

FARMING AND PROPERTY BULLETIN – DECEMBER 2016

BPS Update

The payment window for 2016 claims is now open and we are aware that payments have commenced. Please ensure you check the amount carefully as there have already been incorrect payments where mapping work is ongoing or incorrect on the system.

Applications can be tracked by logging onto the Rural Payments online system and selecting 'Applications' and then clicking 'Apply for BPS'. You will then be able to see the status of the claim; when it says 'Preparing for Payment' all validation checks have been completed and the claim will be sent for payment.

The RPA have confirmed the 2016 payment rate has increased from 2015 by 18.9%.

As previously reported the RPA is aiming to make 90% of 2016 payments by the end of December.

Claim Statements will be issued but not until February 2017. As was the case last year we do not expect these will show individual field details so all discrepancies will need to be checked against the maps online.

Entitlements

It is not currently possible to view your entitlements online. The RPA have reported they are making improvements to this section of the website and expect it will be available shortly. The improvements should allow users to see entitlements by scheme year and give a better ability to track their history. This will include lease end dates and National Reserve Entitlements.

Online Transfers

The ability to transfer land on the Rural Payments website should be available from the end of January. The ability to transfer entitlements online is not expected to be available until at least February. Both land and entitlements can still be transferred using paper RLE1 forms but it may be advisable to wait until the online transfer system can be used to avoid delays in the RLE1 forms being processed.

2015 Payments

All claimants who have not received their full payment for 2015 should have received a reconciliation letter in November. If you are still not satisfied you have received the correct payment for 2015 an email should be sent to ruralpayments@defra.gsi.gov.uk with the title BPS 2015 Payment Reconciliation.

Accountable People

The RPA have now confirmed 2016 payments will be made without details of 'accountable people' being supplied. It is not currently clear if these will be required for the 2017 claim.

The Autumn Statement – Key Points:

Philip Hammond delivered the Autumn Statement on the 23rd November 2016. The key points are summarised below:

- Insurance Premium Tax will increase from 10% to 12% from the 1st June 2017.
- The National Living Wage will increase from £7.20 to £7.50 in April 2017.
- Fuel duty remains frozen.
- Rural Rate Relief will rise to 100% from April 2017. This applies to petrol stations, shops, post offices and pubs.
- Agents will no longer be allowed to charge tenants letting fees.
- The 2017-2018 Personal Allowance for Income Tax will rise to £11,500 and the higher rate threshold to £33,500.
- The rate of corporation tax will fall to 19% for 2017, 2018 and 2019 and then to 17% from the 1st April 2020.
- National Insurance Contributions thresholds for employers and employees will be aligned from April 2017.
- A 'National Productivity Investment Fund' (NPIF) will be introduced to invest around £5 billion a year between 2017/2018 and 2021/2022. The NPIF will target transport, housing, digital communications, research and development.

This will be the last Autumn Statement. Following the budget in the spring of 2017 the budget will move to the autumn and there will instead be a 'spring statement'.

Residential Lettings – Right to Rent Checks

The Immigration Act 2014 made it an offence for landlord's to let a residential property to anyone who does not have the correct immigration statement to occupy their dwelling. From the 1st February 2016 landlords and their agents are therefore required to make the appropriate checks that the correct documents are in place at the commencement and throughout the duration of the tenancy. Landlords who fail to comply with these requirements can face a fine up to £3,000.

From the 1st December 2016 landlords and agents who fail to conduct right to rent checks and remove illegal immigrants from their properties can be sanctioned with an unlimited fine or up to five years imprisonment.

56th ANNUAL HAY & STRAW AUCTION SALE

TUESDAY 10TH JANUARY 2016

At 2.30pm

In the Loyd Lindsay Rooms, Ardington, Wantage, Oxon OX12 8PS

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

ENTRIES BY THE 14th DECEMBER 2016