Rostons Farming Focus

WINTER 2022/23

CHARTERED SURVEYORS • VILLAGE & COUNTRY HOMES • ENTITLEMENTS • PLANNING • LITIGATION • FINANCE

Meet the team

Tony Rimmer
Director
MRICS, FAAV

Andrew Wallace
Consultant Director
MRICS, FAAV, FLAA

Rod Waldron
Village & Country Homes

Jonathan Bell
Associate Director
MRICS, FAAV

Alice Kearns
Graduate Surveyor

James Parton
Graduate Surveyor

Jack Jones
Graduate Surveyor

Rhiannon Parry-Hughes
Degree Apprentice

Georgie Lee
Placement Student

David Heath
Livestock Sales Trainee & Agricultural Valuer

Louise Roberts
Accounts Manager

Sophie Latham
Office Manager

Sophie Barnes
Professional Support

Julie Coates
Professional Support

Linda Cahill
Professional Support

Death and Tax

One of the above is certain that we will all encounter, the other we can possibly mitigate with strategic planning and good valuation advice, come that eventual day.

Over the last 13 years since the last recession, the revenue have been scrutinising the probate returns done at death, more closely.

Following various Tribunal cases, the question of Agricultural Property Relief and Business Property Relief which farmers and business owners have enjoyed for many years, has been challenged.

It should be born in mind that Agricultural Property Relief is only available on the agricultural value. In the current market place on many farms the residential element has a higher market value than its agricultural value. It is therefore essential when undertaking valuations for probate purposes and taxation that this is correctly identified and with a reasoned valid case, such that if you are challenged by the Revenue or the District Valuer, you can address their comments.

Rostons for many years have been identifying the market and agricultural values separately and have found that this helps speed up the process with the Revenue.

If you find yourself in a position wondering what to do following the death of a family member, please give the Valuation Team at Rostons a call and they would be delighted to assist.

Cranage office offers an extra location for the Rostons Team.

The opening of the Cranage/ Knutsford office earlier this year has proved a huge success for the Rostons business, providing not only a working space for the team on the east of the county but also a large meeting room, which has not only been used by the Rostons team to meet clients but for seminars and also used by other farming groups. The location at Holly House Farm, near Cranage, provides easy access to those clients affected in the east of the county by HS2, HyNet and a more recent Manchester Airport Hydrogen Pipeline.

Commenting on its success, Tony Rimmer, Director, stated that “For 20 years we have managed without an Eastern base but this office has just allowed for better grouping of meetings, improved working practices and a reduction in travel, all helping reduce our carbon footprint.”

Agency Property Sales Show Growth

The last 12 months has seen a huge growth within Rostons on the Property Agency side. Both Rural Agency, being farms, farmland, pony paddocks and so forth and also the Village & Country Properties, headed by Rod Waldron, dealing with unique rural properties either in a rural location, with land or with a quirky nature.

The market has been strong across all types until the last month or so, and whilst the wider property market has certainly slowed, the general rural market is showing signs of caution but not a drop in value. It is obviously early stages, and much will depend upon bank rates and the appetite of lenders and the affordability. Very much the overriding factor with all types of property we deal with is location and their uniqueness.

This type of property is unlikely to be impacted as much with a slowing to the market generally.

Welcome Vicky

We are pleased to welcome Vicky Symcox-Black to the Rostons team.

Vicky brings to the Rostons team a wealth of experience having operated in a diverse range of work roles and is really looking forward to developing strong working relationships with Cheshire farmers and landowners.

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The Life of an Apprentice

A general trend across the UK education sector has seen an increase in Degree Level Apprenticeships, and the Chartered Surveying profession, and Rostons itself, is not immune to this change.

My name is Rhiannon Parry-Hughes, and I am Rostons' first Degree Apprentice. Having started with the team in August, I am now well settled in, and firmly on the path of becoming one of the industry's next Rural Chartered Surveyors. I spend approximately three quarters of my time working at Rostons, shadowing the team across a variety of job roles, and then the remainder is spent at Harper Adams University, Newport, studying to gain my Undergraduate Degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management.

I really appreciate the 'hands-on' approach to learning and applying what I learn in university directly to my day-to-day jobs, as well as the high level of responsibility I have been trusted with, early on in my career.

The welcoming nature of the Rostons team and all our lovely clients has only confirmed that I made the right decision to undertake this role, rather than the traditional degree route.

If you, or someone you know, is a hard-working individual, passionate about making a difference in the rural sphere in Cheshire and the surrounding counties, then please get in touch with the team.

Key Dates 2023	
18th -25th January	January Online Machinery Sale
31st January	Stage 1 - Slurry investment Grant close
9th Febuary	Applications for Countyside Stewardship Agreement
15th March	BPS Application Window Opens
20th & 21st June	Cheshire Show
26th July	Nantwich Show
18th August	Flint & Denbigh Show
September	Cheshire Ploughing Match (Date TBC)
1st December	BPS 2023 Payment window opens

Online Auctions

The last 12 months have seen our regular monthly online auction continuing to grow and get a following throughout the UK.

Such diverse items from tractors to bale trailers, to calf hutches, feed fences, trailers, vehicles, have sold to good values and with buyers throughout the UK and indeed Northern Ireland and Poland.

Our farm dispersal sales have been huge successes with many purchasers turning out from local and afar for a good traditional on farm dispersal sale, this has resulted in premium values on many items.

If you are thinking of either tidying the yard of the redundant farm machinery and or having a change of direction, Andrew and the team would be delighted to discuss how we can assist.

Schemes, Grants and Incentives

Renewable Energy

In the northwest we are seeing a significant amount of interest from developers seeking to acquire rights over land to develop a range of renewable energy projects including solar, battery storage and electric vehicle charging points.

The most common form of arrangement is where a developer looks to take an option over an area of land, to enter into a lease should they gain planning permission and connection to the grid, good connection is crucial. While there is significant interest in obtaining sites, it is highly unlikely that there will be much free capacity until network upgrades take place around 2030.

The key requirements are to be close to a connection point, such as a substation or electricity line and low-quality land. As the HyNet Scheme also moves closer, we may also see a new demand for sites connected to hydrogen fuel production.

Slurry Infrastructure grant

As you would have read, BPS is being phased out and the current uncertainty regarding Countryside Stewardship, the Environmental Management Agreements and the Sustainable Farming Scheme. We have had the welcome news of the long-awaited Slurry Investment Scheme, the scheme will pay up to 50% of the cost of installing and upgrading slurry systems to ensure six months storage capacity. This grant will pay for a range of different types of slurry stores and associated pump transfer channels and covers. Stage 1 of the application opens on the 6 December 2022 and closes on the 31 January 2023. This grant is expected to be extremely popular and as such, Stage 1 of the application process is an eligibility check.

Having passed Stage 1, Stage 2 is a design and location check; applications will include the following: Size, Location and type of store proposed along with supporting documents such as slurry calculations, soil analyse, location maps and scaled drawings with design specification. Following Stage 1 and 2 the Rural Payments Agency will invite you to make a full application, this will compile all previously submitted information as well as evidence of funding, planning permission and confirmation the new store will meet current regulations. Much of Cheshire and Shropshire are located in priority areas and as such are more likely to progress past Stage 1.

Should you wish for more information regarding this grant or would like to submit an application for Stage 1, please contact Jack Jones at the Roston's Office.

BPS & Stewardship

Much has been written about the phasing of BPS and you will all have witnessed how much less you received into the bank this year, compared to previous years.

Whilst Stewardship is talked about as an option, you should look at your individual farm and see if it is suited for your individual farm/needs.

Too many people are looking at this as a panacea, when actually for intensive grassland production, with little waste land on a holding, it can lead to a negative effect.

The Rostons Team are completing a number of Stewardship and Sustainable Farming Scheme applications and if you are interested further then please contact Jack Jones at the Roston's Office.