

Circular 13/2015 – Issued by email

22nd April 2015

To: GLAS Advisors

Re: Clarification on the Appointment of Commonage Advisors

Following on from recent circulars and queries received and for the avoidance of doubt, please find below extract from GLAS Circular 08/2015 on Commonages. The extract outlines the process whereby an advisor is appointed to prepare a Commonage Management Plan for commonages over 10ha. To be clear with regard to point 4 below, once an application to become a GLAS Commonage Advisor is submitted to the Department, the process in points 5 – 12 below is initiated. While the closing date for receipt of applications to become a Commonage Advisor is 22nd May, 2015 we will be appointing Commonage Advisors as we receive applications, before that date in line with the appointment process.

GLAS circulars may be found at

<http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmerschemespayments/glas/circulars/> and the application for advisors to act on behalf of a group of commonage shareholders, at <http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/agfoodinformationpages/agfoodagentforms/>.

The list of “Appointments Pending – Commonage Advisors” and the most recent versions of the Scheme Specification and Terms and Conditions may be found at <http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmerschemespayments/glas/>.

Appointment of the Commonage Advisor for preparation of CMPs (>10ha)

Advisors who wish to prepare Commonage Management Plans, (known as the Commonage Advisor), must have attended GLAS commonage training and will be appointed by the Department, following the process outlined below:-

1. Only one Commonage Advisor will be appointed per Commonage;
2. Applications for advisors to act on behalf of a group of commonage shareholders in preparing a Commonage Management Plan may be found at this link <http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/agfoodinformationpages/agfoodagentforms/>.
3. The advisor must contact all shareholders on the commonage to give them the opportunity to join a Commonage Management Plan, should they wish to do so.
4. The completed GLAS Commonage Authorisation Form should be returned to GLAS, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Johnstown Castle Estate, Wexford. **All GLAS Commonage Authorisation Forms from advisors must be received by the Department by 22nd May, 2015.** However, a form can be submitted at any stage up to that date and the appointment of the Advisor will then be made as soon as possible.

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5. An advisor who has reached the indicative number of shareholders or the indicative area, as shown on the Commonage Container database, is *eligible* to be appointed the Master Commonage Advisor. However, the Department will not immediately appoint a Commonage Advisor but will instead publish the following details on the Department's website as, "Appointments Pending – Commonage Advisors";
 - a. Name and contact details of the Advisor seeking appointment;
 - b. Number of shareholders for whom they are authorised to prepare a CMP;
 - c. Commonage identifier and townland;
 - d. Date of notification of proposal to appoint;
 - e. Date of appointment of approval as Advisor (no earlier than five working days of the Department posting the notice).
6. If any other advisor has already recruited shareholders, s/he should talk to his/her shareholders regarding signing up to the proposed Commonage Advisor and if necessary talk to the advisor in question.
7. In exceptional circumstances, where agreement between advisors cannot be reached, another advisor has the five working days from 5(d) to 5(e) to submit a GLAS Commonage Authorisation Form seeking to act on that Commonage and the Department will decide which advisor shall be approved as the Commonage Advisor.
8. Where more than one advisor applies to become the Commonage Advisor, the Department will decide who is eligible to be appointed to the role, based on the following criteria:
 - a. No. of shareholders signed up to each advisor;
 - b. Area of commonage brought to the Plan by those shareholders;
 - c. Number who had sheep in 2014;
 - d. No. of sheep held by those shareholders in 2014.
9. An email will then issue approving the chosen Commonage Advisor and s/he will be given access to the GLAS commonage application system.
10. GLAS Unit will write to those shareholders who nominated the Commonage Advisor saying s/he is now approved to prepare their Commonage Management Plan.
11. GLAS Unit will also write to all other shareholders on the Commonage to let them know that an advisor has been approved to prepare a Commonage Management Plan for the Commonage and that if they wish to be part of that Plan in GLAS they should contact that Advisor.
12. A list of "Commonage Advisors Appointed", with Commonage ID numbers and contact details, will be published on the Department's website. They will also be listed on the Commonage Container.