

Oakbank E-News August 2021

Stewardship reminders

ELS AUGUST

6m buffer strips (EE3 and EE9) – if you have included some wild flowers in your buffer strips (**EE12**) you may now cut the whole 6m strip and remove the cuttings.

Uncropped, cultivated areas for ground-nesting birds (EF13) – from 1st August these can be returned to the normal rotation. If they are sited in an area which could produce a drive or a holding area then you could establish a catch crop asap.

Extended over-winter stubbles (EF22) – from 1st August these can be sprayed off with glyphosate and can return to normal farm management from 15th August.

Winter cover crops (EJ13) - Drill or broadcast a quick growing cover crop mix by 15th September.

Management of rush pastures (EK4) – up to a third of the area of rushes in each field can now be cut.

Legume and herb-rich swards (EK21) – as long as the field has been shut up for at least three weeks, you can now cut or graze these.

CSS OPTIONS AUGUST

Nesting plots for lapwings and stone curlew (AB5) – from 1st August they can be sprayed off, cultivated and sown with mustard/turnips to provide extra partridge holding cover.

Enhanced overwinter stubble (AB6) – return to normal farm rotation from 1st August.

Flower-rich margins and plots (AB8) – cut (and remove if dense) or graze 90% of the area between 15th August and 31st October to leave a plant height of between 10cm and 20cm - leave 10% of the area uncut or ungrazed. If you are establishing an AB8 mix for the first time we strongly suggest sowing before the middle of September.

Two-year sown legume fallow (AB15) – establish mix as soon as possible after harvest (ideally by the end of August).

Autumn sown bumblebird mix (AB16) - establish mix as soon as possible after harvest (ideally by the end of August).

Winter cover crop (SW6) – establish a quick growing cover crop by 15th September.



Catch and Cover Crops

Catch or Cover Crops this season. Clients are getting excellent results with these mixes and we would encourage farmers to trial cover crops on at least a small acreage to see how they get on first-hand. Our team can help you to avoid common pitfalls and supply you with something appropriate for your situation and rotation.



Retirement

After 5 decades of maintaining and enhancing East Anglia's semi-natural and ancient woodland, Rod Pass has finally hung up his hi-vis coat and marker spray! When Oakbank acquired Rod Pass Associates (RPA) in 2018, Rod stayed on as a consultant, looking after some of his best clients and helping the integration of RPA into the Oakbank team. He is now stepping aside completely and we wish him a happy and healthy retirement.

New Team Members

We are delighted to welcome Michael Ryder and Jamie Gunn to the Oakbank team.

Mike is a highly experienced woodland advisor who joins our woodland division from the Woodland Trust. He is based near Norwich and will be predominantly East Anglian based. He will be taking on Rod Pass's clients as well as developing his own client base, whether that's helping manage existing woodlands, through woodland management plans and felling licenses, or helping with woodland creation planning and grants.



Jamie joins us having just completed his Masters in Rural Estate and Land Management at Harper Adams University. Jamie has a practical agricultural background as well as a good understanding of sporting estates, having spent his placement year working on the Atholl Estate in the Highlands. Jamie joins our stewardship team and will also be working with Ian on the regenerative agriculture side of the business.



Woodland planting

If you are thinking about planting some new woodland this coming winter then you need to get your planting stock ordered asap. Nurseries nationwide are struggling to keep up with the demand for planting stock and many are already sold out of certain species for the coming season.

New English Woodland Creation offer

The new grant that was launched with a big fanfare in June, to encourage more landowners to plant more trees does have an important caveat, namely that it cannot be applied for on land that is already in a CS scheme. If you are thinking of applying for a new CS scheme in 2022 but also want to investigate the opportunity that the EWCO brings then it would be advisable to leave the land parcel in question out of your CS application.

New Hedgerow Carbon Code

England's hedgerows already store an estimated 9m tonnes of carbon and a new scheme, developed by the GWCT at the Allerton project, could unlock more than £60m income for farmers by encouraging hedgerow habitat improvements and a tool to calculate the carbon capture potential of hedgerows.

<https://www.gwct.org.uk/news/news/2021/august/proposed-hedgerow-carbon-code-could-unlock-more-than-60m-income-for-farmers/>