

## **FARMING AND PROPERTY BULLETIN 2024 ISSUE NO. 4**

### **ELECTION RESULTS**

After a couple of months of uncertainty, we have an answer and Labour are the new government for the next five years. While many have congratulated Labour on their win, some groups, such as the CLA, believe that the prevailing attitudes from farmers towards Labour is that “they don’t understand or care about rural communities, seeing them solely through an urban lens”.

Steve Reed’s appointment as the new DEFRA Secretary of State marks a significant shift as he is the first Labour MP to hold the role for 14 years. He has acknowledged that the confidence among farmers is the “lowest on record” and has stated that “it will take years to reverse the damage, but the work for change begins now”. We can but wait and hope that these words translate into action and positive results for UK farming and rural communities. Daniel Zeichner, the MP for Cambridge, will be working alongside Mr Reed as the new Farming Minister, having previously shadowed the role when Labour were in opposition.



The King's speech, which took place on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, is the official state opening of the UK Parliament and provides an opportunity for the Government to outline its legislative agenda. Within the speech, the Labour party set out its prospective bills and began the process of bills becoming law. The Renters’ Rights Bill, the Planning and Infrastructure Bill and the Great British Energy Bill could all end up having significant impact on rural communities and land owners.

The Renters’ Rights Bill is set to transform the experience of private renting to include ending Section 21 ‘no fault’ evictions of residential property. The bill aims to give renters greater security and stability in their homes. Concerns are being raised that repossessions will take longer and pose a greater risk to landlords.

The Planning and Infrastructure Bill intends to play a key role in addressing the challenges within the planning system in the hope of unlocking more housing and infrastructure across the county and supporting sustained economic growth. The bill will speed up and streamline the planning process and accelerate the delivery of major infrastructure projects. Rural areas will likely be disproportionately affected by the delivery of new towns, with agricultural land and rural businesses facing the greatest change.

Finally, the Great British Energy Bill will establish Great British Energy a new, publicly owned energy production company which will own, manage and operate clean power projects up and down the country. This bill may mean there is a need for agricultural land to aid the development of large solar, wind power or battery storage projects, potentially aided by having compulsory purchase powers and reformed planning rules. This could be in conjunction with the private sector which has largely driven these projects previously. There is a question about whether this will lower the rents achieved for such projects in the future.



## JUST FARMERS



In an increasingly vocal world of media and news coverage, it is vital that farmers find a clear voice and get their message across. Just Farmers is a pioneering communications project that works to constructively bridge the gap between UK farming and a largely urban-based media. The aim is to help farmers to get their message and voice across and equally assist journalists and programme-makers to find the information and case studies they seek directly from the farmers involved. By actively promoting and putting people together the aim is to give the general public a balanced and better understanding and perspective of UK farming.

Just Farmers are currently recruiting for their next set of fully funded Media Education workshop applicants to help build the connections between farmers and media. The workshop is aimed at improving the successful applicants understanding of how the media works and what journalists need to do their jobs. Once completed the applicant will become part of the Just Farmers network - with a profile on their website and an 'open door' to the media. This means that members of the media can contact the graduates for an interview on any topic of their choice - allowing them to tell your story and get your voice heard. Go to [www.justfarmers.org](http://www.justfarmers.org) for more information

## PLANNING

Rachel Reeves, the newly appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, has announced bold reforms to promote economic growth. Amongst these is a major shake-up of planning with an introduction of mandatory house-building targets, a reversal of the moratorium for onshore windfarms, the promise of more planning officers and a review and shake-up of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Labour said it wants to build 1.5 million homes over the next parliament by reforming planning rules and developing poor-quality areas in the green belt, dubbed "grey belt".



We will await more detail on how these proposals will impact rural and agricultural land, but it could well open up more sites for development than have previously been discounted. There is a rumour that a revisited National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will be released for consultation imminently.



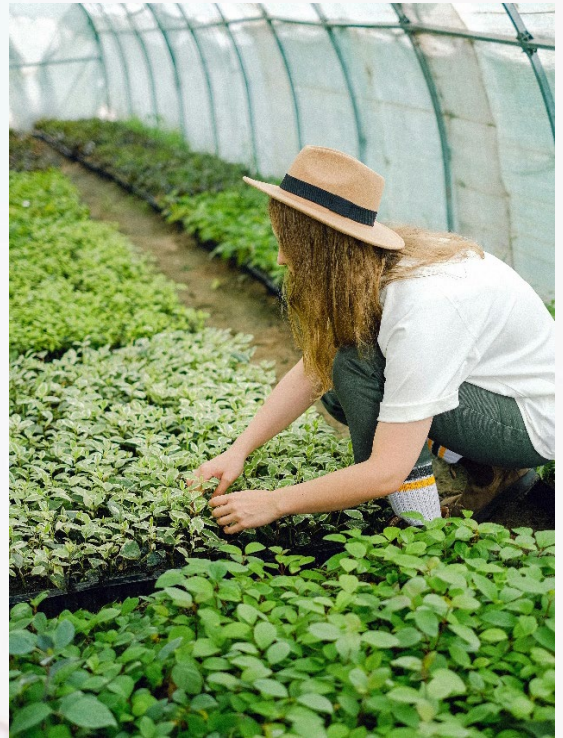
## HEALTH & SAFETY – YOUNG CASUAL WORKERS

As the summer holiday period approaches, this is a good time for employers to check that they have put in place the right procedures for young people who they engage to work as casual workers in farming, public events, catering, and other seasonal work sectors.

The law requires employers to carry out risk assessments for their employees, and to assess any additional factors for any young person under 18 years of age.

The aim is to assess the physical abilities of the young person, their maturity experience, and general ability to carry out the work, because these factors are likely to be different to those of an adult.

Most employers deal with this as part of the induction process when someone starts work, and it is common for employers to carry out a simple person-specific risk assessment record for each young person to make sure that they have covered everything. This is particularly important for people who are under the official minimum school leaving age (MSLA) and where specific restrictions apply to the work which they can do, including a prohibition on employment in industrial workplaces such as factories and construction sites, except on work experience. Pupils will reach the MSLA during the school year in which they turn 16.



Further information is available from the HSE at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/young-workers/index.htm>

## ADKIN NEWS



After 20 years with the company, Sarah Payne BSC (Hons) MRICS FAAV will be leaving Adkin for pastures new.

Throughout her time with Adkin, she has been a key member of the team but now has an exciting opportunity to move client side and take up a newly created post as CEO of the HDH Wills 1965 Charitable Trust. Sarah has been involved with the trust for the past 11 years, managing their estates in Oxfordshire and Suffolk.

We will continue to work closely with Sarah in her new role, assisting her with the ongoing management of the Trust's estates and wish her every success in the future. Her last day is Friday 9<sup>th</sup> August.

### **\* BPS PAYMENT REMINDER \***

BPS delinked payments are still being paid until 2027. We have received confirmation that the first 50% will be paid from the 1<sup>st</sup> of August with the balance to follow from the 30<sup>th</sup> of September. The remittance advice and payment statement will follow the transactions.