



# Women in Agriculture

**- around 50%  
of our staff are  
women, it's  
common sense  
and our 'normal'**

**At D&R, we've always had a large proportion of women in professional roles, but that's not the case across the agricultural sector. Several of our staff attended the Royal Highland Show "Women in Agriculture" breakfast seminar - the marquee was packed and there was a real buzz. Fiona Paul, Alison Aitken, Kirsten Tait and Jenny Baillie agreed with NFU President Minette Batters' conclusion that "the success of women in agriculture comes when being a woman in the job isn't newsworthy."**

We believe it should be about capability rather than gender. One day the headline won't be about being women in the top jobs but until then it's good to have momentum and a platform

that demonstrates women have the skills and ambitions and can do the job equally as well as men. Times are changing, more graduate Surveyors are now female and we see that coming

through our graduate recruitment programme. This year, three out of the four new graduates we have recruited are women.

Alison Aitken gained Fellowship of the CAAV with highest marks in Scotland last year. She and Sam Sykes were invited to a training event to give hints and tips to those working towards the CAAV exams. The room was predominantly filled with women who had come from across Scotland. The balance is certainly being addressed in our corner of the industry.

**It's about being in the know,  
innovative and at the top  
of your game - that's not a  
gender issue.**

**Promotion - 3  
new Directors**



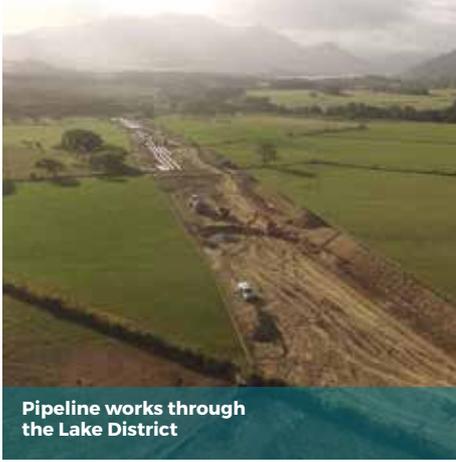
**Woodland shelterbelt  
- a money belt?**



**Our property sales  
are growing**



# It's in the pipeline. Looking after landowners best interests on Utilities



**A new 100km pipeline in Cumbria is one of the UK's largest water pipeline schemes. The United Utilities Project is ambitious, requiring consultation with around 300 farmers/landowners.**

Whilst the pipeline must travel across farmland, discussions have reduced the impact on landowners and compensation has been tailored to individual needs. Chris Edmunds, D&R Director and Chartered Surveyor from our Cockermouth office has worked with 30+ clients since the pipeline was first announced.

Key issues are similar to those faced by others who have utility work affecting their businesses, from temporary loss of land to problems accessing their property, quality of fencing and the risk of gates being left open and livestock straying. There are also impacts on payments from Environmental Schemes and BPS claims.

Chris said "being able to negotiate from an early stage enables us to reach the best financial position for our clients, and in some instances early consultation meant we were able to adjust the pipeline route to reduce the impact on businesses.

**"This project clearly demonstrates that being proactive and engaging with your agent at the start, can make a real difference."**

The Armathwaite Hall Estate has a wildlife park as well as meadows and woodland affected by the pipeline. Park Manager Richard Robinson said, "Chris was very proactive and instrumental in changing the course of the pipeline to protect our wildlife park. As well as taking care of pipeline operational issues, the D&R team advised on woodland restitution and they are now looking after all our payment scheme paperwork, so we can focus on our day job."

Nearby dairy farmer David Nicholson said "D&R has been with us since the start. We see their job as making sure we are not worse off because of the work and so far it's working. As bad as it is to have the pipeline going through, they're making it as easy as possible to live with."

## Gas, wind and water across Scotland

D&R is also heavily involved with a gas transmission pipeline in Dumfries and Galloway. Gas Networks Ireland (GNI) is installing a second transmission pipeline from Dumfries to Brighthouse Bay in Kirkcudbrightshire. D&R's Castle Douglas office is representing the interests of 30 clients, covering 29 farms along the pipeline, which will carry all the Republic of Ireland's gas from the North Sea.

68% of Scotland's power comes from renewable energy and that is rising. D&R supports clients affected by wind projects in the Moray Firth and the Firth of Forth. Coming ashore they require miles of cable to reach inland substations. In places, swathes of 50m working widths will be required. Further afield on Orkney, a new mains cable is to be laid, and on Islay tidal power is being harnessed to come ashore. Our Edinburgh and Linlithgow offices are working on a new water pipeline (c. 12km) connecting Hillend to Balerno, Edinburgh.

In all cases, we urge farmers and landowners not to underestimate the potential consequences eg future drainage problems, impact on land for future development etc, and to engage with an agent as soon as possible to shape the outcome.

**For more information about utility projects contact your local D&R office.**

## Office News

### NEW OFFICE FOR COCKERMOUTH:

With a growing client base and extended services, the D&R team has moved across the building to a larger office in the Lakeland Business Park.

**Call in to meet the team or phone 01900 268 633.**



## Are woodland shelter belts now a moneybelt?

**Timber prices are performing well, opening up a market for farmers to cash-in on timber that was once considered waste. Shelterbelts were previously of little harvest value but with today's prices, they are now profitable.**

In the 1970s there were grants to encourage tree planting - new woodland and shelterbelts appeared. The trees planted in 1970s are now 50 years old and are a crop worth harvesting/cashing in on. Broadleaf timber is making £20-30/tonne where a decade ago it was almost worthless.

Timber prices have risen for a number of reasons. The weaker Pound against the Euro makes imports more expensive and there is a general increase in UK consumption. Sawmill volumes were up last year by 6% and wood chip for biomass boilers is also fuelling demand. Chip and brash was once left to decay because

the cost of extraction exceeded its value but it is now in high demand for biomass boilers and setting baseline timber prices.

Scotland has over half the UK's farmed woodland so it is hardly surprising that we are seeing an increase in the number of clients across Scotland and Northern England capitalise on shelterbelts.

Iain Kyle, Forestry Manager, said **"An acre of forgotten land is now a growing asset and we're managing the harvesting process for several farmers who want advice on their best options."**

**Good to know: You do need a licence and you do need to replant.** Permission from the Forestry Commission is normally needed to fell growing trees and is usually given by a felling licence or approval under a dedicated scheme. It is important that the licence has been issued before any felling is carried out.

Depending on the timber type, landowners can achieve £50+/tonne for quality Sitka Spruce sold as a standing crop from a good sized plot with good access. Sitka is the dominant tree and yields the highest price. Other timber is still attracting good commercial rates:

**Example:** In East Lothian, a mixed beef and sheep farm that planted hardwood and softwood timber on 10.68 hectares of land harvested over 4,260 tonnes, achieving sales in excess of £148,000.



Questions about harvesting or woodland creation?

**Contact Iain Kyle, Forestry Manager, on 01900 268633.**

## Tenant's Amnesty - Don't leave it too late to claim

**The Scottish Government has been highlighting the Tenant's Amnesty - something we mentioned in a previous newsletter so we wanted to give you an update.**

D&R Director Ian Austin is the President of The Scottish Agricultural Arbiters and Valuers Association (SAAVA) this year and has proactively created a template to help tenants fill-in the important information and make the Tenant's Amnesty procedure as easy as possible. This template has now been adopted by SAAVA, CAAV and the Scottish Land Commission.

**What is the Tenant's Amnesty?** Under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, the Tenant's Amnesty allows Scottish tenant farmers to

formally register any improvements made to their holding, that were not correctly documented at the time.

The amnesty is a golden opportunity but there is a time limit.

**What to do?** We recommend compiling a list of all tenant's improvements. Your local D&R office can help you with the paperwork and plans. Although June 2020 may seem like a long way off, it's not. Don't leave it until the last minute to get in touch.

**Contact your local D&R Office.**

# New EPC regulations impact lettings

Much accommodation built in the late 20th Century for farm labourers is redundant for that purpose and is now let out. Whilst it can produce a good income stream, there have been many changes to the residential let sector law and regulations in recent years. Of particular note is the introduction of the Private Residential Tenancy (PRT) last December, plus the Tenant Deposit Scheme, Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) bandings and Landlord Registration.

The EPC banding is a useful guidance tool to calculate energy use, but there has never been a minimum standard. That is set to change and could significantly impact rural properties built of stone and slate, with traditionally low ratings. In the future, it may not be legally possible to let some

residential properties and these requirements may be a headache for rural landlords.

### ■ For existing tenancies:

All properties must be a Band E or above by 31st March 2022 and must be a Band D or above by 31st March 2025.

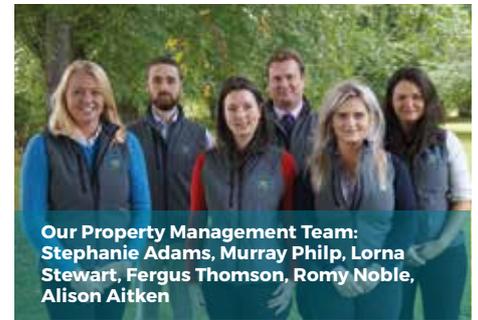
### ■ For new tenancies:

All properties must be Band E or above by 1st April 2020 and must be a Band D or above by 1st April 2022.

In England, from 1st April 2018 all private domestic Landlords must ensure that any domestic property they let has an EPC banding of at least an E before granting a tenancy to a new tenant or renewing an existing tenancy. This is to extend to all private rented properties from 1 April 2020 even when there has been no change in tenancy arrangements.

EPC efficiency can improve, but substantial investment may be needed. There is some discussion on allowing lower minimum bandings for properties that have had significant sums of money spent on them to improve energy efficiencies. Also there may be grants and loans to finance improvements. Property owners should review their property portfolio's existing EPC certificates and prepare for improvements where needed to achieve the new minimum rating.

### Meet our Property Management Team



Our Property Management Team: Stephanie Adams, Murray Philp, Lorna Stewart, Fergus Thomson, Romy Noble, Alison Aitken

To find out more - contact the Property Management Team at your local D&R office.

## Growth in our property sales in a year of market decline



The general marketplace has been quieter in 2018, but D&R has seen 31.5% growth in property sales in the year to date, compared to the whole of 2017. This includes whole farm units, forestry, lifestyle and equestrian properties. There's still a very buoyant market price performance, with most sales going to a closing date and achieving offers in excess of the

asking price. With a strong database of active buyers, we've also seen an increase in off market (private) sales.

**60% growth in 3 years:** As land and property owners have become more aware of our consistently strong sales performance, the number and scale of properties sold has grown at a pace across our 9 offices. We're also selling an increasing number of large farm units too, including Shankston & Keirsmill Farms, Patna, Ayrshire, a 600 acre livestock unit at offers over £1.45M.

**Buying on your behalf:** Whether for simplicity or privacy, more clients are asking us to buy land and property on their behalf. So, whether you are looking to sell and want a no obligation sales appraisal, or you are looking to buy property, we're happy to discuss your requirements.

## Selling or Buying?

Contact your local office or Fiona Paul on 01506 811 812

# Maintaining telecom mast income - time to seek advice

**If you are affected by telecoms infrastructures, contact your local D&R office and make sure you receive the advice you are entitled to.**

The government has been under pressure to improve rural connectivity and introduced the new Digital Economy Act 2017, which became law in December 2017. In so doing, a new Electronic Communications Code "the Code" now governs behaviour of landlords and tenants with telecommunication infrastructures. But are Landlords still getting a fair rent?

Undue pressure has been brought to bear on landowners from companies trying to establish a new, lower rent "norm" for sites. D&R has observed several examples of sharp practice by providers looking to take advantage of landowners in trying to acquire rights for a fraction of their value.

Put simply, under threat of legal action, landowners are being pressured to accept derisory rents for as little as £45/year for a standard site (10m x 10m compound with 20m high mast).



The market is currently being tested by a number of Land Tribunal cases - we await their outcome with interest. Landowners should stand their ground in negotiations and not give in to the operators demands.

Landowners should take professional advice from a rural surveyor who understands the intricacies of the Code. Landowner's reasonable fees for Surveyors and Solicitors are usually paid for by the company looking to lease a new site or renew the lease on an existing site.

**Author: Gervase Topp, Maud Office. Contact 01771 613 717 or your local D&R office.**

# NVZ's - planning to make the most of your muck

**Farmers outwith Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) are unlikely to appreciate the regulatory burden that these areas bring. For those affected the rules and regulations can create a headache unless you plan ahead.**

There are rigidly enforced BPS deductions applied as penalties for non-compliance and potential problems with SEPA (Scottish Environmental Protection Agency). Taking professional advice early is key to planning your fertiliser needs before you spread and to prevent mistakes.

NVZ regulations require accurate records to be kept for 3 years. It's a time consuming exercise and there are programmes that can help, but in practice, we are seeing more clients come to us for support with their fertiliser and muck management plans, which must be ready by 1st March and updated throughout the year.

Why? The paperwork includes a risk assessment plan (RAMS map) and calculations on nitrogen requirements for each crop as well as calculations on how much storage is needed for muck. You must detail soil type for each field, the cropping and sowing date, the quantity and date of nitrogen application, livestock numbers, movement of muck and the location of muck heaps as well as an inventory of all fertiliser bought and applied. There are also rules on the maximum nitrogen limits that can be applied, plus timing and how close you can spread to watercourses.

In reality, inspections occur in the summer, so now is a good time to plan for next year. Don't get caught out ordering and spreading costly fertiliser in the spring that could exceed your allowance.

**Author: Gwen Chalmers, Agricultural Consultant, Maud.**



AgriScot 2018 - See us on Stand 107

**■ We're on stand 107 at AgriScot - 21st November**

**■ We'll be at LiveScot - 24th November, Lanark Agricultural Centre**

**Positive career path at D&R** - proof that there is a career path at D&R is evident in our recent appointments and promotions.

**3 new Directors** have been appointed to our Board, expanding the breadth of skills and creating a stronger platform for growth. The new additions to the team are Derek Bathgate (Castle Douglas and Ayr), George Hipwell (Linlithgow) and Ian Austin (Edinburgh). All three were selected from within D&R and all have won the SAAVA Presidents Cup for the best Scottish students in their professional CAAV exams.



New Directors

**New Branch Manager in Lanark** - Alison Aitken has taken over the role of Branch Manager from Niall Milner who is concentrating on client work and his new role as Finance Director. Alison joined D&R in August 2015 and gained Fellowship of the CAAV last November where she was runner-up for the Talbot Posonby Prize for highest marks in the UK exams and she also won the SAAVA President's Cup (the fifth winner within D&R).



Alison Aitken  
New Lanark Branch Manager



Cup winners: Chris Edmunds, George Hipwell,  
Derek Bathgate, Alison Aitken, Ian Austin



Suzanne, Will, Pippa, Lorna, Stephanie

## New staff

**Graduate Surveyors.** In line with the trend of more female graduates, 3 of our 4 new graduate surveyors this year are women:



Stephanie Adams



Will Blair



Pippa Paterson



Helena White

- **Stephanie Adams** - Berwick
- **Will Blair** - Berwick
- **Pippa Paterson** - Forfar
- **Helena White** - Edinburgh

## New starters. Welcome to

- **Suzanne Latto**, PA to Martin Hall and **Lorna Stewart**, Surveyor in Edinburgh



Suzanne Latto



Lorna Stewart

## TOW Champ - David Paterson

We were delighted to sponsor the Young Farmers' Tug Of War finals at this year's Royal Highland Show and were proud to see our Lanark colleague David Paterson **#pullingfortheteam** with the winning men's team - Biggar YFC - the best men on the day.



## Great graduations:



Helena White, Iain Kyle, Emma Homer

Three of our D&R team graduated from Harper Adams University last month. Iain Kyle, the firm's Forestry Manager, graduated with an MSc in Forestry Management following 2-years of part time study. He was the only Harper student to graduate from the course this year.

Emma Homer, a Graduate Surveyor and also based at the Cockermonth office, completed her MSc in Rural Estate and Land Management. Helena White from Edinburgh graduated with a degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management.