

# Keeping Ahead of the Game

**Aberdeen & Northern Estates have sold 26 farms during 2010 which equates to approximately one every two weeks and is far more than any other agent selling farms in this part of Scotland.**

This confirms our position as the choice of agent for many sellers in Northeast Scotland as we are regarded as having a large number of potential buyers from the length and breadth of Great Britain.

Sales of farms throughout the year have, as usual, been a mixed picture with good quality units in sought after areas selling extremely well but other farms, in more outlying areas, needing particularly good experience on behalf of the agents to find the right buyer.

### Dramatic improvement

Although prices of arable produce looked very low as we entered 2010 following the 2009 harvest, things improved dramatically throughout the year and, in many cases, prices for arable produce were approximately twice that achieved in the previous year.

As the year has gone on, however, and with the arrival of earlier than usual wintry weather, this does have an effect on the markets and sellers must be realistic with their asking prices if a sale is to be achieved.

A good balanced view of how the market is performing at any particular moment can be given by any of the members of staff at

Aberdeen & Northern who have a great amount of experience in selling and valuing farms throughout Northeast Scotland.

That experience led to myself being interviewed recently for the BBC Scotland television Landward programme about the difficulties facing young people trying to get started in farming.

The producers recognised that Aberdeen & Northern Estates had a lot of expertise and knowledge and we were able to highlight that although it can be difficult, there are still good prospects available at an affordable price.

### 'Must see' site

The A&N Estates website has always been by far and away the busiest of all the group sites and a 'must see' site for anyone searching to buy a farm or rural property in this part of Scotland.

The interest in the site has always been sufficient to make us believe that this was a unique marketing tool exclusive to Aberdeen & Northern Estates clients. We have now expanded our property listing by joining Primelocation. Primelocation is the pre-eminent website for the property selling profession and gives huge exposure to properties listed for sale.



Our properties are also now listed with other sites and search engines including FindaProperty.com, FindaNewHome.com and Globrix.com which gives us unprecedented appeal for both buyers and sellers.

Although interest rates are at a historically low level, many buyers still find it particularly difficult to find attractive terms for borrowing, although this can often be achieved if enough research is carried out and Aberdeen & Northern can help guide clients through this tricky process.

### Upturn in renewable energy projects

Aberdeen & Northern Estates have noted a considerable upturn in the amount of enquiries we have had regarding projects for renewable energy. Feed-in Tariffs (FIT) which were introduced in April 2010 make the economics of medium scale wind turbines attractive on a good site.





Under the FIT Scheme an operator of 100kW to 500kW wind turbine receives 18.8p per Kilowatt hour (kWh) for all energy generation plus a further 3p per kWh for all electricity exported to the National Grid.

Originally it was understood that the rate would be guaranteed by government for 20 years from the date of installation and would rise with inflation for the life of the Scheme. There is speculation, however, that there will be a review as they are so lucrative.

There is a widely held opinion that these rates may be available for a much shorter time and accordingly many operators are trying to climb on the bandwagon while they are still available.

### Take great care

We have had a considerable number of clients who have been approached by a wide variety of agents trying to secure an option to erect wind turbines or other renewable installations on their property, and great care must be taken before any formal document is signed in order to ensure the best deal is achieved.

Land owners should be aware that the renewable energy developers do realise that this is a complicated business and do not have a problem in meeting Aberdeen & Northern's fees when instructed to act on behalf of the farmer/landowner.

## New equipment enhances survey capability

**A worthwhile recent addition to our business is some Magellan GPS professional survey equipment, which is enhancing our capability in the provision of digital mapping.**

This Promark 3 device looks like an extra long ski pole with a trolley wheel on the top but is allowing us to accurately measure and map land areas.

We already use the web-based Promap system and the new GPS equipment saves both time and labour in taking accurate measurements.

Previously, measuring could involve two people with tapes and chain measures but now this device can be placed by one person at a point in a field and fix on several points. Both James Petty and James Presly have found it incredibly useful.



Agriculture

## Your local Agricultural Managers.



Jim Angus **07867 906420**



Sheena Fraser **07900 980722**

Call us to see how we can help your business.

**BANK OF SCOTLAND**  
With you all the way