



# FarmWell

INFORMATION | SUPPORT | RESILIENCE

## Q&A WITH GUTO OWEN

Guto Owen, Farming Connect Development Officer for Conwy

### Why do you feel it is important for agricultural businesses to plan ahead?

First point is to know where you are currently, you can't plan ahead unless you know how your business is performing and what aspects need improving, focusing and changing.

Farming Connect Support

- Did you know that we have a [free business plan template](#) online?

Why not put everything on paper so you are clear on where you are and where you're going. This can be checked free with an independent business advisor through our fully funded surgeries. If this is not for you then you can get 80% funding to get an approved advisor to complete a full business plan for you with a cash flow forecast. It is always good to get an extra pair of eyes to look over things.

A clear realistic plan allows all members of the family or business to know what exactly you are aiming for. It should show the methods on how these goals can be achieved, cost implications and the time frame within which these goals need to be achieved. Keeping a plan in the back drawer is no good, it is important to check progress and if needed, be flexible and adapt to changes. Businesses outside of agriculture have monthly board meetings and weekly updates, why isn't this the case within a farming business?



Guto Owen

### What advice do you have for anyone facing unexpected change?

- Don't panic and take time to find a solution.
- Turn it into an opportunity.
- Be flexible and be ready to change. There's no easy route to reaching goals, or we would all be doing the same.
- Involve others and seek external advice and support if needs be.

### Do you think businesses who plan for the unexpected are more successful and why?

- Everyone plans ahead in some sort of way, even if it's in their head, farmer's diary, on the back of an envelope or in a business plan. Writing it down is known to get better results.
- As the famous quote says "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail".

## How can Farming Connect support businesses to plan ahead and for the unexpected?

First point is to know where you are currently, you can't plan ahead unless you know how your business is performing and what aspects need improving, focusing and changing.

### Advisory Service

Tailored Support to help you plan ahead and set goals. Advisory Service provides:

- Expert, independent, confidential and bespoke advice tailored to your business needs.
- Reduce costs by increasing efficiency across all areas of your business.
- Benchmark your performance and work towards progress and growth and identify areas for improvement and find solutions to problems.

There's up to 80% funding for 1-1 support and 100% funding for group advice.

### One to One Surgeries

Free over the phone or digitally, this one hour surgery will enable you to gain advice and guidance specific to your business in a confidential and trusted setting. Topics include Legal, Accountant, Business, Nutrition, Grass and soil management, Woodland, Marketing and diversification, Planning, Staff management, Infrastructure and Anima; Health.

### Mentoring

Eligible mentees can access 15 hours of fully funded mentoring services with their chosen farming or forestry mentor. You may communicate via face-to-face visits, telephone conversations or video calling to name just a few. Our Mentors have 'been there, done that' and can develop relationships based on mutual trust and respect. They will be able to share their knowledge, experience, and impartial views to help you identify your goals and fulfil your potential.

### Training

Our skills and training programme will help individuals acquire the key skills and competencies you need and meet personal, business and technical objectives. All training is fully funded or subsidised by up to 80%. We also have free E-learning courses available which covers a wide variety of topics which will help you develop new and existing skills, knowledge and improve working practices within your business.

### IT Support

Farming Connect provides fully funded computer training. Whatever your skill level, computer training could help you manage your business more efficiently, reduce your paperwork, save you time and money. This includes one to one sessions, group workshops or tailored support on EID Cymru, BCMS and so forth.

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