

# RISING STAR

There are new career opportunities for those interested in the overlap of agriculture and environment, as *South East Farmer* discovered in conversation with one of the region's rising stars, Georgina Wallis.

## Give us a sense of what your job involves

I'm a farm and environment consultant with CLM, so at heart it's helping farmers and landowners navigate the options, especially during this time of huge change for agriculture.

It's also about ensuring farm businesses are as profitable as they can be, while taking care of the environment. This can involve everything from filling out BPS forms to working on scrub management plans for the South Downs.

## Why did you choose that career?

I grew up on our family farm in Bedfordshire. My dad has always been keen on conservation and soil health, so this has always been at the forefront of our business.

Right now, everyone's eyes are on agriculture and the opportunities it can bring to deliver environmental outcomes. Farming covers so much of the nation's land area, and the Covid-19 pandemic has focused attention on farming methods and food supplies, so it feels like a time when I can make a real difference.

## What skills do you need?

Interpersonal and communication skills are vital. I work with many different people in many different situations. It's never just a set of figures on a balance sheet; the job is always about people and, often, families. Every farm is unique, so in each instance you have to approach the situation differently. The first task is to understand the client and work out what they want to achieve. A good consultant helps clients make informed decisions and has their best interests at heart.

## Did you go to college?

I did a Foundation Degree in Agriculture at Moulton College in Northamptonshire. I actually worked as a catchment sensitive farming officer while studying, so that was a busy two years! I then topped that up with another two years of study to achieve a BSc in Land Management.

## What are the main opportunities for farmers in the South East?

This is an area where there are lots of 'protected' landscapes and, while this can bring some restrictions on what farmers can do, it can also open up some great opportunities. Local projects, such as the new Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme, provide farmers with a unique chance to build a scheme to suit them and the environment around them.

There are also great opportunities for diversification. The sheer volume of people opens doors for retail businesses, events and residential development. Agriculture and food production will rightly always remain at the heart of many businesses, though.

## What do you do when you're not working?

I love tug-of-war and recently represented England at the British and Irish Championships. I started the sport in Young Farmers and it's a great way to



> Georgina Wallis

travel the world and meet some fantastic people – and it certainly keeps you fit. I also enjoy spending time with my horse, Lady, and one of the highlights of my time in Sussex has been doing the 1066 Walk, which runs from Rye to Pevensey and goes through some lovely, varied landscapes, from rolling hills and marshes to the coast.

9

## Farming Account Handler

£DoE | Full-time | Flimwell & Tunbridge Wells Agency

For over 100 years, NFU Mutual have insured Britain's farming communities. Now, our customers come from all walks of life, but our ethos is the same – honesty, fairness and trust. We believe in taking the time to find products and services to meet our client's needs, inspiring trust and building long term relationships by exceeding expectations.

As their local agency in Flimwell & Tunbridge Wells, we have an exciting vacancy for a Farming Account Handler to join our successful and expanding business. We are looking for an enthusiastic individual who will undertake the ongoing responsibility and management of our farming customers.

### This will include:

- Servicing and renewing our existing book of farming customers
- Providing technical advice to ensure our customer's insurance needs are met
- Identifying cross selling opportunities and cover gaps
- Supporting the Agency in achieving its Financial Services target by securing referrals for the Financial Adviser
- Introduce our Health & Safety Services to new and existing clients.

### What we're looking for:

- Strong interpersonal skills, communication skills, & relationship building abilities
- A background in farming or understanding of the farming industry is desirable
- Full driving license and access to your own car.

Full training in a friendly and supportive environment will be provided as well as on-going personal development.

This role is based at our Flimwell office, 5 days a week, Monday to Friday, usual office hours of 9am-5pm and starting salary will be dependent on experience.

To apply please email your CV to [bethan\\_davies@nfumutual.co.uk](mailto:bethan_davies@nfumutual.co.uk) or call 01892 337488 for more information.



Please note you'll be employed by an Agent of NFU Mutual and not by NFU Mutual directly.