

SPRINGING INTO SUMMER!

■ PETER HODGES, DIRECTOR



It has been a busy 2017 with many auctions, sales and other projects successfully completed and we are looking forward to our forthcoming sales.



This year we are attending various shows and ploughing matches and we would be delighted to see you there. Sign up to our e-newsletter to stay up to date.

With many divisions of the firm, and offices situated throughout Kent and East Sussex it is important to understand how our various divisions, all connected, are working with one another to provide a full and professional property service.

WELCOME TO NEW TEAM MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome Mandy Bussey to our Agricultural Team at the Paddock Wood Office. Mandy has joined the team with a running start (literally!) - see our sporting article on the back page for more!

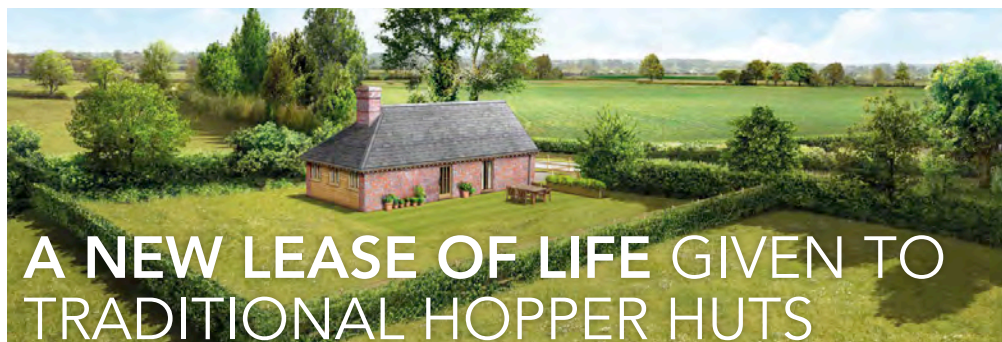
Tracey Gooding has joined Bloomfields to offer her support to the planning team. Tracey, who lives in East Sussex has had many years of experience in the planning sector and will be a valuable addition to the growing team.

We also welcome back Lucy Austin. Lucy returns to the Paddock Wood Lettings Team after maternity leave. We wish her luck in her new role.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Beth Watts, part of the Bloomfields team, on becoming an Associate member of the Royal Town Planning Institute in March.

Congratulations also go to Jon Booth on passing his RICS exams and now joins others at Lambert & Foster as a Member of the RICS. Jon also passed his CAAV exams to become a Fellow of the CAAV. Well done!



A NEW LEASE OF LIFE GIVEN TO TRADITIONAL HOPPER HUTS

■ GARY MICKELBOROUGH, DIRECTOR



Our client had aspirations to maximise the potential for use of this building for residential purposes. Having previously been granted permission for use only as a holiday let, the client instructed Bloomfields to identify the simplest strategy to attain full residential use. Despite works having already been carried out to convert the building to a holiday let, Bloomfields was able to work with the Council to gain consent for a full and unrestricted use of the building as a home.

The matter has subsequently been passed on to Lambert & Foster's Rural Land Experts who have successfully marketed the building for sale as a development opportunity. This has proved yet another great example of how the synergy between Bloomfields and Lambert & Foster provide the all-round knowledge and expertise required to maximise, as well as deliver, the development and financial potential of any rural building.

HOUSING DEMAND OUTSTRIPPING SUPPLY

■ CLAIRE LITTLE, MAYFIELD RESIDENTIAL



With warmer weather now upon us the thought of moving enters many people's minds. Spring has the reputation of being the best time to sell as buyers and sellers alike often delay during the winter months. We always encourage properties to the market during winter as there is often a significant lack of property whilst demand from buyers can remain high. House prices appear to be consistently on the rise which could be underpinned by a lack of supply of property coming to the market.

We are experiencing somewhat of a stalemate as many home owners are reluctant to place their home on the market until they have found an onward move. Luckily many buyers are becoming increasingly patient and are often prepared to wait until they find the right home.

HOUSES NEEDED!

We have a database with many eager purchasers who are waiting to secure homes be it on the open market or on a more confidential basis. If you would like some advice as to what method of sale would suit you best or just an informal chat then we would love to hear from you.



BARNs, BARNs AND MORE BARNs!

■ ALAN MUMMERY, DIRECTOR



The success of the Bloomfields Planning Team is creating a steady flow of barns with consent for residential conversion for the Lambert & Foster development sales team. Recent instructions have included Top Barn at Popes Hall Farm in Sandway which found a buyer within one month of marketing.

New to the market is the fascinating group of buildings at Amherst Farm in Egerton where two buildings, one with consent for a four bedroom conversion the other with a one bedroom consent, have recently been launched. The buildings are on the edge of the village with stunning views of the Downs. New instructions in Smarden and Pluckley will also shortly be launched.

If you are interested in purchasing a development property please register your details with us as these buildings seem to sell fast!



VOTE FOR HOUSING

■ ALEC COX, DIRECTOR



Without doubt Brexit, the economy and the NHS will dominate the 2017 General Election. Energy, education and defence should also get a strong look-in while the devolved governments will be trying to get as much air time as possible. But do spare a thought for housing, as, on the evidence of the recent past, it doesn't look as if any of the political party's will.

Over the past nineteen years, and during the tenure of four prime ministers there have been no fewer than fourteen housing ministers. This post seems to have become a stepping-stone for ministers who are either on an upwardly mobile career path or heading in the opposite direction into the political wilderness. That such an important part of our daily lives can be dealt with in such a perfunctory way seems short sighted and negative to most outside Westminster. Property is a national obsession along with providing important jobs and revenue through allied industries such as furniture, flooring, lighting and decorating, and in the service sector – finance, legal, surveying, etc.

We need more housing in the UK and we need better housing. Yet successive governments have failed to plan, have failed to act and have failed to build the 250,000 new homes that we are estimated to need each year. They have failed to establish any sort of meaningful housing policy – indeed how could there be a meaningful one with so many different housing ministers?

Our hope is that whichever party prevails on 8th June the new Prime Minister will take the housing ministry more seriously. We also hope that the new chancellor will not use housing as another easy way to create revenue without first thinking through the implications a higher rate of tax will have on the property market as a whole – after all, we all have to live somewhere!

£15,000 DONATION TO THE KENT AIR AMBULANCE



Lambert & Foster are delighted to be involved in the distribution of the remaining funds of the Maidstone & District Fatstock Show Association following the final show that was held in December 2014.

A cheque for £15,000 was presented to the Kent Air Ambulance by Committee Members Les Steven, Brian Stone, Chairman Steven Goodworth and Ian McLean. It is a privilege for Lambert & Foster to be in a position of making such generous donations to charities that offer so much to the rural community that we live in.



PROPERTY AUCTION UPDATES

■ ALAN MUMMERY, DIRECTOR



It has been a busy start to 2017 for the Lambert & Foster property auction team. The first sale of 2017 was held on the 30th March. A diverse catalogue of fourteen lots created significant pre-sale interest. The main property on offer was Breach Farm, Upchurch, on behalf of Executors, where two houses, three development properties and land were offered for sale as a whole or in nine lots. The vendors were tempted to sell several lots prior to auction, including a barn for conversion, an end of terrace cottage and two blocks of agricultural land, all selling significantly higher than their pre-auction guide prices. The largest and most valuable lot in the sale was Hazelhurst Farm at Three Legg Cross in Ticehurst, East Sussex, where again Executors were selling. This 94 acre farm with extensive buildings was sold prior to auction around the top end of the guide price of £800,000 - £820,000.



The early Summer auction, due to take place at the Grange Moor Hotel in Maidstone on 24th May, includes an equally interesting array of lots. There are several blocks of agricultural land in Cranbrook, Yalding and Boughton Monchelsea, Ash (Sevenoaks) and Brenchley, varying in size from 6 to 23 acres. Ramstile Farm at High Halden offered on instructions of Executors, is creating significant interest. The main lot comprising a bungalow, buildings with potential for alternative uses and 29 acres is guided at £750,000 - £800,000. The remaining farmland is parcelled in three lots from 8 acres to 26.8 acres.

Auctioneer Alan Mummery commented. "We have had back-to-back auctions with fascinating selections of properties which have really got the phones ringing!". We hope to be having our third auction at the end of July and are currently undertaking pre-auction appraisals ahead of the closing date in early June. The Auction Team can be contacted at the Paddock Wood office on 01892 832325.



TOP FRUIT GROWER OF THE YEAR AWARD GIVEN TO BLOOMFIELDS' CLIENT

■ BLOOMFIELDS PLANNING TEAM



Tom Ogden was delighted to be invited to attend the UK Grower Awards in February to witness Bloomfield's client AC Goatham & Son claiming several accolades at this prestigious event organised by Horticultural Weekly. This came just after Bloomfields obtained planning permission for a new 9,000 bin cold store and extension to a farm building and also after Bloomfields negotiated the relocation of 16 mobile units to support farm workers on a site in north Kent.

AC Goatham & Son won the Top Fruit Grower of the Year Award, a prize awarded to a top/stone fruit grower that impresses the judges by demonstrating continuous

achievement in one or more areas.

Bloomfield's client was also selected as finalists for employing the Best Production Manager in the business whilst also making the finals for the Best Business Innovation Awards for the adoption of their new fruit growing techniques to increase yields. AC Goatham & Son were runner up for the Edible Grower of the Year Award, an accolade considering winners across all of the fruit and vegetable categories.

Last month, Tom was also a guest at the Kent Chamber of Commerce awards to witness AC Goatham & Son take the Overall Business of the Year Award. Bloomfields congratulate the entire AC Goatham & Son team on their recent achievements.



FARM MACHINERY DISPERSAL SALES

■ ALAN MUMMERY, DIRECTOR



Property hasn't been the only topic of conversation in the auction team, with two large on-site farm machinery dispersal sales already held in 2017. Henry and Heather Bryant's decision to reorganise their farming activities resulted in the largest farm machinery sale that Lambert & Foster have held for several years. Taking place at Bounds Farm, Boughton near Canterbury it presented a first class range of farm machinery and equipment, including around 20 tractors, that was offered to an enthusiastic gathering of farmers and growers. Hot on the heels of this success was the next Farm Dispersal Sale on behalf of Executors of Breach Farm, Upchurch. Blessed with summer-like conditions, a complete clearance was effected with some large scale arable and grassland machinery selling in excess of expectations.

Next on the calendar are the famous Paddock Wood Collective Sales which get under way with dates fixed in May, July and September - entry forms are now available. Our annual trip to St. Michaels for the Rural Bygones Auction takes place on the 3rd June.

Please contact our Auction Manager, Elaine Bishop, at our Paddock Wood office 01892 8322325 for more information.

FULL SALE REPORTS AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE

BREAKFAST SEMINAR 2017

■ WILL MATHIAS, RURAL PROFESSIONAL



As a firm of Property Professionals, Lambert & Foster not only strive to give the best advice possible to their clients but also make a point of maintaining strong working relationships with other professional advisors.

Each year, Lambert & Foster and Bloomfields host a breakfast seminar and deliver a series of short talks and presentations about relevant topical issues affecting property owners. Some 70 professionals, ranging from solicitors and accountants to bank managers and consultants came to hear the informative presentations of L&F and Bloomfields which covered a range of topics including the implications of Brexit on rural property, values of land and property,



planning opportunities with permitted development rights and the emerging local plans of many local authorities. Everybody left feeling that they had learnt something and it is both satisfying and rewarding to regularly have other professionals coming to us for advice.

The networks that we have created with other professionals often set us apart from other firms, leading to a much greater synergy all of which is to the clients benefit when working jointly on projects.

PROPERTY PROFESSIONALS WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

■ WILL MATHIAS, RURAL PROFESSIONAL



In the world of property, many firms like to refer to themselves as professionals and many will tell you that they are in order to secure business with you. Lambert & Foster differ from most other agents by being able to prove that they are indeed property professionals. Within Lambert & Foster there are:

12 Members, Fellows, Associates & Probationers of the **Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors** including 8 **RICS Registered Valuers**

7 Fellows & Probationers of the **Central Association of Agricultural Valuers**

4 Chartered and Associate Members of the **Royal Town Planning Institute**

2 Members of the **Association of Residential Letting Agents**

2 Members of the **British Institute of Agricultural Consultants**

1 Member of the **Chartered Institute of Arbitrators**



In addition, Lambert & Foster as a firm, is regulated by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the Association of Residential Letting Agents. Also, our Bloomfields planning team are regulated by the Royal Town Planning Institute. Therefore, by using Lambert & Foster or Bloomfields you know that our staff adhere to the highest levels of integrity and professionalism and will consistently provide you with a high level of service, backed up by honest, expert knowledge.

BEST VILLAGE IN BRITAIN

■ CLAIRE LITTLE, MAYFIELD RESIDENTIAL



Mayfield has been voted the best village in Britain by the Times Magazine and we are very proud to be part of this beautiful village and thriving community.

Spending so much time in Mayfield it is not hard to see what makes this village so special. The shops on the High Street provide a good range of products and services whilst shopkeepers always offer a warm welcome and smile (even on gloomy days!). The Mayfield News & Views is packed with events, dates, talks and walks around the historic village which dates back 1,000 years and has over 40 listed buildings. Even the village sign has won an award!

Yes, we agree that Mayfield is special and do not hold back when talking to home buyers that are yet to experience the delights of what the village has to offer.



SPORTING UPDATE



Out of hours many of the L&F staff enjoy participating in sporting activities. Recently the team have taking part in not one, not two but THREE running events...

Four members of the extended Lambert & Foster family pulled on their trainers for the **2017 Paddock Wood Half Marathon** which attracted 2,100+ runners held in bright sunshine following a 13.1 mile route through the town and surrounding countryside.

Jon Booth headed home in 1hr 52mins and Alan Mummery returned in 2hr 11mins both achieving personal bests. Huge thanks to the very vocal and cheerful supporters who supported the team.



We are delighted to announce that Mandy achieved an excellent time of 3hrs 58mins in the **London Marathon**. She now has a Good for Age guaranteed place for next year. Congratulations Mandy!

Third on the sporting calendar was the **annual Whitstable 10k race** held on the seafront on a blustery and showery May Bank Holiday Monday. It was a great team performance from the Lambert & Foster and Bloomfields staff, friends and family.

Eleven made the starting line and delivered excellent performances all round. Hot on the heels of successful half and full marathon successes Jon Booth (49mins 29secs) and Mandy Bussey (50mins 44secs) led in the men's and ladies'



teams. Cranbrook Office's Alec Cox (50mins 24secs) finished almost hand in hand with Bloomfields' Gary Mickelbough (50mins 25secs) who had returned directly from warm weather training on his sun lounger in the Mediterranean! Other sterling performances were achieved by Surveyor Carl Blackford (53mins 55secs) whilst Alan Mummery (56mins 55secs) and Wendy Morris (63mins 38secs) spent a little more time enjoying the sea views along the way!

All staff members received £75 each for their nominated charity. Well done to everyone involved!

BASIC PAYMENT SCHEME UPDATE

■ WILL MATHIAS, RURAL PROFESSIONAL



As applications for the Basic Payment Scheme are under way ahead of the 15th May deadline, we are urging all clients to review their claims well ahead of the deadline where possible.



Whilst the online applications automatically save and store a large amount of previous changes made making the reviewing process simpler in a number of cases, there are plenty of outstanding issues that have not been fully

resolved from 2016 claims and in some cases 2015 claims.

BPS Claim Statements now offer a drastic reduction in information meaning that if you suspect something is wrong with your claim, it is down to you to prove to the RPA that they have processed something incorrectly. When coupled with the fact that the RPA is not prepared to issue full sets of maps anymore and only make individual field maps available online, attention to detail in preparing a claim is more important than ever. If a mistake is made, you can rest assured that the RPA will not pay out any additional money for the applicants error.

Should you require assistance with your claims, we are here to help.

PROBATE RELIEF

■ KATIE HURLEY, RURAL PROFESSIONAL



The news of the snap General Election was a welcome relief for many of our clients in the process of applying for probate. When the budget was announced earlier in the year the Government looked to significantly increase the cost of probate fees based upon the value of the estate. This would see fees increase from the current flat rate of £155/£215 to a scaled cost which for an estate valued in excess of £2 million would require a fee of £20,000. The proposed changes were to come into force in May 2017.

Given the considerable costs involved meant a sudden urgency to submit the application for probate as soon as possible to try and avoid the new charging schedule. Consequently Lambert & Foster's team of RICS Registered Valuers have had an exceptionally busy couple of months preparing valuations for inheritance tax purposes. Fortunately, due to the call for a General Election in June, the Government have announced that they will not have time to draft the legislation in time and therefore the proposed hike in fees has been shelved.

Valuations for inheritance tax purposes need to be carried out by an RICS Registered Valuer. Lambert & Foster's valuation team comprises a wealth of experience in valuing property with a total of eight RICS Registered Valuers. We are also able to assist with valuations for different purposes including; secured lending, tax planning, compulsory purchase, market appraisals and rent reviews.



PROPERTY PROFESSIONALS FOR OVER 100 YEARS

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