



**DAVIDSON
& ROBERTSON**
RURAL SURVEYORS & CONSULTANTS

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Bulletin

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Rural insights from our teams across Scotland & Northern England



Maximising value when selling your rural property

Selling your property is done only once, so knowing how well you are positioned in the marketplace and what you can do to improve your chances of a sale is critical.

Deciding when and how to sell, and who you want to use as an agent, are the first three key issues facing property owners looking to put property on the market.

Preparing to sell:

Traditionally properties come onto the market in spring when the property is looking its best. However,

with demand still outstripping supply for rural properties, when you are ready, is the most important factor.

1. Decide if you will sell on the open market to achieve the best deal, or through private sale.
2. Instruct agents with a proven track record, breadth of experience and local knowledge.
3. Instruct a solicitor at the outset so any issues with the title and boundaries can be rectified before the property goes to market.

4. Speak to an accountant about tax liabilities. How a property is sold can potentially affect the owners' tax liability.
5. If the property has grazing land and occupiers, formalise grazing agreements to help guarantee vacant possession and improve the saleability.
6. Residential property in Scotland needs a Scottish Home Report. In England & Scotland, residential properties require an Energy Performance Certificate prior to marketing unless exempt.

5 things to do when impacted by infrastructure projects



Renewable developers still hungry for sites



Are broadleaves the modern answer to shelterbelts?



Adding value to your business

   www.drrural.co.uk

Choosing your Agent:

Looking for a down-to-earth, approachable agent that has experience, contacts and local knowledge is important.

1. Choose designated specialists in rural property with a proactive approach, coupled with local, regional, and wider national knowledge and a wealth of contacts.
2. Choose a knowledgeable team with years of experience in selling and buying a variety of properties including rural land, farms, estates, forestry, planting land, development properties and new homes.
3. Choose an agent that thinks about wider opportunities such as adding value via diversification potential. Having cross-discipline specialists means your agent can scope developing outbuildings, natural capital and carbon, renewables, and leasing potential.
4. Choose one that has a strong list of potential buyers – it indicates a good reputation and that buyers have trust.
5. A great agent will pull together a well thought out tailored strategy,

rather than an off-the-shelf package.

6. Great marketing - review how your agent creates marketing material, uses social media, property portals and advertising to hit your largest targeted audience.

Presenting your property:

First impressions count, so making sure your property is ready for your agent, photography and viewings is crucial:

1. The right asking price is a key component, and potentially the most important. The balance is always to price it right to get a good level of interest, encourage viewings and build on a strong first impression.
2. Decluttering is worth the effort and is essential.
3. Is the drive into the property tidy?
4. Are the hedges, yards and outside areas well maintained?
5. Are the internal areas of residential properties clean and fresh?
6. Don't miss out the gutters - ensure they are clear and look maintained.

7. Do gates swing nicely and is the property easy to access?
8. Photograph when the weather is good. Professional photography/video makes a massive difference – especially drone footage and walk-throughs.

You only have one chance to sell a property, so it's important to make the most of it. Getting your property ready and choosing the agent with expertise, experience and breadth of knowledge is critical.



Chris Edmunds

Considering selling? contact Chris Edmunds, Director and Head of Agency on 01900 268 633.

Successful sale of rarely available Dumfriesshire Farm

Our client approached us to market the sale of Upper Mains Farm, an excellently developed 230-acre beef & sheep farm with arable potential that was rarely available in the local market of the highly productive Dumfriesshire lowlands.

The property included:

- A traditional, 5-bedroom farmhouse
- An excellent range of traditional and modern buildings
- Productive farmland sown to grass, with a mix of grade 3.1/ 3.2 by the James Hutton Institute

Upper Mains had been a successful



family farm, and the owners were keen to market it to its maximum potential. Davidson & Robertson's Agency team drew on their network of national, regional, and local buyers known to be interested in acquiring this type of property, driving significant interest and multiple offers in excess of the asking price, resulting in the property being on the market for only 5 weeks.

The owners commented, "We chose D&R as our agent in selling our farm as we knew that they were rural property specialists and would be able to

market our property to its maximum potential. This was something we were only going to do once in our lives, and so it was important to get right. And we certainly did: D&R drew on their contacts who were actively in market for a farm of our type in our area, and we very quickly had plenty of interest and very good offers – so much so that we sold our farm over our asking price."

For more information contact Chris Edmunds, Director and Head of Agency on 01900 268 633.

Great demand for support on infrastructure projects from NFUS members

There is significant activity on rail lines across Scotland, as Network Rail energise their lines. To achieve this, they need temporary access to adjacent land – which is achieved through voluntary access via negotiation. If affected, you are entitled to advice, and it is important to take this up as soon as you receive notification.

Scottish Water has extensive new pipeline projects and existing pipeline upgrades, all in addition to ongoing pipe maintenance. To support these works, Scottish Water has statutory powers, acquiring new sites and processing facilities, which will also impact farmers and landowners. It cannot be overstated, the importance of engaging professional advice as soon as you hear you may be affected.

The Affinity Partnership between D&R and NFUS was launched at AgriScot in November and aims to support NFUS members when

statutory undertakers like Scottish Power, Scottish Water, or Network Rail need to do work on their land.

We are already talking to members who are concerned about the effect on their land and want to understand more fully their rights and options. We are also able to explain what can be claimed for and can support you in making a claim so that you are properly compensated.

Ian Austin, D&R Director, and Head of Utilities, Energy and Infrastructure said:

“The push to net zero has resulted

in a requirement to upgrade the national electrical network. National Grid has stated that over the next seven years (from 2023), five times the level of electrical infrastructure built in the last 30 years will need to be built”. This is set to impact huge numbers of farmers across the country.

The earlier a team is engaged to represent you, the more scope they have to negotiate the best outcome for your business, with the least little impact and the best level of compensation possible.

To understand your rights and options call our free helpline for NFUS members 0131 609 9717 nfusutilities@drurual.co.uk.

Top five actions to take when faced with electricity infrastructure projects on your land

Significant upgrades to electricity infrastructure will affect many farmers and landowners, but not everyone is prepared for the first official letter dropping through the door.

Ongoing consultations in the North East of Scotland about new overhead lines are causing debate. Similar consultations are taking place or planned across Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Central Scotland, the Borders, and England. For those affected, it is important to understand what to do first.

“The next steps are crucial, but not always clear and time is of the essence,” says Alasdair Allan, Senior Associate, who leads a team focused on infrastructure projects at Davidson & Robertson (D&R).

For those affected, we have drawn up a list of the top five key things that they need to do as soon as notification is received:

Appoint or get in touch with your Land Agent as soon as you know your land will be impacted by the works. The earlier a Land Agent is engaged to represent you, the more scope they have to achieve the best outcome for your business. You are likely to have reasonable professional advice costs covered by the electricity company.

Do not sign anything until you have taken advice as this could result in you missing out on compensation. You are entitled to professional advice as part of this process, and it's crucial to take this up before signing any consents or agreements.

Mitigate losses – You are responsible for ensuring that all losses, disturbances, and costs incurred as a result of the works are mitigated as far as possible, where reasonable to do so. With this in mind, it is vital that you first understand how the proposed works will impact you and your land.

Know your rights – a good Land Agent will advise fully on what your rights and options are and will be able to explain exactly what is expected of you, so the earlier you engage the better. Not everyone knows the extent of what can be claimed, so they can clarify that for you.

Record your time – your time is valuable – keep a detailed diary of the time you spend talking with statutory undertakers, with your Land Agent, and in accommodating the works so that

this can be fully compensated. This is an area often overlooked by farmers but is a very valid claim.

Whilst the electricity companies do have statutory powers allowing them to construct new lines, in many situations there is often much that can be negotiated. They also have the right to take access to existing infrastructure for maintenance purposes, but again there is much to be agreed in advance of permitting entry.

Once the works are completed, the electricity company is duty-bound to reinstate the land back to its' previous state, to the landowner/tenant's reasonable satisfaction. It can sometimes take several years for land to get back to full production and, up until that point, compensation can be claimed to ensure that farmers are not left any worse off as a result of the works.



Alasdair Allan

For more information contact Alasdair Allan, Senior Associate on 0131 449 6212.



Successfully supporting Kettlehill Farm on Utilities projects

The Onshore Wind Sector Deal for Scotland is a deal between the Scottish Government and the onshore wind sector (developers and stakeholders). It sets out the ambition for the next phase of Scotland's onshore wind development, to achieve the ScotGov ambition of 20GW of installed capacity by 2030. It's a big deal and split into 6 elements, which are summarised below:

Situated in the picturesque region of East Dunbartonshire is Kettlehill Farm; a family-owned multigenerational farm with significant land holdings specialising in beef, sheep, and arable farming.

The family-farm has been a loyal client of D&R for decades and have trusted Ian Austin and his team to provide advice on a wide range of Utilities, Energy and Infrastructure projects such as road, water and power schemes.

Kettlehill Farm has been impacted by multiple statutory undertaker projects over the years; some lasting short periods of time, and some spanning decades.

Through all of these projects, Ian and

his team have fully engaged with the relevant statutory undertakers and managed each claim from start to finish on the farm's behalf. As part of this, D&R also put in place additional reservations for the future, ensuring the farm's long-term interests, after the work had been completed.

William Henderson of W&A Henderson, Kettlehill Farm, says:

"We've never considered going anywhere other than D&R because we always get such a good service. From situations that can be resolved quickly, to longer-term situations taking over a decade to be resolved, D&R gets the best outcome for us every time professionally and thoroughly."



Ian Austin

**For more information contact
Ian Austin, Director and Head of
Utilities, Energy and Infrastructure
on 0131 449 6212.**

Renewable developers still hungry for sites

Several renewable companies have terminated fixed price contracts awarded by the UK Government relating to onshore energy projects output prices, sparking concern that renewables development has peaked. This is not the case; renewables developers are hungry for more sites across Scotland, and they are also prospecting for onshore wind sites in England.

So, energy development on your land is still an option and could be transformative for your business. Tens of megawatts of generation on your land can lead to hundreds of thousands of pounds of annual rent for your business.

Derek Bathgate, Director at Davidson & Robertson said "Green energy production remains a growth sector and will be for many years to come. For the next round of Contracts for Difference (CfD), the government is likely to offer more attractive rates that will incentivise investors to develop."

Rental income paid by third-party developers and operators for onshore wind farms, solar parks,

and battery energy storage systems (BESS) of reasonable scale will alter the financial landscape of most landowners, and it will span more than a generation.

Onshore wind farm development has mainly been in Scotland and Wales; however, D&R is aware that several developers are prospecting for sites in England. There is optimism that either a change in the UK government or government policy will enable large-scale onshore wind development in England, creating significant opportunities for English landowners in the north and west.

Connecting to the national grid

Renewables and energy developments can only be achieved if developers can get a connection to the national electricity grid network. The grid is undergoing a massive overhaul and expansion with the electricity licence holders (e.g. National Grid, Scottish Power, Northern PowerGrid, etc.) under a great deal of pressure to reinforce and upgrade the electricity network. It means more landowners will

be affected by the drive for green energy, with the installation of electricity infrastructure across their land.

Anyone faced with the opportunity to lease land for energy development, or facing compulsory electrical infrastructure works, should seek professional advice as soon as possible to maximise opportunities or compensation.



Derek Bathgate

For more information about renewable opportunities contact Derek Bathgate, Director and Head of Regions on 0131 449 6212.

Marginal returns on coniferous shelterbelts – are broadleaves the modern alternative?

Farmers agree that shelterbelts on farms are good for their land, livestock and for the environmental sustainability of flora and fauna. For years there has been a push towards conifer shelterbelts for commercial gain, but could there be other, better long-term options for farms by moving to broadleaf shelterbelts?

Keith Muir, Forestry lead at Davidson & Robertson (D&R) believes more diverse broadleaf shelterbelts are now a better prospect, rather than looking for marginal commercial gain from conifers over their 40-year life.

Choosing to plant broadleaf trees gives long-term shelter with no interruptions from felling. Felling

conifers can result in up to 10 years of reduced to no shelter, which can then result in lower livestock and crop yields, more soil blow, additional fence maintenance, and replanting costs, along with soil damage from extraction.

Depending on the tree species chosen, there could be additional diversification benefits including an income stream from fruit and nuts like walnuts and native apple species. Overall, the benefits from changing from conifer to deciduous tree planting potentially outweighs the issues and income streams of conifers that become very marginal if looked at over the longer time period of a farm's life.



Keith Muir

For more information contact Keith Muir, Associate Director on 07379 495 517.

Properties for Sale



Woodside Farm

New to the market for offers over £950,000. A fantastic opportunity to acquire a 34 acre small holding within the Western Lakes and Lake District National Park, complete with coastal views.



Drumbeg Woodland

New to the market for offers over £575,000. A very attractive mixture of both commercial and amenity woodland, located near the town of Bathgate in rural west Lothian, easily accessible from Edinburgh and Glasgow.



Contact us to register your interest.

Coming soon

Well located arable farm in Tarbolton, Ayrshire for offers over £3.91 million.

**To unsubscribe from our mailings
email marketing@dr rural.co.uk**



To view all properties for sale, scan me



Your local Agency Team:



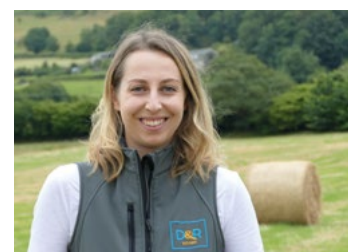
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