

Latest news from NFU south east region

Editor: sandra.nichols@nfu.org.uk  [follow us on Twitter](#)

Member benefit of the week:

Fancy getting away from it all? NFU members can get up to 15% off airport parking charges with APH. More information can be found here: <http://www.nfuonline.com/membership/farmer-grower/member-discounts/save-15-on-airport-parking-with-aph/>

NFU Conference next week:

The national NFU conference will be held next week at the ICC in Birmingham. We have a strong line up of speakers featuring government ministers and a wide range of industry experts. If you can't make the conference, don't panic! We will be streaming all of the main sessions live and they will also be available to watch again online. This link will take you to the conference viewing page:

<http://www.nfuonline.com/news/nfu-conference-2016/nfu-conference-2016-news/watch-the-nfu16-conference-live/>

NFU AGM & officeholder elections:

After the conference, the NFU AGM will be held at 2.30pm next Wednesday and the national officeholder elections will take place, with NFU Council voting the officeholders in. The 'white smoke' from the proverbial papal chimney should appear at about 4pm on Wednesday and results will be posted on the NFU website as soon as they are available. For more information on candidates please see:

<http://www.nfuonline.com/news/nfu-elections-2016/>

All members are encouraged to share their views on the candidates with their respective council delegate or county chairman – details for these can be found in the British Farmer and Grower magazine.

BPS 2016 meetings:

The meetings dates have been set! See the table below for full details. If you have any queries, please call 01730 711950.

Date	Time	Mtg starts	Venue	Postcode
Monday 4 April	9.30am – 12.30pm tea/coffee available on arrival	10.00am	Magnolia Park Hotel, Golf & Country Club, Boarstall Bucks	HP18 9XX
Thursday 7 April	9.30am – 12.30pm tea/coffee available on arrival	10.00am	Bredhurst Room, Kent showground, Detling	ME14 3JF

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Thursday 7 April	1.30pm – 4.30pm tea/coffee available on arrival	2.00pm	Kleinwort Pavilion Ardingly	RH17 6TL
Friday 8 April	10.00am – 1.00pm tea/coffee available on arrival	11.00am	Gilbert White Suite Sparsholt College Winchester	SO21 2NF
Friday 8 April	2.00 – 5.00pm tea/coffee available on arrival	2.30pm	Marcham & Drayton room, Oxford Abingdon Hotel, Abingdon	OX14 1TZ

Basic Payment Scheme latest:

We are aware that more payments have been released, but progress is still slow.

The RPA made a promise to contact everyone by the end of January to let them know when they will be paid. Some people have received letters, and some have received emails from the RPA – if you have had neither, then please check your email address registered with the RPA is correct and also check your junk folders. If you have still had no contact then do please let us know as we may be able to assist. Contact: NFU CallFirst 0370 8458458 or your County Adviser for any BPS queries.

We also have a range of briefings and Q&A documents on our BPS page:

<http://www.nfuonline.com/business/basic-payment-scheme-bps/>

Survey on OSR & Cabbage Stem Flea Beetle damage:

Please assist with our lobbying work on Neonicotinoids by filling out our online survey on flea beetle damage this year: <http://www.nfuonline.com/news/latest-news/take-part-in-our-osr-survey-your-data-matters/>

We need to assess the extent of the problem in order to push for future derogations on neonicotinoid use.

Rural Planning Review:

DEFRA is seeking to review the planning constraints facing rural businesses and to review the thresholds allowing conversion of agricultural buildings to residential.

Local planning authorities are therefore asking for opinions on the current planning system. DEFRA want to encourage as many people as possible to take part in this opportunity to help inform how planning for rural businesses might be improved. As such DEFRA are also seeking evidence from businesses, including farmers, who use the planning system in rural areas, so that they can build up a picture of how the planning system is working for these businesses. This includes how agricultural permitted development rights are operating. This evidence should provide DEFRA with a picture of what is happening across England, and reveal any local and national issues.

If you would like to contribute your views then please complete the survey at

www.surveymonkey.com/r/RBDXGFD. If you are unable to complete the online survey, please could you email your response to RuralPlanningReview@communities.gsi.gov.uk.

Big Farmland Bird Count:

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There is still time to submit your results – you can use this link to take you speedily to the submission page <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2016gwctbigfarmlandbirdcount>

2016 Conservation plot Seed offers in conjunction with the Campaign for the Farmed Environment:

If you are thinking of planting plots for birds, bees, bugs and a greener farm, you can contact the Campaign for the Farmed Environment South East team, who have partnered with seed companies to arrange discounted rates for the following mixes:

1. Summer Sown Field margin mix - £30 for 4kg for 1 ha

Smooth Stalked meadow grass, Rough Stalked meadow grass, Timothy, Sheeps fescue, White clover, Yellow rattle, Chewings Fescue, Red Clover, Tall Fescue, Crested Dogtail Birdsfoot Trefoil, Lesser Knapweed & Common Bent. Produced by BASF, available via Limagrain. Call or email us for a voucher number. Max 10 units per holding.

2. May to July Sown "Bees n Seeds" mix - £50 for 20kg for 1 ha

Mustard, Brown mustard, Buckwheat, Gold of Pleasure, Kale rape, Sunflower, Phacelia, Fodder radish To plant May-July. By Syngenta, available via Kings. Call or email us for a voucher number. Max 15 packs per farm. Closes 1st July 2016.

3. Autumn Sown Pollinator mix - £35 for 4kg for 1 ha

Crimson clover, Red clover, Phacelia, Native cornflower, Native corn marigold, Native corn chamomile By Syngenta, available via Kings. Call or email us for a voucher number. Max 10 packs per farm. Closes 1st October 2016.

CFE South East team contacts for information and vouchers:

Email: southeast@cfeonline.org.uk

Call or text: Helen Theobald 07816 648112

Energy Barns around the M25 Corridor:

Energy storage is going to be an important part of the UK's energy generation and distribution system, helping to smooth out the intermittency of renewable generation systems and ensuring smooth supply on the grid. Technology has been trialled to store excess electricity through battery systems which can reduce the peaks in supply and demand that UK energy suppliers and the national grid have to deal with.

Opportunity for landowners:

The Government has released funding to support "Smarter Network Storage" Projects, i.e. Energy Barns. If you farm in the M25 corridor and are interested in leasing out your land for an Energy Barn you could benefit from the following:

- Landowner to receive 3 years plus 3 year option for a 25 year lease.
- Annual payment of £2000/MWp capacity: approx. £20,000 pa.
- All agent and legal fees paid for.
- All permissions applied for by the RNA Energy company.
- New steel portal frame building erected (50mx20m) near existing farm buildings.



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- End of 25 year lease building revert to landowner for peppercorn fee of £1.

Only a small area on your property **near other buildings is required (about 10,000 square feet, or less than half an acre)**. The batteries within the Energy Barn store excess energy from the grid to be used at later times, and therefore a connection into your existing power line is needed.

The proposed site should be **approximately 300m from a 33kV connection**.

If you are interested in receiving more details please contact:

Emma Powlett, emma@powlett.co.uk

Free workshops on Forestry grants:

The FACE Consortium are forest business advisors that are available to provide free advice to forest businesses and organisations in a range of areas from timber harvesting, extraction and primary processing equipment to training, business advice and marketing. To help you with taking these ideas forwards, they are holding a series of Application Masterclasses. The Application Masterclasses will explain in detail how to create the best possible grant applications, with opportunities to ask questions and discuss your proposals. These are being run free of charge by the FACE Consortium.

The Application Masterclasses will take place in the following locations:

Hampshire / Surrey – Monday 29th February (2:30pm – 5:30pm)

Alice Holt Research Station, Alice Holt Lodge, Farnham, Surrey GU10 4LH

Kent / East Sussex border – Tuesday 1st March 2016 (3pm – 6pm)

Woodlands Enterprise Centre, Hastings Road, Flimwell, Wadhurst, East Sussex, TN5 7PR

Berks / Bucks / Oxon – Wednesday 2nd March (3pm – 6pm)

Sylva Wood Centre, Little Wittenham Road, Long Wittenham, Oxfordshire, OX14 4QT

Berks, Bucks & Oxon - County Adviser – tom.cackett@nfu.org.uk

Farmer survey on attitudes towards environmental management and risk:

The University of Reading is currently undertaking work in relation to farm management and how this impacts on the environment and how, in turn, the environment is able to provide benefits to agricultural production.

The University is now seeking the view of farmers in the wider community on their practices and attitudes towards environmental management and risk. It would be greatly appreciated if those of you involved in farming/farm management could spare some time to fill in the online questionnaire. This should take less than 15 minutes of your time, and can be found at the bottom of the opening page of the project website:

<http://www.fp7liberation.eu/>. Responses are anonymous.

Free Workshop for farmers in the River Ock Catchment:

The Farming Advice Service are running a FREE workshop focusing on water quality and how improved soil management benefits the farm business and the environment

The event will take place between 9.30am – 3.00pm on 3rd March at The Old Baptist Hall, Packhorse Lane, Marcham Oxon, OX13 6NG. Lunch is provided and after lunch the group will depart for the field site to look at

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soil compaction, soil organic matter and soil health. Places are limited so please book now to avoid disappointment. Bookings and Technical helpline: 0345 345 1302 Email: bookings@farmingadvice.org.uk

Hampshire and Surrey – County Adviser sandra.nichols@nfu.org.uk - [twitter](#)

Your County Adviser is on leave from 12 February returning to work on 29 February. If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the NFU regional office on 01730 711950.

Surrey County Council proposal on waste charging:

SCC is proposing to charge for DIY 'non-household waste' from private individuals homes and reduce opening hours at Surrey Community Recycling Centres (CRCs). The NFU is concerned that charging for domestic waste will encourage more fly tipping and essentially pass on costs to the landowner for the associated clear up. If you wish to raise objections to this proposal, there is a petition sponsored by a Mole Valley District Councillor: <http://petitions.surreycc.gov.uk/nochargecrc/>

Kent

Your County Adviser, Catherine Joules, is currently on maternity leave. Any issues that can't be dealt with either by your Group Secretary or NFU CallFirst on 0370 845 8458, will be covered by us in the regional office on 01730 711950.

Calling Kent NFU Golfers:

This year's SE Qualifier for the NFU Golfing Society Finals will be held on the Goodwood Park course on Monday 13 June. The event includes: 9 holes Greensomes; Light lunch; 18 holes 4 ball betterball; Dinner and presentation.

The Kent presence at this annual event has been very lacking over recent years. If you would like to know more about this event and the NFU Golfing Society please contact: Matthew Griffin at the NFU Office, Edenbridge. Email: Matthew.griffin@nfumutual.co.uk or call: 01732 867727

Farm Walk - 'Life on the Edge'- benefits of field margins:

Join expert speakers on 23 February from 10am until 2pm at Chapel Bank Farm, Reading Street, Tenterden, TN30 7HU, courtesy of Tim Piper, followed by lunch in The Ferry at Stone in Oxney TN30 7JY: BASIS & NRoSO points available.

- Mike Edwards – Syngenta Operation Pollinator – pollinator & beneficial insects – environmental and economic value
- Peter Thompson – Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust – wildlife and biodiversity - keeping water clean
- Tim Clarke - Independent Agronomist – weed problems – mechanical and chemical controls

Book via SouthEast@CFEonline.org.uk or contact Prim on 07580 004 645

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Sussex and Isle of Wight – County Adviser james.osman@nfu.org.uk - [twitter](#)

West Sussex broadband grant scheme:

This capital grant scheme will support superfast connection for groups of businesses not planned for inclusion in either the commercial or publicly-funded rollouts of broadband infrastructure. Business estates or clusters in West Sussex have until 17th April 2016 to apply to the new Digital Connectivity Grant Programme which will provide up to 40 per cent of the cost of getting connected. There will be a workshop for potential applicants on the afternoon of Wednesday 11th March 1-4pm at the South Downs Centre in Midhurst. For more information visit: <http://www.coast2capital.org.uk/helping-business-growth/grant-funding/digital-connectivity-grant-programme.html#sthash.8J101aTD.dpbs>

Farm Walk - 'Life on the Edge'- benefits of field margins

Join expert speakers on 25 February from 10am until 2pm at Priors Byne Farm, Bines Lane, Partridge Green, RH13 8EQ, courtesy of John Ford, followed by lunch in The Green Man. BASIS & NRoSO points available.

- Mike Edwards – Syngenta Operation Pollinator – pollinator & beneficial insects – environmental and economic value
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Manager sought for mixed family farm

New working farm manager is sought for 1100 acre mixed downland farm, which straddles the Cuckmere Valley. Cattle: extensive herd of suckler cows, with weanlings taken through to finish intensively. Lambing flock of 1000 ewes with full time shepherd. 300 acres arable (wheat and spring barley). 3 bedroom tied cottage. Please send cv to: rbrown.gira@btinternet.com or call on 01323 870144.