

Summer 2026



HOPE'S
AUCTIONEERS & LAND AGENTS

NEWSLETTER

AUCTION REVIEW

Following the success of the Christmas Prime Stock Show and Sale, prime cattle trade has been somewhat in the doldrums with falling sales and prices restricting options. Our anniversary sale however significantly reversed this trend with a super heifer from regular supporters Messrs J Dixon & Son of Lessonhall Farm selling to Paul Harrison of RJ Harrison & Son for 502 p/kg.

Prime sheep numbers continue to increase and current traders are far in excess of pre-season predictions and healthy returns from store lamb purchasers are being received. With increased buyer support and trading accounts, excellent returns for prime lambs and cast sheep at Wigton are providing sheep producers with confidence in the sheep market.

Following a successful hogg season with numbers well in excess of previous years, new season lambs have set off with plentiful supplies at 25% increases in yearly values. As the season progresses, late summer will once again provide excellent trading opportunities for both store lambs and breeding sheep.

Store cattle sales continue to be a significant income stream for the company and as with prime sheep, it has been pleasing to see many clients selling at Wigton for the first time and returning for subsequent sales. With a competitive environment store cattle numbers going through the auction are still on the increase, with more ringside buyers than ever before driving both trade and numbers. Our anniversary show and sale on the 12th March provided a tremendous show of cattle and a trade to match. With out cattle topping at £3,400 for a limousin x heifer from Messrs Watson, Cuningarth.

The "quieter" Thursday proving not to be so quiet with strong store lamb and breeding sheep sales and the opportunity to trade in calves and young stirks. This section has gone from strength to strength with demand outstripping supply and producing super returns for vendors with plenty of cattle trading £1,100 - £1,400 for young stirks with milk calves

regularly £600-£700. Such returns also allow our dairy producers the opportunity to spend this income in our dairy section which continues to attract quality dairy stock.

We offer a complete service for farm sales which can be conducted on the farm or moved to the mart premises for convenience. Sales can be arranged at short notice, and we provide a full and comprehensive service. Collective small tools, implement and machinery sales are held quarterly through the year with the next sale on the 27th June 2026 held at the auction premises.



Anniversary Show and Sale of Dairy Cattle



Anniversary Show and Sale of Store Cattle



Christmas 2025 Prime Cattle Champion and Reserve



Christmas 2025 Butchers Lambs Champion and Reserve

CONTACT



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Hopes Auction have raised an incredible amount of £9,000 for charity!

CHRISTMAS CHARITY TRACTOR RUN

In December 2025 we held our Charity Tractor Run which was well supported with both decorated tractors and spectators lining the streets from Wigton to Cockermouth.

Following a generous donation from Hopes Auction Company we are pleased to announce we have raised an amazing amount of £9,000 to be split equally between our chosen three charities:

- JIGSAW- Cumbria's Children's Hospice
- Great North Air Ambulance
- Children's Cancer North

This money will go along way for each of these charities, and they greatly appreciate our support. This event is becoming such a team effort so thank you to those who sponsor, support and help in a big or small way, it wouldn't be possible without you all. After another fantastic year and being such a big date in everyone's Christmas calendar, we look forward to seeing you all on Monday the 14th of December 2026 for another magical night.

Winner 2025 Decorated Tractor Sammy Wright pictured to the right.



MARION MUIR FAAV

I am pleased to announce that I have now gained my fellowship with the Central Associated of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV) and honoured to have been awarded with the Alistair Turnbull Award for receiving the highest mark in the Northumbria and Cumbria Branch.

The CAAV is national specialist professional body representing and briefing those acting and advising on agricultural, rural property and business matters across the whole of the UK, advising on broad variety of topics like landlord and tenant, taxation, planning, compulsory purchase and valuation to ensure a high standard in rural business.

After months of hard work and revision to prepare for an intense and challenging two-day exam last November at York

Racecourse being tested on practical, written and oral skills, I am delighted to have passed.

I have been part of the team at Hopes Auction for almost 2 years, the experience and knowledge I have gained during this time has been key to helping me with my recent success. I am now working towards sitting my exams for the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

There are many people who take time to help students like me prepare for these exams so a big thank you to all who have helped and supported. I would like to say a big thank you to everyone at Hopes Auction Company, all my family and friends who I couldn't have done this without, I greatly appreciate their guidance and support.

I look forward to using my knowledge and skills gained to continue to support farmers and the rural community in my day-to-day work.



If I can be of any assistance please don't hesitate to contact me on mmuir@hopesauction.co.uk or 016793 44901.



MANAGEMENT UPDATE

NEW MANAGING DIRECTOR APPOINTED - WILLIAM GATE



As part of the ongoing strengthening of the Hopes team, the Board of Directors have made the move to appoint a Managing Director to oversee the day to day running of the business. This role will act as conduit between the part time board and the full-time leadership team that already exists.

The role will predominantly focus on supporting the current team to continue to grow the business across its Livestock and Land agency functions whilst ensuring a forward-looking strategy is in place to provide the maximum benefits for our loyal vendor base as well as our shareholders.

William Gate will take on this new role from the 1st May 2026 on a part time basis.

William, who is currently part of the board of directors has been with the business for three years and will fulfil the new role alongside the site management team whilst also continuing the role he already fulfils for ruminant feed specialist NWF Agriculture based in Longtown and Aspatria.

William is locally born and bred, starting off life in Bothel and currently residing near Fletcherstown. His grandparents farmed in Bassenthwaite, and he has always had close links into the local agricultural world.

Career wise, he spent the first twenty-nine years at James Walker in Cockermouth where they manufacture seals and gaskets for a whole host of industries across the globe. He held senior roles in technical and quality before leading the operational side of the business. During his early years there he gained a BSc (1st class) in Polymer Sciences. During his time at James Walker, he was also the lead in setting up a new operational plant in India.

For the last eight years he has been at NWF Agriculture being the site manager at Longtown and Aspatria following the acquisition from Jim Peet. Currently those sites produce more than 150,000t of ruminant feed distributed across Northern England and Southern Scotland.

Outside of work, alongside his oldest son Matthew, he runs his smallholding consisting of 200 commercial Beltex ewes which he puts back to the Beltex tup to produce export lambs that naturally return through the Hopes prime stock ring, whilst retaining gimmers as part of a closed flock system.

As well as Matthew who is a joiner for local building firm Lattimer's, Ashely his youngest son works in the brewing industry, and Julie his partner works as production manager at James Walker.

Upon his appointment he commented:

"Having been part of the Board of directors at Hopes now for three years, when the team decided we were going to strengthen and appoint a Managing Director, I quickly realised this would be a role that would be very fulfilling and utilise my skill set built up over forty years.

Thankfully NWF were very accommodating to my request to adjust my contract to allow me to take on this new challenge.

I am adopting a very loyal and proactive team and a business that is now on a very stable footing with a fabulous client base.

I am very much looking forward to helping the business set its strategy for the coming decades.

Yes, we live in turbulent times but having the agility to react is something the farming community have done for decades and we at Hopes want to ensure we offer the right services to complement this.

I will be in the auction at least one day every week so looking forward to working with everyone under the Hopes umbrella.

Please don't hesitate to give me a shout if you have any ideas on how we can move this business forward."



GEORGE LATTIMER

We are delighted to announce the appointment of George Lattimer to the board here at Hopes, adding further experience and expertise that will help shape the future direction of the business.

George began his career as a bricklayer after studying at Carlisle College before progressing to a working site manager and now today a Director for his family company, Lattimer Homes where he has worked for over 40 years. Lattimer Homes was founded in 1970 and over the years has built a strong reputation across Cumbria.

Lattimer Homes have worked closely alongside Hopes in previous year through selling and renting of properties, developing a longstanding relationship built on professionalism and trust. Lattimer Homes also continue to work with a number of local farming families throughout Cumbria, maintaining connections that span decades.

When speaking about his new appointment George has said *"I am over the moon to join the board here at Hopes and I will do what I can to help and support when required."*

LAND AGENCY UPDATE

CAPITAL GRANT

The Capital Grants are anticipated to re-open in July 2026. These payments cover the cost of one-off investments on farms, with an increased amount of funding to £225 million to support hedgerow restoration, tree planting and improving water quality. If this is anything like last year the application window will not be open for very long so being prepared with submissions is key.

Works such as RP15- concrete yard renewal, RP28- roofing or RP4- livestock/machinery tracks require catchment sensitive farming approval before an application can be made. This approval can take time so now is a good time to start thinking ahead for future rounds.

If you are interested in applying, contact us as soon as possible for assistance and guidance.

SUSTAINABLE FARMING INCENTIVE (SFI)

It has been confirmed that the SFI will be opening on 30th June 2026. Some actions from previous rounds have been removed with a cap at £100,000 per annum per business.

In June 2026 applications will open for small farms (3-50ha) and those with no existing live Environmental Land Managements Agreements. In September 2026 a second application window for all farms will open.

COMPENSATION CLAIMS

Recently our team have been busy assisting clients who have been impacted by utility providers accessing their land, often resulting in damage or crop loss which we know is very frustrating for landowners.

We are actively involved in assessing losses and negotiating and settling compensation claims with a range of providers including Electricity North West, United Utilities, and Northern Gas Networks.

If any of the above matters are of interest we would be delighted to help, contact the Land Agency team today for further information and advice.

VALUATIONS

As RICS Registered Valuers, we offer valuations for all purposes. The team have recently been out and about providing valuations for farms, bare land, and residential properties.

The recent changes to Inheritance tax reaffirm the importance for families to have a handle on who owns what, and the value associated with these assets. Here at Hopes Auction, we have the knowledge and experience to be able to offer the complete package of asset valuation, from farm steadings and land to livestock and machinery.

MARKET APPRAISAL

Thinking of selling or letting your property this year? The Land Agency team would be delighted to help!

Did you know we offer expert advice on selling and letting both rural and residential properties across Cumbria. From character cottages and farms to family homes, we are here to help guide you every step of the way.

We have the ability to sell properties privately or via the auction route. Contact us today for a free, no-obligation valuation.

RECENT SALES HAVE BEEN MET WITH STRONG DEMAND

Alongside this, sales of Fell Rights and Marsh Stints have been met with exceptional demand.



SOLD - Land at Jenkin Cross



SOLD - Newlands Grange



SOLD - Orchard House



ADMINISTRATION/YARD OPERATIVE

We are looking for someone to complement our team here at Hope's Auction.

The role involves covering sales days and one additional day on a rota basis with another member of the team to provide maternity leave cover, with the potential to develop into a permanent position in the future. There may also be opportunities for additional hours when required.

We are seeking an organised and enthusiastic individual with strong administrative and computer skills, an excellent telephone manner, and a commitment to delivering outstanding customer service to support the smooth running of weekly livestock sales and general office operations within our auction team. The successful candidate must also be capable of performing effectively under pressure, particularly during busy sale days.

Key duties will include assisting with auction day operations, processing invoices, payments and post-sale documentation, maintaining a high level of accuracy and attention to detail, confidently using Microsoft Office applications and database systems, and updating the company website and advertising screens.

Experience within the agriculture or livestock industry would be advantageous but is not essential. Applicants must be comfortable working with sheep and cattle on sale days. The ideal candidate will possess strong communication skills and be confident interacting with farmers, buyers, and vendors. We offer a friendly and supportive working environment, with full training provided to the successful candidate, making this an excellent opportunity for someone looking to build their experience and grow within the role.

Sale Days – Tuesday and Thursday. One additional day worked on a rota basis.

Competitive Hourly Rate Dependent on Experience. To Apply please send your CV and a short cover letter to: landagent@hopesauction.co.uk or call Heather 016973 42202 for more information.

Closing Date: 30th June, 2026



STOCKSMAN
CAFE • BAR • RESTAURANT

The Stockman is open on a Tuesday and Thursday on sale days, offering snacks and hot cooked meals from 8:30am to 2:30pm

We offer a range of catering including for funerals, christenings, weddings, afternoon teas and buffets as well as supplying outside catering for any event.

We serve delicious home cooked meals with ingredients sourced from the local community of Wigton

Please contact Lisa on 01697341115 or 0739258361

DATES FOR THE DIARY

EVERY TUESDAY

Sale of Prime Sheep at 9am followed by Cull Ewes.
Ballot @ 8:30am

EVERY THURSDAY

Sale of Prime Bulls followed by Prime Cattle at 10am

ALTERNATE THURSDAYS

Sale of OTM Cattle to commence at 10:30am followed by Store Cattle
Sale of Calves & Strikes, Dairy Cattle, Breeding Cattle, Store Sheep & Breeding Sheep

JUNE 2026

- 25th Sale of Calves & Stirks, Dairy Cattle and Beef Breeding Cattle
- 27th Sale of Machinery, Small Tools and Implements

JULY 2026

- 23rd Sale of Calves & Stirks, Dairy Cattle, Beef Breeding Cattle and Opening Sale of Store Lambs

AUGUST 2026

- 1st Cockermonth Agricultural Show
- 2nd Gilsland Agricultural Show
- 6th Sale of Calves & Stirks, Dairy Cattle followed by Early Breeding Sale
- 8th Dalston Agricultural Show
- 13th Sale of OTM Cattle and Prime Cattle followed by Show & Sale of 800 Store Cattle

SEPTEMBER 2026

- 2nd Mule Ewes & Shearlings @ 11am
- 2nd NEW DATE- Lads nights out @ 6pm- Show and Sale of Tups (please note no females at this sale)
- 5th Heskett Agricultural Show
- 12th Wigton Whites- Show and Sale of Continental Shearlings and Ewe Lambs
- 16th Mule Ewe Lambs & Local Lamb Day
- 24th Sale of OTM Cattle and Prime Cattle followed by Show & Sale of Store Cattle

OCTOBER 2026

- 2nd NEW DATE- Second Sale of Breeding Tups
- 22nd Sale of OTM Cattle and Prime Cattle followed by Suckled Calves and Store Cattle

NOVEMBER 2026

- 29th Christmas Show & Sale of Prime Cattle and Butchers Lambs

DECEMBER 2026

- 14th Christmas Tractor and Tinsel Run

