

# Land Business Update

Week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022

## Farming and food

### Funding available under the Farming Investment Fund in England

This table summarises what grants are for and whether they are open. Please speak to [Marie Charles](#) for more details or if you are considering an application.

	Farming Equipment and Technology Fund	FARMING TRANSFORMATION FUND			
		Slurry Infrastructure	Adding Value	Water Management	Improving Farm Productivity
<b>Aim of the grant</b>	To improve sustainable productivity through new equipment and technology.	To build new, replace or expand existing slurry stores to provide six months storage.	To fund equipment to add value to eligible agricultural products.	To improve water use and to secure water supplies for crop irrigation.	To improve productivity through automation and installation of slurry acidification equipment.
<b>Grant status</b>	Round 1 closed. Round 2 to open early 2023.	To open in Autumn 2022.	Closed to new applications.	Closed to new applications.	Round 1 now closed.
<b>Deadlines</b>	Round 1 claim deadline: 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2022.	Not yet released.	Stage 1 full applications deadline - 31 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2024.	Tranche 1 applications deadline - 30 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2022.	N/A.
<b>Amount</b>	£2,000 to £25,000.	£25,000 to £250,000.	£25,000 to £300,000.	£35,000 to £500,000.	£35,000 to £500,000.
<b>Who can apply</b>	Farmers, horticulturalists, and forestry owners.	Pig, beef and dairy farmers whose systems produce slurry.	Growers or producers to add value to eligible agricultural products.	Arable and horticultural businesses growing irrigated food crops, ornamentals or forestry nurseries.	Farmers and horticulturalists.
<b>Examples of stuff that can be funded</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inter row hoe / weeders</li> <li>▪ Tree shears, timber trailers</li> <li>▪ Cattle crush, robotic silage pusher</li> <li>▪ Rainwater harvesting, slurry separators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Slurry stores</li> <li>▪ Impermeable covers</li> <li>▪ Pumps, pipes and safety equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Second-stage grain processing</li> <li>▪ Automatic vending machines (e.g., milk vendors)</li> <li>▪ Processing equipment (e.g., to make wool into yarn)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Irrigation equipment (trickle, boom, capillary beds)</li> <li>▪ Water reservoir construction</li> <li>▪ Pipework, dam walls, abstraction points.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Robotic harvesting &amp; weeding equipment, robotic feeding systems</li> <li>▪ Slurry acidification equipment</li> </ul>

### When and how to cut your hedges?

This can be an emotive issue but the following guidelines will help make hedges useful for wildlife:

- Bigger is generally better – wider hedges (say 2 metres wide) generally give more space and protection for wildlife. Taller is better too (say 2 metres high), although a range of heights is also valuable.
- Gap up – some species can't cross even small gaps, so fill any gaps (and it looks much better).
- Let the berries grow and leave them on – ideally cut the hedges at the end of winter to leave the larder of fruits and nuts for wildlife. Cut them once in two years or even less frequently if possible (although some roadside hedges may need annual cutting in places for road safety).
- Have a bit on the side – hedges with wide flower-rich margins act as wildlife corridors (and reservoirs of beneficial insects to eat pests in crops).

### A review of the Red Tractor standard forthcoming?

There is increasing debate in the farming community and press about what value Red Tractor certification provides to farmers. Many consider that its benefits are outweighed by the cost and paperwork. This has led to some farmers opting to not be assured, despite following the standard's requirements.



### **TB Advisory Service (TBAS) expands to cover the whole of England**

All livestock farmers in England can now benefit from the TBAS, a free biosecurity service funded by Defra which aims to protect herds by reducing the risks and spread of the disease. Previously, the service had only been available to farmers in or close to high risk areas. Many types of farm animals are eligible, including pigs, sheep, goats, deer and alpacas. The service includes phone advice and an initial farm visit by a TBAS-trained vet who provides tailored advice, followed by a follow-up visit six months later. More information on how to sign up to the service is available on the TBAS website [here](#).

### **Anglian Water's Farm Innovation Grant open for applications until 30<sup>th</sup> November**

The grant supports farmers within the [Anglian Water area](#) to improve the quality of water flowing through and below their land by reducing pesticide, nutrient, pathogen or soil pollution. There is no set list of options so farmers have to put forward what actions they intend to take to address priorities in the different catchments. It is a competitive scheme, with grants capped at £7,500 per holding. Offers are expected to be made before the New Year.

### **Support for new entrants to the agricultural industry**

People under the age of 40 and new entrants thinking about starting a career in the industry can access support through a new initiative, '[Opening the gate](#)', co-created by the Prince's Countryside Fund and Aldi. It offers virtual workshops and access to expert knowledge from farm managers and recruiters. The workshops will be held on Zoom with [the first one](#) taking place on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November at 7pm, on the topic of work experience, employment opportunities and networking for school and college leavers.

## **Environment**

### **UK's national parks offer £70m deal to land managers to restore peatland**

The initial funding of £70m over two years will be used to guarantee land managers a minimum price for carbon credits generated by restoring peatland so it does not emit greenhouse gases. The funding is being administered by Revere, a company formed between the UK's national parks and Palladium, a carbon finance business, last year. The fund will take a share of the increase in the value of the carbon credits over time, which it plans to sell to businesses to offset their own emissions. The national parks have entered into the joint venture as they said that restoration of degraded peatland was not happening at the required scale or pace needed, due to inadequate finance. Speak to [Joel Paterson](#) in our peatland team for more information.

### **Government fails to publish Environment Act targets on time**

Defra says it is unable to publish the targets, despite having had over three years to develop them. The Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) has said it is actively considering enforcement action. Environmental organisations have filed a complaint to the OEP and Defra over the failure. The targets are a requirement under the Environment Act, which was passed by this government, and are also a manifesto promise. The government published draft targets earlier this year but they were heavily criticised for their lack of ambition. For example, the proposal to increase 'nature' by 10% by 2042, beyond its levels in 2030, probably meant that 'nature' will actually be worse than it currently is. Many are hoping the government produces a set of stronger actions before the UN Biodiversity Conference, known as COP 15, this December. However, Defra has managed to miss almost all of its self-set deadlines for ELM development and the government has a wider history of setting 'world-leading' policies but failing to implement them, as evidenced by the Climate Change Committee.

## **Property**

### **Scottish tenants benefit from increased protection during the cost of living crisis**

The [Cost of Living \(Tenant Protection\) Scotland Bill](#) gives residential tenants greater protection from rent increases and evictions during the current cost of living crisis. The Scottish Government has set rent increases at 0% (i.e., no increases) until at least 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, after which the temporary measures will be reviewed.

### **Scottish Government consults on Werrity Review recommendations on grouse moor management**

The recommendations include licensing of grouse moors, muirburn and trapping of some species due to animal welfare concerns.