

UTASS Briefing: 8th February 2019.

BPS 2019 APPLICATIONS.

Defra have announced that the 2019 application period will open on 13th March. Applicants are encouraged to check all the online details the RPA hold for their business before making an application. The accuracy of mapping information is important but the business partners, bank details and entitlement information needs to be correct as well. The online transfer of entitlements is now active. **Midnight on the 15th May 2019** is as usual the deadline for receiving applications, transfer of entitlements for use in 2019 and Young and New farmer additional application forms. Late forms are accepted up to the 10th June but penalties will apply

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP.

All holders of HLS, UELS and Countryside Stewardship agreements that are not just related to capital works need to submit a claim for their annual management payment by **15th May 2019**.

COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP.

The window for applications opens on the 18th February for all the schemes running under the Countryside Stewardship banner. The deadline for requesting Higher Tier application packs is 31st March 2019 and for mid-tier 31 May 2019. Defra are also running the Hedgerow and Boundary Capital Grant scheme again with a deadline for applications of the 3rd May. If members need assistance with applications it would be helpful if appointments are made early in the application window as BPS claims have to take priority once the application process opens on the 13th March.

MEMBER SURVEY.

Thanks to all our members who have completed and returned the annual survey. It is a requirement of our funders and helps us provide the services that are most beneficial to our members. Though the deadline is past, there is still time to get your views included if you are quick!

UTASS OPENING TIMES.

A review has shown that UTASS staff are working over their hours on a regular basis. Looking at the times when there is little demand and after due consideration it has been decided to reduce the opening times as follows

- With effect 1st February 2019 the office will close at 4pm on Fridays
- With effect from 1st July 2019 the office will close on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30pm (This is to allow for preparation for, and dealing with, applications for various payments in the beginning of the year)

These times will be kept under review and will be reconsidered if there is a noticeable reduction in the service UTASS is able to offer its members. Thank you for your understanding. Bob Danby

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

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