



oakbank

CREATING THE PERFECT HABITAT

OAKBANK E-NEWS DECEMBER 2024



STEWARDSHIP REMINDERS

ELS DECEMBER

Hedge and ditch bank cutting continues as does ditch cleaning.

SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDING FOR FARMLAND BIRDS (EF23/HF24 & AB12)

A reminder that the feeding period for AB12 starts on 1st December and EF23 on 1st January (HF24 can be either) so make sure you have your food ready to go. Remember a maximum of 70% of the mix can be cereals with at least 30% of the overall mix being small seeds such as oilseed rape, millet or canary seed. You **MUST NOT** use tailings/screenings.

Please contact the office to discuss different mix options and prices.

SKYLARK PLOTS (EF8 & AB4)

Make sure they are sprayed out of winter cereal crops by 31st Dec. Each plot must be at least 3m wide and a minimum area of 16m².

DEFRA ANNOUNCES HOLD ON CAPITAL GRANT APPLICATIONS

On 27th November, and without notice, Defra announced that they were closing the main Capital grant scheme [An update on capital grants – Farming](#)

We understand that existing applications already submitted are likely to receive agreement offers but there is no clarity on this as yet.

KIRSTY BRANNAN

On 6th December we say goodbye to Kirsty Brannan who takes up a role with the Crown Estate as their Biodiversity & Conservation Manager. Having done quite a bit of work for the Crown Estate in the past we are hopeful that we will continue to work with Kirsty in the future. But for now we wanted to thank her for her huge contribution to Oakbank over the past 6 years and wish her the very best for the future.



WOODLAND & TREES

DEFRA HOLD ON CAPITAL GRANT APPLICATIONS:

With regards to the above announcement, this does not apply to the following woodland related grants:

Woodland Tree Health grants, which help protect tree health against devastating plant pests and diseases.

Capital grant plans and management plans are important to help support the development of new CS Higher Tier agreements.

Protection and Infrastructure grants and Higher Tier capital grants, help support delivery of high value environmental benefits.

However, we are still seeing a huge delay in the processing of these grants and are still waiting on Woodland Management Plan Grants to be approved, some of which were applied for several months ago.

CHRISTMAS CRACKER

Our seasonal interesting fact comes from woodland advisor, **Tom Penrose**:

Recent research shows that British Christmas tree farms provide habitat for a diverse range of wildlife. A study funded by the British Christmas Tree Growers Association (BCTGA) surveyed 19 plantations from Devon to Yorkshire and found a wide range of mammals such as bats, voles and red squirrels, as well as 60 different species of moth and 40 different types of birds, of which 13 were red or amber listed species. An average 6ft Christmas tree takes 10 years to grow and, as each one is harvested another is planted meaning that tree farms can attract and sustainably support this wealth of wildlife through many rotations. In addition, if purchased locally and recycled correctly, the carbon footprint of a real tree can be as much as 10 times less than that of an artificial equivalent. Accordingly, consumers of FSC or BCTGA certified Christmas tree growers can rest assured that they are supporting a truly sustainable process.

Christmas Opening Hours

The Oakbank Office will close at 1pm on Tuesday 24th December and will re-open on Thursday 2nd January 2025.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

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