

UTASS Briefing: 9th August 2024

BPS DELINKED PAYMENTS

The RPA have made the “vast majority” of the first instalment (50%) of the 2024 delinked payment. The final instalment will be paid from 30th September 2024.

As payments are made directly to claimant’s bank accounts it is essential that you inform the RPA of any changes to bank details as soon as possible.

This can only be done by telephoning the RPA on 03000 200 301.

SUSTAINABLE FARMING INCENTIVE (SFI)

Defra have recently released information on their new “expanded offer”. This has involved moving and adapting most of the Countryside Stewardship (CS) Mid-Tier options to SFI plus the introduction of some new “actions” (options are now called actions).

Put simply, CS Mid-Tier and associated “wildlife packages” have gone leaving two schemes: SFI and Higher Tier CS.

- Expanded offer includes 102 actions. Some of the actions require 5 year agreements rather than 3 year.
- One action, GRH6 Species Rich Grassland, requires approval from Natural England (official term is endorsement). Defra expect to introduce additional actions in this category.
- The limit of 25% of the holding for some of the arable actions has been retained.
- Defra claim that some of the payments include a premium (additional bonus above the basic “compensation for income foregone”) to encourage uptake.
- Potential applicants currently need to register their interest online https://defragroup.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cSGsCBrA5Kim3H0
- SFI open to all including those who have not previously claimed BPS.
- Higher Tier CS details will be published this summer for entry next winter.
- There will be no mechanism for annual amendments to SFI23 agreements. A new agreement will have to be opened to add any additional actions.
- The management payment will be £40 per hectare up to 50 hectares for the first year and then £20 per hectare for the remaining years.

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- It is essential to have correct and complete mapping on Rural Payments before applying. Buildings and farmyards must have a field number or be identified within an existing field to be eligible for the HEF1 and 2 “Maintain weatherproof traditional farm buildings” action

Please do contact us, hopefully as a signed up member of our Farm for the Future resilience programme, if you want to discuss/explore SFI further or need assistance expressing an interest online.

UTASS SUMMER GET TOGETHER

It's been a few years since we've arranged a social event, so after such a dreadful spring, and slow start to summer, we thought that it was a good time to all get together!

Everyone is invited! Tickets are £10 for Adults and £5 for Children.



Tickets can be purchased from UTASS or online at <https://utass.org/shop/>

A Hog roast and side dishes are included in the ticket price, we'll also have a licenced bar for refreshments as well as activities to keep the younger ones entertained!

It would be really lovely to see you all there.

We'll be drawing our first ever UTASS raffle at the event too, prizes include a 3-night stay at Binks Holiday Cottage in Weardale, a 14-gear bicycle, £100 voucher for Middleton Forge and a 4x4 experience at Deepdale Off Road, plus many others!

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

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