

FARMING AND PROPERTY BULLETIN – NOVEMBER 2014

Changes to Weight and Speed Limits – Tractors and Trailers

The Department for Transport has announced that it intends to change the weight and speed limits for agricultural tractors and trailers on the roads of Great Britain from Spring 2015. While the maximum laden weight for a trailer will remain unchanged, the maximum combined weight limit for a tractor and trailer will increase to 31 tonnes, allowing larger tractors to pull loads. The maximum speed limit for conventional tractors will increase from 20mph to 25mph.

New Basic Payment Scheme Guidance

DEFRA has published the third of its CAP update leaflets. It can be downloaded from the GOV.UK website and includes further information on:-

- National Reserve
- Active Farmer
- Young Farmer payment
- Greening
- CAP Information Service (CAPIS)

Solar Panels and Basic Payment Scheme

DEFRA has confirmed that land that is used for solar panels will not be eligible under the new Basic Payment Scheme (BPS).

Entry Level Stewardship – Greening Double Funding

If your ELS agreement commenced in or after January 2012 you should have received a letter from Natural England stating which options within your agreement are considered 'double-funding' options. The letter enclosed a form which you are to complete and return by the 15th November stating which out of the following three options you intend to do:

1. Accept the reduction in value of the agreement from 2015 without making any amendments.
2. Make amendments to the agreement to add new options to the agreement or increase the area covered by existing options in the agreement.
3. Not accept the reduction in payments and close the agreement with effect from midnight on the 31st December 2014 without penalty.

If you do not reply by the 15th November they will assume that you are happy with the reduction in payments.

Adkin Announcements



Adkin are delighted to announce that Christine Thomas has just passed the Assessment of Professional Competence examination with the RICS and is now a qualified Chartered Surveyor! Christine has worked very hard and we are all pleased with this great achievement.

Christine will continue to assist Sarah Payne and Alison Bowler in Estate Management.



Adkin would also like to announce the appointment of Andrew Chandler BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV who will be joining the team this month as a Senior Surveyor. A Berkshire farmer's son, Andrew graduated from the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester in 2004. He is a member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, Fellow of the Association of Agricultural Valuers and a RICS Registered Valuer. Andrew will be dealing with a wide range of professional matters and will specialise in the sale of all forms of rural property.

SPS 2014 Payments

The payment window will open as usual on the 1st December. The exchange rate was set for this years payments on the 30th September at the rate of €1 = £0.7773. This is 7% less than last years figure.

It is not yet possible to calculate the payment farmers will receive as the annual revaluation of entitlements needs to happen. Entitlement values are calculated from scratch each year and can vary depending on the number of entitlements claimed. It is also further complicated this year as the rate of Financial Discipline for 2014 is unknown. For 2013 it was 2.45% and for 2014 1.3% has been proposed. An announcement is expected at the end of this month. In addition entitlement values will change again as a result of the shift from using the modulation mechanism to the new 'Pillar Transfer'. This will see entitlement values drop but with no further modulation deductions then made.

Despite the above, entitlement values for 2014 have been estimated at circa £192/ha for Non-SDA lowland areas. This is assuming Financial Discipline is 1.3%.

Domestic Septic Tanks and Small Sewage Treatment Plants: New Regulation in England

In 2011 the Environment Agency proposed to introduce new regulations which would have required the operators of domestic septic tanks and small sewage treatment plants in England and Wales to register their systems. It was dropped in England it was dropped amid concerns that it would add unnecessary regulation without significant benefit in terms of pollution control. Instead, DEFRA carried out a review and undertook a consultation to establish a better way forward for England.

The outcome of that process was a new statutory instrument – the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Amendment (England) Regulations 2014 (SI 2852). Those Regulations implement a new approach to the regulation of small sewage discharges which comprises three layers:

- New General Binding Rules will apply to all small sewage discharges.
- New discharges after 1st January 2015 which are within or close to a “sensitive area” (as defined by the Environment Agency) will have to have an environmental permit.
- Any sites within a ground source protection zone 1 will continue to need an environmental permit.

The General Binding Rules

The General Binding Rules set out the requirements for both discharges to surface water and discharges to ground. They include a requirement for the “operator” of the system to give a written notice on the sale of the property to the new operator, stating that a small sewage discharge is being carried out and describing the system and its maintenance requirements.

Under the new Regulations, an operator is defined as “...a person who has control over the operation of the sewage treatment plant by reason of:

- (a) being an owner of the land on which the sewage treatment plant is situated or being used; or
- (b) having entered into a written agreement with the owner of the land on which the sewage treatment plant is situated or being used to be responsible for the maintenance of the sewage treatment plant.”

Sensitive Areas

If a new small sewage discharge is to be created after 1st January 2015 in or near a “sensitive area”, then an environmental permit will be required. The current list of sensitive areas includes:

- Groundwater Source Protection Zone 1s (SPZ1) (for discharges to ground)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Ramsar sites
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) designated for biological reasons
- Ancient Woodlands
- Selected protected species and protected habitats
- Local nature reserves and local wildlife sites which are aquatic in nature

ADKIN 54TH ANNUAL HAY & STRAW AUCTION SALE

TUESDAY 13TH JANUARY 2015

at 2.30pm

at Ardington Sports Club, Ardington Sports Ground
Ardington, Nr Wantage, Oxon, OX12 8QB

Entry forms available from the office or www.adkin.co.uk
All enquiries to Philip Pocock (01235 862888)