

SPRING Ranking System Explanation

As the SPRING Scheme has increased in size and number of applicants, there has been a requirement for caps to be placed upon certain options. These caps have limited the total funds available for popular high-cost options such as fencing, concrete or hardcore tracks. Avoiding this as much as possible is considered a priority and so we have made a change to the application process.

To achieve this and to ensure funds are shared fairly, we have created a ranking system. This will avoid bias placed upon farm type or size and promotes the greatest benefits for biodiversity and water quality.

The main options have been ranked from 1-3 (with 3 being the best) based upon their benefits to both water quality and the environment using data from the Atkins Natural Capital Assessment carried out for SSW and assumptions developed through prior knowledge.

We have calculated the score as follows.

- 1 The overall application request is totalled.
- 2 The proportion of the cost attached to each rank is noted as a percentage of the total cost. (i.e., 25% rank 3, 50% rank 2, 25% rank 1)
- 3 This percentage is then multiplied by its rank to gain a decimal score for each rank.
- 4 The scores are then added to view the total score with a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 3.
- 5 The highest scores indicate the strongest application, funds are then allocated from highest score to lowest until the funds are expended.

If an application includes an item not on the pre-ranked list, we will allocate it a rank using assumptions on its benefits.

Example:

Application A requests £10,000, of which 25% is rank 3, 50% is rank 2 and 25% is rank 1.

Rank 3: $0.25 \times 3 = 0.75$

Rank 2: $0.5 \times 2 = 1$

Rank 1: $0.25 \times 1 = 0.25$

Application is weighted at 2.

We think this method allows farms of all size to have an equal chance of acceptance, assuming they are selecting options with the greatest benefits to water quality and the environment.

Current options and ranks

Field options		
Title	Payment	Rank
12-24m Watercourse buffer on cultivated land	£613.00	3
4-6m Watercourse buffer on cultivated land	£452.00	3
4-6m Watercourse buffer on intensive grassland	£200.00	3
Arable reversion into grassland	£326.00	3
Arable reversion into grassland - Intensive	£200.00	2
Arable reversion into grassland - low input	£375.00	3
Arable reversion into grassland - SFI Top Up	£20.00	3
Beetle banks	£600.00	3
Cover crop	£126.00	3
Cover crop - annually sown	£500.00	3
Cover crop - grazed	£56.00	2
Cover crop - SFI top up	£21.00	3
Flower rich mix	£674.00	3
Hedge laying/restoration	£11.00 (up to £1,000)	2
Hedge planting	£15.00 (up to £1,000)	2
Herbal ley	£115.00	2
Herbal ley - SFI top up	£35.00	3
Oats, peas and vetch	£110.00	3
Oats, peas and vetch undersown with clover	£150.00	3
Permanent grassland - Low input	£125.00	3
Take field corners out of management	£400.00	3
Two year legume fallow	£593.00	3
Undersowing spring cereals	£300.00	3
Undersowing maize	£120.00	2
Wild bird seed mix	£600.00	3
Wildfarmed water premium	£200.00	3

Capital options		
Title	Payment	Rank
Below ground dirty water tank	£350.00	3
Biobed (lined)	£64.00	3
Biofilter	£980.00	3
Bird feeder	£20.00	1
Bucket brush	50% of total cost (up to £1,000)	1
Bulk bag dispenser	£50.00	3
Bund - Nitrate	50% of total (up to £3,000)	3
Bund - soil	£194.00	2
Chemical store	50% of total (up to £3,000)	3
Closed transfer system	50% of total (up to £2,500)	2
Coppicing bankside trees	£25.00	1
Cross drains	£300.00	2
French drain	£15.00	1
Gate - as soakaway	£400.00 (£750 for a double)	2
Gate - relocation	£320.00	2
Gate - resurface	£130.00	2
Gate - at a river crossing	£200.00	1
GPS system	50% of total (up to £2,000)	1

Capital options continued

Title	Payment	Rank
High priority concrete	£30.00 (up to £4,000)	Variable (de- pending on WQ benefit)
Livestock and machinery hardcore tracks	£30.00 (up to £2,000)	2
Machinery	33% of total (up to £4,000)	Variable (de- pending on WQ benefit)
PA training	100% (excluding VAT and exam fee)	3
Pesticide / Sprayer washdown area	£40.00	3
Roofing - Pesticide / Sprayer Washdown Area	£70.00	2
Piped culvert	£350.00	2
Rain goods	£11.00	1
Roofing - Box muck store / Slurry pit	£70. 00 (up to £5,000)	2
Roofing - Livestock / Silage	£30.00 (up to £3,000)	2
Soil testing	50% of total (up to £2,000)	Variable
Soil course	30% of total	3
Solar panel water pump	100% of total (up to £600)	2
Spill Kit	50% of total (up to £200)	3
Sprayer calibration	100% of total (up to £1,000)	3
Sprayer efficiency add-ons	50% of total (up to £300)	3
Swales	£7.00	2
Trough	£100.00	2
Trough - hard bases for livestock drinkers / feeders	£150.00	2
Trough - pipework	£2.00	1
Watercourse fencing - permanent electric	£4.50 (up to £2,500)	2
Watercourse fencing - post and wire	£5.50 (up to £2,500)	2
Watercourse fencing - sheep netting	£7.00 (up to £2,500)	2
Weed Wipers	£50% (up to £4,000)	2

There are additional options not included within this list that will be ranked based on their overall benefits/costs. The rank for these options can be justified if any queries are brought forward.