

Bridging payments give cash injection for stewardship customers

News story

Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship claimants will be offered bridging payments for the 2019 claim year.



The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has confirmed today that farmers and land managers will be offered bridging payments for unpaid claims on their stewardship agreements.

The interest-free loans will cover Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship 2019 payments to ensure farmers and land managers are paid for the important work they do to protect the environment.

Eligible claimants will receive a payment in May for 75% of the current estimated value of their claims to help with farm business cash flow while the remaining processing is completed on their claims.

This builds on the announcement made yesterday to extend the claim window for 2020 as part of a suite of measures the RPA is undertaking to help rural businesses affected by coronavirus.

RPA Chief Executive Paul Caldwell said:

We are committed to driving up performance on the Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship schemes, but these bridging payments will help to tide farmers and land managers over in May before their claims are paid.

We know this is a difficult time for farmers and rural businesses, and our focus remains on processing the remaining claims so they can be paid as quickly as possible.

A bridging payment is an interest-free loan to customers ahead of their full

payment, providing them with 75% of the current estimated value of their claim. Once the full payment has been processed and made, the amount already issued through a bridging payment will be held back.

As the vast majority (99%) of Basic Payment Scheme claims have already been paid in full to customers, the RPA will not be making bridging payments to BPS customers this year. The RPA is working quickly to resolve the few outstanding applications where payment is due.

The RPA will be writing directly to farmers and land managers to provide an update on bridging payments and on how these payments will be calculated.

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