

Sell Live & Thrive (and help the cashflow problem?)

Last month an article in the local paper claimed that Shropshire farmers are “hanging on by the skin of their teeth amid the continued crisis gripping the industry”. At the same time a poignant article in the Business Clinic section of the Farmers Weekly (15/01/16) rightly reports that whilst a business may not be damaged in the short term by lack of profits, lack of cash can, and probably will, have a devastating effect.

Although payments from the Basic Payment Scheme have now started to appear into the current account, in reality this money may already have been promised to creditors several times over. There are, of course, a number of ways to generate additional cash to supplement the business during such austere times, but few come without their own set of disadvantages which may not suit the business.

Perfect economic model

It would appear that for the foreseeable future, low farm-gate prices will continue to put the squeeze on the farm's cashflow which is critical to any business. As a livestock auctioneer I have always believed in the “Sell Live & Thrive” slogan, but never more so than now. There is little doubt that a livestock market is nearer to the perfect economic model than any other business in respect of willing seller and willing buyer of a known commodity on any given day.

Compared to dead weight sales, where there are often unseen deductions based on subject carcass quality, the livestock market allows total transparency and clarity on prices achieved. Furthermore, whilst direct sales to the abattoir might be more convenient, the key advantages of being in the market place are missed. The livestock market allows the seller a unique opportunity to match stock to individual



buyers' requirements thereby maximising the value of the beast and numerous buyers in the same place on the same day mean that all classes and quality of stock can be bunched together for a particular buyer. When it comes to cash, the market plays its trump card. Not only can the seller be sure of prompt payment, he can be confident of payment as all

transactions are backed by an insurance policy. Few businesses can boast this claim.

Farming is a lonely business

We all know that farming can be a lonely business and the chance to meet up with like-minded people to exchange views, catch up on the latest news and trends or just ‘chew the cud’ over a cup of tea should not be undervalued. At Market Drayton Livestock Market local lady Ann Fowell has recently taken over the market café and is already reporting an increase in custom from buyers and sellers alike who are breakfasting and lunching on her home-made, locally-sourced produce and judging by the number of people sitting chatting, the café remains an important social hub for the farming community. Many auctions now let out office space to allied businesses (vets, agricultural suppliers, solicitors and insurance brokers) so that the market effectively becomes a ‘one-stop shop’ for the busy farmer.

It would seem that by selling live through the market, much needed extra cash isn't the only benefit.



Mike Taylor is Senior Partner of Barbers Rural and Chairman of Barbers Auctions

How can we help your business thrive?

Practical, straightforward property solutions to guide you in the right direction

Business is increasingly competitive, particularly in farming, and finding a competitive advantage is often the key to success. This can be more straightforward than it sounds. It doesn't have to mean increased marketing or diversification - it can sometimes be achieved by making cost savings, improving the management of assets or resolving long-standing problems.

Whatever the problem, the experienced team at Barbers Rural aim to offer professional, pragmatic and practical advice on a broad range of issues associated with our core skill: rural land and property. Our highly motivated, dedicated and dynamic team have a combined experience of over 100 years in the industry and have the formal qualifications, training and traditional values of exceptional customer service you want to find in a well-established, client-focused firm.

As Agents for the Agricultural Mortgage Corporation, we are able to arrange long-term and flexible lending at competitive rates - particularly relevant in the current challenging economic climate.

Whatever the problem, we will help you find the answer.

Our professional services include:

- Valuation & Sale
- Landlord & Tenant matters
- Planning & Development
- Succession & Tax Planning
- Compensation Claims
- Property & Estate Management
- Grants & Subsidies
- Dispute Resolution
- Farm Finance
- Expert Witness
- Business Consultancy
- Renewable Energy

Meet the dynamic team of professionals at Barbers Rural



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Featured Properties



28.6 Acres, Nr Market Drayton

Offers Invited

28.6 Acres | currently in grass but equally suited to arable rotation | formed in one parcel | soil classification of Salop (fine loam over clay) | relatively flat | two access points onto public highway (A529) | mature hedgerow boundaries | registered for Basic Payment Scheme | entitlements included in sale | viewing by appointment |



Littlehales Place, Nr Newport

Price on Application

EPC D

4 bedroom cottage | paddocks and woodland 5.35 acres in total | well equipped kitchen with attached conservatory | dining room | delightful sitting room and study with feature-dividing log burner | floodlit manège | heated swimming pool and sauna | boot room | 4 bespoke stables including feed and tack room plus wash box & stores |



Lodge Cottage, Nr Market Drayton

Guide: £375,000

EPC F

Renovated 2 bedroom cottage | permission for further extension | exceptional and far-reaching views across rolling countryside | adjoining paddock available by negotiation | peaceful, rural location | inviting sitting room with log-burning stove | near to thriving towns | bedrooms enhanced with period fireplaces | extensively modernised |



Stafford Lodge, Nr Market Drayton

Guide: £400,000

EPC E

4 bedroom charming period property | paddock of 2.8 acres | attractive, extensive and abundant gardens | productive orchard | double garage with inspection pit and workshop | vegetable patch | peaceful rural location with easy access to thriving market towns | potential for adaptation for equestrian use | convenient for A41 |



Greenacres, Nr Whitmore

Price on Application

EPC F

3 bedroom detached bungalow | elevated position | lovely location | far-reaching views across open farmland | entrance hall | dining room | sitting room | kitchen | utility room | office/snug | family bathroom | stunning gardens with charming cottage-style borders and lawns | subject to an Agricultural Occupancy Restriction |

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