

October 2009

Dear Member,

Autumn 2009

Although we understand that many members are still busy with harvest and autumn work we are now starting to think about our training programme for the Autumn/Winter.

Autumn/Winter Programme

Please find our initial programme attached for your information. This programme will develop quite considerably over the coming weeks as members let us know what they need and as we continue to make our visits. We still have a number of instructor days booked to accommodate all needs.

Funding for Training

As many of you will be aware, the VTS funding that was available ended on 31st August 2009. There is a new fund becoming available through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) administered in the West Midlands through Lantra Sector Skills Council.

We are in the process of putting together a bid to secure some of the available funding and would welcome feedback from members on the types of training they are looking to undertake over the next year or so. To that end, whilst we are in contact with you on a day to day basis and through visits, we would welcome your thoughts at this point so that we can include them in our bid if possible. Emails and phone calls would be welcome.

We are also aware that the above funding is only available to members who live and operate within the West Midlands geographic area and that we have members in Gloucestershire and Wales. We are currently also looking at possible funding streams for these members so please let us know your needs also.

Women and Work Programme

Whilst on the subject of funding, we still have a number of places available under the Women & Work programme which provides a cash grant contribution of £450 per participant towards eligible and approved training costs that amount to at least £650 of training. To be eligible women must be working within the agricultural, fencing, game & wildlife management, land-based engineering, horticulture, landscape, trees & timber, and environmental conservation industries.

If you would like further details, please contact Tony or Chris.

Changes to First Aid Training

Following a review by the Health & Safety Executive, the arrangement for first aid training in the workplace has been revised to ensure that the training provided is proportional to the risk involved in the workplace. This has resulted in the 4 day First Aid at Work Certificate course being reduced to 3 days. The existing 1 day Appointed Persons First Aid is now to be called Emergency First Aid at Work and will essentially cover the same content as before.

These changes took effect on 1st October 2009, and the courses we are now providing will be the new programmes. Refresher training for those with existing full First Aid at Work certificates will continue to be of 2 days duration and all previous as well as future certificates will need to be renewed every 3 years.

If you have anyone needing the First Aid at Work Certificate refresher 2 day course over the coming months, could you please let us have expiry dates so that we can schedule training events.

Further information and guidance for employers, relating to how many First Aiders they may need and at what level, is available from www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid

Packing and Processing Produce discussion group

A number of members have now spoken with us about the possibility of developing and organizing an informal discussion group for those who are involved in packing and processing produce. We would like to hear from any members who may be interested in being part of such a group. Our initial thoughts are that we would try and organize events and speakers on topics that are of mutual interest and suggested by the group itself. If successful in our funding bid above, we would hope that this activity would be potentially eligible.

Member visits

As ever, we are happy to visit any member who would like us to come out and discuss how we can be of help. Please let us know if and when you would like us to visit.

And finally....

.....if you have any other training needs, requirements or enquiries, please don't hesitate to call – we look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

Tony & Chris Walmsley
on behalf of Wyvern Training Services