. The Manx Museum and National Trust Act 1959-86 makes damage to such sites a criminal offence.
- Adhere to the Inland Fisheries Act 1976, and the Land Drainage Act 1934 when undertaking any works in or near watercourses.

You must not:

- Undertake new drainage works, ploughing, clearing, levelling, re-seeding or cultivations on uncultivated land or semi-natural habitats without prior written approval from DAFF. New drainage work requires permission from DoT Drainage Division.
- Allow the deterioration of non-productive landscape features which are part of the agricultural unit, such as shelter belts, copses and ponds.
- Cut down, wilfully damage or destroy, uproot or prune a tree registered under the Tree Preservation Act 1993, without the written consent of DAFF.
- Introduce, keep or grow Genetically Modified Organisms.
- Injure, alter, damage, remove or destroy any object, building or site listed on the National Heritage Record.

Guidance

Rough grazings and other semi-natural areas refers to land containing semi-natural vegetation, including heathland, heather moorland, bog, unimproved and rough grassland which is used or is suitable for grazing.

With regard to archaeological heritage sites, an exceptional circumstance would occur if it can be proven that all reasonable precautions were taken, and that all due diligence to prevent any damage to the site was exercised.

Identify all semi natural habitat sites on the farm and ensure all workers or contractors are aware of such areas. Monitor sites regularly to ensure no damage is occurring.

Identify the archaeological sites on your farm and ensure all workers or contractors are aware of such features. Regularly check sites for signs of damage, particularly trampling damage by livestock and take appropriate measures to remove the cause of any damage and give the land time to recover.

Any farmer wishing to infill any of his land with soil, spoil, hard core or any waste material must apply to DLGE, and obtain the necessary consents before commencing this activity.

New drainage works and modification of existing drains could cause a lowering of the water table and result in the loss of wetland plant communities and their associated fauna.

Severe poaching is defined as the cutting up of turf by the trampling of livestock to the destruction of the underlying vegetation leading to a predominately muddy surface. Landscape features include trees, shelterbelts, copses and ponds.

Any tree with a diameter of 8 centimetres when measured at a height of 1.52 metres is automatically protected under the Tree Preservation Act 1993.

Written consent may be obtained from DAFF Forestry, Amenity and Lands Division under certain circumstances to remove or prune a tree registered under the Act.

The prohibition of Genetically Modified Organism's is a precautionary approach aimed at avoiding the risk of adverse effects on native biodiversity.

Deterioration is defined as:

- Not maintaining functional stock proof fences around shelter belts and copses.
- Severe poaching where feeding and/or other husbandry practices of livestock occur in copses and shelterbelts. Land will not be considered to be severely poached if it can recover to the extent that there is no longer a predominately muddy surface by anytime during the growing season in the following calendar year.
- Poaching, erosion or other damage to archaeological heritage sites by farming practices.
- Failure to maintain ponds on the holding e.g. eutrophication, drainage.
- The source of water for these non productive landscape features must not be deliberately diverted or removed.

Under the Inland Fisheries Act 1976, free river passage for freshwater fish is safeguarded, and all life stages of fish and their habitats are protected from disturbance and pollution. You must contact DAFF, Inland Fisheries Division, well in advance of any proposed works on or near any watercourse. Works likely to disturb the channel or destabilise banks should be avoided from October to June inclusive, in order to protect spawning and juvenile salmon and trout.

Where action involves works that may affect a watercourse (whether or not designated as a 'Main River'), e.g. riverbank engineering/protection; installation of bridges and pipes, consent must be sought from DoT Land Drainage Section. Consent must also be sought from DoT Land Drainage Section before constructing anything or planting trees/shrubs within 30' either side of a watercourse designated a 'Main River' under the Land Drainage Act 1934.

'Water course' includes all rivers, streams, ditches, open drains, cuts, culverts, dykes, sluices, sewers (other than sewers under the control of a local authority) and passages through which water flows.

If you are unsure whether a feature on your land falls within the above definitions, please contact DAFF for further guidance.

Benefits

- Archaeological heritage sites are an attractive and valued part of the local landscape.
- Trees and semi-natural habitats contribute to both the landscape character and the wildlife value of the countryside.
- It is believed there may be reduced risk of unfavourable genetic modification of native species by limiting exposure to Genetically Modified Organisms.
- Protecting trees and woodlands helps maintain and preserve biodiversity and the landscape of the Isle of Man.
- Non-productive landscape features can provide valuable habitat for both flora and fauna.
- Protecting freshwater habitats helps maintain and conserve native fish species.

Standard 15 - Application of lime, fertilisers and pesticides to rough grazings and/or semi-natural areas

Requirements

Do not apply any fertilisers, manures, pesticides, or liming materials to any rough grazings, moorland, unimproved pastures, wetlands, or other semi-improved areas. In some circumstance you may obtain prior written permission from DAFF, in which case you must comply with any conditions contained.

Guidance

Rough grazings and other semi-natural areas refer to land containing semi-natural vegetation, including heathland, heather moorland, bog, unimproved and rough grassland which is used or suitable for grazing.

Exceptions are allowed in the following circumstances:

- Herbicides may be applied to control injurious weeds (Spear Thistle, Creeping or Field Thistle, Curled Dock, Broadleaved Dock and Ragwort) as defined in the Weeds Act 1957, and with the prior written approval of DAFF for the control of other plants e.g. Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed.
- For the control of Bracken with approved herbicides.
- Where a valid and approved Environmental Impact Assessment is submitted to DAFF.
- DAFF should be consulted if it is intended to use a pesticide within 5 m of a watercourse.

Benefits

- Protection and maintenance of the biodiversity of ponds, wetlands and watercourses which are important natural habitats in the Isle of Man
- Rough grazings and semi natural areas are some of the most valuable and visible land types in the Isle of Man. Not spreading any liming materials, pesticides or fertilisers on these areas will help to protect the biodiversity of these important habitats.

Standard 16 - Field Boundaries

Requirements

You must not damage, nor without the prior written agreement of DAFF and any other appropriate statutory bodies remove or destroy any of the following boundary features: dry stone, turf and stone-faced banks and hedges, walls complete or dilapidated, hedges and hedgerow trees, boundary trees or watercourses.

You must not cultivate or apply fertilisers, dredgings, slurry, manures or pesticides to land within 1 metre (margin) of the centre of a hedgerow or land within 1 metre (margin) of the top of the bank of a watercourse.

No hedge trimming is permitted between the dates specified in the Manx Hedgerow Management Code of Best Practice except for roadside hedge trimming required in the interest of road safety.

Guidance

Guidance can be found in the Manx Hedgerow Management Code of Best Practice issued by DAFF Wildlife and Conservation Division and Forestry, Amenity and Lands Division.

You must take all reasonable steps to maintain green cover on the margins throughout the year.

DAFF should be consulted if it is intended to use a pesticide within 5 m of a watercourse or, a LERAP assessment (Local Environment Risk Assessment for Pesticides) must be carried out. The 1 metre margin should not be used for the storage of materials, for example bales or dredgings.

The spot application of herbicides may be applied to control injurious weeds (Spear Thistle, Creeping or Field Thistle, Curled Dock, Broadleaved Dock and Ragwort) as defined in the Weeds Act 1957, and with the prior written approval of DAFF for the control of other plants e.g. Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

Written approval is not required where you propose to widen field entrances to enable access for livestock or farm machinery

'Water course' includes all rivers, streams, ditches, open drains, cuts, culverts, dykes, sluices, sewers (other than sewers under the control of a local authority) and passages through which water flows.

Other examples of potentially damaging activities include:

- The canalisation or culverting of watercourses.
- The cutting of bankside vegetation between the dates specified in the Manx Hedgerow Management Code of Best Practice except for the control of injurious weeds (as defined in the Weeds Act 1957), Bracken and Giant Hogweed and the control of Japanese Knotweed (which should not be by cutting).

Benefits

- Traditional field boundaries provide valuable shelter for stock, nesting cover for birds and a variety of habitats and food for wildlife. They are significant features in the landscape and the older boundaries may form part of ancient enclosure patterns of archaeological or historical interest.

Standard 17 - Encroachment of unwanted vegetation

Requirements

You must not allow the encroachment of unwanted vegetation which degrades the agricultural and environmental value of the land to the extent that the land is not capable of returning to agricultural production by any time during the growing season in the following calendar year.

Guidance

Taking the above into account, the encroachment of native species is allowed in the following instances:

- Re-colonisation of trees across the boundary line from native woodland.
- Reversion of land to wet grassland or wetland.

Patterns of ecological succession will be regarded as consistent with the standard of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition provided that:

- They are consistent with maintaining the ecological status of protected areas (e.g. ASSIs).

- The growth of scrub is easily reversible through regular cutting, use of approved herbicides or grazing.

Through appropriate grazing, topping or other permissible methods of control, land managers can prevent the severe encroachment of unwanted vegetation which is both agriculturally and environmentally degrading, including Rhododendron, Bracken, Gorse and weeds covered by the Weeds Act 1957, Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and Himalayan Balsam.

Benefits

- Land is retained as capable of agricultural production.
- Unwanted vegetation which is both agriculturally and environmentally degrading is controlled.

Standard 18 - Public Rights Of Way

Requirements

You must not without lawful authority or excuse disturb the surface of a public right of way that crosses your land so as to render it inconvenient to pass over it, or block the free passage along a right of way (such as by locking gates, growing crops, allowing overhanging vegetation, or blocking the route with electric or barbed wire fences).

Guidance

'Public rights of way' is an umbrella term for all legal rights of way, including footpaths, bridleways and roads used as public footpaths and byways open to all traffic.

You are permitted to disturb the surface of a footpath or bridleway across a field (that is, not a field-edge footpath or bridleway) in order to plough the land, or to bring the land into agricultural use when it would not be convenient to avoid disturbing the surface of the path. However, if you do this, you must make good the surface of the path or bridleway to not less than its minimum width, and indicate the route to members of the public; and do this within 14 days of the first disturbance if you are sowing a crop, or within 24 hours in all other circumstances.

Where maintenance is your responsibility, you must:

- Maintain any stile, gate or similar structure across a footpath or bridleway that you are responsible for in a safe and usable condition.
- Trim hedges and other growth to facilitate access, taking due account of other regulations. Where a conflict may occur, advice should be sought from DAFF.

Benefits

- Public rights of way are very important to the Isle of Man, providing both residents and visitors access to the countryside. Maintaining access in good and passable condition aids everyone's enjoyment of the countryside, and reduces the risk of wilful damage occurring.
- Well maintained Rights of Way discourages users from straying onto other areas of land.

Further Guidance

The Standards of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition of agricultural land are intended to be as comprehensible as possible. However, further best practice guidance can be obtained from:

- The Manx Hedgerow Management Code of Best Practice.
- The Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Water.
- The Manx Watercourse Management Code.
- The Heath Burning Code.

Contact Details

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Tel 843109

DAFF Forestry, Amenity and Lands Division

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Tel 801263

DAFF Agricultural Advisory Team

Knockaloe
Patrick
Peel
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Tel 842335

DAFF Agricultural Policy Team

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Tel 685838

DLGE Environmental Protection Unit

Murray House
Mount Havelock
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Tel 685894

DAFF Fisheries Division

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DoT Land Drainage Section

Meary Veg
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Tel 693512

DAFF Animal Health Division

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Murray House
Mount Havelock
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Tel 685894

DOT

Sea Terminal
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IM1 2RF
Tel 686600

Water Authority

Tromode Road,
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Tel 695949
www.gov.im/water

Manx National Heritage

Douglas
Isle of Man
IM1 3LY
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