

UTASS Briefing: 17th July 2023

COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP or SFI?

The last briefing on 2nd June outlined the increase in CS rates for the uplands and how Defra intended CS and SFI would fit together. Since then a 'Sustainable Farming Incentive Handbook' has been made available online. There are now more standards, including a Low Input Grassland Standard (LIG 1 & LIG2) and a lot more detail.

CS at the moment has rather more options and supplements than SFI so it is important for farmers to assess which scheme and which options would best suit their own farm.

Defra are expecting the SFI online application system to go live "from August" (Their words!). This may not happen before the 18th August deadline for applying for a Mid-Tier CS agreement.

With the above in mind, Janet Fairclough will present the latest information, at **7pm on Thursday 27th July** at UTASS. She will contrast the two different schemes so that those farmers who may find CS the better option have time to apply before the 18th August deadline.

This is part of our 'Farm For The Future' programme, however anyone can come along. Please contact UTASS to book a place, supper will be served.

In the meanwhile, it would be advisable for all members who may be interested in joining either scheme to check the land details for their business on Rural Payments as the application process can **only** be done online and requires accurate mapping information for an eligible application to be made. As direct payments, BPS, are phased out it is increasingly important for farmers to look at all alternative or additional income sources: this includes CS and SFI.

For further advice and assistance please call UTASS 01833 641010.
Richard Betton.