Clough Woodland
Benefits for my land

BENEFITS
Clough woodland creates many benefits for water, wildlife and people. It also has numerous advantages for farmers, land owners and managers. Clough woodland:
• Contributes to bracken control
• Provides shade and shelter for livestock
• Improves water quality
• Reduces downstream flood risk
• Enhances the landscape
• Provides a source of timber
• Reduces atmospheric pollutants

Will creating woodlands be costly and time consuming?
Woodland creation amounts on each land holding will be a subject of discussion between landlord and tenant (on tenanted farms). Woodland creation and management on small farms through much of Europe is seen as a contributor to business sustainability. Woodland creation provides wood for use on farms for wood fuel and can be used for fencing material. Woodlands can also be designed as windbreaks to give stock shelter and can be laid out to allow continued use of droving routes to move stock around the farm.

Will woodland have an impact on my shoot?
New woodland will create extra woodland and scrub edge habitat which would suit some game birds such as partridge and pheasant. New woodlands will mostly be at relatively small scale with as much as 40% open ground incorporated into the design. This will mean ease of access for shooters and beaters.
Can woodland increase the risk of pests and predators on my land?
Woodlands will be in smaller blocks with, as mentioned previously, as much as 40% open ground incorporated into them. This will not create dense thickets where it is impossible to control pests. The density of trees and shrubs could be as low as 400 per hectare on planted areas so woodlands will be accessible to allow farmers, gamekeepers and shoots to access them for pest control. Often new woodland will be created by expanding existing woodland. The additional burden on pest control in these areas will be minimal. Consideration will be given to the potential impact woodland could have on rare ground nesting birds such as curlew where this may be an issue.

What are the risks associated with these diseases?
There are some serious plant diseases out there. The secret is to plant or encourage a wide selection of tree species and to ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place. This way, trees are healthy, less stressed and more able to cope with any diseases that come along. Creating woodlands through natural regeneration normally produces woodlands best suited to the conditions of the site. Obviously planting some trees such as Ash is not allowed at the moment and guidance on other species is readily available.

Will my woodland attract deer?
When planning new woodland it is crucial to consider what pests such as deer are present in the area and what protection needs to be put in place. This is usually tree shelters or deer fences. This together with deer control programmes will allow new woodlands to establish. Once the woodlands are established they will undoubtedly provide additional habitat for deer but open ground (designed into the woodlands at the start) will enable deer culling if and when it is needed.

Will I be able to allow livestock to use new woodland as shelter?
This will depend on how the woodland creation has been funded. The Forestry Commission includes compensation for taking the land out of agricultural production. If there were Farm Woodland Payments, livestock must be excluded. If there are no Farm Woodland Payments in place then stock could be allowed back into woodland when it is fully established. Under the woodland creation scheme, land in the scheme must not be used for any agricultural activity, including grazing, for a period of at least five years. Land managers can claim their BPS through the WCG agreement and until the end of any subsequent 10-year maintenance agreement.

Will allowing stock back into established woodland compromise its value for conservation?
The main thing to ensure is that stock does not damage or kill the trees by either eating them or by compacting the soil around the trees. A grazed woodland habitat could benefit certain bird species such as tree pipit and spotted flycatcher. At a landscape scale it would be good to have a mixture of woodlands where some grazing was allowed and others where an understory is allowed to develop.

This is one of three factsheets about clough woodland creation, which are part of a series of factsheets produced by the Moors for the Future Partnership. For more advice and information, please contact either:

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