

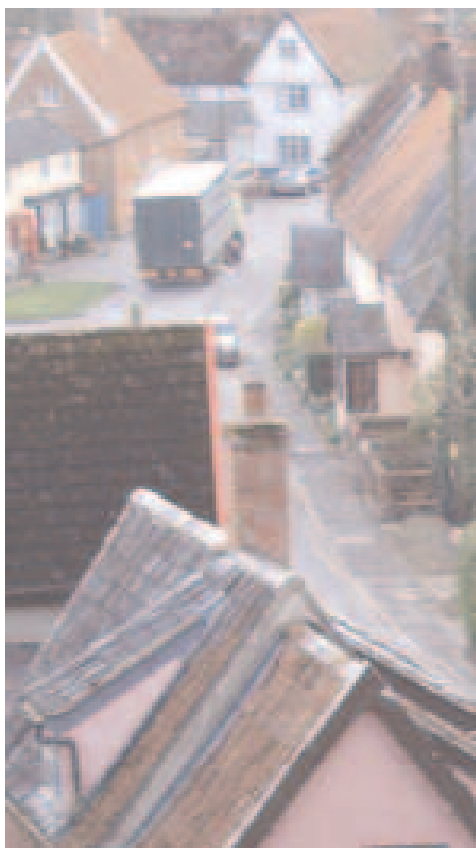
Rural Report

A monthly newsletter focusing on issues of rural life and farming of relevance to the work of the Church of England in the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

Information is drawn from organisations connected with the countryside (in its widest sense) within Suffolk and beyond.

The newsletter will produce brief reports giving factual information on a range of issues. Items may be of general interest or provide opportunity for prayer.

If more details are needed on any of the topics mentioned, please contact Brian Chester at bc@bcnewslink.com or call 01572 757600



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Incidents of fly-tipping on public land increased by two percent across England in 2019/2020, according to new figures released by Defra. However, according to Mark Bridgeman, president of the Country Land and Business Association, this is just 'the tip of the iceberg' as the figures do not include the vast number of fly-tipping incidents which occur on private land and result in farmers paying out thousands of pounds a year to clear the rubbish. He called for tougher action against those responsible.

More than 3,000 incidents of fly-tipping were recorded by councils across Suffolk in the year before the first national Covid-19 lockdown, according to latest environmental figures. A total of 3,223 incidents of rubbish and waste being illegally dumped were recorded between the beginning of April 2019 and the end of March 2020. This total was down (by 457 incidents) on what was a record total for the previous year. It took the total amount of incidents recorded across Suffolk in five years to 15,588. *East Anglian Daily Times*

A report jointly commissioned by Rural Services Network, Britain's Leading Edge (an association of rural local authorities), the Council for the Preservation of Rural England and English Rural has revealed that government spending per person on public infrastructure is 44% higher for urban areas than it is for rural areas that include no major cities.

The carbon footprint of British pig farming has reduced by almost 40% over the last 20 years, according to a study led by the Institute for Global Food Security at Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland. The independent research, funded by the EU, drew its conclusions from historic data on livestock systems across England, Scotland and Wales.

<https://www.nlaf.uk/Library/content/Detail.aspx?ctlID=ZWVhNzBIY2QtZWJjNi00YWZiLWEIMTAtNWExOTFiMjJjOWUI&rID=MjUIMjc=&slD=MQ==&qrS=VHJIZQ==&rrtc=VHJIZQ>

Farming and meat trade organisations have expressed dismay at government plans to tighten live animal transport rules and ban live exports other than for breeding purposes. The consultation, which closed on 25 February, has proposed a reduction in maximum journey times for each species and a ban on all movements when outside temperatures fall below 5C or rise above 30C (or 25C in the case of poultry). But the NFU said that, in order to ensure the best possible welfare outcomes, the main priorities should be the animal's fitness to travel, loading and unloading, and driver training, rather than the length of journey or the external temperature. *Farmers Weekly*

An app developed by animal behavioural scientists at the Scottish Rural College to help field teams to better understand, recognise and record emotionally expressive behaviour that contributes to an animal's quality of life, is being trialled on farms linked to Waitrose over the next two years.

A report by the Soil Association shows that UK's organic market is now worth £2.79 billion, after a 12.6% growth in sales in 2020. The market reached its highest growth rate in 15 years, outperforming the non-organic sector. Online and home delivery sales fuelled much of the growth with sales increasing by 2%, meaning that 25% of organic sales are delivered in this way.

Despite improvements in mental health awareness, two thirds of farmers still say they would not seek professional help if they were concerned about their own mental health. A video launched as part of February's *Farming Help Awareness Week* aims to promote the work of the Farming Help charities across the UK. The charities include The Farming Community Network, RABI, RSABI, Addington Fund and Forage Aid - all supported by The Prince's Countryside Fund. The short film features a candid discussion of mental ill-health issues and the support received.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6U7oT_kdVk&feature=emb_logo

This newsletter was initiated under the guidance of the Diocesan Rural Affairs Group set up as a means of identifying current rural issues and considering how the church should respond.