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## **Rural Business Support**

Specific advice for Agricultural businesses can be found through the Advice for Kent Downs Farmers Scheme.

More general business advice is available with details on the [Existing Business](#) and [Business Start up](#) pages.

## **Free Advice for Kent Downs Farmers**

If you are a farmer, landholder or small rural business in or straddling the boundary of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) you could be eligible to receive a free Action Plan to support you in expanding or diversifying your business.

The Kent Downs Rural Advice Service is a pilot project providing free support to farmers and land owners who are seeking to make a change to their land management practices or business. The service can arrange for experts in planning, environment and business development to visit each farmer wishing to take advantage of the service and set out advice in a straight forward Action Plan to help take proposals forward.

This free service is available within the Kent Downs AONB, a nationally important protected landscape. Not sure if you are in the Kent Downs AONB? Visit the [Kent Landscape Information System Website](#) or contact Jenny Bate.

For more information contact Jenny Bate, Kent Downs Rural Advice Service Coordinator:  
West Barn, Penstock Hall Farm, Canterbury Road, East Brabourne, Ashford, Kent TN25 5LL  
Tel: 01303 815170

[Email Jenny Bate](#) or [Visit the Kent Downs website](#)

## Farm Diversification Toolkit

The Farm Diversification Toolkit is a reference guide and DIY toolkit to help farmers take a balanced and integrated approach to making changes on their farm. Covering the business, financial, heritage, environmental and planning issues the Toolkit offers anyone a first step introduction and web based 'source book'.

[Farm Diversification Toolkit PDF 2.52MB](#)

For more information on the Toolkit please [email Jenny Bate](#) at Kent Downs Rural Advice Service or [visit the Kent Downs Website](#).

## Action for Communities in Rural Kent

[Action for Communities in Rural Kent](#) is an independent voluntary organisation that deals specifically with rural projects and communities within Kent. Action for Communities in Rural Kent provides support and advice for rural businesses as well as helping to raise awareness of rural issues.

To support the ever changing needs of rural retailers, Action for Communities in Rural Kent has created the [Kent for Rural Retail\(KARR\)](#), this organisation attempts to prevent villages from becoming just dormitories to local towns and tries to preserve retail in the rural area.

For more information call 01303 813790

[Kent Downs and Marshes Leader](#)

The Kent Downs and Marshes Leader programme can provide grants of up to £50,000 depending upon the project, although match funding will be required in many cases. This money can be provided towards capital or revenue costs, and is available to social and community groups, and to rural and land based businesses.

To find out more visit [Kent Downs and Marshes](#) or contact 01622 221389

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