

CHEFFINS

200 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

RURAL

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SCENE

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A CRITICAL TIME FOR AGRICULTURE...

The long awaited Autumn Budget was delivered on 26th November but despite months of campaigning from the agriculture industry, the Government has not changed direction with its plans to significantly limit the availability of Agricultural Property Relief and Business Property Relief on Inheritance Tax.

There has been some concession to the original proposals, with the ability to transfer the £1 million APR/BPR allowance between spouses and civil partners, therefore effectively increasing the cap to £2 million. Whilst this amendment

is welcome, the £2 million cap stills falls well short of the asset value of many family farms when you account for the farmhouse, cottages, land & buildings, machinery, livestock and growing crops.

(Continued overleaf...)

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Many farming businesses will also be impacted by the additional policies announced in the Budget, including the Mansion Tax (an annual surcharge on residential property in excess of £2 million) and the 2% increase in tax on income from let property, which will increase the tax liability on non-farming income from cottages and let buildings. The dividend tax is also increasing by 2% which will impact farming businesses which operate as companies.

The Budget included a mixed bag on diversified income from holiday lets, farm cafés and similar businesses, with a reduction in business rates for some retail, leisure and hospitality but the introduction of a tourist tax (subject to further consultation) for overnight stays.

The ongoing financial and mental strain on the agricultural sector over the past 18 months has been significant, with the combination of the tapering out of the Basic Payment Scheme and the dwindling numbers of farm subsidies and environmental grants.

The announcement of the APR spouse transfer provides some breathing space but essentially it only defers the problem of a major IHT liability down the line. Early succession planning will be ever more crucial to allow ample time for family discussions and to ensure a smooth handover from one generation to the next. The cap on relief has created worrying times for the entire agricultural community and, as a result, it is anticipated that more farmland will start to filter into the market as businesses look to offset individual tax liabilities.

At Cheffins, we are here to support everyone in the industry who might be impacted by the Government's decisions. Forward planning with appropriate professional advice and support will be critical to help farmers navigate their way through this disastrous policy, and we would recommend, as a starting point, that farmers carefully review their business and farming structures to make the most of the allowances available.

Accurate valuations of property, machinery and other taxable assets will be important to ensure effective IHT tax planning, as well as a wider review of business plans in the face of increased costs and tax liabilities.

For more than 200 years, Cheffins has supported farming and rural communities through recessions, global conflicts, agricultural downturns and challenging government interventions. As the consequences of these latest reforms become clear, we will continue to work alongside farmers to help them understand the potential impact on their businesses and long-term succession. Agriculture has always been a sector defined by resilience and adaptability. While these reforms will undoubtedly present challenges, we expect many farmers to respond by adjusting their business plans and longer term strategies to secure the future of their farms.

Simon Gooderham, Director
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The Route to Rural...

For young people seeking a career path, the scope of opportunities in the rural sector is vast with opportunity to gain skills across an expansive range of work areas. Here, in association with the CAAV's Route to Rural campaign, three of our recent recruits share their experiences and explain what led them to choose a career in the rural sector.

Harriet Petherick, Apprentice Rural Surveyor (Cambridge office)

Growing up on my family farm in Stretham, I have always had a deep connection with the countryside and knew from an early age that agriculture was the path I wanted to follow. My fondest memories are of weekends spent with my dad driving a tractor across the farm. Sitting in the passenger seat of various John Deeres – travelling here, there and everywhere – truly sparked my passion for rural life and the land.

This countryside upbringing naturally led me to join Soham Young Farmers' Club as soon as I was old enough. Being part of Young Farmers provided me with a range of opportunities within the agricultural industry and really confirmed my desire to build a career in the sector.

I went on to study 'A' Levels before beginning my Degree Apprenticeship with Cheffins where I'm based in the Cambridge office. This role allows me to combine full-time work with academic study, spending four weeks at work followed by one week at Harper Adams University.

Since starting my career with Cheffins back in September, I have gained invaluable experience that bridges academic learning with real-world practice. Working across a range of rural properties and shadowing experienced colleagues has deepened my understanding of land management, valuation and estate stewardship, while helping me develop the skills needed to navigate complex planning, agricultural, and environmental matters. This hands-on experience has strengthened my professional judgment, communication and client relationship skills, providing me with a solid foundation to progress confidently within the surveying profession and make a meaningful contribution to the rural sector.



Felicity Wright, Graduate Rural Surveyor (Ely office)

Growing up I spent a lot of time outside squashed behind the digger seat or hanging off the side of various construction machinery with my dad and my brother. From an early age, I was captivated by the big kit rolling through the yard and the characters who operated it.

Later my fascination extended beyond the yard to the logistics and decision-making which underpin land based industries. I particularly enjoyed hearing about the kit my dad had bought at various auctions during the week. Each piece came with a story often involving a competitive bid, a bit of luck and a telling-off from the bank manager!

These early experiences developed a lasting interest in market dynamics, value and trade and laid the foundations for my early interest in valuation. I went on to study Real Estate at Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester where I developed my knowledge in valuation, economics, property law and planning and development.

After graduating I spent 18 months in rural estate management gaining practical experience in property operations. While I valued the exposure, I soon realised my passion lay in valuation and business management – areas that allow me to combine analytical thinking with a deep understanding of land and its commercial potential.

Today as a graduate surveyor at Cheffins I am proud to be part of a team that plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of rural property and enterprise. I still enjoy going to farm auctions with my dad and together we admire the machinery and reconnect with familiar faces from the past. These moments reinforce my commitment to a career rooted in land, sustainability and the community.



Katelyn Raven, Apprentice Rural Surveyor (Ely office)

Growing up on a farm meant I got my hands stuck into just about everything. I look back at photographs of when I was just about old enough to walk and was knee deep in the fresh concrete floors we were laying in our grain stores, excited to put my handprint in the entrance of the shed. I also loved taking the moisture readings of the grain at harvest, running up and rolling headfirst down the heaps of wheat and also getting a few cheeky days off school to be with my goats whilst they gave birth.

But the most impactful event took place in 2015 when I was 9 years old; my parents retired from farming and sold their farm machinery by way of an onsite auction. It was then that I realised that maybe being a land agent was the next best thing to farming! And it also comes with a fraction of the stress!

From that day onward, I made my way through school and sixth form with the end goal of becoming a land agent. I'm now in my second year as a Degree Apprentice studying the BSc Hons – Rural Enterprise and Land Management course at Harper Adams University with the intention of becoming a Rural Chartered Surveyor.

The apprentice course is an amalgamation of study at university followed by a number of weeks in the office. The practical experience combined with the theory of study informs the advice I can pass on to the farmers whom I've known since those early days as a child growing up on the family farm.

At Cheffins, we support CAAV's Route to Rural by encouraging the entry of young people into the agricultural profession. With all the challenges that our clients face, a growing profession needs good people to develop a broad range of skills as trusted advisors. We are proud to value and nurture the next generation of rural professionals.

Rural Business Space

"...certain agricultural buildings can be converted for flexible commercial use without a full planning application."



Cheffins obtained Class R Permitted Development approval for the conversion of this unused agricultural building on the outskirts of March, Cambridgeshire

Opportunities for farmers and agricultural property owners

Across the East of England, many farmers and landowners are reassessing how best to use their existing assets in the face of changing agricultural markets and evolving rural economies. As farming income tightens and traditional practices change, converting redundant or unused agricultural buildings into commercial business space is proving a smart way to diversify and create a steady income.

Traditional brick barns and steel framed sheds are valuable assets which are sometimes just sitting idle. Rather than letting these buildings fall into disrepair, conversion can turn them into productive spaces such as workshops, small offices, retail and storage units. Demand for well located rural business space continues to grow, particularly among local enterprises looking for affordable premises with character and good accessibility.

Supportive Planning Policy

Planning rules have become more supportive of rural diversification in recent years. Under Class R of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO), certain agricultural buildings can be converted for flexible commercial use without a full planning application. This can extend to uses such as offices, retail and light industrial activities. Whilst each case must meet specific criteria, including building condition, access and location, the process is relatively straightforward. Early engagement with the local planning authorities and tailored advice from our team of rural surveyors here at Cheffins is essential to ensure compliance and a successful outcome.

A long-term rural investment

Converting redundant and unused buildings is not merely a diversification tactic; it represents a sustainable investment in the future of the holding. By repurposing existing buildings, agricultural property owners can create secure income streams, strengthen the resilience of their business and contribute to a more dynamic and prosperous rural economy.

A prime example...

Recently, Cheffins successfully secured Class R Permitted Development approval for the conversion of an unused agricultural building on the outskirts of March, Cambridgeshire, on behalf of a long-standing client. The project has since been completed and the building let on a full repairing and insuring lease, generating approximately £25,000 per annum in additional income. This outcome demonstrated how proactive diversification and effective use of planning policy can unlock significant value from underused rural assets.

Get in Touch

For farmers and agricultural property owners considering similar projects, early advice and local expertise can make all the difference. The Cheffins Rural Team provides comprehensive support from initial feasibility assessments and planning guidance to marketing and lease negotiations.

Andrew Amey, Rural Surveyor
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Property Auction Autumn Update



Lot 10, Orchard Way, Great Wilbraham, sold for £651,000

The last few months have been a really busy period for the property auction team. Our September auction saw the usual wide variety of land, residential and commercial property being sold, and while it is certainly the case that the market can be tricky, there were some fantastic results across the sale.

The auction kicked off with frantic bidding for the 2.36 acres of grassland in Houghton, which attracted interest from a number of buyers and soared to an amazing selling price of £175,000. Similarly there was a lot of pre-auction interest in the 5.85 acres of land and lakes in Great Wratting, which sold to a local party for an impressive £132,000.

"Despite the apparent caution in the wider market, the auction room still seems to provide investors with a safe-haven for their money."

The headline lot was the sale of the detached house and woodland in Great Wilbraham which, after some lengthy bidding, was finally knocked down for £651,000. The house needs a full internal update but offers the buyer an amazing setting to create a truly stunning home.

Similarly, a bungalow in Histon sold well over its guide price of £550,000, as did a mixed-use freehold block of property in Royston which again commanded a large premium over its £650,000 guide price.

Despite the apparent caution in the wider market, the auction room still seems to provide investors with a safe-haven for their money. A bank investment property in Newmarket, a buy-to-let property in Waterbeach and a development site in Fordham, all found new owners and demonstrated that there's still plenty of market activity for investment assets that are priced correctly.

The team then turned their attention to the latest Commercial Property Network (CPN) auction, which Cheffins host on behalf of a national network of 34 commercial property agents. Notable successes from that auction were the sale of 15.43 acres of equestrian land in East Sussex which made an impressive £305,000, (proving that our appetite for selling land spans beyond our normal boundaries) and a quirky commercial investment property with sea views in Portslade (Brighton and Hove) which made £125,000.

These newly-founded nationwide auctions continue to gather momentum and have provided our team with a wider view of the property sectors throughout the UK, with other recent sales in County Durham and Cumbria providing constant variety!

We look forward to 2026 with the regular pattern of quarterly auctions taking place in March, June, September and December.

Ian Kitson, Director, Property Auctions
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Lot 11, 63 Park View, Histon, sold for in excess of £550,000

Machinery Auctions Update



As predicted, 2025 has been an unprecedented year for used agricultural machinery auctions with some 60 live and online and timed online auctions taking place in a congested calendar. The factors affecting UK agriculture are well documented, from IHT reform to the cost of new machinery and low commodity prices. There seems to be a perfect storm in agriculture but from this storm there are opportunities.

Farmers, contractors and end-users faced with ever increasing costs have been studying our auction catalogues to find good quality second-hand machinery to replace older machines. New tractor registrations have dropped again in 2025 and this has had a knock-on effect on the quantity of used machinery coming to the market place as trade-ins. Sales of new machinery in general have been impacted by the increasing cost of new equipment as farmers look to the second-hand market for replacement kit.

Our auctions have been driven by farmers who now represent the majority of buyers at onsite dispersal sales. That is not to say that secondhand dealers do not play an important role in the used machinery trade, they do, although they have become more discerning and less speculative.

There is a generational change taking place in UK agriculture with succession being an issue and the average age of farmers increasing. Contractors will consider their options as they reach retirement age and if reinvestment in new kit is required will be less inclined to commit themselves to finance deals or loans. This presents opportunities for younger and progressive farmers and agribusinesses looking at the efficiencies of scale of acquiring more land.

“This year Cheffins have offered for sale over 4,000 tractors and over 32,000 lots of machinery through our Cambridge Machinery Sales and onsite auctions.”

This year Cheffins have offered for sale over 4,000 tractors and over 32,000 lots of machinery through our Cambridge Machinery Sales and onsite auctions. Whilst UK buyers have dominated the trade we have also exported to a large number of EU countries and to countries further afield. It is the trade to the EU zone which has created challenges with sanitary and phyto-sanitary certification required for all agricultural machinery entering the EU. This has been compounded by the Northern Irish protocol following the Windsor Agreement which effectively means that Northern Ireland is treated in a similar way to agricultural machinery entering the EU – placing more strain on exports. We have invested further in the washdown facilities and staff at the saleground to cope with the paperwork and the physical cleaning of machinery to allow the expeditious movement of machinery to the EU.

The gross total sale value for 2025 will be over £60m by the end of the year and it is interesting to note that the top 25 prices are all six figures with the top two prices being for two 2023 Claas Lexion 8600 Terratrak combines achieving £345,000 and £342,000 respectively at the Abbots Ripton Estate auction in November. The combine trade has been impacted by land coming out of production with farmers and contractors holding on to older combines and over supply. Nevertheless farmers have been strong buyers at auction for late registered high-spec machines and will obtain a significant discount compared with buying new, especially if manufacturers warranties are available. Farmers and end-users are also dominating the trade at on farm machinery auctions for late registered, higher horse power tractors and also for older pre Adblue machines where a premium has been paid for well maintained machines such as the 2011 John Deere 8345R at the Foster Harrison auction in Norfolk which achieved an impressive £85,965.

Self-propelled sprayers have also been proved popular for both farmers and dealers with some excellent prices being achieved; a 2021 Bateman RB35 which made £167,762 (Cauldwell) and 2023 Horsch Leeb at the Abbots Ripton auction which sold for £214,000. Cultivators, drills and ploughs have also seen strong demand, for example, a Väderstad NZ Aggressive 12m at £50,000 at the Eastern Farms auction in September. Some of the most popular purchases at auction are trailers with a 2020 Richard Western GRS25 chaser bin at Eastern Farms making £50,000.

The classic tractor trade sees no sign of easing with some exceptional prices being achieved. Collectors and investors have become more discerning and top prices are being paid for low-houred, genuine examples or for extremely well restored tractors. Some examples of this are a 1982 County 774 making £83,544, a Ford 7000 at £40,000 and a New Holland TM120 which made £69,880 with 88 hours! At the other end of the spectrum a 1917 Holt Type N gun tractor which made £76,000 and a Foden steam wagon which made £300,000 demonstrates the strength in the collectors' market.

Cheffins has invested heavily in a new online bidding platform developed by UK auction technology experts Newline to create ever increasing efficiencies for online bidding and payment. As the technology has developed and bidders become more confident with this method of bidding, more of what we sell is being purchased online whether at live online or timed online auctions.

Auction is a cost effective method of sale utilising access to a global marketplace to achieve premium prices at auction. For enquiries on selling machinery through any of our auction methods, please contact one of the Machinery team.

William King, Chairman
01353 777767 | william.king@cheffins.co.uk

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Biodiversity Units for sale

We provide a reliable and trusted source of off-site biodiversity units delivered directly by landowners.



Pymoor, East Cambridgeshire

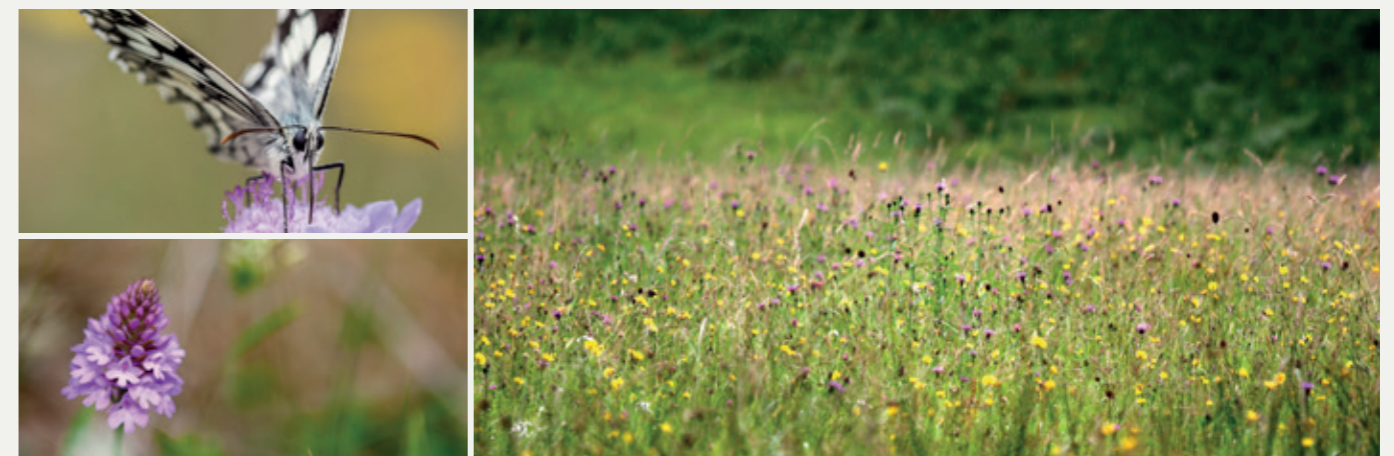
Situated in the Cambridgeshire Fens at the edge of the Ouse Washes, the 52-acre Oxwillow project focuses on habitat creation to support generous swathes of grassland which are interspersed with rich aquatic fauna and flora.

Biodiversity Units available:

- Other neutral grassland
- Pond
- Native species-rich hedgerow

Local Planning Authority: East Cambridgeshire

National Character Area (NCA): The Fens



Coploe Hill, South Cambridgeshire

Coploe Hill forms a 75-acre site on the chalk ridge that traverses southern Cambridgeshire. The vision for BNG habitat creation extends to meadows, hedgerows and ponds that will provide vital space and a stepping-stone for the distinctive chalkland species that flourish throughout the neighbouring Local Wildlife Site, Coploe Hill Pit.

Biodiversity Units available:

- Lowland calcareous grassland
- Other neutral grassland
- Pond
- Native species-rich hedgerow

Local Planning Authority: South Cambridgeshire

National Character Area (NCA): East Anglian Chalk

Biodiversity Net Gain at Cheffins

Our team of experts can match biodiversity units to your development project, offering a simple and effective way to satisfy your conditions off-site.

Supporting developers with fully secure, landowner-led solutions.

To discuss the process of securing biodiversity units from one of our sites or for an informal quote, please contact Katie Hilton (01223 271959) or Jonathan Purkiss (01223 271991).

Staying ahead of compliance: How we can help you navigate the rules

The shifting sands of compulsory regulations and scheme rules across the farming industry can make life difficult to keep on the right side of the regulatory landscape.

Doing the right thing provides reassurance and avoids costly setbacks in the event of inspections and audits. That's why we offer tailored support to help our farming clients stay compliant – proactively, efficiently and providing our clients with peace of mind.

We provide support with:

- Defra rules for farmers and land managers
- Sustainable Farming Incentive record keeping and annual review of actions
- Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship schemes, including records to support claims and inspections
- Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) regulations

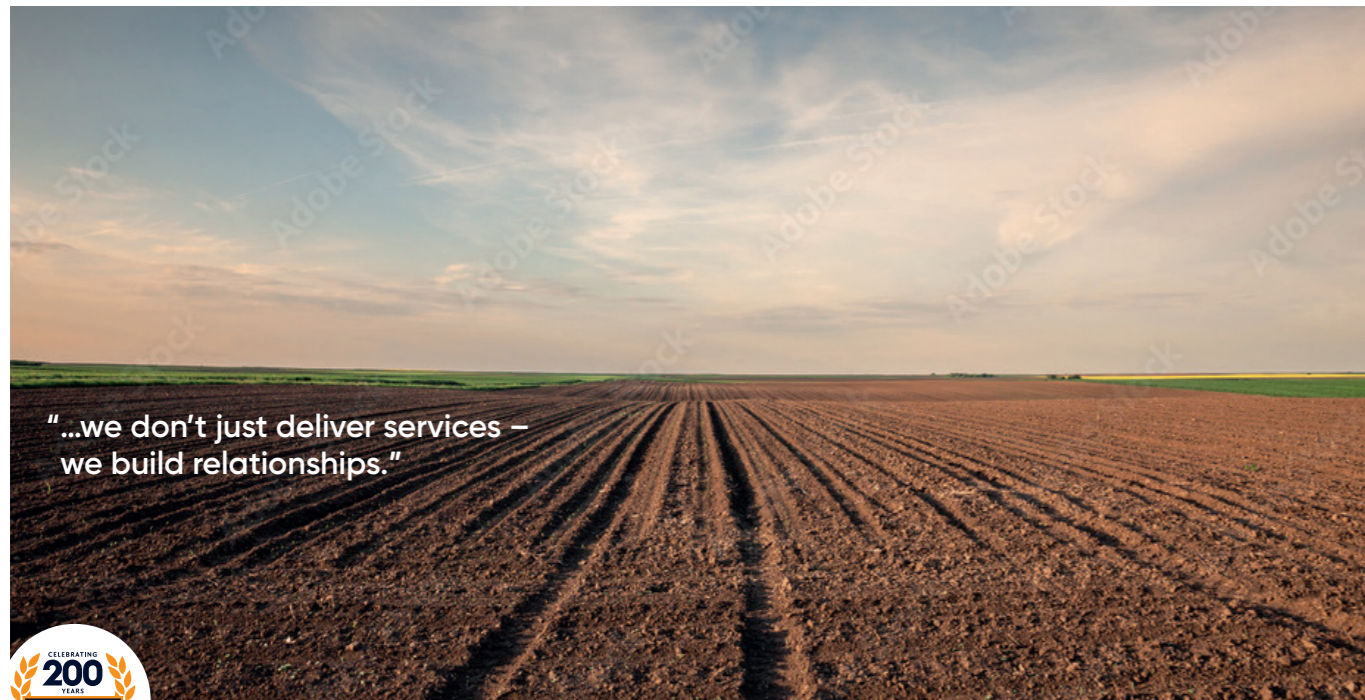
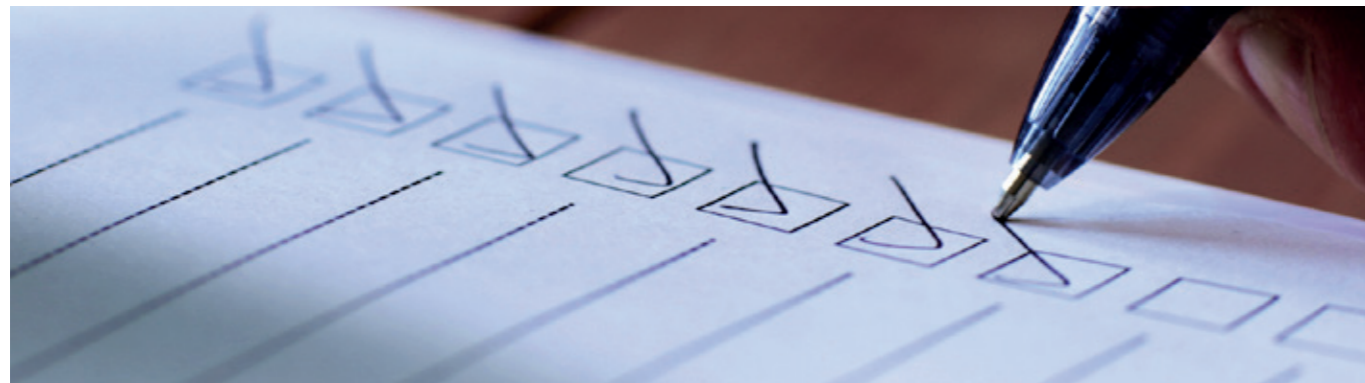
- Hedgerow regulation, including protection rules around removing a hedgerow
- Assurance schemes such as LEAF Marque audits and plans

Often our clients like us to spend anything from a couple of hours to a full day in the farm office, producing reports, making sure records are complete and generally preparing everything for inspections or audits. It can be especially useful to tackle this kind of task over the quieter winter months.

At Cheffins we don't just deliver services – we build relationships. We like our farming clients to know they can count on us to be responsive, informed and invested in their business' success.

For further information on our compliance service, please contact:

Katie Hilton, Director
01223 271959 | katie.hilton@cheffins.co.uk



"...we don't just deliver services – we build relationships."



"Landowners can submit a deposit to protect their land from gaining public rights of way."

Landowner Deposits: Protect your land with confidence

Landowner Deposits made through Section 31(6) of the Highways Act 1980 provide a robust tool for landowners to protect their property from public claims to new rights of way.

Claims can arise in instances where evidence is provided that a route or an area of land has been open to and used by the public for 20 years without challenge by the landowner.

At Cheffins we can guide you through the statutory process to submit a Landowner Deposit to the relevant local council that is accurate and robust and that will clearly demonstrate your intentions regarding public access.

Our team will work with you to assess your land and its existing position with regards to public and permissive access routes, prepare a clear set of maps and declarations and make the necessary deposits on your behalf.

Landowners can submit a deposit to protect their land from gaining public rights of way through a period of use by the public.

This is particularly important for land that has been used for informal use without 'force, secrecy or permission'. By depositing a statement and map, landowners can prevent members of the public from acquiring permanent rights to use the land.

The process is known as a highways statement and will protect the land for a period of twenty years from the date of the deposit.

By registering your land this way, you can prevent unwanted public access claims and keep your options open for future use. Whether you own a farm, woodland, or private estate, our Section 31(6) deposit service gives you peace of mind and control over your property.

For further information on Landowner Deposits, please contact:

Katie Hilton, Director
01223 271959 | katie.hilton@cheffins.co.uk

A pioneering nature recovery project is underway in the Cambridgeshire Fens – our guest author Sarah-Jane Taylor explains

Guest Author, Sarah-Jane Taylor talks us through an ambitious nature recovery project which is taking on the challenges which the Cambridgeshire Fens are facing in a changing world.

The Taylor family can trace its roots back to the Ely Fens over hundreds of years – and long before the area was drained. As the fens have evolved, so has our family's role within them and it is our ambition to use our past experiences alongside cutting-edge research to help shape the fens of the future.

As farmers and providers of natural capital, we have taken a multi-faceted approach to trialling new solutions. A major part of this new approach has been to work alongside the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH) and Fen Group as a field-scale study farm for the AgZero+ and LP3 paludiculture research programme.

Paludiculture is an agricultural practice that involves farming on a raised water table or rewetted peatland, contrasting with the traditional idea of fenland farming methods that drain peatlands to grow crops. By keeping peatlands wet, paludiculture helps lock in carbon stored in the soil and preserves the value of these carbon stores.

Our farmland is specifically being used to trial the suitability of growing different rice varieties for production on rewetted land. The hope is that this pioneering work will open new possibilities as the climate changes in the future for UK-grown rice and sustainable farming on peatlands. This is part of a broader trial examining the suitability of different paludiculture crops like hybrid willow for bioenergy and also rare fenland species for conservation.

Another major aspect of our nature recovery work has been to convert land to sell for biodiversity net gain. Our habitat bank encompasses an initial 21 hectares of marginal land taken out of arable production from which to sell units. With the ability to provide around 123 biodiversity net gain units, developers can purchase these units from us to off-set their planning requirements, allowing us to take the long-term responsibility of delivering the habitat gain.

We see our habitat bank as a pioneering nature recovery project with a vision to restore further wildlife habitats on a significant scale. Within the East Cambridgeshire Local Planning Authority, our farmland is situated in an area of strategic significance at the edge of the Ouse Washes, known for wintering and breeding wildfowl and waders. The Ouse Washes are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Ramsar wetland site, a Special Protection Area for birds and a Special Area of Conservation. Our habitat bank provides the perfect stepping stone habitat, working in harmony with the adjoining natural and agricultural environment.

The network of habitats we have created is continually evolving, providing 'ready-made' medium and high distinctiveness units including neutral grassland, ponds and native species-rich hedgerows, with traditional orchard and floodplain mosaic coming in phase 2.

From the outset we took the decision to partner with a series of stakeholders including Natural England, RSPB and The Wildlife Trust to ensure that the biodiversity net gain units which are now on offer will deliver high quality habitats for key species, reductions in carbon emissions and still provide extensive grazing land.

"The hope is that this pioneering work will open new possibilities as the climate changes in the future for UK-grown rice and sustainable farming on peatlands."

This engagement with these stakeholder bodies has really helped to shift the dial on our thinking, and this has led us to become a farming partner in the Ouse Washes Landscape Recovery Programme alongside other farmers, NGOs, Defra and private companies. The ambitious project is primarily focused on habitat creation, and for our part we will create a swathe of high-quality wetland habitat, attracting key wetland species, within the Ouse Washes corridor.

For us, nature recovery in The Fens underpins our vision and drives us to restore habitats across our farmland. As a family, our hope is to provide ecosystem services that will dovetail with our conventional farming enterprise and wider local initiatives we are involved in. By broadening our scope and building resilience into our farm and the landscape, we will leave a legacy for the next generation to be proud of.

Sarah-Jane Taylor, Director of Oxwillow

Biodiversity Net Gain units at Oxwillow are available to purchase now through Cheffins, with competitive and flexible terms available. For further information, please contact [Katie Hilton katie.hilton@cheffins.co.uk](mailto:katie.hilton@cheffins.co.uk) or [Jonathan Purkiss jonathan.purkiss@cheffins.co.uk](mailto:jonathan.purkiss@cheffins.co.uk) or via 01223 213777.



Sarah-Jane and Craig Taylor, Directors of Oxwillow



Are you Renters' Rights ready?

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 introduces major reforms to the private rented sector in England, impacting landlords, letting agents and tenants. While the Act is now law, we are awaiting confirmation of when its various parts will come into force.

While the Act doesn't apply to residential property let under an FBT or AHA tenancy, it will cover any residential property on a holding that's sublet under an AST or Assured Tenancy.

To support you, here is a quick guide summarising the key changes ahead that landlords need to know, along with how letting agents can help. They include:

1. ASTs become periodic tenancies
2. New tenancy structure
3. Clearer grounds for termination and limits on 'no-fault' evictions
4. New rules on rent increases
5. Restrictions on rent bidding
6. Greater rights for tenants to keep pets
7. New anti-discrimination measures
8. New standards for private rented homes
9. New landlord registration and redress requirements
10. Expanded local authority powers for enforcement

ASTs become periodic tenancies.

When this part of the legislation comes into force, all tenancies will automatically become assured periodic tenancies (rolling contracts). This means that they continue indefinitely until ended by a notice from the tenant or a notice from the landlord for specific reasons.

New tenancy structure

At the start of the tenancy, landlords must give the tenant a written statement of the terms of the tenancy.

When this part of the legislation comes into force, existing tenants will have to be given a UK Government-provided note of what is changing within one month, but will not need their tenancy agreements replaced.

Rent cannot be taken in advance of the tenancy agreement being signed, but the deposit can be.

Clearer grounds for termination and limits on 'no-fault' evictions

When in force, Section 21 evictions will be abolished. A landlord will then only be able to end a tenancy by serving a Section 8 notice, which specifies one or more appropriate grounds for possession. Different grounds have different notice periods.

Where the landlord wants to move in or sell the property, they won't be able to do this during the first 12 months of a tenancy.

Ground 5A which enables a landlord to recover possession of a property for the housing of "qualifying" agricultural workers: the amendment expands the new Ground 5A so that landlords will also be able to reclaim the property for a self-employed worker providing their contract is for a minimum of six months, a move which is more in tune with the realities of agricultural employment.

A tenant can end a tenancy at any point by serving a two-month notice in writing on the landlord. If there are joint tenants, then notice by one will be effective for all tenants.

New rules on rent increases

When in force, rent periods will be monthly or less, and in the first month of the tenancy, only one month's rent will be accepted. In subsequent months, tenants can voluntarily pay more but cannot be required to do so. Clauses in tenancies that predate the Renters' Rights legislation remain valid.

Rents can only be increased once per year by serving a Section 13 notice, and tenants must receive at least two months' notice. Tenants can challenge unfair rent increases via the First Tier Tribunal.

Restrictions on rent bidding

When in force, the Act will require landlords and letting agents to publish the asking rent for the property.

Prospective tenants can be asked to bid up to the advertised amount, but cannot be encouraged to bid over that amount, and no offer over the advertised amount can be accepted.

Greater rights for tenants to keep pets

Once in force, a landlord may not unreasonably refuse a request from a tenant to keep a pet.

Landlords must respond to pet requests within 28 days. If a super landlord (such as a freeholder) does not allow pets, and they will not give permission when asked, this is a reasonable basis to not allow a pet. In other cases, it will be for the landlord to show that the request was unreasonable.

New anti-discrimination measures

When this section of the legislation comes into force, Landlords must not discriminate against prospective tenants on the basis that they might or will have children living at or regularly visiting the property, or that they are, or may be, in receipt of benefits.

Landlords will still be able to carry out affordability checks and not grant a tenancy based on income.

In certain circumstances, landlords can refuse to let to a household with children if it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. For example, it may be reasonable to refuse to allow children if it would lead to the property being legally defined as overcrowded.

New standards for private rented homes

Once in force, private rented homes must meet the Decent Homes Standard. This includes being safe and well-maintained, free from serious hazards, fit for human habitation, and in compliance with Awaab's Law. In practice, this means responding promptly to damp and mould issues should they arise at the property.

New landlord registration and redress requirements

When it is up and running, all landlords must register with the Private Rented Sector Database and join the new Landlord Ombudsman, who will resolve disputes.

Expanded local authority powers for enforcement

Once in force, local councils will enforce the new rules with penalties resulting in a £7,000 fine for a first offence, rising to £40,000 for repeat offences.

For many offences, tenants can apply to the First Tier Tribunal for a Rent Repayment Order for up to 24 months of rent.

Redress schemes can also deal with complaints from tenants and require payment of damages or remove a landlord from the scheme for serious breaches.

Cheffins are Renters' Rights Ready and if you require any further information please contact:

Sarah Bush, Head of Residential
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Cheffins wins Green Award at Cambridge Independent Business Awards

Cheffins was thrilled to be named winner of the Green Award at the 2025 Cambridge Independent Business Awards (CIBA) in recognition of its ambitious woodland creation scheme and the wider programme of sustainable initiatives being rolled out across the firm under its Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) policy, led by Director Katie Hilton.

The Rural Professionals team took a leading role in creating the five-acre woodland at Fulbourn, just outside Cambridge where over 2,500 native, deciduous trees were planted to support biodiversity and carbon capture.



Katie Hilton, Jack French and Simon Gooderham receiving the award at the CIBA awards ceremony held at King's College, Cambridge.

MEET THE TEAM



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1825-2025

Sale Dates 2026

Cambridge Machinery Sales

Monday 12th January
Monday 9th February
Monday 9th March
Monday 13th April

Cambridge Vintage

24th & 25th April

Property Auction

Wednesday 4th March
entries closing 30th January





For advice worth taking, it pays to choose Cheffins.

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