

Asset

PROPERTY AND PLANNING NEWS AND UPDATES

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**Lambert
& Foster**

PROPERTY PROFESSIONALS

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2023 – A LEVELLING UP YEAR!

Welcome to our first edition of 2023. We are hoping that the Government's announcement just before Christmas for the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill with reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework will provide opportunity for a more stable planning system. Inevitably, there will be more focus on climate and environmental factors when

decisions are being made for the future allocation of land in Local Plans. The property industry needs certainty and confidence and we are optimistic that this year we will see that return. I hope you enjoy reading this issue of Asset.

TIM DUNCAN, DIRECTOR



PROPERTY PROFESSIONALS FOR OVER 100 YEARS

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SITE PROMOTION & DEVELOPMENT | COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL LETTINGS



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CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

RURAL AGENCY UPDATE

The team have recently launched a number of new instructions including 107 acres of broadleaf woodland in Southborough, an opportunity to purchase a barn with prior approval for residential conversion in West Farleigh, and 65 acres of Grade III Wealden pasture with a range of former Hopper Huts in Rolvenden.



Alan Mummy



Dan Page



Amelia Rogers



Will Jex



Full details of these new properties can be downloaded from the Lambert & Foster website.

What's new for 2023?

DEFRA have started 2023 by introducing a new Management Payment to the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) and updating payments rates under Countryside Stewardship.

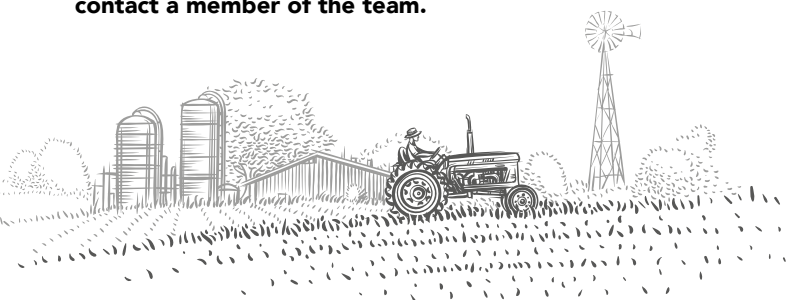
INTRODUCING SFI MANAGEMENT PAYMENTS

The Sustainable Farming Incentive Management Payment will provide farmers with £20 per hectare, for up to 50 hectares of land entered in the scheme, providing up to £1,000 per year in addition to payments under the scheme Standards.

This additional payment, which will be made available to both new and existing agreement holders, is intended to cover the administrative costs of participation.

Jon Booth, Director of Lambert & Foster, comments; "a management payment is certainly welcome, and may encourage those not yet engaged with the Scheme to reconsider. We expect additional SFI Standards to be announced in the coming weeks, so watch this space!".

If you wish to explore the Sustainable Farming Incentive for your holding, and would like more information, please do contact a member of the team.



UPDATED COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP PAYMENT RATES

DEFRA have also announced changes to the payment rates for options and capital items under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

On average, option payment rates will increase by 10%, and payment rates for capital items by 48%, though it should be noted that the increases for some will be greater than others; the overall intention is to ensure the payments received more accurately reflect the actual costs incurred in meeting the requirements.

Option payment rate changes will apply to all Countryside Stewardship Agreements, including existing, while capital payment rate changes will only apply to new Countryside Stewardship agreements that start in January 2024.

The Countryside Stewardship schemes opens for applications for the final time this Spring for agreements starting in January 2024, which will provide a guaranteed income for five years. This can be particularly useful for holdings not eligible for the Standards currently available under the Sustainable Farming Incentive but feeling the effects of the reduction in BPS payments.

If you would like assistance with applying for an agreement this year, please contact a member of the team.

Discord within Lewes District Council over housing numbers

Lewes District Councilors met on 8th December 2022 to discuss the progress of its new Local Plan after the Government's announcement of its 'advisory' 300,000 annual national house building targets. Currently, the Government's formular requires the construction of 783 new properties across Lewes District every year; a figure that cabinet Councilillors have called upon the Government to 'rip up'. To give this some context, Lewes's current Local Plan, adopted in 2016, set an annual housing requirement of half this number, at 345 homes.

Deputy Leader of the Council was quoted saying:

"The comments by the Secretary of State for Levelling-Up creates a smokescreen to pacify all those who are as appalled by the Government's housing targets as we are in Lewes district. The announcement offers zero certainty for residents and instead spreads false hope that unwanted development now won't happen."

This debate came after an 'unprecedented' 42,000 comments from a recent consultation about future development in the district and where it should be built; the level of response of which was seen as sending a clear signal to the Government that their planning system is not fit for purpose and requires root changes.

How this is to be resolved remains very much an unknown, however with Councilillors making comments such as that "The government's planning system has united people against it, not least because these ill-conceived housing numbers are causing great and unnecessary concern to many communities. They should rip up their method for working them out and listen to local people, not policy makers in Whitehall", it will no doubt be a herculean task! Watch this space for further updates!



RURAL GRANTS

We are often asked about the availability of grants to support farm investment.

Farming Equipment & Technology Fund

Farming Transformation Fund

- Slurry Infrastructure

- Adding Value

- Improving Farm Productivity

- Water Management

Farming Futures Research & Development Fund

If you require assistance with an application or have a project in mind, please contact a member of the team.

In addition to the RPA, there are grants available through KCC and Medway County Council. They are often targeted at R&D, as opposed to grants for capital items.

As soon as the grant schemes are re-opened, L&F will provide updates through our Rural Services mailing list. Make sure you are on the list!

→ www.lambertandfoster.co.uk/join-the-mailing-list/



Property development is a team game

In the arena of competitive sport the winners are often the team that made the most of each player's expertise and specialist skill set. Essentially, the team performs better than the sum of its parts. In the world of property development, it is no different.

Even before development potential is established, right the way through to the marketing and sale of the finished units, the ultimate success of a property development is down to an extensive team of property professionals, experts and specialist consultants, all working

together to deliver an optimum outcome.

As a client of Lambert & Foster and of Bloomfields Chartered Town Planners, you gain direct access to your very own extensive team of experienced property professionals. The wide range of property services available across our businesses allows us to guide, advise and service your needs at every stage of the development process.

An experienced, focused team that



works seamlessly together to deliver an optimal outcome can be very hard to beat. If you own land and think it may have potential for development of any kind, or if you're looking for new sites to develop, we would love to hear from you.

At every step, one of our **Development Surveyors** can remain involved, comparing, and contrasting the various options, ensuring the most appropriate and financially viable development scheme.

STEP 1

Development Potential

Our initial 'desktop' appraisal process allows us to analyse a site. The Development team can also physically visit your site. We then report back to you on the development potential and potential price.

STEP 2

Planning & Technical Design

The Bloomfields planning experts together with their architectural team provide a full planning service.

STEP 3

Marketing

Our Development Land Agency department can formulate a tailor-made professional marketing and disposal strategy. We can generate significant interest and drive market competition to draw out the most suitable purchaser for you at an optimal price.

STEP 4

Sale

Our Valuation Department Surveyors can produce formal RICS 'Red Book' valuations. Our market-leading Estate and Lettings Agency departments can assist and deliver a comprehensive sales or letting service.



Planning permission granted for flood protection works

Following a flood event last year which caused damage to the listed building, advice was sought to provide flood protection measures that would protect the listed building but not impact its setting or historic fabric.

A case was made to the Council to provide a flood protection wall and flood bund, whilst also providing flood compensation measures to ensure that the risk of flooding did not increase elsewhere. This was granted by the Council without delay.

"Possibly the most significant reunion since Take That!"

We were delighted to see some old faces back at the office when former Partners, John Butler, David Benson and Peter Hodges visited to meet with Nick Brandreth and Director, Alan Mummery.

Alan commented; "I joined the firm in 1986 and these chaps were my bosses during the early part of my career. It speaks volumes for the firm that we maintain contact with our extended family of former Partners and staff, and it was great fun to get the old team back together. Possibly the most significant reunion since Take That!" Alan went on to say, "I often get asked how my old Partners are doing so I thought everyone would enjoy this happy picture."





HLS extension offers now being received

Back in September 2022, the RPA announced that farmers in England will have the option of extending their Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreements for a further 5 years from 2023.

The majority of existing HLS agreements will be offered an extension, however, if this is not the case, the RPA will confirm exactly why the agreement cannot be extended.

These extension offers are now beginning to arrive in the inboxes of clients who are making calls to us for advice on the pros and cons of continuing their agreement for a further five years.

These new agreements do not preclude a farmer from exiting the agreement early, which can be done so without penalty, to enter into a new land management scheme or a Countryside Stewardship (CS) agreement.

Whilst keeping the existing HLS agreement for a further five years, the agreement holder can still also apply for:

- a CS Capital grant or a new CS Higher Tier Capital only grant, which will be open for new applications all year round.
- a CS Higher Tier, Mid Tier or Wildlife Offer agreement starting from 1 January 2024. In a break from previous rules, therefore, this additional agreement can be in the same parcel as an existing HLS or CS option as long as there is sufficient room for them to co-locate and not overlap. The HLS and CS options must not conflict with each other.
- the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI). Again, there must be enough room for the existing and new options to co-locate, not overlap, and the HLS and SFI options must not be in conflict.

As we have seen previously with the single year extensions, the agreement holder will be asked to simply sign the offer letter and return it to the RPA before the existing agreement expires; which we can do on the agreement holder's behalf in most cases.

If you have received such an email from the RPA and would like to discuss it in further detail, please contact your local Lambert & Foster office: East Sussex or 01435 873999, West Kent on 01892 83232, or East Kent on 01303 814444.

New funding for agricultural and horticultural automation and robotics

DEFRA has announced the third round of their Farming Futures Research and Development Fund. The competitive fund, which opened for applications on 9th January 2023, will match-fund projects with a total cost of between £750,000 and £1,500,000, that see farms and researchers collaborating to find innovative solutions using automation and robotic technologies to overcome sector-wide challenges, while boosting productivity and sustainable farming practices. There are two strands to the fund – the first supports the research and development of new innovations, while the second accelerates the deployment of recently developed automation and robotics.

Please get in touch with our Rural Professionals team if you need advice and help on this matter.

Annual Tax on Enveloped Dwellings – Revaluation Date

Introduced on 1st April 2013, Annual Tax on Enveloped Dwellings (ATED) is a tax that is payable annually in the UK on residential dwellings which have been valued at over £500,000 and are owned fully or partly by a company.

ATED is calculated on a banding system based upon property value. The revaluation of the dwelling as at specified date is essential every five years. For the 2023-2024 ATED year and the four years thereafter the property must be valued as at 1st April 2022.

Annual charges have been increased since previous years, in line with inflation. According to the Office of National Statistics,

“UK average house prices increased by 15.5% over the year to July 2022, up from 7.8% in June 2022. This is the highest annual inflation rate the UK has seen since May 2003”.

This means that properties that have previously fallen below the £500,000 threshold may now be eligible. Reliefs are available which can alleviate up to 100% of the tax payable. However, an annual tax return, submitted on 1st April must be submitted for the relief to be claimed.

Lambert & Foster's valuation team are well placed to assist you with producing a robust valuation for HMRC. It is vital to obtain an accurate valuation as the figure will determine your financial burdens for the next five years. Furthermore, accuracy is even more crucial should your property be close to the boundary of a band.

If you wish to find out how we can assist, please contact the valuation team at your local office.



Should I stay or should I go?

In the last two years property prices have risen steeply. But, with the Bank of England interest rate rises how is this affecting house prices and what can we expect?

The reality is that if the market falls, it's not just the house you are buying that will likely fall in value but the house you are selling too. Therefore, it is important to know you have therefore considered all options to maximise your property's value whilst you ensure you have an agent who is confident (yet realistic) in negotiating on your behalf.

Property portals are already displaying a range of discounted properties and it is clear to see that all parties may seem more willing to negotiate than they were in the past. So, having a good professional agent with local knowledge to oversee this can streamline this whole process.

There is no denying that the current situation appears testing for most with a mortgage. For many, downsizing is a good way to make financial commitments more manageable. But remember, downsizing doesn't necessarily mean in physical size terms, it can also mean financial terms too for those moving out of London so having a comprehensive database of waiting purchasers, like we do, can broaden your options as a seller.

The days of flipping property to make a quick profit may seem reduced, but it is often worth making the move when you find something you love or when you find something more financially manageable.

Having been around for over 120 years, we have helped many local people get through challenging times and our commitment to this will not stop. We are here to help guide you through the difficult decisions, with measured, calm, professional advice and local knowledge.

To organise your market appraisal and receive professional, local advice, contact your friendly local office at Wadhurst, Cranbrook or Paddock Wood.



Gill Weavers
Wadhurst



Ross Banes
Paddock Wood



Alex Cox
Cranbrook



Permission granted to remove agricultural occupancy condition

Permission has been granted by Bromley Council for the removal of an agricultural occupancy condition. Following the successful grant of a lawful development certificate to prove non-compliance with the occupancy condition, a case was made by Bloomfields that the agricultural occupancy condition was no longer relevant to planning, enforceable or reasonable. The application was accompanied by a valuation of the property undertaken by Lambert & Foster, which provided evidence that the dwelling was well beyond the economic reach of the condition's target audience. The removal of the condition has subsequently increased the value of the property significantly.

FOR SALE

HARRIETSHAM, KENT

An Impressive Grade II Listed period farmhouse with a significant two-storey traditional brick rear wing extension including an ancillary detached single roundel oast, ragstone stable, triple garage and a range of former agricultural buildings complemented by formal lawned gardens and paddocks extending in all to 3.76 acres.

GUIDE PRICE £1,800,000



UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL VALUE OF YOUR LAND

Do you have land suitable for **residential development** which is adjoining towns, villages or hamlets in the south east?

The time is right to explore the potential of your land - for an initial appraisal, please contact Tim Duncan on 01892 832 325
tim.duncan@lambertandfoster.co.uk

Should you use a letting agent or manage a property yourself?

Many landlords manage their properties on their own and do it very well, but for others it's far more convenient and time saving to use a letting agent.

Consider managing your property yourself if:

- Keeping costs to a bare minimum is a necessary consideration.
- You can take the time to deal with tenants' queries and problems as they occur... a water leak for example, will not wait.
- You know reliable professionals (e.g. plumbers and electricians) who you can call upon to help with any problems, at short notice.
- You are prepared not only to study current regulations that affect landlords and tenants, but also to keep abreast and respond to any new legislation as it becomes law
- You want to be a hands-on landlord and are happy to receive calls at any time during the day and also in the evening.
- You live close to your let property, so you can pop over easily to check any small issues.
- You are willing to do inspections at the property quarterly and speak directly with tenants about any problems.
- You are handy and can attend to minor issues yourself.
- You are willing to check payments are received and tackle tenants regarding any late rental payments.
- You are happy to keep track of all expenditure and keep invoices and statements to provide to your accountant for tax purposes.
- You can issue the necessary paperwork to increase the rent or serve a notice to quit.

It is advantageous to use a letting agent if:

- You are new to being a landlord and want some professional help to avoid falling foul of legislation.
- You do not have a lot of spare time to deal with any issues.
- You would prefer someone else to deal with tenants' queries and to handle any problems.
- You would find it hard to conduct inspections and take the tenant to task about anything you are unhappy with.
- You live a good distance from the property, so inspections or looking at small maintenance issues would be difficult.
- You would be uncomfortable dealing with tenants in rent arrears.
- You do not have good local contacts such as electricians or plumbers to call upon at short notice.
- You would not be comfortable completing and providing relevant paperwork.
- You would like ongoing advice on current market conditions and rental values.
- You would like advice on how to reach a higher EPC value for your property, or what improvements will make a difference to rental value in future.
- You would like your accountant/yourself updated with an annual statement for your tax return, with relevant invoices provided.

At Lambert & Foster we aim to take the stress away from letting a property and take care of all day to day matters, whilst keeping you informed. We keep up to date with all current legislation, so you don't have to worry.

We are there to check that the property is well maintained and rent is received and transferred promptly. We are on hand for advice and have experience dealing with all sorts of people and issues.

We are happy to work with you in the manner that suits you best and can be flexible if things change and you need more or less help as the rental progresses.

MEET THE LETTINGS TEAM



Melanie Payne
MARLA



Sally Patient



Lucy Austin



Emily Nicholson



Katie Chyla

1 IN 3 PEOPLE IN ENGLAND
WOULD LIKE TO BUILD
THEIR OWN HOME

Custom Build - The Future of New Home Delivery?

Recently, a small sector of the UK new build housing market has started to gain significant traction and remarkable market growth – Custom Build.

There are many advantages to the Custom Build approach, both for landowners and homeowners. It offers a lower risk and less hands-on experience than the typical ups and downs of a 'self-build' project you might have seen many times on C4's 'Grand Designs.'

Traditionally, landowners sell development land on to a PLC or regional housebuilder. The amount the vendor receives is the gross value of the end development (the GDV), less all the associated costs, including the developers profit. Effectively, landowners are selling each plot to the PLC housebuilder at a 'wholesale' price.

With the Custom Build approach, landowners often partner-up with a custom build developer, who then installs the necessary roads, pavements, and utilities to create a 'fully serviced' plot. Each plot is provided with a 'plot passport' which details planning, design, and other construction constraints. The plots are then openly marketed and sold on to incoming homeowners, often at a higher 'retail' price.

From the homeowner's perspective, rather than having to adapt their lifestyle around a pre-built house, they can essentially pick their new home from a brochure and make specific choices on the homes look, feel, layout and design.

If you are interested in investigating the potential of your own land for residential development, please get in touch.



**Lambert & Foster
and Bloomfields are
proud sponsors of the
Tunbridge Wells
Foresters football
team for the
2022/23 season - Go Foresters!**

THE LAMBERT & FOSTER PADDOCK WOOD HALF MARATHON

We are delighted to be once again sponsoring one of the most successful races in the Southeast. It's time to book it into your running calendar!

The 2023 half marathon will be held on Sunday 12th March 2023. Entries are now open! Sign up at:
www.paddockwoodhalfmarathon.co.uk

**FARM
EXPO**
KENT COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

**We will be at Farm Expo
on 1st March 2023 - join
us there!**

**You can sign up for property alerts, request
market appraisals, join our mailing list, browse
the latest property news and see the team at
www.lambertandfoster.co.uk**



www.lambertandfoster.co.uk www.bloomfieldsltd.co.uk

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