

Welcome



Dear Member,

Welcome to the 2018 edition of the IFA Countryside newsletter. What a year this has been so far. Spring was non-existent to say the least and the summer has brought a lot of challenges to the farming community in terms of fodder and water availability. One important observation from both the spring and summer weather issues is the strength and support that communities give to each other in times of need.

IFA Countryside recognises the important role of recreational routes in promoting tourism and economic activity in rural areas. We have engaged with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, making submissions on proposals to develop greenways and blueways across the country. Engagement must take place with all stakeholders and any such greenways must be developed in co-operation with the rural communities involved.

It's time to get tough on litter louts. We are calling for tougher sanctions on serial dumpers who use the Irish countryside as a skip. Energy Minister Denis Naughten's recent decision to increase the on the spot fines for littering is welcomed by IFA Countryside.

Community involvement and ownership will be a key principle of the new renewable electricity support scheme. IFA has long advocated a community-centred approach to future energy policy. Irish citizens should be entitled to be part of Ireland's transition to a low-carbon economy.

IFA Countryside members attended the first ever organised Hunter Competence Assessment Programme (HCAP) course facilitated by the Deer Alliance. Don't miss our article on page 3 to see what's involved and how to get your club certified.

IFA negotiates with some of Ireland's top brands to deliver exclusive discounts to our members. These exclusive offers include car, motor and home insurance, motor vehicles, travel, hotel breaks and much more. Get the most from your membership by being aware of all that you can save.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very safe and enjoyable year ahead. Enjoy the countryside!

Richard Kennedy
Chairman, IFA Countryside

Member Services

Member Benefits

	Fibre broadband from €10 per month			Save up to 17% on packages
		10% off €140 cash back 18 months		up to 30% off TV bundles

Unique Security I.D	15% off car fares	Save €300	12% off	15% off

Personal Accident Cover & Personal Legal Liability Cover
€35 off voucher
Fire & Theft Protection on Licensed Firearms

€1,000 off finance	Subsidised training courses	€1,000 off finance	20% off	10% off car hire 15% off van hire



It's time to get tough on litter louts

IFA Countryside Chairman Richard Kennedy said IFA has called for tougher sanctions on serial dumpers who use the Irish countryside as a skip for their illegal activities. He said, "Ireland's natural landscape has been preserved over the years by generations of farm families. It is widely recognised that our scenic beauty underpins our tourism offering, however illegal dumping of rubble, mattresses, furniture and electrical appliances continues to undermine the good work of farm families, and stronger action is now required from Government."

"Minister Naughten's recent decision to increase on the spot fines for littering is welcomed and must be followed up with increased enforcement action by local authorities, as well as tougher sentences and penalties for large scale serial dumpers," Mr Kennedy said.

Community ownership of renewable projects moves a step closer

IFA Countryside has welcomed the clear statement from Energy Minister Denis Naughten at the recent Energy Ireland 2018 conference, that community ownership will be a key principle of the new renewable electricity support scheme to be announced in the coming months.

Richard Kennedy said, "As part of the association's climate activation programme, IFA has long advocated a community-centred approach to future energy policy. Large scale development companies can no longer plunder our landscape, put in place renewables and associated infrastructure and take the €500m collected from households each year, as part of the electricity levy (PSO)."



Walks Scheme & Greenways Update

IFA has impressed on Minister for Rural and Community Affairs Michael Ring the need to increase the number of walks covered by the Walks Scheme from 40 to 80, and to increase the funding from €2m to €4m.

At recent meetings, IFA Countryside reminded the Minister that this was a commitment in the Programme for Government, which has to be delivered on. Mr Kennedy said, "The Walks Scheme has been of huge value to many areas. It has resulted in increased tourist numbers in peripheral areas and has generated strong economic return on a small investment. With regards to Greenways, IFA recognises the important role which these recreational routes have to play in promoting tourism and economic activity in rural areas. However, they will also have a significant impact on rural communities. IFA has made a number of submissions to the Department of Transport in support of the development of a workable framework, which respects the rights of landowners impacted by recreational routes. Engagement must take place with all stakeholders and any such greenways must be developed in co-operation with the rural communities and landowners involved.



IFA



'My Land' 2019 Calendar Competition

Overall Winner 2018 - True Love by Simon Lambert, Co. Wexford.

IFA has teamed up with the Irish Farmers Journal and Irish Country Living to bring you the 12th annual IFA calendar competition.

What makes a winner? The theme of this year's calendar is **'My Land'**. We are looking for fresh, clear and captivating photographs that show the magic of rural Ireland. The **'My Land'** theme includes anything that you think captures the beauty and magic of life in rural Ireland including livestock, landscapes, farm buildings, farm yards and much more.

The Prizes! If your photo catches the Judge's eyes as one of the overall monthly winners, you can look forward to your picture being published in the 2019 IFA calendar as well as a two-night stay in a luxurious hotel with a full Irish breakfast each morning. The overall winner will be chosen by our judges and receive a prize of €2,000. The second will be chosen by public vote on the Irish Farmers Journal Facebook page, and will receive a prize of €500.

Submitting Your Photos: Please include a title for your photo as well as your name, address and phone number. Photos must be landscape format. **Photos can be submitted via the app or online: www.ifa.ie/membership/calendarcomp**



Heritage Bill

IFA Countryside is thankful for the lobbying efforts of our members over the past two years in securing the passing of the Heritage Bill through the Dáil. This was a major effort from a number of our gun clubs in securing the extra month for burning. Game and conservationists will now be better able to manage hill and mountain ground which in turn will aid the longevity of grouse and other upland bird species.



IFA Countryside Chairman Richard Kennedy said hill farmers need burning to be allowed during the month of March as this will lead to a better management of hill land and avoid abandonment. He explained that burning is a vital management tool to ensure that land is not overgrown and as a result abandoned. On hedge-cutting, allowing farmers to cut hedges in August would be a very sensible decision from a road safety and farm safety perspective.

Richard Kennedy said that an early conclusion is now necessary with immediate implementation.

IFA Countryside Members Complete HCAP

IFA Countryside members with the support of Farm Business Skillnet attended the first ever organised Hunter Competence Assessment Programme (HCAP) course facilitated by the Deer Alliance.

The Deer Alliance is the organising body for the assessment and certification of persons involved in the management, conservation and stalking of wild deer in Ireland. They recently ran a closed HCAP Training Workshop and Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) in Portlaoise for members of IFA Countryside at the request of IFA Farm Business Skillnet, who subsidised candidates as part of the IFA's ongoing commitment to training for members. Farm Business Skillnet is the training division of IFA, providing training and up-skilling to both the IFA volunteer structure and to groups of IFA members. HCAP is now in its fifteenth year of operation and has processed over 2,700 licensed hunters since commencement.

Successful HCAP candidates receive an individual signed and sealed certificate, together with a wallet-size HCAP-Certified Hunter ID Card (with individual name and number) and a HCAP badge. The HCAP badge is available only to HCAP-Certified candidates and is not generally available.

If you or your club is interested in completing the HCAP at a subsidised rate, please contact the IFA Countryside office on 1890 924 982. Full details of HCAP can be found on the Deer Alliance website, www.deeralliance.ie



Three members of the Garda National Crime Prevention Unit at Garda HQ visited the Farm Centre to meet with the IFA Crime and Security Spokesperson Richard Kennedy.

Pictured below From left to right: Barry Carey, IFA Crime Prevention Officer, Sergeant John Crosse, IFA Countryside Chairman Richard Kennedy, Sergeant Pat Conway, IFA Director of Organisation James Kelly and Sergeant Kelvin Courtney, National Crime Prevention Unit.



Energy proof your home

Did you know, you could avail of a grant of up to €6,000 to energy proof your home? The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) encourages people to reduce their energy costs and improve the energy performance of their homes through the Better Energy Homes programme.

Full details and information on how to apply are available at www.seai.ie/betterenergyhomes



IFA Countryside Chairman Richard Kennedy recently met with Kathleen O'Toole, Chair of the Commission on the Future of Policing as part of IFA's efforts to combat rural crime and increase Garda resources in rural areas. The meeting discussed the importance of community policing and cross border crime concerns.

“IFA Countryside provides good cover over a range of outdoor activities eg fishing, walking etc. Good backup and friendly staff”
Golden Kilfeacle Gun Club



We defend the interests of members who actively enjoy our countryside through:

- The protection of the environment
- Influencing positive change in policies that impact rural Ireland
- Providing real cost-savings

In addition to strong representation, IFA Countryside also offers a range of Exclusive Member Benefits including free Personal Accident Cover and Personal Legal Liability Cover, hotel breaks, mobile, power, telecom, TV packages and much more.

Join IFA Countryside's Club Programme and avail of the following additional benefits:

- Subsidised Pheasants & Ducks
- Subsidised Feed from Local Dealers
- Vermin Trap Subsidy
- Subsidised HCAP Courses

Membership from €50

Join IFA Countryside TODAY.

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“We are delighted with IFA Countryside as it suits our needs as a club and is a perfect fit as a rural based organisation keeping up-to-date on countryside matters and preserving the countryside ethos & community spirit”
ABGN Gun Club

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