



oakbank
CREATING THE PERFECT HABITAT

OAKBANK E-NEWS JULY 2024



STEWARDSHIP REMINDERS

ELS JULY

6M BUFFER STRIPS ON CULTIVATED LAND (EE3 & EE9)

the 3m next to the crop should be cut after **15th July**

12M BUFFER STRIPS FOR WATERCOURSES ON CULTIVATED LAND (EJ9)

the 6m next to the crop should be cut after **15th July**

NECTAR FLOWER MIX (EF4)

if you haven't done so already, cut half the area of nectar flower mix to 20cm by the end of **this week** (unless ground-nesting birds are present)

VERY LOW INPUT GRASS (EK3)

you can now (**from 1st July**) cut, harrow and roll (if you need to)

MANAGEMENT OF RUSH PASTURES (EK4)

you can now (**from 1st July**) harrow and roll (NOT CUT)

CSS OPTIONS JULY

NESTING PLOTS FOR LAPWING AND STONE CURLEW (AB5)

retain cultivated areas until **31st July** (after which they can be sprayed off, cultivated and sown with mustard/turnips to provide extra partridge holding cover)

ENHANCED OVERWINTER STUBBLE (AB6)

retain stubble and any subsequent regen until **31st July**

HARVESTED LOW INPUT CEREAL (AB14)

do not harvest before **15th July**

PERMANENT GRASSLAND WITH VERY LOW INPUTS (GS2)

can be cut for hay or silage from the **1st July**, as long as you do not disturb nesting birds

4-6M BUFFER ON CULTIVATED LAND (SW1)

cut between 1-3m of the strip next to the crop edge after **15th July**

IN-FIELD GRASS STRIP (SW3)

cut the entire area after **15th July**

12-24M BUFFER (SW4)

the 6m next to the crop should be cut after **15th July**

SFI

Defra expects that the new expanded offer for SFI to be fully operational by 22nd July 2024. However, the scheme is now open to selected applicants who submit an expression of interest form (see below).

SFI2024 Expression of Interest form:

https://defragroup.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cSGsCBrA5Kim3H0

The scheme will be open to new entrants to farming who have not previously been registered under BPS.

Agreements will last 3 or 5 years depending on actions chosen.

Processing of applications will be done automatically and should take a few days, with the first quarterly payment arriving in the fourth month after your agreement start date.

SFI2024 Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-farming-incentive-scheme-expanded-offer-for-2024/sfi-scheme-information-expanded-offer-for-2024>



COVER AND COMPANION CROPS

Please take a look at the new opportunities for Catch and Cover Crops within SFI, they offer attractive funding for these highly effective tools within your rotation. However, this opportunity will also bring significant increased demand for the seeds and mixes, so please do not delay in speaking to us about your requirements, or you may miss out on the most suitable options.

For more information and seed quotes, please contact the team at the office on 01480 890686.

TREES & WOODLAND

SPRUCE TREE PEST; IPS BARK BEETLE DEMARCATION ZONE EXTENSION

An extended demarcated area (DMA) is now in place to prevent the spread of Ips Typographus in spruce Crops. It covers parts of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk. This is in addition to existing demarcated areas in Hampshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Surrey, City of London, Greater London, West Sussex, East Sussex, Kent and Essex. To check whether your woodland falls in the zone a [new map is available here](#). Full guidance of the requirements are available [here](#). If in doubt, don't hesitate to get in touch with us to discuss.

WOODLAND CREATION REMINDER

Applications to the [England Woodland Creation Offer \(EWCO\) grant](#) (EWCO) grant that aim to plant in autumn or winter 2024-25 must be submitted in full by 30 June 2024. Whilst this date has just passed, if you are considering to plant new woodland this year, talk to us now as there may still just be time!

OAKBANK DEMONSTRATION DAY

On the 20th June, we hosted a demonstration day with our Velcourt colleagues at Stamford. We had six autumn-sown demonstration plots, side by side, looking at different stewardship options. Plots included three legume fallow options, herbal ley, bumblebird mix and a pollen and nectar mix.

Discussions on establishment, management and why to choose each option were covered.

Velcourt also had nutrient trials on display, expertly undertaken by their trials team, as well as Limagrain discussing wheat variety options.

We are looking to continue the demonstration plots and run the open day again. Please let us know if you would be interested in attending next year.



JOB OPPORTUNITIES

We are recruiting into both our Woodland and our Stewardship and Conservation Divisions. If you know of anyone with the relevant skills who might be interested in joining our friendly and dynamic team then please pass on these links

[Oakbank Recruitment - Woodland Consultant - Oakbankgc](#)

[Oakbank Recruitment - Farm Environment & Stewardship Advisor - Oakbankgc](#)

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