



Buoyant property sales growth despite more challenging market

There are positive signs in the property market, despite the challenges of 2024. Last year we saw 100% growth - both in terms of tender enquiries and instructions to sell.

Chris Edmunds, D&R Director and Head of Agency said “Our visibility significantly increased last year, and we completed sales on some exceptional farms, good quality land and smallholdings.

“Choosing who to work alongside when selling their property is a huge, once or twice in a lifetime decision that involves a lot of trust. Landowners place great value on recommendations, so we are pleased to see the number of referrals increasing which we believe contributed to the number of instructions doubling in 2024. As we move towards spring, we already have far more properties on the market or to launch than at the same time last year.

“Factors influencing the decision to sell and the right time to do so,

is a very personal one, be that to restructure the business, diversification, retirement, or releasing capital to reduce debt. Whatever the reason for selling, preparation will make the process smoother, and presentation will make a significant difference to buyers viewing the property.”

Top five tips to get the most out of selling your property:

1. Appoint an experienced Agent to discuss planning, preparation, appraisals and marketing options. Choose one recommended for good local knowledge, national impact and a wealth of contacts including a potential buyer list. An Agent with multi discipline expertise can also advise on scope for development or assessing natural capital assets.

Infrastructure projects across Scotland and northern England



How will the 2030 Clean Energy Plan affect you?



Crystal Rig IV Wind Farm negotiations



2. Instruct other professionals – your accountant about tax liabilities and a solicitor so issues with titles or boundaries can be rectified before launch, and if the property has grazing land and occupiers, formalise agreements to help guarantee vacant possession and improve saleability.

3. Property presentation is important, so take time to check gutters, yards, and outside areas. Maintain hedges, check fences, gates, and water troughs. Declutter and scrap the scrap (which currently has a high value).

4. Plan your photography – professional photography makes a huge difference and there is now an expectation of drone footage and walk through videos. If your crops look best in summer/autumn, consider photography a year in advance.

5. Get your timing right – whether you choose to sell on the open market or private sale, your Agent will work with you to launch once everything is in place, and that doesn't have to be springtime. D&R saw several 2024 instructions held over until spring 2025

because the timing wasn't right, or circumstances changed.

Whilst springtime is traditionally a popular time to launch properties, D&R is also seeing more property launches extending to later in the year. In 2024, the majority of D&R instructions and sales came in the second half of the year.

2025 launches

With numerous properties already on the market and more spring launches already planned, Davidson & Robertson is gearing up for a busy year.

Will Dalrymple, Senior Associate at D&R said "New to the open market this spring is West Shirva, a mixed livestock farm strategically positioned between Glasgow and Stirling. Extending to over 250 acres, the farm has a centrally positioned steading, good range of buildings and a four-bedroom farmhouse. In addition to being a productive livestock farm, there is potential for woodland creation, biodiversity net gain and wetland areas for habitat management, so we anticipate interest from both farmers and investors.

"In Southwest Scotland, we have recently launched Grahamsfield which is a smallholding comprising 2 properties, yard and buildings for offers over £475,000, and in the North East, a smallholding/equine yard is on the market in Fraserburgh for offers over £460,000. In contrast, across the border in the English Lake District, Foldgate Farm, a lifestyle smallholding opportunity with a variety of income streams is on offer for a guide price of £1.25million.

"Coming to the market shortly we have a number of productive farms both on the open market and available privately. There are also blocks of bare land and a number of lifestyle opportunities already secured as instructions."



Chris Edmunds

**Thinking of buying or selling?
Contact Chris Edmunds, Director and
Head of Agency, on 01900 268 633.**

Case Study: Successful sale of a highly desirable farm in Machars

Mindork Farm is a mixed livestock farm in the scenic Machars area. The property was brought to market in two lots with the first offering a five-bedroom traditional farmhouse, steading and approximately 144 acres, and the second lot offering 39 acres of land.

Our client, Mr Walker, decided to explore his options for the future of the farm as there was no next generation coming through to take it on. D&R's Agency team discussed with Mr Walker what he hoped to achieve and provided a market appraisal and proposal to market the property in two lots. On this basis D&R was selected to

launch the property, and through our marketing and leveraging of our network of buyers interested in this type of property we delivered significant interest resulting in competitive offers for both lots and two sales at prices over the asking prices.

William Dalrymple, Senior Associate, who worked closely with Mr Walker in launching the property and achieving this positive sale said "We were delighted with the sale of Mindork Farm. The property received keen early interest from farmers and farming businesses local to the property and as far away as the South of England, proving testament to the

strength of our marketing strategy and network of buyers."

Mr Walker of Mindork Farm said: "I couldn't be happier with D&R. The decision to sell Mindork Farm was a difficult one, but D&R's understanding of my needs and their marketing of the property gave me confidence that this was a positive move. I highly recommend D&R to anyone thinking of selling."



Infrastructure update

D&R is working on infrastructure projects right across Scotland and northern England.

Orkney developments: SSE have multiple projects affecting Orkney including overhead and underground reinforcement works, a new substation, an onshore underground HVAC cable and a 53km subsea HVAC cable connecting to the mainland.

Alasdair Allan, Associate Director has been in Orkney representing landowners affected by SSE's works and encourages anyone affected to get in touch.

Dumfries & Galloway: Planning approval has recently been granted for KTR – Kendoon to Tongland Reinforcement Project in Dumfries & Galloway. The SPEN project to replace the existing 80-year-old line was met with over 1,000 objections because of the new route through the Galloway Forest Park and the 100's of larger pylons required, but the Scottish Ministers gave approval because it is classed as essential work in the drive to net zero.

D&R Associate Sarah Bennett in our Castle Douglas office has years of experience in infrastructure issues and is already supporting existing clients affected by the work.



Alasdair Allan

For a confidential conversation contact Alasdair Allan, Associate Director on 0131 449 6212.



The new 2030 Clean Energy Plan: the implications, and the effect on farmers

Ian Austin, Davidson & Robertson Director and Head of Utilities, Energy and Infrastructure looks at the 2030 Clean Energy Plan and how it will impact farmers.

December 2024 saw the launch of the Government's 2030 Clean Energy Plan, a plan to meet 100% of Great Britain's electricity demand with clean power by 2030. An outcome of this plan is that a vast amount of infrastructure work is needed to create thousands of miles of new power network lines that will result in farmers being affected by such work.

There has been a huge shift to creating clean energy from renewable sources in the UK over

the last decade – rising from 15% to 47% in 2024. However, according to a report from the UK Government's independent advisor, the National Energy System Operator (NESO), £60bn investment is still needed to deliver around 600 miles of onshore and 2,800+ miles of offshore power network lines. That's more than double the total built in the last 10 years.

Ian said "We have been acting for clients in the renewable sector for over quarter of a century, and

exclusively for farming landowners and tenants affected by utility work for over fifteen years, so we are acutely aware of the massive requirement to create new infrastructure for electricity energy creation in the future. We are also very familiar with the issues farmers face when utilities infrastructure crosses their land and have been expanding our team across Scotland and the North of England to deal with the surge in activity and enquiries.

"Rapid delivery of 80 networks and enabling infrastructure projects is essential to achieve the 2030

Clean Energy Plan and beyond. Many projects are already in the pipeline, affecting farmers where new pylons, transmission lines and upgrades to existing lines are required."

On the generation side of the Plan, the National Grid Reforms (TMO4) announced in 2024, has been constantly evolving, and will now require energy developers sitting on 'zombie' projects (with grid approval but no land right agreements in place), to ensure they have that land agreement in place by April 2025. They will also have to demonstrate a need for the development. As part of the 2030 plan, the UK Government is also speeding up the process of how energy development projects are reviewed at the planning stage. In England, they are proposing a new Planning and Infrastructure Bill to make the planning process quicker and easier, to speed up the delivery of Clean Energy developments.

More focus will be on wind (offshore and onshore), and solar energy generation sources because it is widely acknowledged that multiple renewables sources are needed.

Offshore wind projects can take over a decade to go live, but onshore wind and particularly solar projects, are quicker to set up. It's no surprise that onshore wind is now back in the frame in England and greater emphasis will be placed on technological advances for solar projects across Scotland and England. There is a strong push for onshore wind and solar to meet the targets, onshore wind must double in capacity and solar needs to triple.

On advice from NESO grid application reviews were temporarily halted on 29th January 2025 to 'spring-clean' the process, changing focus to prioritise projects that can accomplish clean energy on target. Future projects are likely to be evaluated based on quality and quantity, and whether developers have land rights secured with landowners and secure agricultural tenants.

What are the implications for farmers?

At this stage, renewable projects that already have a grid offer and land rights secured are unlikely to see any negative effects - with the exception of battery proposal that will now be required to demonstrate the need for the development. Developers that have yet to apply for a project's grid connection will now need to wait for applications to reopen later this year. Going forward, NESO's plan is that projects, which are deemed essential, and has its grid connection and land rights secured should move forward to development at a quicker pace. Conversely, projects without land rights secured or not meeting requirements could be delayed or rejected from the grid connection queue.

Ian concluded "For farmers faced with infrastructure project crossing their land, and for those looking to develop sites for renewable energy, the key message remains the same - take professional advice from Agents with significant experience in this sector, and do not sign anything until you are fully aware of your rights and options. In most cases, your reasonable professional costs are likely to be covered either by the utility company or the developer.

"An Agent will identify potential issues and suggest solutions as well as determining the value of your land and property rights. We have seen numerous cases where the value of an access strip of land had a far greater value to the project than simply the acreage value, and we have successfully negotiated improved offers for clients relative to the value of the development."

Developing your own renewable project

The UK Government's desire for more onshore wind and solar generation opens up realistic opportunities for landowners to benefit from such developments. Whilst such developments can take years to come to fruition, the benefits can be transformational

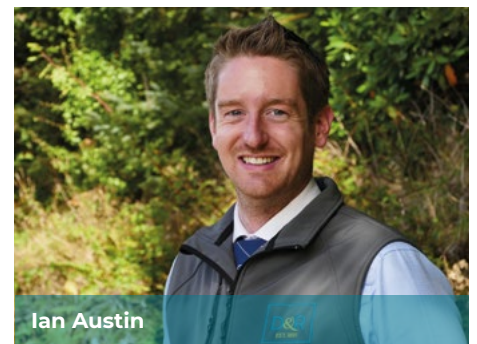
for a farming business. Weighing up your options, and partnering with the right developer, are key, and this is where working with a trusted and experienced Agent from the outset will make a long-term difference to your business.

It is essential to talk to an Agent who has significant knowledge in this ever-evolving market sector, and one who can recommend credible developers to approach with proposals – there is a lot more to it than just the headline rates which at first glance can seem attractive. The wider implications for your business could be affected without the right advice.

A good agent may suggest that you approach several developers or will engage with the developer you have already chosen for a project and can explain the long-term implications for your business. Importantly, they will also know current market values and will be skilled in negotiating commercial terms on your behalf.

For over a quarter of a century, D&R has been acting for clients in the renewable energy sector, working on projects that have contributed to around 10% of all Scotland's renewable energy creation to date (that's more than 1 GW of renewable energy delivery to the grid).

Infrastructure and renewable energy projects are intertwined, and the D&R team has decades of expertise to deal with both.



Ian Austin

For more information on how the Clean Energy Plan will impact you, contact Ian Austin, Director and Head of Utilities Energy and Infrastructure on 0131 449 6212.



Neil Anderson of Harehead Farms on site at Crystal Rig Wind Farm

Case Study: D&R's role in negotiating the Crystal Rig IV Wind Farm Extension at Harehead Farms, Duns

Back in 2013, Neil Anderson, the Farm Manager at Harehead Farms, asked D&R to represent Harehead and negotiate terms with Fred. Olsen Renewables Limited (FORL) for an extension to the Crystal Rig Wind Farm complex, to be known as Crystal Rig IV (CRIV). Crystal Rig Wind Farm, which stretches across East Lothian and the Scottish Borders, started up in 2003 with 25 turbines. By 2025, the complex will grow to include 102 turbines, generating more than 260 MW of electricity — enough to power the equivalent of around 200,000 UK homes.

D&R successfully negotiated lease terms for the CRIV extension back in 2015. The extension consists of 11 turbines, four of which are located on Harehead Farms. Construction kicked off in 2024, with electricity generation expected to start in late 2025.

Throughout the whole process, D&R has been by the landowner's side, offering ongoing support - latterly during construction. We've made sure communication flows



Stuart Baungally, Head of Land (UK), Fred. Olsen Renewables



smoothly between the wind farm developer and the landowners, seeking to keep farming operations running during the construction phase. For instance, we have reached agreement on the construction of ramps and crossing points along the wind farm tracks, to enable livestock and farm vehicles to cross. We've also agreed that cattle grids and gates will be installed where the wind farm track

has gone through existing fences and stone dykes.

D&R's comprehensive support has made sure these renewable energy projects integrate with the farm's day-to-day activities, showcasing our ability to optimise such land use agreements while keeping agricultural operations running.

Neil Anderson of Harehead Farms said:

"I had no prior knowledge of wind farms, but D&R explained every step of the process to us very well and have made all the work that has gone on feel very smooth and straight forward.

I'd recommend to any other farmers facing similar projects on their land to get in touch with D&R to assist you through the process, they'll certainly help you out."

Stuart Baungally, Head of Land (UK) at Fred. Olsen Renewables Limited (FORL), commented:

"The success of this project has been driven by strong relationships and mutual trust, which were evident throughout our negotiations with Harehead Farm, expertly supported by D&R.

"Thanks to the dedication of Neil and D&R, not only did the commercial negotiations progress smoothly, but they also facilitated crucial discussions around practical land management.

"Their solutions effectively balanced the needs of ongoing farming operations and construction activities, ensuring a seamless partnership for all parties involved."



Ian Austin

Interested in exploring green energy options for your land? Contact Ian Austin, Director and Head of Utilities Energy and Infrastructure on 0131 449 6212.

Properties for Sale



West Shirva Farm, Kilsyth, North Lanarkshire

New to the market for offers over £1,450,000

A mixed livestock farm extending to approximately 251.26 acres, equipped with a centrally located steading with a good range of buildings and a four-bedroom farmhouse.



Upper Killyquharn, New Aberdour, Fraserburgh

Offers over £460,000

A complete equine yard/small holding with views to the north coast of Aberdeenshire. Extending to approx. 35.01 acres (14.7 hectares), with a range of traditional and modern buildings, modern equine facilities and a 3-bedroom farmhouse.



Foldgate Farm, Corney, Millom, Cumbria

Guide Price £1,250,000 as a whole or in lots

A spacious 5-bedroom farmhouse and 6-bedroom traditional barn conversion, stables, buildings and land, the total area extending to approximately 6.62 acres. Substantial income streams.

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