

# UTASS Briefing: 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

## BASIC PAYMENT SCHEME (BPS) 2018.

The RPA have announced that they have delayed the opening of the application period for BPS 2018 until the middle of March so that they can stabilise the online land information after the errors in the recent mapping refresh. We will let our members know when RPA Online is opening for applications. The deadline for submitting claims without a penalty for late applications is **15<sup>th</sup> May 2018**. However, given the many problems we have picked up from the RPA mapping refresh, it would be sensible not to leave applications to the last minute.

## HEDGEROW AND BOUNDARIES GRANT SCHEME.

The 2018 scheme opened for applications in January. It is very similar to the 2017 scheme with the same requirement for maps and photographs to accompany an application. The maximum grant per holding has increased to £10,000 with a deadline for applications of the **30<sup>th</sup> April 2018**.

## COUNTRYSIDE PRODUCTIVITY SMALL GRANTS.

The RDPE Countryside Productivity Small Grant scheme provides funding for farmers to purchase equipment to improve the productivity of their farm. It uses an online application process and is targeted at supporting investment for specific pieces of agricultural equipment such as livestock fixed and mobile handling equipment (including EID readers), precision farming, resource management and general equipment. Everything is on a 40% “standard costs” grant with a scheme maximum of £30,000. The deadline for applications is **14<sup>th</sup> March 2018**. Successful applicants have 150 days from approval to purchase or install the equipment.

## COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP

Natural England have announced some new packages for the Middle Tier of Countryside Stewardship including an Uplands Option. The requirements have been simplified and the scheme is no longer competitive: all eligible applications are guaranteed an agreement. The scheme is still very prescriptive and bureaucratic but is an improvement on what was on offer. It may be worth some members looking at the details and considering a possible application. The deadline for requesting an application pack is **31<sup>st</sup> May 2018** and the deadline for submitting an application **31<sup>st</sup> July 2018**.

UTASS will do its best to provide support and assistance to all its members who wish to apply to any of the above schemes. However, given the complex and tight time scales involved, we will be giving priority to BPS applications as soon as the application window opens.

For further advice and assistance please call UTASS 01833 641010.  
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