

# L&F News

## OFF TO A GREAT START IN 2018!

■ ALAN MUMMERY, DIRECTOR



Don't believe all you read about the property market. We continue to negotiate good sales of land and development opportunities for motivated sellers.

Working with our experienced Chartered Surveyors and Chartered Town Planners in Bloomfields, we can offer a complete appraisal, planning and marketing service. Sound advice is only a telephone call away.



## RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN EVER INCREASING DEMAND

■ ALEC COX, DIRECTOR



A healthy supply of buyers want the opportunity to create a stylish home where they can have an active input into layout and design with an emphasis on energy efficiency, and lower, long-term maintenance costs. Building plots, development opportunities and buildings for conversions throughout Kent and Sussex continue to be in strong demand and are met with short supply!

A great example of how our professional departments work together and the popularity for projects was recently demonstrated with marketing and achieving successful sales agreed on Mathurst Farm.

The property comprised an oast and hop picking machine shed, two agricultural buildings sitting side by side, very much in use when hop growing was abundant throughout the Weald and currently used for occasional storage.

Our client initially contacted Lambert & Foster's Katie Hurley, a qualified Chartered Surveyor based at our Paddock Wood office and asked her advice on how to maximise the buildings potential. Katie successfully managed the project resulting in the team achieving a residential planning consent on the oast, and a prior notification approval for a change of use on the hop picking

machine shed to a pair of residential attached properties.

With successful consents achieved our client sought our advice on market value and the best way to sell. We recommended both properties be placed on the open market, to be sold by Private Treaty as a whole or in two lots and to proceed to the market immediately. Within the first two weeks, asking price interest was generated with further viewings being arranged. In consultation with our client we agreed to invite best offers to be submitted. The buyers expressing interest ranged from private buyers to developers. Multiple bids were received and a sale in excess of the guide price of £700,000 for the two lots was achieved (subject to contract).

If you are considering a sale, now is the time to contact us for a comprehensive appraisal.



## GOOD DEMAND FOR ORCHARD LAND

■ ALAN MUMMERY, DIRECTOR



The beginning of January saw the launch onto the market of a portfolio of top quality fruit orchards in the High Weald of Kent at Combourn Farm, Goudhurst.

The sale results from the owners' retirement from active fruit growing and the total area of 71 acres is offered for sale as a whole or in 3 lots. Included in the sale is Little Combourn Orchards which comprise 29 acres of relatively young orchards (2014 – 2016) which have met good enquiry from neighbours and local fruit growers.

I have been pleasantly surprised at the good level of enquiry we have had for these quality orchards. We have had individual interest in each of the lots as well as combinations. Given the difficult trading conditions in the fruit industry, it is encouraging to see that there is a good appetite to continue to invest in good quality fruit.

Full sales particulars can be downloaded from our website.

## LAND FOR SALE AT WHYDOWN, BEXHILL ON SEA

It is exceptionally rare for parcels of agricultural land to come to the market at Whydown. In fact no one can remember the last time this happened!

The land with direct access to Whydown Road extends to 17.12 acres.

It is in three parcels and there is a mains water supply. The guide price is £120,000 - £130,000 and you can find the full sales particulars on our website.



# ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SALE AGREED BY LAMBERT & FOSTER

TWO DOUBLE BEDROOM TERRACED COTTAGE IN EAST FARLEIGH, KENT  
**SIMILAR PROPERTIES URGENTLY REQUIRED FOR READY, WILLING AND ABLE BUYERS**

*If you are looking to secure a sale on your property, call us today*

**43 VIEWINGS** **19 OFFERS**

## MEMBERS OF THE TEAM GET ROYAL INTRODUCTION

■ TOM OGDEN, BLOOMFIELDS DIRECTOR



After having a tour of the 8,080m<sup>2</sup> facility, Nick Brandreth and Tom Ogden were

introduced to HRH The Princess Royal at the formal opening of AC Goatham & Sons fruit packhouse and cold store facility to explain their roles in obtaining planning permission for the site's infrastructure.



As a Planning Consultant and Land Agent to AC Goatham & Son for over 30 years, Nick Brandreth was able to explain how they have had to consider the ever changing and increasingly complicated planning system in their business growth. Tom Ogden then discussed the role a Planning Consultant takes in working with the public, the Council and a range of Consultants to assist in meeting the client's objective of delivering such a large proposal on the site within critical time frames.

HRH Princess Ann formally declared the facility open after recognising the vital and understated role undertaken by those involved in the rural economy. This was an immensely proud moment for all those involved in the project and a chance to reflect on the magnitude of what had been achieved through persistent team work.



## TWO NEW BUILD DWELLINGS IN GREEN BELT

■ KATIE HURLEY, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR



Planning permission has been secured by the team for two new build dwellings in a rural location just outside Tonbridge.

Our client came to us looking to maximise the value of their farm buildings. The site was situated in an attractive location outside of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) but had its challenges being within a flood risk area and the Green Belt. We engaged with the Local Planning Authority and Environment Agency early on carrying out pre-application work before moving forward to a staged planning approach.

Firstly obtaining prior approval for the conversion of the buildings from agricultural to two residential dwellings followed by an application for full

planning permission to redevelop the site to provide a more comprehensive design scheme for two new dwellings with associated change of use land to residential curtilage. Despite the Council's reservations regarding new development in the Green Belt we were able to put forward a scheme that constituted 'very special circumstances' by improving the openness of the Green Belt through reducing the overall footprint of built development and reorganising the layout which met the Local Authorities' approval.

The permitted scheme allows for two contemporary designed dwellings each providing in excess of 3,000 sq.ft of accommodation over two floors, both with large gardens and a shared garage outbuilding.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION

■ TOM OGDEN, BLOOMFIELDS DIRECTOR

Whilst Bloomfields has a proven track record in delivering new buildings in the countryside, changing the use of buildings and land and dealing with controversial planning matters, understanding value and delivering opportunity is just as important. So, whether you are considering onward sale of an asset (whether at auction, on the open market or behind closed doors), letting potential, promotion/option agreements and even managing build outs, it is wise to take advice from suitably qualified professionals. That is why the collaborated approach between Bloomfields and Lambert & Foster has worked so well in delivering results.



# IMPORTANT

## GDPR

### GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

Many of you will have heard that data protection rules are changing.

The government has confirmed that the UK will opt in to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) before it leaves the EU.

#### GDPR comes into force on 25 May 2018.

So that we can continue to send you property particulars, news updates, changes to legislations, details of our services etc we will be asking you to 'opt-in' to receiving information from us. Please take the time to respond so that we can continue to keep you up to date.

# THE 68<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GRAZING SALE



■ TED HANDLEY, RURAL CONSULTANT



The 68th Annual Grazing Sale will shortly be upon us and is a very good barometer of what is happening and confidence levels in the livestock world.

Although grazing rights for summer grazing had been sold by auction from time to time from around 1900 it was in 1950 that the first collective sale was organised and was held in the Corn Exchange in Hailsham, East Sussex.

The majority of the land offered in that first sale belonged to the Weston-Simons family and was all located at Pevensey Levels, a fertile grassland area between Hailsham, Eastbourne and Bexhill on Sea. Incredibly this area has a very strong French connection. I am sure you are now asking why.

Well, it was at Pevensey Bay that Guillaume, Duc de Normandie, landed with his army that led to the last invasion of England and of course slaying of and taking the English Crown from Harold at the Battle of Hastings

In 1066, Pevensey Levels or Pevensey Marshes (as the locals call it) was truly "marshy land" with lots of rivulets and wet areas frequently flooded by the sea.

Eight centuries later the French prisoners that had been captured during the Napoleonic wars, dug the drainage ditches to create the mosaic of fields that exist today. They also constructed the first sea wall to keep out the sea. Incredibly, the sea levels were lower at that time but eventually pumps had to be installed to control water levels and the inundations of the sea.

Today Pevensey Levels or Pevensey Marshes are an internationally recognised RAMSA site and a Site of Special Scientific Interest used for cattle and sheep grazing. Each year Lambert & Foster offer for sale up to 1,000 acres of summer grazing rights to local farmers.

Consensus of opinion says this grazing is "good stuff".



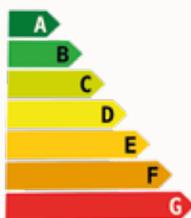
# TIME TO ACT ON EPC RATINGS OF LET PROPERTY

■ JONATHAN BOOTH, RURAL PROFESSIONAL



The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 set out Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) for let residential and commercial property. The Regulations state that any property that has an Energy Performance Certificate rating below band 'E' cannot be let on a new tenancy on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018. Any domestic private rented property cannot "continue to be let" on an existing tenancy on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. For non-domestic property, the long-stop date is 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

The implications for a landlord may be significant, particularly for a portfolio of rural property. The local authority will enforce the Regulations with fines for residential property up to £5,000 and non-domestic property up to £150,000. Where the Regulations apply, to avoid



being in breach, a landlord must carry out energy efficiency improvements or apply for one of the exemptions.

A number of exemptions are available but they must be applied for and will typically have a limited life of five years. The exemptions include, but are not limited to:

- » All relevant energy efficiency improvements have been carried out
- » Tenant has refused to give consent for works to be carried out
- » The market value of the property will be reduced by more than 5% following the improvement works
  - » Temporary 6 month exemption before compliance is required
  - » Buildings that are not required to have an EPC

It should be noted that Listed Buildings and buildings within a

Conservation Area are not completely exempt from the requirement to have an EPC and may therefore be subject to the Regulations. It is also important to note that the Regulations will only apply where a property has an EPC rating. While landlords are now under an obligation to obtain an EPC for a property before it is rented out, there is no obligation to obtain an EPC where a property was let before 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 and remains let under that tenancy. Where a property is likely to fall into Band 'F' or 'G', a landlord should be mindful of this fact before instructing an EPC assessment of the property or indeed seeking to bring a long standing tenancy to an end.

**AHEAD OF APRIL 2018**, we recommend an audit of property portfolios is carried out to assess which buildings fall under the Regulations and are at risk. Thereafter a phased improvement plan can be put in place. Contact us to find out how we can help you.

CONVERSION ACHIEVED TO RESIDENTIAL USE ON THIS BUILDING



DEADLINE  
**15**  
APR

## STORAGE TO RESIDENTIAL UPDATE

■ GARY MICKELBOROUGH, BLOOMFIELDS DIRECTOR



Readers are reminded that the current permitted development rights which can permit the change of use of storage buildings to residential units are due to expire on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018. This technically means that it is necessary for any prior approval application for the change of use of such buildings to have been approved, and for the building to have been converted, by that date. Whilst we expect the legislation to be extended, this is not certain, and so readers are reminded to consider, in good time, what options may be available to them.

## WELCOME TO NEW TEAM MEMBERS...

Lambert & Foster are delighted to welcome

**Ben Wombwell** to the team. Ben joins the expanding agency and valuation department based at our Paddock Wood office. Living locally in the Maidstone area he has recently returned from a year teaching in Australia, having completed a Degree and an RICS accredited Masters in Real Estate at Nottingham Trent University. Ben will be specialising in farm and development land sales and valuations.



**Vicky Bedford** joins the Bloomfields team this month. As a Chartered Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute and with over

16 years of experience working in Local Authorities, Vicky will be an obvious asset to the team. Director, Tom Ogden says, "We are delighted to have Vicky join the growing Bloomfields team. Vicky's experience and local knowledge will fit perfectly with the needs of the business to offer honest qualified professional advice across a range of planning services and at a time when planning opportunities are rife for land and business owners".

## LIGHT INDUSTRIAL BUILDING TO A HOUSE IN GREEN BELT



CONVERSION ACHIEVED TO RESIDENTIAL USE ON THIS BUILDING

■ TOM OGDEN, BLOOMFIELDS DIRECTOR



Having already confirmed the change of use of a building from an office to a house, Bloomfields have achieved a further permission on a site in the Green Belt to change the use of an industrial unit to a further house.

This has given Bloomfields' client a range of options for their site. During the negotiation process the Bloomfields team also demonstrated that the provision of additional information with regard to contamination surveys was not necessary.

PROUD SPONSORS OF THE  
**2018 PADDOCK WOOD 1/2 MARATHON**  
SUNDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> APRIL



## FORTHCOMING 2018 SALES



### PADDOCK WOOD COLLECTIVE SALE

KEYLANDS SALEFIELD,  
PADDOCK WOOD,  
TONBRIDGE, KENT  
TN12 6QL

**03**  
MAY

**12**  
JUL

**04**  
OCT



### BYGONES SALE

LITTLE HARBOURNE FARM,  
ST MICHAELS,  
TENTERDEN,  
KENT TN30 6SH

**02**  
JUN



### HARD FRUIT SALE

HORSMONDEN VILLAGE HALL,  
BACK LANE,  
HORSMONDEN,  
KENT TN12 8LH

**27**  
JUL

PADDOCK WOOD OFFICE 01892 832 325 | [auctions@lambertandfoster.co.uk](mailto:auctions@lambertandfoster.co.uk)

## PROPERTY PROFESSIONALS FOR OVER 100 YEARS

[www.lambertandfoster.co.uk](http://www.lambertandfoster.co.uk)

**PADDOCK WOOD 01892 832 325**  
77 Commercial Road, Paddock Wood,  
Kent TN12 6DS

**MAYFIELD 01435 873 999**  
The Estate Office, High Street, Mayfield,  
E. Sussex TN20 6AE

**CRANBROOK 01580 712 888**  
Weald Office, 39 High Street, Cranbrook,  
Kent TN17 3DN

