

UTASS Briefing: 22nd September 2023

FARM FOR THE FUTURE

The government's Agricultural Transition Programme (ATP) covers the phasing out of the BPS and its replacement with environmental schemes over the next 5 years. Next year BPS will be paid at 50% which, when combined with increases in most farm input costs, is squeezing farm incomes. UTASS has been running Farm for the Future (FFTF) over the last two years to help farmers understand, plan and manage some of the upcoming changes such as business finances, environmental schemes, succession, tenant issues, animal health and soil & carbon.

We are launching a new round shortly. It is a free programme funded by Defra's Resilience Fund via the Royal Countryside Fund. It will again provide the opportunity of meetings on specific topics, such as environmental schemes or succession planning, as well as One-to-One sessions with professional advisors. We are holding two welcome meetings for farming families to come and learn more about the programme:

- Barnard Castle Cricket Club 7.00pm Monday 2nd October
- Charles Attwood Social Centre, Wolsingham 7.00pm Wednesday 4th October

A supper will be served. There will also be the opportunity to sign up for FFTF if you haven't already done so. This can also be done online [Farm for the Future Sign up Form \(tfaforms.com\)](https://tfaforms.com) or through phoning UTASS. It would be helpful if you could contact UTASS to book a place.

SUSTAINABLE FARMING INCENTIVE (SFI)

This scheme has eventually opened for applications but with a limited roll-out as the IT software is still being developed. There are now more Actions (previously called Standards) available especially for arable and mixed farms. Opportunities do exist for those already in CS or ES (HLS extensions) agreements but are limited by "double funding rules" (not paying for the same Action twice). Applications are made online through Rural Payments. Currently potential applicants have to let the RPA know that they are interested in applying for SFI by going to Sustainable Farming Incentive on Rural Payments and completing the electronic "SFI Register your Interest Form". The RPA will then contact the applicant with details of how to apply, hopefully within 4 weeks.

It is important that potential applicants' mapping details on Rural Payments are correct **before** applying for SFI. If you would like to check your maps or need assistance in completing an RLE1 form to make the corrections please contact UTASS and book an appointment.

For further advice and assistance please call UTASS 01833 641010.

Richard Betton