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RURAL FORUM

TUESDAY, 8 MARCH 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bateson (Chairman), David Coppinger, David Evans (Vice-Chairman), David Hilton and Richard Kellaway

Officers: Harjit Hunjan, Shilpa Manek, Chris Hilton, David Scott, Tony Carr and Florence Churchill

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and conducted around the table introductions.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Colin Rayner, Phil Watson and Russell Watson.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest received.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 November 2015 were unanimously agreed.

RURAL CRIME

The Chairman welcomed Superintendent Bhupinder Rai, Commander for Windsor and Maidenhead and Inspector Emily Roberts, lead in Windsor and Maidenhead on rural crime. Inspector Emily Roberts is based in Windsor.

Superintendent Bhupinder Rai informed Forum members that Inspector Emily Roberts would be regularly attending the Rural Forum to update Members on rural crime.

Points highlighted by Superintendent Bhupinder Rai included:

- Drop of crime by 14%, 133 recorded crime incidents last year compared to 114 this year.
- Increase in arrests.
- Currently six ongoing investigations.
- Four further people charged last year.
- Ongoing work includes:
 - Tack marking – engagement carrying on
 - Crime prevention

The intelligence was not really flowing as well as it could and therefore now using automated number plate recognition (ANPR). The peaks in rural crime are currently being looked at.

Questions and Answers asked by Forum Members included:

- Hare coursing problems – in the past five weeks, had a very good response and police attended the farm within 10-15 minutes. It took one hour to catch the two hare coursers, both aged 14 years. It was confirmed that 14 years old was not under aged and was prosecutable. They may not be taken to court but would go through the correct youth justice processes and system.
- What evidence was required by the police to prosecute the accused? It was advised that this was on a case by case basis by Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The police would arrest, collect evidence, conduct the witness evidence interviews and pass all information on to the CPS. Currently there were a few ongoing cases which would be good examples to learn from once completed.
- The local access forum of West Berkshire is working with another company with large cars to capture the hare coursers. Insurance for this would be an issue.
- Machinery theft – national organised crime – police have been successful in this. All organised crime information is collected and once a week the information is sent to Thames Valley headquarters. All patterns are looked at and weekly bulletins are prepared. Windsor and Maidenhead are very well linked in. This is still a significant problem nationally.
- What do the rural community need to be aware of? It was highlighted that the biggest issue was cyber crime, and fraudulent transactions. Forum Members were advised that in the main, the fraud was targeted mainly at vulnerable people but not exclusively. Internet security work has to be preventative, issuing many safety messages.
- Data tagging in coordination with Thames Valley Police.

Forum Members highlighted that they are not receiving Neighbourhood Crime emails that the community used to receive. Members were advised that the email was still sent out and the mailing list probably needs refreshing. Superintendent Rai would look into geo-fencing to see if the existing system can be adjusted.

ACTION: Clerk to send the contact details of Inspector Emily Roberts to all Rural Forum Members. . Email - Emily.Roberts@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

ACTION: Clerk to send the future meeting dates to Inspector Emily Roberts.

UPDATE FROM THE FARMING COMMUNITY

Update received from Andrew Randall.

Presentation attached.

ACTION: Clerk to send Streetscene contact number to all Rural Forum Members for rubbish and fly tipping.

Link to the RBWM Website report IT form:

<https://forms.rbwm.gov.uk/popup.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=LcSmztQpUYS>

BROADBAND INTERNET

The Rural Forum received a presentation from Colin Batchelor, from Superfast Berkshire Project. Presentation attached.

Points from the presentation included:

- Project conducted in two places.
- £4.6 million public funds invested.
- There are 120 cabinets in the county and 19 of which are in Windsor and Maidenhead Borough.
- In phase II, the government framework was not used but using and working with other suppliers.
- Monies were put forward by individual unitary districts, Windsor and Maidenhead did not put forward as much as some other boroughs, £415k was put forward.
- Further work in Windsor, Wraysbury and Burchetts Green would be completed by the end of 2016.
- At the present time, Windsor and Maidenhead were at the bottom of the table shown.
- Councillor Bateson raised the issue that a large amount of money was spent by Windsor and Maidenhead. Colin Batchelor explained that in phase I, there was one pot for all districts, in phase II, individual districts raised funds which were matched. Windsor and Maidenhead had actually made the lowest contribution of the six authorities in Berkshire.

The Chairman went round the Members to record what speeds of broadband they received. They were indicated as follows:

- Pinkneys Green – 1.2
- Drift Road – 0
- Forest Green – 0.8 and 0.5
- Cookham – 1.29 and 0.35
- Holyport – good
- Burchetts Green – 7.0 and 1.0
- BCA – very good

The main aim was to ensure that each property had basic broadband (deemed to be 24mps). There was a satellite scheme at present where £350 would be given to offer an alternative broadband connection per household.

ACTION: Colin Batchelor to provide link to Clerk for minutes.

Colin Batchelor informed the Rural Forum that there was a significant underspend in phase I and this was still available to use. It had been decided that half would be used with both BT and the other half with other companies. Funds were going to be used to bring all districts to 97%. Windsor and Maidenhead would therefore benefit the most from this remaining funding.

ACTION: Clerk to circulate presentation with minutes.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN

Chris Hilton, Director of Planning, Development and Regeneration and Flo Churchill, Interim Policy Manager gave an update to the Rural Forum on the progress on the Borough Local Plan.

In September 2015, it was agreed that all councils would have a local plan. Windsor and Maidenhead have been working very hard to produce a local plan.

Points discussed included:

- Decisions on planning applications securing sufficient and appropriate land for affordable housing.
- There was a call for potential sites last year.
- Further consultation to take place later this year, the results of which would be used to support the draft plan when sent to the Secretary of State.
- Concern that all large houses being built and a desperate situation occurring for affordable housing.
- High rise buildings would be detrimental to the borough.
- A supplementary planning document will be produced after the local plan completed.
- Timeframe.
- Neighbourhood plans and them fitting in with the local borough plan.
- Neighbourhood plans have to be pro development and conform to the local borough plan.
- The most recent plan always takes president.
- Green belt guidance is very clear, should only be altered once in a generation when writing a local borough plan.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, we aim to protect green belt land.

WEIGHT LIMITS FOR HGV'S ON LOCAL ROADS

Tony Carr, Traffic & Road Safety Manager, gave an update on the changes that have taken place.

In connection with the Holyport Weight Limit, points discussed included:

- The diversion route being three miles long and HGVS transferring, from A roads to rural B roads, going through minor roads and passing a primary school.
- The change being rushed without proper consultation.
- Tony Carr confirmed that the Road Haulage Association were consulted as the general representative body for road hauliers, but no response was received within the consultation deadline.
- Signage being a major issue for the new route.
- Major effect on agricultural community.

ACTION: Place this item on next meeting agenda.

ACTION: Send Members consultation documents and road plan.

BERKSHIRE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Points highlighted by Liz Hadden, Berkshire College of Agriculture, included:

- 16 graduating students from BCA.
- All but one have employment.
- Many agricultural apprentices.
- Scholarships available for different 3-4 apprenticeships
- Insight from local forums is very valuable to find out what is actually needed.
- Further report due out in May 2016.
- Seeking joiners for BCA networking group.

UPDATE ON THE RURAL WALK

Date to be confirmed.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members to note dates of future meetings:

- Wednesday 2 November 2016 at 6.00pm
- Thursday 2 March 2017 at 6.00pm

The meeting, which began at 6.00 pm, finished at 8.10 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

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RBWM Rural Forum

Farming Update

8th March 2016

Farming Update Items

1. Recent Weather & Its Impact
2. Recent On-Farm Activities
3. Market Updates
4. Industry News
5. Rural Matters

Weather

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Water Logging



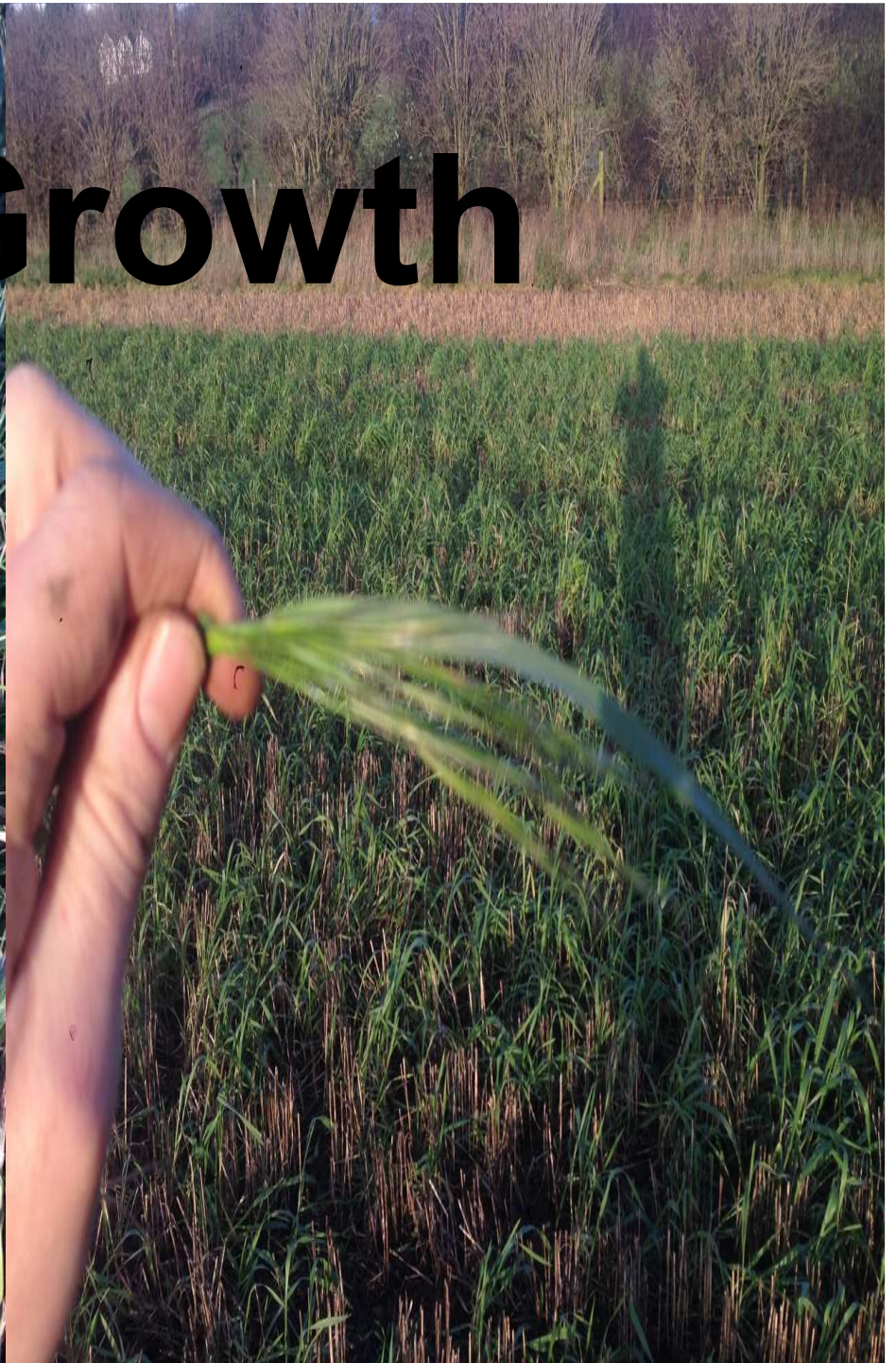
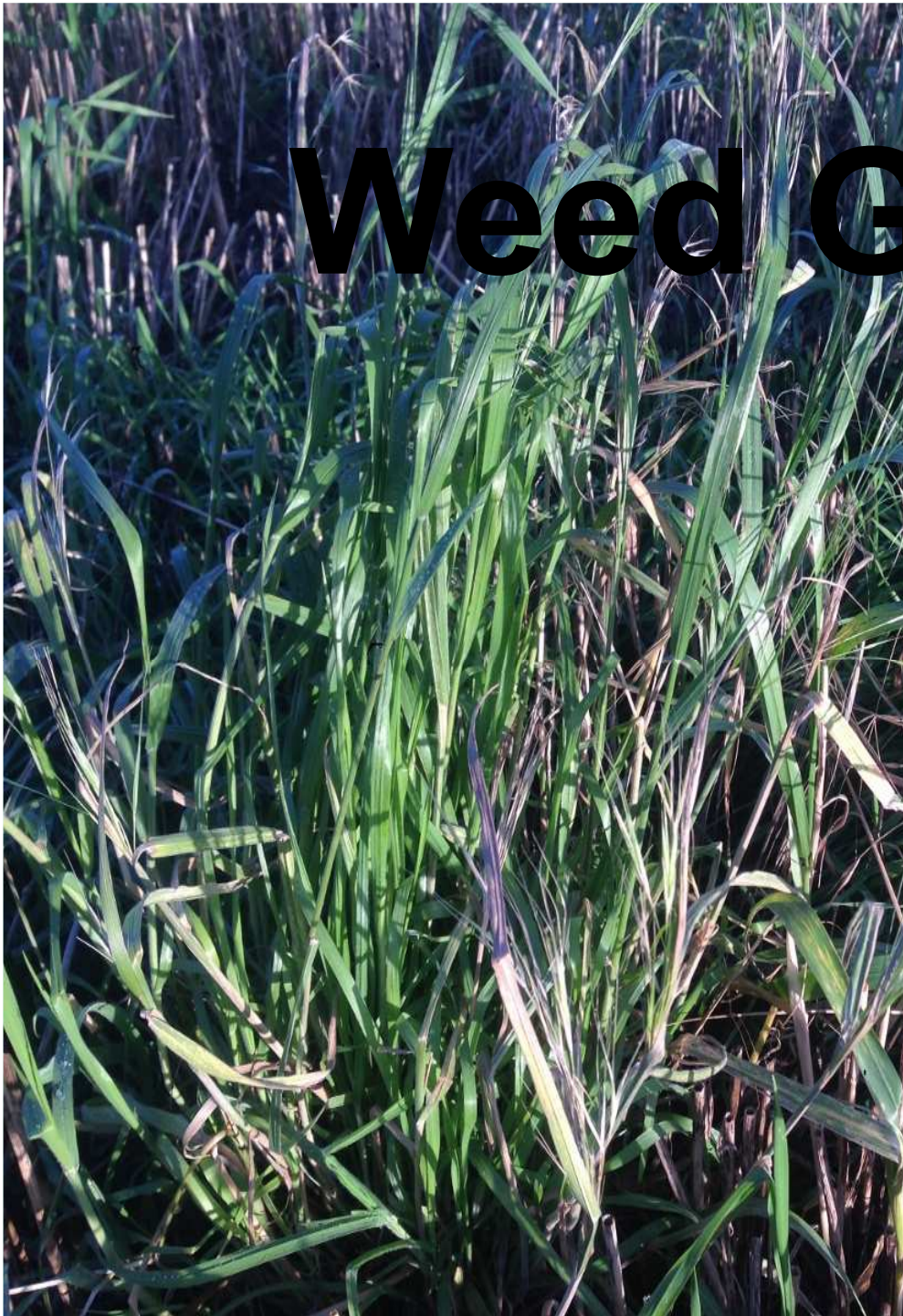
Pest Problems



Disease Pressure



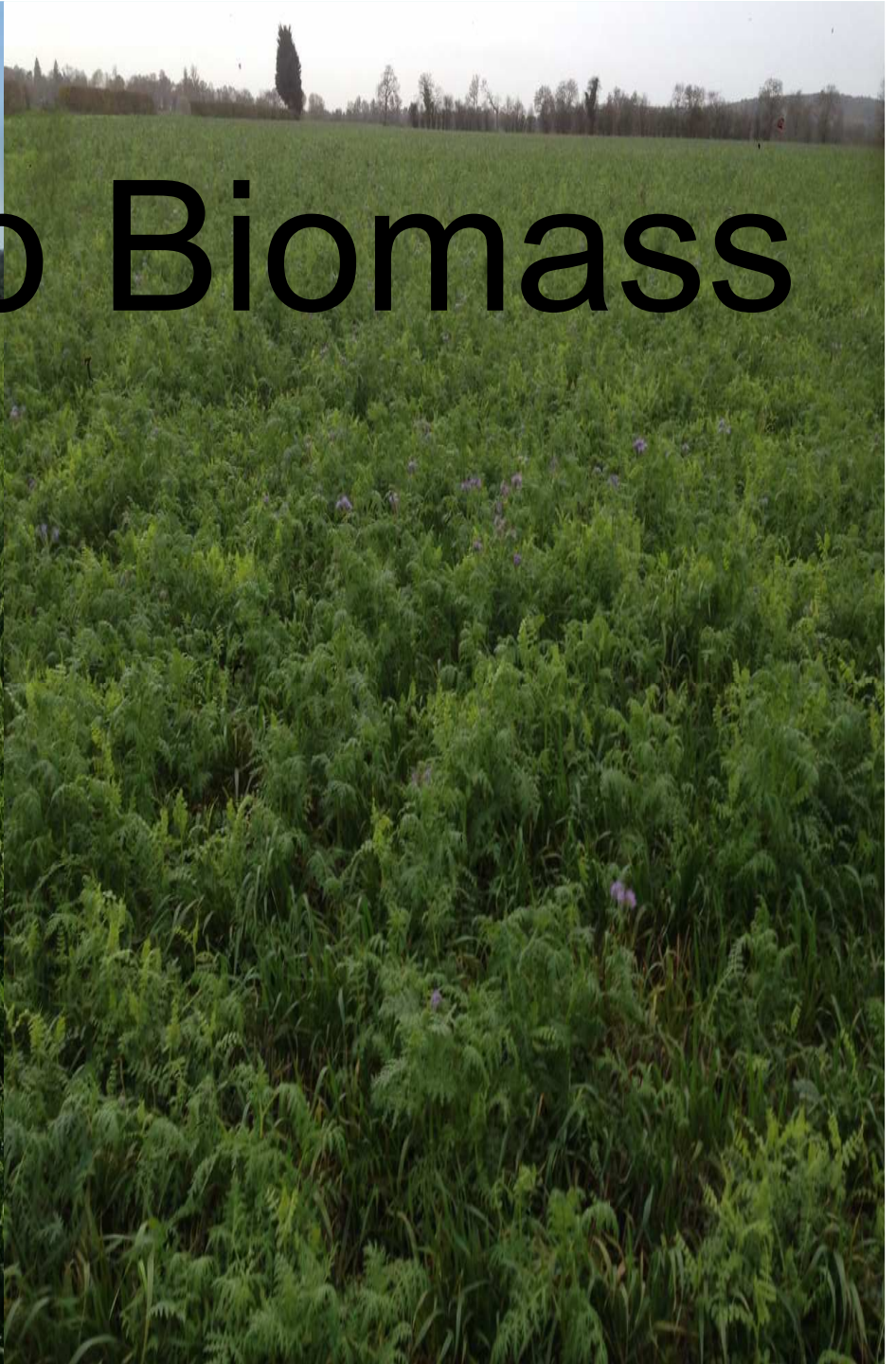
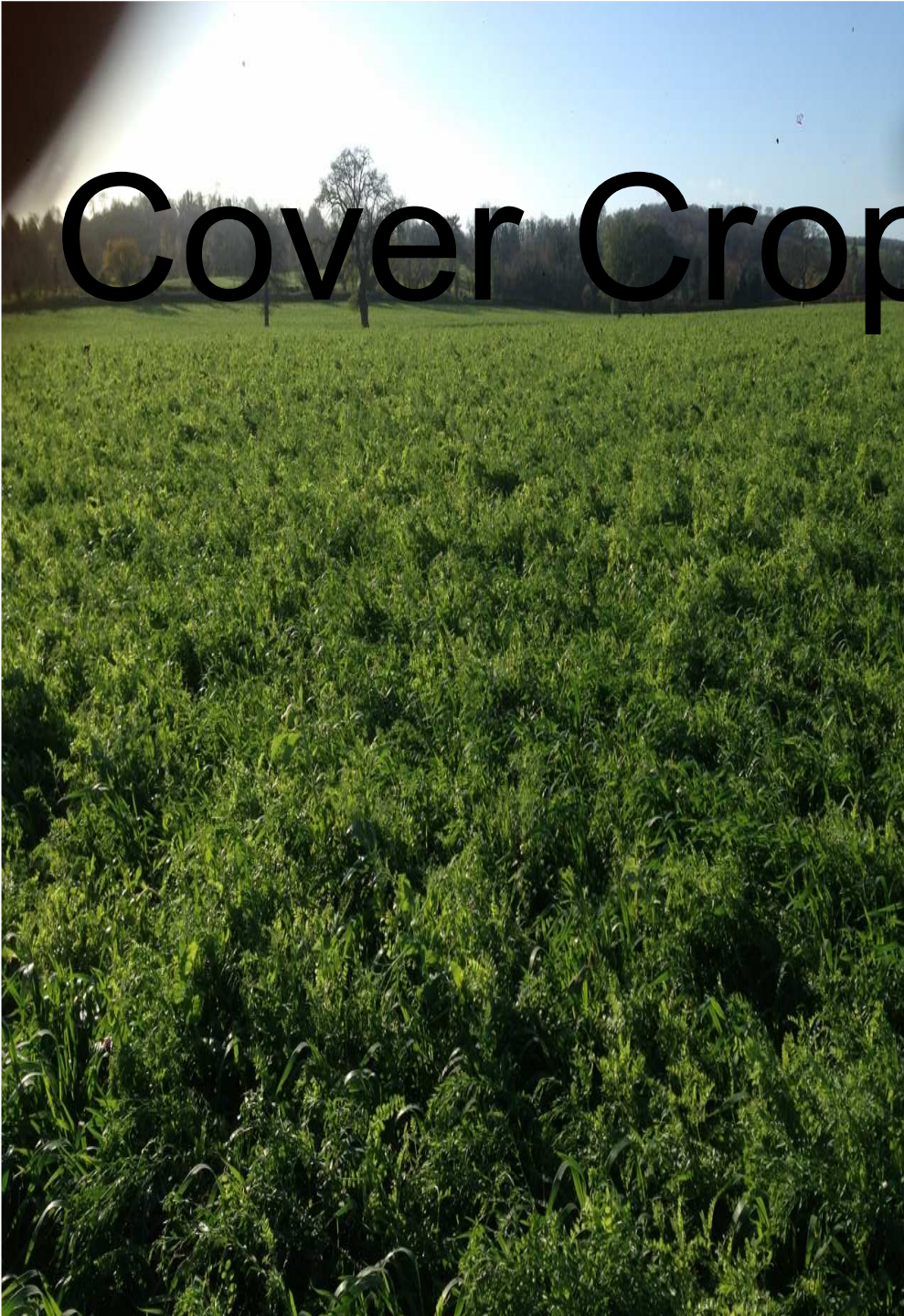
Weed Growth



Winter Wheat



Cover Crop Biomass



Carbon Capture

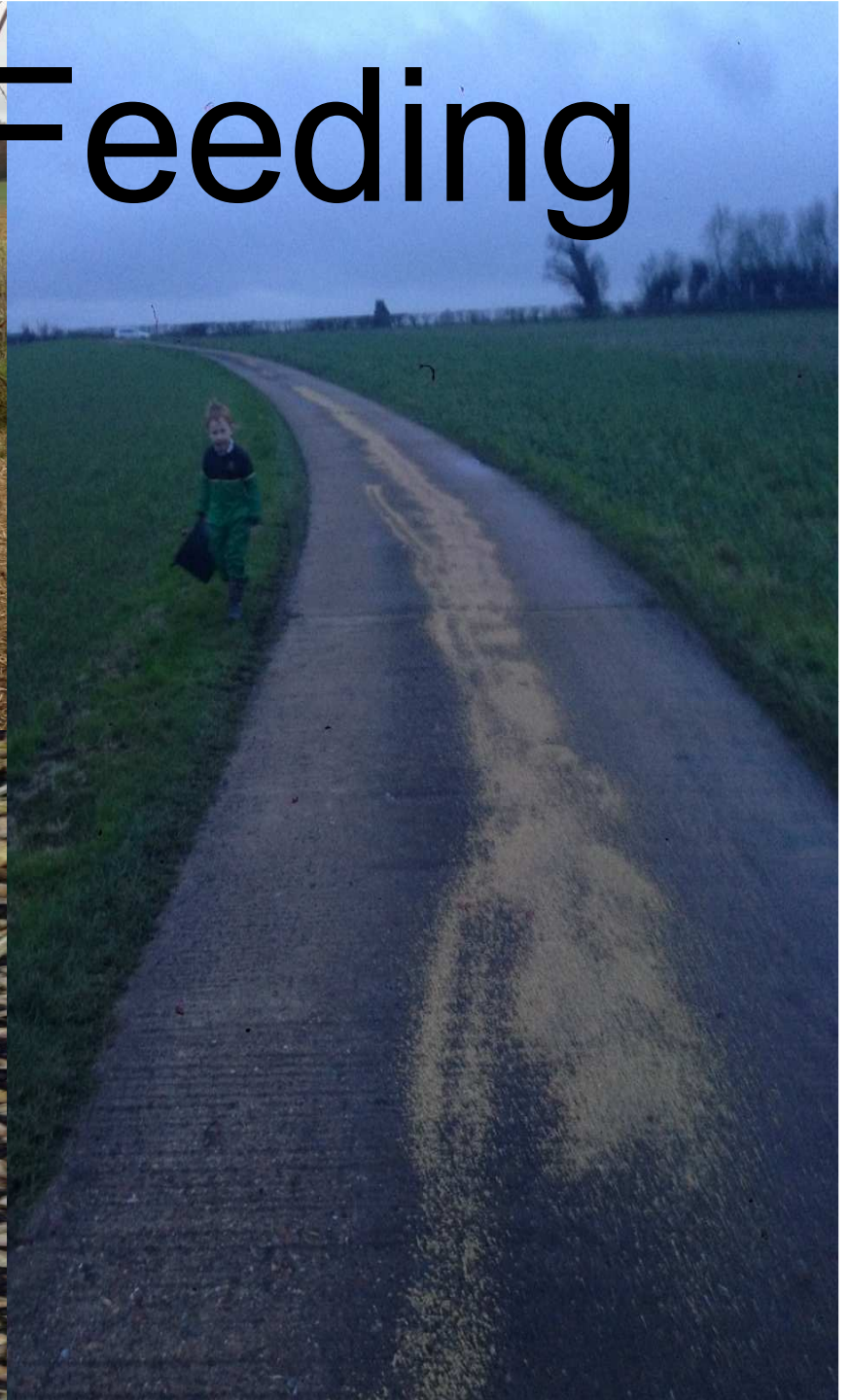


Recent On Farm Activities

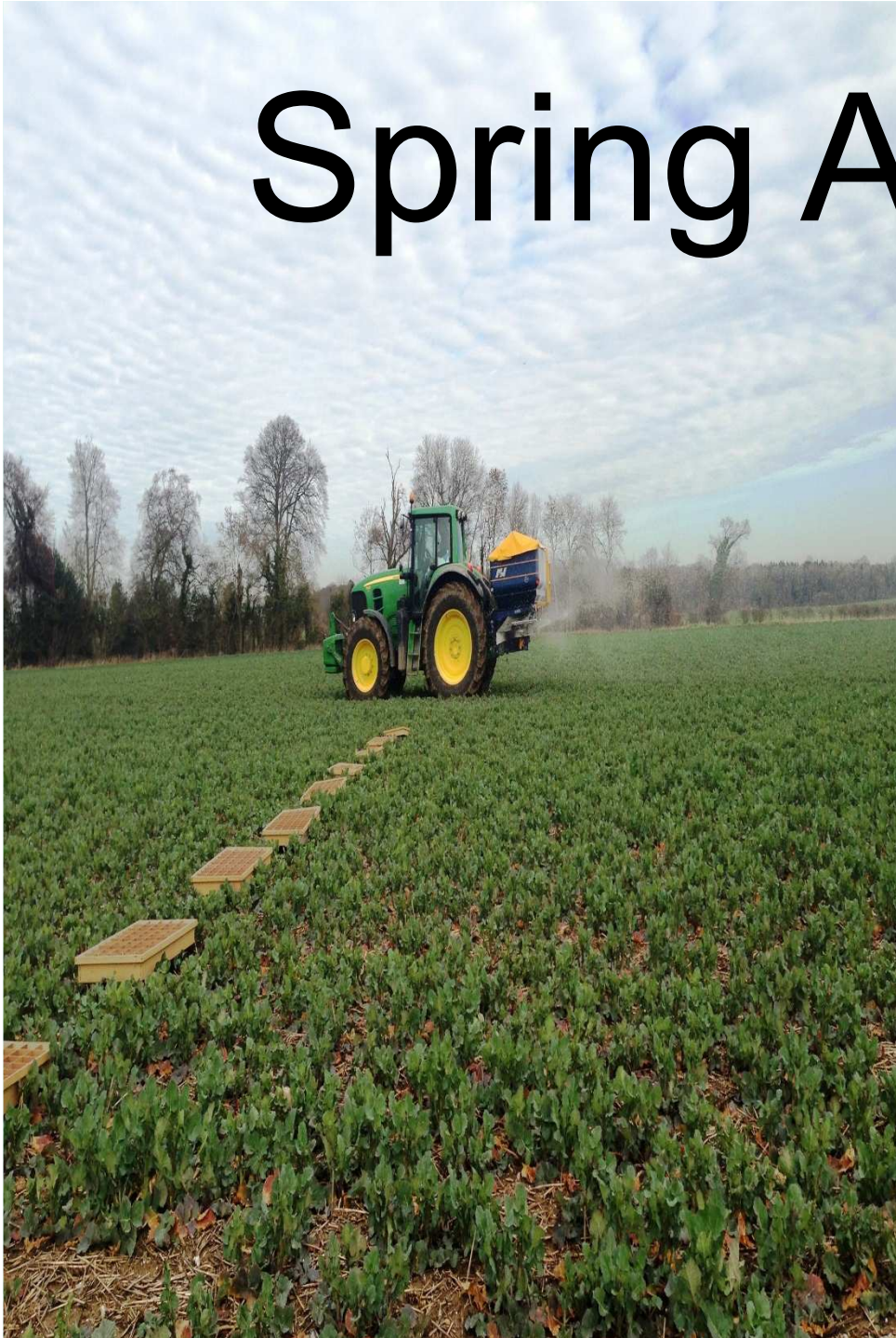
Tree Planting



Wild Bird Feeding



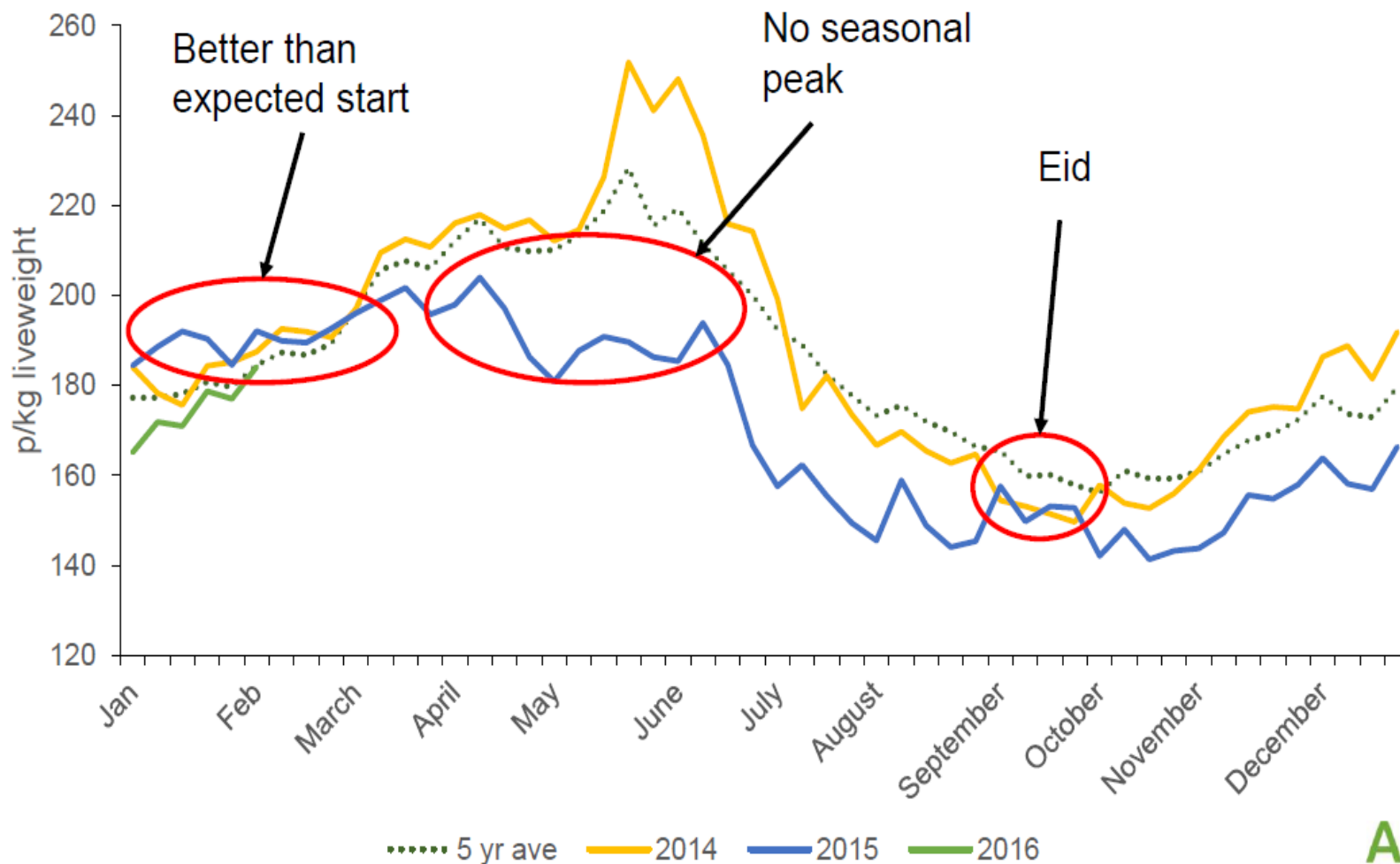
Spring Activities



Market Updates

- Lamb
- Beef
- Wheat
- Oilseed Rape

Lamb Prices



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Chart: GB liveweight lamb price
Source: AHDB Market Intelligence; LAA; IASS

Cattle Prices

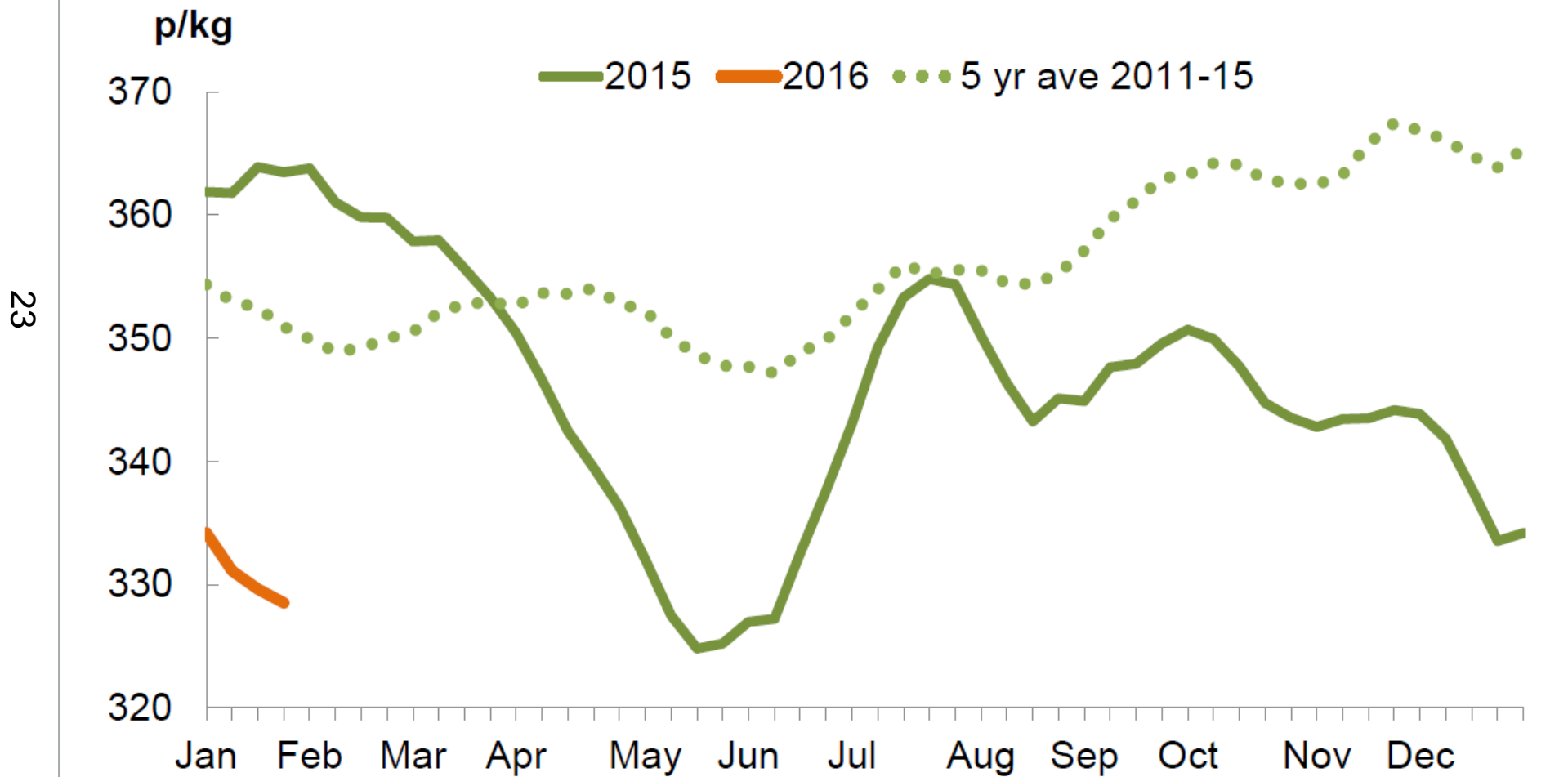
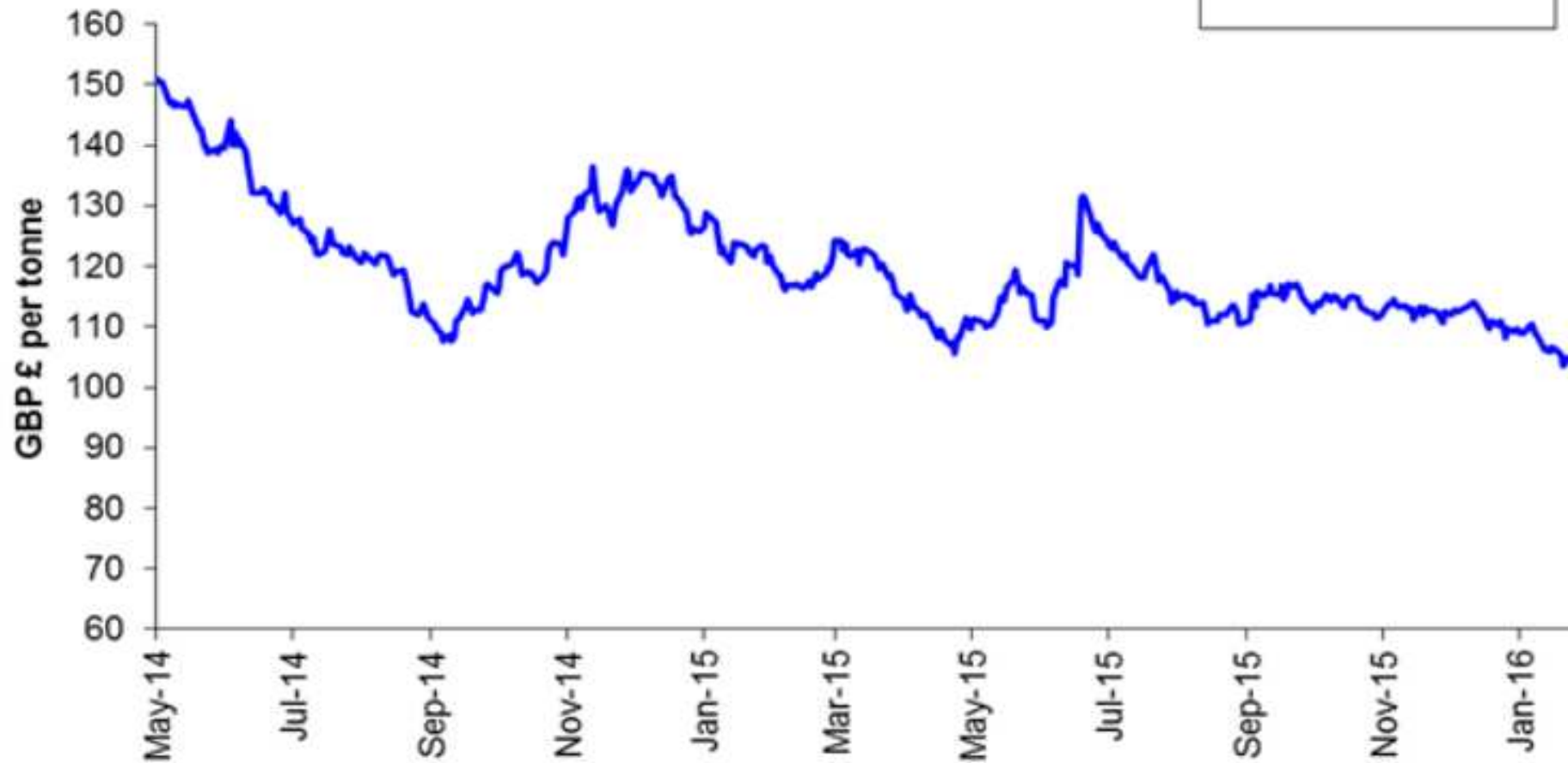


Chart: GB deadweight average prime cattle price
Source: AHDB Market Intelligence

Wheat Prices

Source: AHDB

LIFFE Wheat Nearby Contract



Wheat Prices

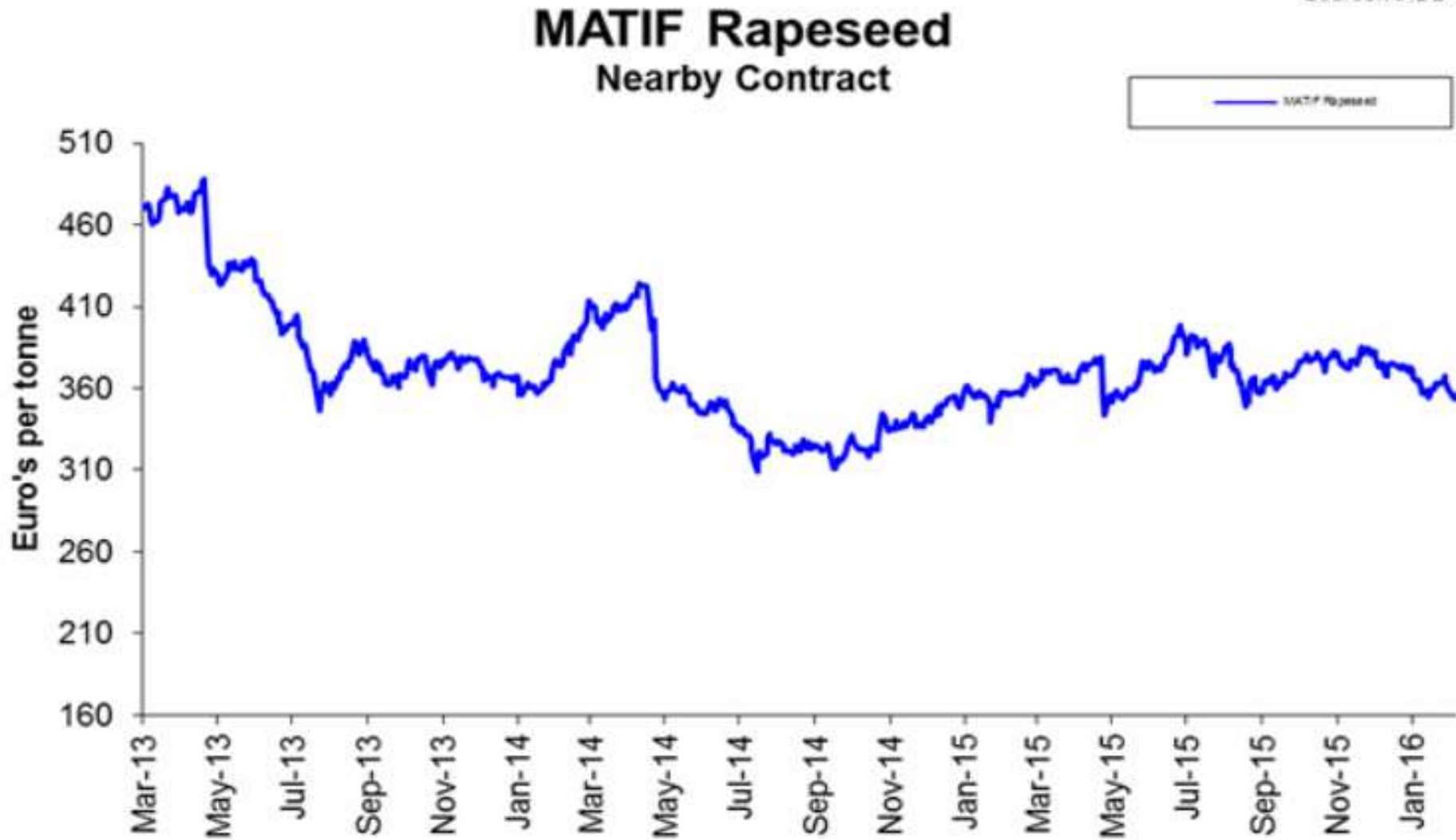
WHEAT PRICE FROM 1250
(£/T 2015 PRICES)



INCREMENT

Oilseed Rape Prices

Source: AHDB



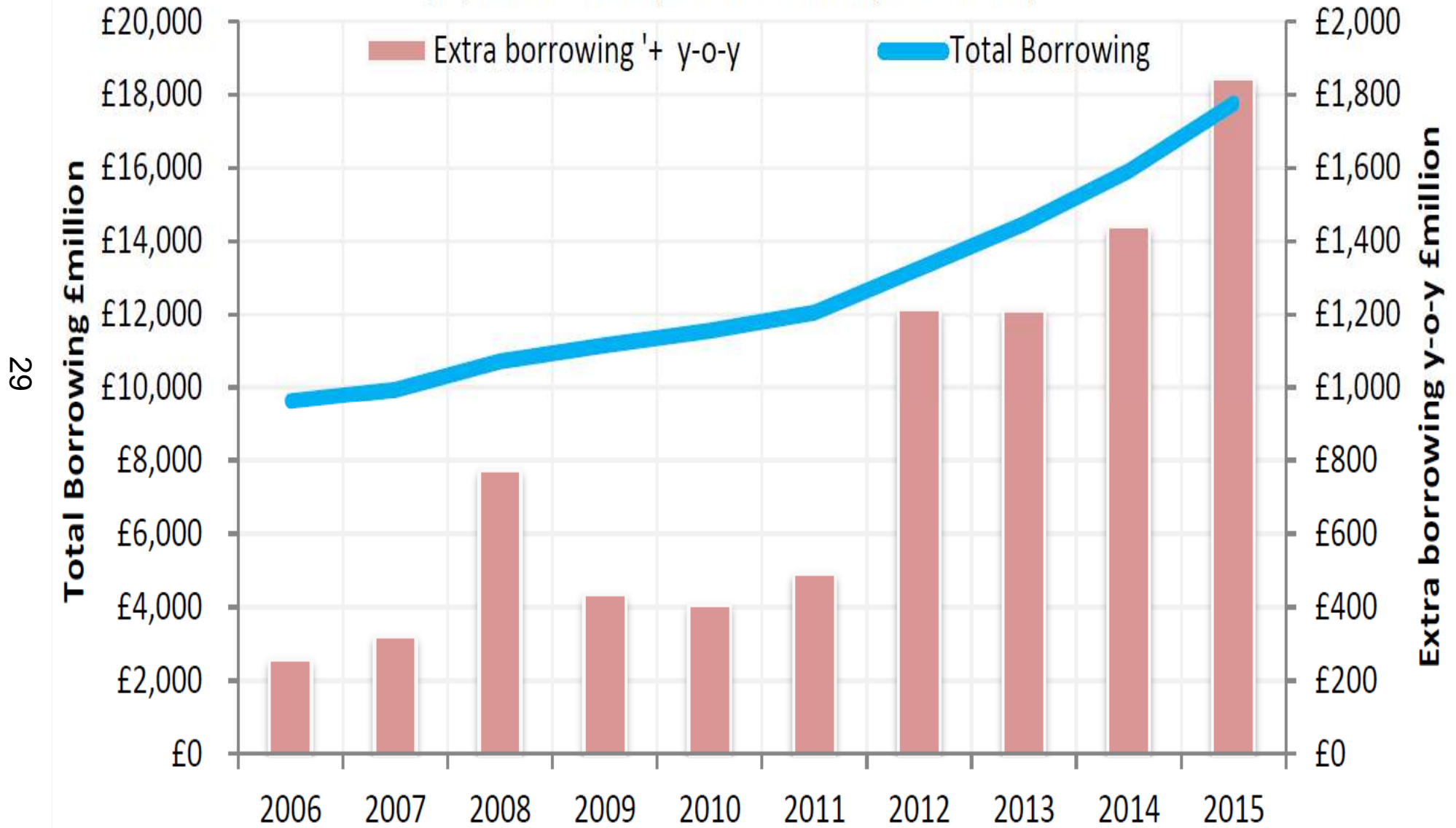
Commodity Prices	Dec 2015 prices	Prices 24 months ago	% change y-o-y
Wheat (£/t)	111.2	165.0	-32.6
Dairy (ppl) – Nov	24.2	34.6	-30.0%
Deadweight pigs (p/kg)	122.5	168.2	-27.2%
Deadweight sheep (p/kg)	365.3	397.0	-8.0%
Deadweight cattle (p/kg)	337.0	382.9	-12.0%

Source: AHDB (Figures may not add up due to rounding).

Industry News

- Second year of significant falls in farm income.
- Significant Delays in the Payment of the Basic Payment Scheme monies to farmers
- Negative effect of exchange rate meant 6% drop in money received – the lowest in 8 years.
- 12% rise in borrowing over previous 12 months – an extra £1.8bn compared to 2014.
- Farm borrowing has doubled in a decade.
- Arable sector income forecast to be down 24%

Graph 1: Farm borrowings reach record £17.8bn due to delay in BPS payments and squeeze on farm profitability

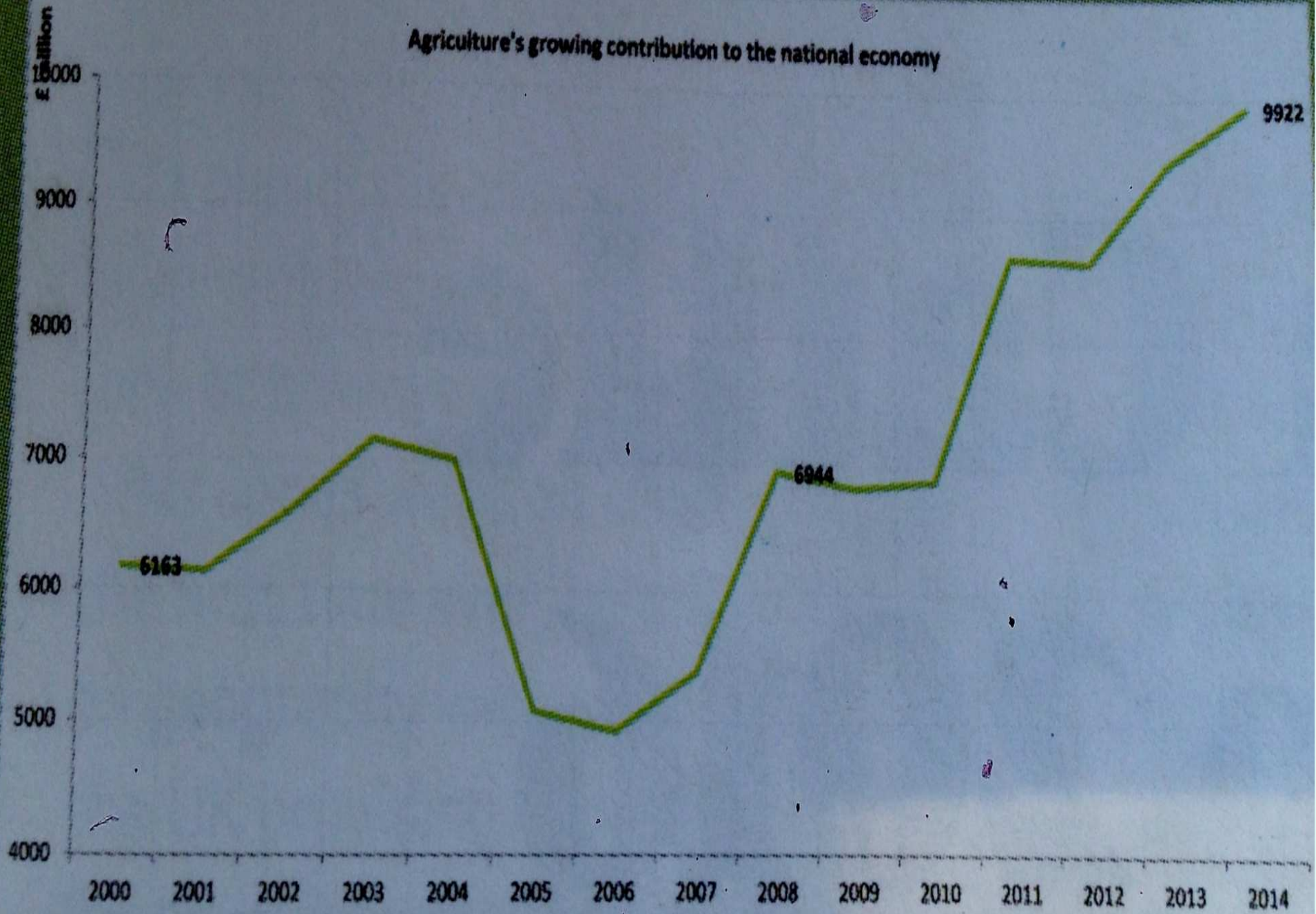


Source: Bank of England

Future Prospects

- Forecasts across sectors show that the higher supply situation of the last 2 years is set to continue and it is possible that prices will remain under pressure in the short term
- Despite on-going challenges, the sector's contribution to the local economy remains vital.
- Gross Value Added (GVA) has reached almost £10billion (see chart)
- This means it's contribution has grown by 45% in the last 5 years, helped by commodity prices early in this period.
- Collectively the agri-food sector is worth £103bn or 6.8% of GVA (larger than car and aerospace manufacturing combined)
- Food and drink is now the 4th largest export sector.

Agriculture's growing contribution to the national economy



Source: Defra

Future Prospects

- **DEFRA's 10-point plan for boosting productivity in rural areas**
- **Summary of Aims to help get Rural areas fully connected to the wider economy**
- **1. Extensive, fast and reliable broadband services**
- **2. High quality, widely available mobile communications**
- **3. Modern transport connections**
- **4. Access to high quality education and training**
- **5. Expanded apprenticeships in rural areas**
- **6. Enterprise Zones in rural areas**
- **7. Better regulation and improved planning for rural businesses**
 - Alongside wider measures to reduce the regulatory burden and improve planning, the government will review planning and regulatory constraints facing rural businesses and measures that can be taken to address them by 2016. The government will introduce a fast-track planning certificate process for establishing the principle of development for minor development proposals.
- **Easier to live and work in rural areas**
- **8. More housing**
- **9. Increased availability of affordable childcare**
- **10. Devolution of power**

“Brexit”

- UK membership of the EU is as much about **broader, political questions** as it is about economics
- Following Brexit, UK Government would have to decide how to fill the **policy vacuum** in those areas where the EU currently has competence (trade, agriculture, regulations)
- It would also need to negotiate the kind of **trade relationship with the EU27** it wanted
- Agricultural outlook will also depend on **macroeconomic performance** and future settings of key macro variables
- For agriculture, the situation outside the EU needs to be **compared with** what the CAP and EU regulations might look like after 2020

“Brexit”

- The great unknowns
 - UK **trade** policy after Brexit
 - UK **agricultural** policy after Brexit
 - UK regulatory policy after Brexit
 - UK **macroeconomic performance** after Brexit

VS

- Structure of **future EU CAP** and **future EU regulatory system** assuming the UK remains a member after 2020

Rural Matters

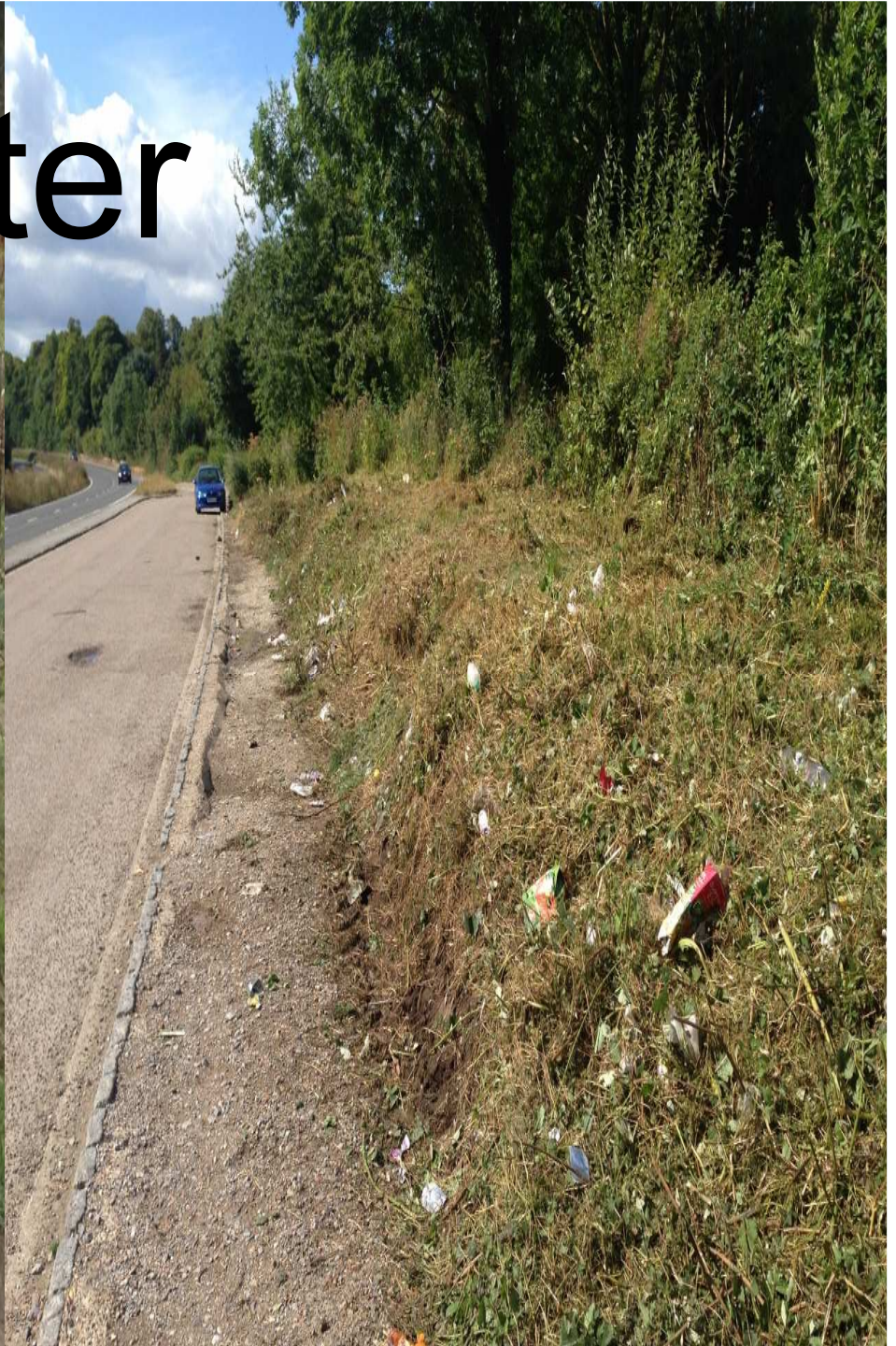
Hare Coursing



Hare Coursing



Litter



Fly Tipping



Scrap Prices



Rural Communications

- Poor mobile signal remains a big issue in rural areas.
- Some 98% of NFU members own a mobile phone, yet only [one in six of surveyed](#) could receive a mobile phone signal across the farm
- The Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP) was set up by the government in 2013 and had a budget of £150 million to improve poor mobile coverage in remote areas by 2016 and to address areas with no coverage 'not spots'.
- The project has now been closed early; and it has failed to make any substantial improvements to rural mobile coverage. Only £9.1 million was spent out of the original £150 million. Only 16 new masts have been built out of 600 proposed sites.
- Addressing fellow MPs during a Westminster Hall [debate](#) last week, Ed Vaizey, minister for culture and the digital economy, said he was as "guilty as charged" over the failure of the project and admitted it had not been a success.

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Superfast Berkshire

RBWM Rural Forum

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8th March 2016

Colin Batchelor

Superfast Berkshire

RBWM Rural Forum



The story so far in RBWM.....

Private Sector rollout

- Data provided through OMR
- Declared 87% coverage (BT & Virgin Media)
- Some gaps (reduction in coverage by around 2.5%)

Superfast Berkshire – Phase 1

- Procurement through Government framework - £4.6m public funds (Berkshire)
- Contract with BT providing FTTC solution – completed September 2015
- 19 cabinets upgraded benefiting 3,400 properties
- Mainly suburban areas (Ascot, Maidenhead, Wraysbury) but a few rural areas

Superfast Berkshire – Phase 2

- OJEU Procurement with open market - £415k public funds (RBWM)
- Contract with Call Flow providing mainly FTTC solution – due to complete mid 2016
- 11 cabinets upgraded benefiting 1,750 properties
- Mainly suburban areas (Windsor, Wraysbury) plus Burchett's Green

Superfast Berkshire

RBWM Rural Forum



District	SF % Expected Phase 2
Bracknell	96.0%
Reading	99.4%
RBWM	92.7%
Slough	95.8%
West Berkshire	100.0%
Wokingham	96.8%
Berkshire Total	96.9%

Superfast Berkshire

RBWM Rural Forum



Continued supplier engagement – Commercial deployment

BT New Build (limited information)

- None identified in RBWM

Warwicknet (HL view)

- Targeting 9 cabinets in RBWM

Virgin Media (Awaiting response with further details)

- Expansion of Virgin network – Project Lightning (£3bn across UK)
- Engaged on provision to Social Housing

Hyperoptic (At various stages)

- Target Apartment blocks – 6 identified in RBWM
- Engaged on provision to Social Housing

Superfast Berkshire

RBWM Rural Forum



'Release of funding' from Phase 1 - Contractual clauses

Accelerated Gainshare

- Take-up increased from 20% to 30% (approx £800k)
- Superfast Berkshire Phase 1 currently at 28.5%

Basic broadband savings

- Satellite scheme introduced for Basic Broadband (Sub 2Mbps)
- Less funding required than expected (approx £600k)

Under-spend on Phase 1

- LA contribution / BT contribution
- Under-going financial reconciliation (hopefully by 31/3/16)
- Anticipating total savings (approx £1m)

Questions

- How will this funding be allocated ?
- What solutions can be secured ?
- Who will benefit ?

Superfast Berkshire

RBWM Rural Forum



How will this funding be allocated ?

District	SF % Expected Phase 2	SF % Target Phase 3
Bracknell	96.0%	97.0%
Reading	99.4%	99.4%
RBWM	92.7%	97.0%
Slough	95.8%	97.0%
West Berkshire	100.0%	100.0%
Wokingham	96.8%	97.0%
Berkshire Total	96.9%	98.0%

Superfast Berkshire

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Agreed approach by SFB Project Board

- 1. Continue commercial deployment** (BT, Warwicknet, Virgin, Hyperoptic, etc.)
 - Remove ineligible proposed coverage (overlapping areas)

- 2. Adapt BT proposal**

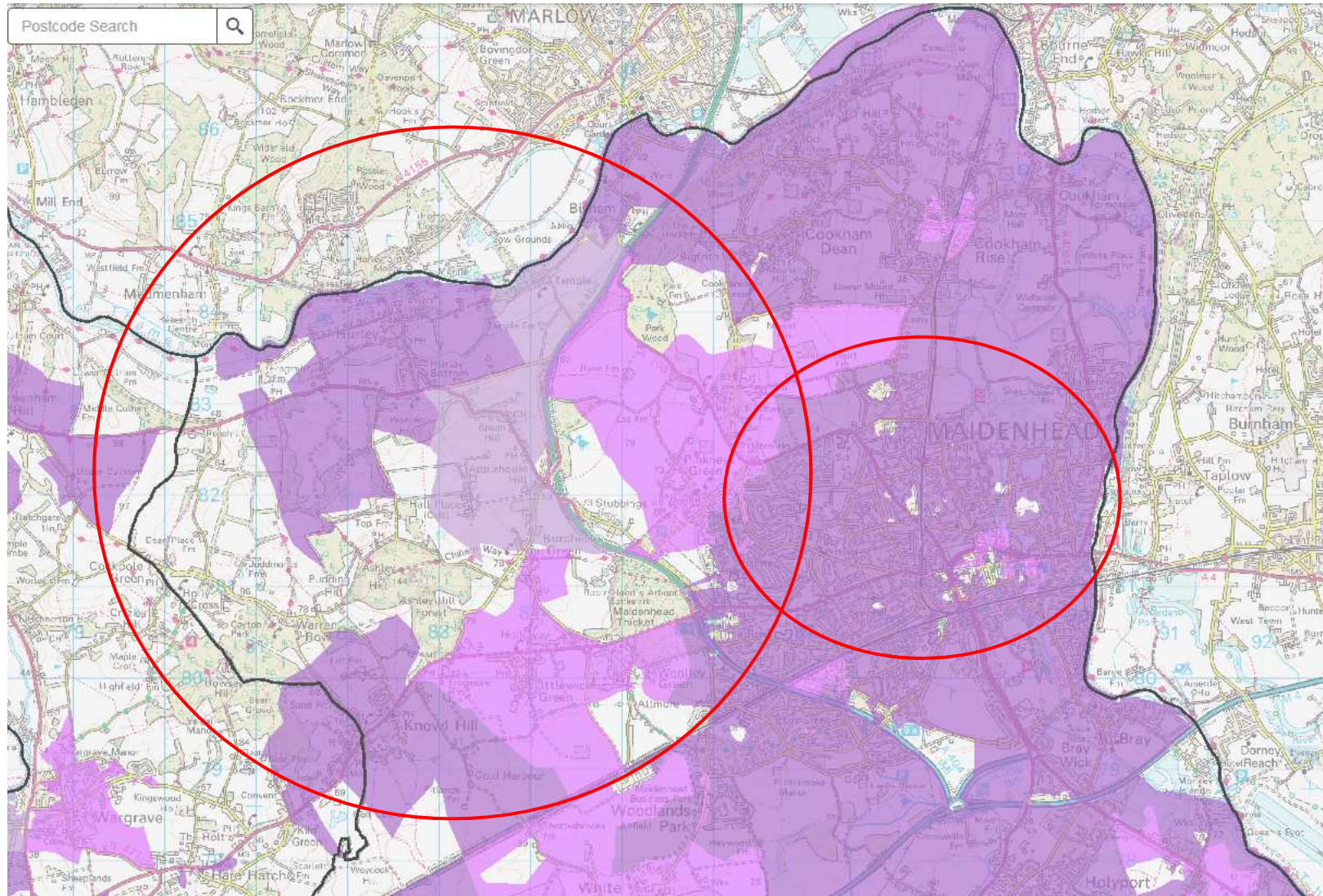
- Remove ineligible proposed coverage (overlapping areas)
- Target urban / suburban areas – ‘best value for money’
- Press BT on delivery timescales

- 3. Market tender remaining gaps** ¹

- Consider procurement options (similar to Phase 2, Market engagement, Lots, etc.)
- Target more challenging rural areas
- Focus on VfM, total coverage, delivery timescales

¹ Procurement expected to take 6 – 8 months

Superfast Berkshire RBWM Rural Forum

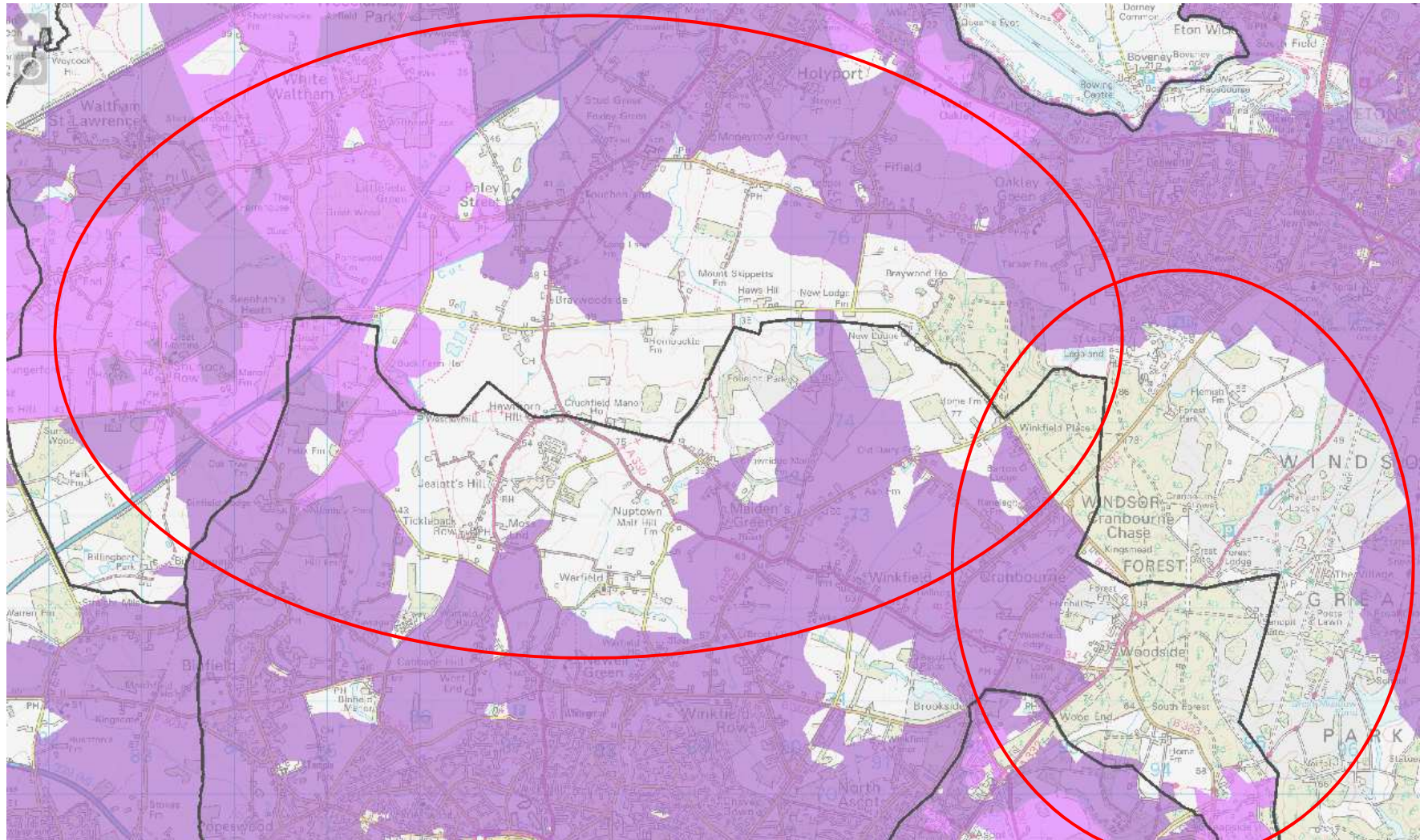


Superfast Berkshire

RBWM Rural Forum



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Superfast Berkshire

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What we hope to achieve ?

A (complex) blend of solutions & suppliers – facilitated by SFB

Maximise value from Public funding – where it is required

Extend coverage to 97% + for all districts – push all towards 100%

Delivered by 2017 / 2018 – working in 'partnership'

Questions