



Appin Deer Management Incentive Scheme 2026/27

TERMS & CONDITIONS

To register for the scheme, please read the following Terms & Conditions, fill out an application form and submit it to appinrainforestproject26@gmail.com.

For any enquiries, please contact the scheme manager on 07345 572367 or appindeer@gmail.com.

Background and scheme aims

Appin Forestry Services Community Interest Company (CIC) operates on behalf of Appin Community Development Trust and is responsible for delivering the Rainforest Regeneration Project in the Appin area, supported by funding from the Nature Restoration Fund.

One of the key objectives of the project is to reduce the impacts of deer on rainforest regeneration and support the recovery of native woodland habitats. As part of this work, a deer incentive scheme is being trialled to encourage increased deer management and support higher levels of deer culling across the Appin area.

The scheme recognises that achieving increased levels of deer management can result in additional costs for landowners and deer managers, including the time and resources required to undertake additional culling. The incentive payments are therefore intended to help offset these additional costs and reduce the financial burden associated with increased deer management, supporting landowners and deer managers in contributing to the wider objectives of rainforest restoration.

Further information on the management of deer in the area can be found in the Appin Deer Management Plan, which is downloadable as a PDF from the Appin Community Development Trust website;

<https://www.appin.scot/projects/rainforest?tab=tab-deer>

1. Scheme area and eligibility

- The location eligible for the scheme is the **Appin Deer Forum Area** (see *Figure 1*).
- All participants must register with the scheme before culling deer eligible for incentive payment.
- Participation in the scheme is open to those with the legal right to take or kill deer on any landholding within the Scheme Area.
- Either the stalker/deer manager or the landowner can apply for the scheme. Where the payee is the stalker, the application form must also be signed by

the landowner confirming that they have given permission for the stalker to claim the incentive in respect of deer culled on their land.

- Where a landholding is tenanted, it is recommended that an agreement is reached between landowner and tenant.
- Incentive scheme claimants will be required to supply their bank details to AFS CIC so that payment can be made.
- Those participating in the scheme are expected to attend and engage with the Appin Deer Forum.
- The scheme will not be available to areas of publicly owned land where public sector organisations employ staff or engage contractors to control deer.

Figure 1: Appin Deer Forum Area



2. Duration of scheme and trial period

- The scheme will accept culls for eligible deer recorded between **1st October 2026 - 15th March 2027**. No incentive claims will be accepted after that date.
- The incentive scheme is funded for **two years** - 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- 2026/27 will act as a trial, and the scheme will be evaluated and participants consulted prior to launching the 2027/28 scheme.

3. Scheme structure

- There are two tiers to the scheme:

- **Scheme 1** is intended to assist larger landholdings with established deer management, covers landholdings **above 150 hectares** and targets females and juveniles.
- **Scheme 2** supports **smaller landholdings** with little or no current deer management, covers landholdings **below 150 hectares** and targets males, females and juveniles.

4. Qualifying cull

- **Scheme 1**
 - To incentivise additional culling, a landholding must cull a minimum of **2.5 adult female or juveniles of any species of deer/100ha** to qualify for payment.
 - When the qualifying cull has been reached, the scheme participant will also receive a **back payment for all adult female or juveniles of any species of deer culled over the threshold of 2 deer/100ha**.

Example:

Landholding = **300ha**.

Qualifying cull @ 2.5 deer/100ha = $300\text{ha} \div 100\text{ha} \times 2.5 \text{ deer} = \mathbf{7.5 \text{ deer}}$

Backpayment threshold @ 2 deer/100ha = $300\text{ha} \div 100\text{ha} \times 2 \text{ deer} = \mathbf{6 \text{ deer}}$

Deer culled = **8 deer**

Having reached the qualifying cull by shooting 8 deer you will then receive a back payment for the previous 2 deer, **and** you will receive payment for any deer culled above the qualifying cull.

Where a calculated deer number includes a fraction of 0.5 or greater, the number will be rounded up to the nearest whole deer. Where the fraction is less than 0.5, the number will be rounded down to the nearest whole deer.

The amount paid will depend on whether deer culled were hinds or calves.

- **Scheme 2**
 - In recognition that smaller landholdings require additional deer management support, scheme 2 has no qualifying cull.

5. Incentive payments

- **Scheme 1** incentive payments are payable for Roe and Red deer:
 - Females – **£150**
 - Juveniles – **£90**
- **Scheme 2** incentive payments are payable for Roe and Red deer:
 - Females – **£150**
 - Males – **£90**

- Juveniles – **£90**
- In recognition that stalking Sika deer can be difficult, **£350** will be paid for Sika deer culled. This is for males and females and is applicable to Scheme 1 and Scheme 2, with no minimum cull required. Sika deer are rare in the Appin area, and all effort should be made to prevent them expanding into this range.

Summary:

	Scheme 1	Scheme 2
Landholding size	Above 150 ha	Below 150 ha
Qualifying cull	2.5 deer/100ha, with backpayment to 2 deer/100ha	None
Purpose	Support larger holdings with established deer management	Support smaller holdings with little or no current deer management
Target deer	Females and juveniles (<i>All species</i>)	Males, females and juveniles (<i>All species</i>)

6. Deer management principles

- While the primary purpose of the incentive scheme is to encourage a reduction in deer numbers and impacts, there is also an objective to improve the structure and health of the Appin deer population. Deer managers involved in the Incentive Scheme are asked to use their discretion when selecting deer to cull.
- When selecting deer for culling, consideration should be given to:
 - The age structure of the deer population; not removing one age cohort.
 - Dependent young; no dependent young should be orphaned. Non-suckling or weaned calves can still be dependent on the mother for herd position and feed.
 - Where possible, leave good breeding deer, both male and female. Select the older deer in poorer condition or deer that are specifically causing damage.
- Refer to Best Practice Guidance for further advice; bestpracticeguides.scot/welfareCulling

Best Practice Guidance is a collection of guides produced in partnership with an extensive Steering Group consisting of key organisations with knowledge and expertise in deer management.

7. Legal compliance

- Incentives are payable providing the taking of deer is fully compliant with all relevant legislation.

- Best Practice Guidance should be followed and is a legal requirement in some circumstances.
- If out-of-season and/or night shooting is carried out, the relevant licence must be shown prior to commencing culling under the incentive scheme.
- Deer culled under the provisions of the General Authorisation are eligible for the incentive scheme, provided all conditions of the authorisation are complied with;

General Authorisation under Section 5(6) (a) for the taking or killing of deer during close season

[nature.scot/general-authorisation-deer-2026-2027](#)

8. Recording and evidence of culls

The process to claim the incentive payment is as follows;

Register with scheme >> carry out cull >> submit evidence via Epicollect5 app >> inform scheme manager deer has been culled within 24 hours >> evidence is verified by scheme manager >> payment is made in the following month.

- Participants must evidence **all deer culled**, including all deer below the payment threshold.
- The Epicollect5 app will be used to record each deer culled. Instructions on how to use the app will be provided. The App requires the following information;
 - Property on which stalking is taking place
 - Name of stalker
 - A clear, close-up photograph from which the sex can be determined;
 - A photograph with a recognisable landscape or backdrop behind it, with the deer in the fore ground
 - All photographs must be clear
 - Date of stalk
 - Time shot taken
 - Location
 - Deer species
 - Sex/age
- A random selection of grallochs will be checked to ensure compliance with scheme conditions.
- The scheme manager must be informed as soon as possible via WhatsApp, and no later than **24 hours** of a deer being culled - the sooner the scheme manager is informed, the more likely the gralloch is found and the claim is verified.

9. Payment arrangements

- Incentive payments will be paid monthly, in the month following the deer being culled.
- Payment will be subject to the required evidence being supplied and the rules of the scheme being met.

10. Verification and compliance with scheme conditions

- Compliance monitoring will be undertaken by the scheme manager who will review and verify the reported culls, species, age, sex, and geo-referenced location via the App.
- Any non-compliance breaches will result in the Applicant being removed from the scheme and payment withheld.
- Any reports of fraudulent activity will be reported to Police Scotland.

11. Data sharing

- All recipients (and associated landowner, if different) of the incentive scheme agree to their cull figures being shared with **NatureScot** and included in the **Appin Deer Management Plan**.

12. Scheme funding and availability

- The funding available for the scheme is subject to a fixed maximum limit. If the funds spent approach the limit, Applicants will be notified that no further payments will be made for any subsequent claims. Claims submitted prior to the exhaustion of the budget shall be considered and processed strictly in the order in which they are received, on a first-come, first-served basis. Any culls reported after notification shall not be eligible for payment.
- AFS CIC will endeavour to provide as much advance warning as possible if available funds are approaching depletion.

13. Changes to the scheme

- The terms of the scheme may be changed at any time.
- There is no set notice period for changes, but where practicable, changes will be communicated as far in advance as possible.
- All participants will be notified of changes by email or WhatsApp.