

Rural Payments Agency update – April 2022

Welcome to the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) April 2022 update. RPA recognises that this is a really challenging time for many rural businesses and we would like to share some updates with you and reflect on what has been achieved. Our updates include:

- the Sustainable Farming Incentive in 2022
- Landscape Recovery and Local Nature Recovery
- the Lump Sum Exit scheme

We have published our 5 Year Strategy which sets out our main objectives in delivering agricultural transition, meeting both customer expectations and policy needs, delivering environmental outcomes through a quality service and being an exemplar of the Civil Service's Operational Delivery Profession working in practice.

We continued to deliver a range of services to rural businesses and developed and implemented new schemes and services. We launched the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) pilot with over 2,500 expressions of interest and more than 900 applicants.

RPA has continued to issue payments to farming and rural businesses through schemes such as the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), Countryside Stewardship (CS) and Environmental Stewardship (ES). Over 100,000 eligible 2021 claims worth £1.8bn were paid – 92% by the end of December (2020: 89.5%). This represented 98.3% of BPS, 62.2% of CS revenue claims, and 64.6% of ES eligible claims.

We also received over 5,600 CS Capital grant claims worth £66.75m, which had helped to establish and maintain woodland and hedges, as well as much more.

We introduced a new approach for rural business that were due more than one 2021 scheme payment (combinations of BPS, CS, and ES). We wanted rural businesses to receive at least one payment in December, and over 98% did.