

# JOURNAL

Autumn 2024 | Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture



**aic**  
agricultural  
industries  
confederation  
®

**New Ministerial  
appointments at Defra**

**MP Fellowship  
Scheme launches**

**AIC Dinner &  
Conference latest**

## An update from AIC Chief Executive Robert Sheasby

Following the General Election, we have a new UK Government in Westminster and many new MPs. This is why we're asking Members to aid AIC by engaging with their MP and to host a meeting to support our work to land key lobbying messages on behalf of the agri-supply industry.

As you will read in this Journal edition, AIC has been working with Members through the summer to engage with a broad range of politicians, civil servants, and regulators through a variety of visits and meetings. Thank you to all who have supported these efforts to foster valuable relationships and build a greater understanding of our industry's role.

There is a lot of work on the desk of the new Defra Secretary Steve Reed MP and his ministerial colleagues, and there appears to be a recognition that the consequences of their decisions will be critical.

This November, the AIC Dinner & Conference will see ministers from across the UK share their views and vision for the years ahead, making it the must-attend event to get your questions answered. Coming less than a fortnight on from the Government's first budget, I'm sure there will be much to discuss.

Finally, congratulations to AIC's Hazel Doonan on her 20 years of service as Head of Crop Protection & Agronomy. Her depth of knowledge and expertise is a great asset to AIC and its Members.



Robert Sheasby,  
Chief Executive, AIC



## Defra ministerial appointments follow General Election

AIC has welcomed **Steve Reed MP** as the newly appointed **Secretary of State for the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)**.

**Daniel Zeichner MP** was appointed as a Minister of State for Defra with AIC also congratulating him on his new role.



Robert Sheasby with Daniel Zeichner MP

During the 2024 General Election, AIC's manifesto was received positively by many prospective parliamentary candidates from across the party spectrum. This has facilitated some initial contact with individual MPs, with further meetings planned for the autumn. This is especially important given the number of new MPs elected in individual constituencies, and the formation of new Select Committee members and their Chairs.

Read AIC's blog on five things that the General Election result means for UK agriculture by scanning the QR code. >>



Ed Barker,  
Head of Policy and External Affairs



## MP Fellowship Scheme to raise awareness of agri-supply industry

**With so many new MPs in Parliament, AIC is already working closely with the National Farmers Union (NFU) on the Food and Farming Fellowship Scheme.**

20 MPs elected in the recent **General Election** have joined the collaborative new industry-led scheme which champions British food and farming in their local constituencies and Westminster. The group consists of 15 Labour, 3 Liberal Democrat, and 2 Conservative MPs.

Given the significant change in the UK political landscape, it is essential that new MPs appreciate the valuable role of the agri-supply industry in supporting productive, sustainable agriculture.

The year-long project will tell the story of the wider UK food and farming sector and build a deeper understanding of the entire food supply chain.

The Scheme is a partnership between AIC, the NFU, and other sponsoring organisations, **ABP UK**, **Arla Foods**, **Barfoots**, **British Egg Industry Council (BEIC)**, and the food waste charity **Fareshare**.

It is set to showcase the entire industry, from pre-farm suppliers such as animal feed manufacturers, agronomy groups, and seed breeders, through to producers and processors.

A series of business visits over the coming 12 months will allow the participating MPs to see first-hand how the UK supply chain works to produce food sustainably and understand why these businesses are essential to our national food security.

**Ed Barker,**  
Head of Policy and External Affairs



## Defra teams learn of agri-supply investment on feed mill and port tour



Recently, a large group of Defra officials joined AIC on a two-day tour of several Member businesses to enhance understanding within government around the investments being made in UK food, feed, and fuel supply chains.



Vicky Robinson,  
Head of Sustainability

Civil servants toured the l'Anson Bros Ltd feed mill near Thirsk, which is the newest and most cutting-edge facility of its kind in Europe. They learned how feed materials are used to produce animal feed, and asked questions about the major investments being made by the family-run business.

The group also visited Teesport - the UK's fifth-largest port and one of the deepest cargo quays - which handles a variety of dry bulk shipments, including agricultural commodities such as grain and fertiliser.

The Defra team heard how the port has undergone a multi-million-pound refurbishment of its former steel export terminal, allowing it to now handle bulk products. The visit, which was coordinated by AIC Member Viterra and hosted by PD Ports, provided useful context to help inform the work of Defra officials on trade and sustainability.

In addition, AIC Member Ensus provided an insightful tour of its bioethanol refinery, aiding the group's understanding of this market and how crop materials - including grains and maize - are used for biofuel production.



## Sustainable Farming Incentive 2024 details published

Updated Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) 2024 scheme information and guidance for England was published in early August, with some key changes to note.

It comes after the new Defra Minister Daniel Zeichner MP reiterated the Labour Government's full commitment to the environmental land management schemes.

The expanded SFI offer initially comprises 102 actions with payments now available for precision farming, no-till practices, agroforestry, a new and expanded offer for upland farmers, and more actions for tenants on short-term contracts.

Scan the QR code to read more. >>



Vicky Robinson,  
Head of Sustainability



Andrew Pearson,  
Policy Manager

## Launching at this year's AIC Conference in November

Following significant research and consultation with Members and stakeholders, AIC's new report "Agri-supply: An action plan for sustainable efficiency" will provide insight and actions to support a resilient UK agriculture and food system.





**aic** 2024  
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12 - 13 NOVEMBER



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"added value" within  
the agri-food supply chain**

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## Case made to AHDB on levy collection rebate rate revision

**Over the past 18 months, AIC has been working on Members' behalf to strongly represent their views to the Government and the AHDB in consultations on changes to the levy collection rebate rate.**

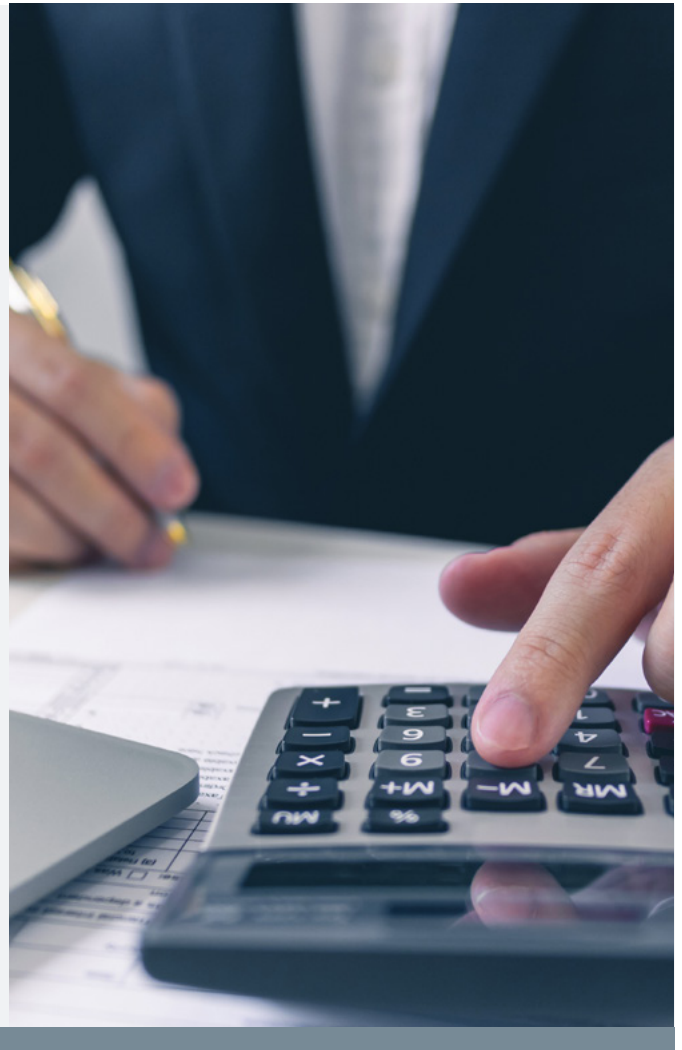
It was the AHDB's intention to implement the levy administration change as of October 2024. AIC has maintained that 12 months' notice should be given to levy-collecting businesses, and the change is now expected to be implemented in April 2025.

Relevant Members are being contacted by the AHDB to invite them to a meeting to discuss the cost and risk associated with collecting the levy.

AIC has successfully made the case that levy collectors' voices must be heard on how any "recovered" rebate money to AHDB is spent by the levy board in future.

In addition, AIC has made it clear that any "recovered" funds should be used by AHDB to support the work of market access, among other interests.

AIC has also successfully argued that Members should not be required to share customer data with AHDB.

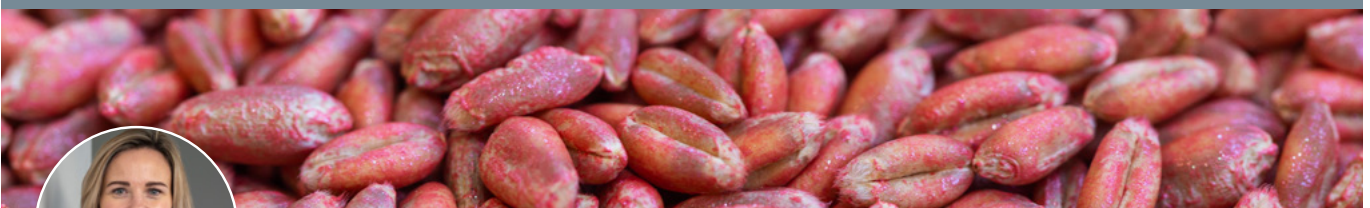


## Working towards long-term solution for treated seed imports

**AIC is working with Defra to assist in developing an understanding of the potential impacts from the loss of access to seed treatments in 2027, as well as offering insight into the views of Members in relation to this policy area, as Defra further scope and develop future options.**

AIC is providing Defra with information on which crops and products, in addition to maize, are likely to be most affected by the absence of treated seed imports from the EU in 2027 when a UK Government statutory instrument put in place late last year expires.

This legislation was passed at the end of 2023 and meant that farmers and growers in Great Britain can continue using seeds treated with PPPs authorised for use in the EU up to 1 July 2027, as long as the PPPs are authorised in at least one EU or EEA Member State.



**Rose Riby,**  
Head of Combinable Crops and Seed

## Summer of showcase visits to AIC Member businesses

AIC has facilitated a series of informative visits with government officials to Member businesses in recent months. These were the latest in a series of days showcasing the research and development investment in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) being made by AIC Crop Protection & Agronomy Members.

August saw a group from the Chemicals Regulation Division (CRD) visit Fargro's plant protection store in West Sussex to learn about biological-based crop production methods. The trip showcased sustainable methods used by UK fruit growers and agronomists to meet market demands while controlling weeds, pests, and diseases.



**Fargro CRD**  
visit August 2024

In July, CRD staff visited Agrii's Technology Centres at Stow Longa, Cambridgeshire and Bishop Burton, Lincolnshire to view cultivation and herbicide trials covering sustainable ways to control herbicide resistant blackgrass, spray application technology, and how Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) options fit into farming systems.



**Agrii Stow Longa**  
visit July 2024

Later that month, a group of Defra civil servants joined AIC on a visit kindly hosted by Agrovista at its Lamport AgX trial site in Northamptonshire. They heard about how resistant blackgrass can be controlled using cover crops and spring-sown crops, as well as SFI options.



**Agrovista Lamport AgX**  
visit July 2024

CRD staff also attended one of three events hosted at Frontier's trial site near Driffield in June to see variety and crop nutrition trials as well as performance of environmental plant species. All of this work underpins the value of agronomic advice delivered by AIC Member agronomists, helping farmers and growers produce profitable and sustainable crops.



**Frontier Driffield**  
visit June 2024



**Hazel Doonan,**  
Head of Crop Protection & Agronomy

## Hazel Doonan marks 20 years as Head of Crop Protection and Agronomy

Hazel Doonan, AIC's Head of Crop Protection and Agronomy, celebrated 20 years of working at the agri-supply trade association in July.

For two decades, Hazel has led AIC's policy work on behalf of Member businesses in the UK distributor agronomy sector.

In 2004, she joined AIC and brought strong expertise and experience in crop protection and agronomy having previously worked for 18 years as a **BASIS-qualified agronomist**.

To read Hazel's reflections on her AIC career so far, scan the QR code.



## Careers booklet promotes animal feed sector opportunities

**A careers booklet aimed at attracting new entrants into the animal feed supply chain has been published by AIC.**

The booklet - "**Careers in the Animal Feed Supply Chain**" - was created by AIC's Feed Future Forum, a group of younger Members of the agri-supply trade, to equip the next generation with the knowledge and better understanding of what a career in the UK's livestock feed industry looks like and why it's so rewarding.

Available as a hard copy and as a digital download, the booklet offers information on a wide range of roles within the animal feed supply chain, including technical, procurement, sustainability, logistics, IT, and engineering.

AIC's Feed Future Forum will promote the booklet at shows and careers events in the coming months. Scan the QR code to find out more and download the booklet. >>



**James McCulloch,**  
Head of Animal Feed

## Response to Government consultation on proposed UK REACH changes

**AIC has responded to the Government's consultation on UK REACH, which sets out proposed changes to the regulation of chemical substances in Great Britain.**

The response highlights the need for practical guidance, proportionate regulations, and consideration of the potential impacts on industry competitiveness and regulatory burden.

While AIC broadly supports the approach set out in the consultation, it has reiterated that there remains a duplication of an existing regulatory system - **EU REACH**.

A more optimal solution for Member businesses would be full access and mutual recognition of the EU scheme.

Given that the legislation and the **UK IUCLID templates** used to submit information to the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** may not be adopted until well into 2025 at the earliest, there is a genuine concern that meeting the first registration deadline of 27 October 2026 will be unachievable.

AIC therefore advocates an extension of time limits for compliance.



**Jo Gilbertson,**  
Head of Fertiliser



# Helping shape the future of Scottish agricultural support

**The Agriculture & Rural Communities (Scotland) Act was passed into law in July.**

This provides a framework for secondary legislation which will define the detail of support mechanisms and payment rates for Scottish farms.

AIC Scotland and industry stakeholders have been working closely with Scottish Government officials on the co-design of key aspects of the future support framework to ensure Members interests are protected.

This has included calling for government recognition of Feed Adviser Register (FAR), FACTS, and BASIS qualified advisers within the requirements of the whole farm plan.

Work continues on other aspects of the framework including the code of practice for sustainable and regenerative agriculture, where AIC is collaborating with stakeholders to ensure that this recognises the wide range of farming practices which contribute to regenerative agriculture.



**Ian Muirhead,**  
AIC Scotland Policy Manager



# Show reception brings industry and Welsh Government together

**Members, policymakers, and industry stakeholders joined an AIC Cymru reception at the Royal Welsh Show on 22 July.**

The well-attended event brought the wider food and farming sector together with Welsh Government for productive conversations which support agriculture and food production in Wales and throughout the UK.



The gathering provided a valuable opportunity to share AIC's priorities on food security and land use, trade, and sustainability data.

Ahead of the reception, AIC also held constructive talks on areas of common interest with farming unions including NFU Cymru.



**Michael Muncey,**  
AIC Cymru Policy Manager

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**DINNER & CONFERENCE**  
 12 - 13 NOVEMBER



## Capturing “added value” within the agri-food supply chain

### More AIC Conference speakers confirmed for 2024

More **AIC Conference** speakers have been announced for 2024, including the Scottish Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity Jim Fairlie MSP, Minister for Food Security and Rural Affairs Daniel Zeichner MP, UK Agri-Tech Centre’s Phil Bicknell, and Groundswell co-founder Paul Cherry.

The **AIC Dinner & Conference** will return on 12-13 November 2024 in Peterborough, with an unmissable line-up of thought leaders from the worlds of politics, business, academia, and trade considering this year’s Conference theme, ‘Capturing “added value” within the agri-food supply chain’.

The latest speakers to be revealed will join the author and businessman Henry Dimbleby MBE, National Farmers Union (NFU) President Tom Bradshaw, and Will Jennings, General Manager at Rabobank. The Conference chair is experienced broadcaster and journalist Tom Heap.

For more details and to book early bird tickets with a saving of more than 10%, go to [www.aiconference.org.uk](http://www.aiconference.org.uk).



**John Kelley,**  
 Chief Operating Officer



[aiconference.org.uk](http://aiconference.org.uk)



### New FAR Game Feed training course launched



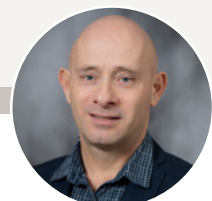
SCAN ME

**AIC has launched a valuable new training course designed to enhance the understanding of feed advisers, gamekeepers, and landowners on critical antimicrobial resistance and biosecurity issues.**

The **Feed Adviser Register (FAR)** released its latest **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)** module on 4 July 2024.

The “Managing Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and Biosecurity in the Gamebird Sector” online course builds on the AMR and biosecurity knowledge covered in the FAR’s popular Game Feed Module 1 training, launched in 2022.

Participants will need to have completed the Game Feed Module 1 before they can progress to the latest training. Scan the QR code to find out more.



**David Moss,**  
 Technical Manager

## Update on Red Tractor Entry Level Feed Enterprise

Over the past year, AIC has worked with Red Tractor on the development of its Entry Level Feed Enterprise (ELFE), providing constructive feedback on proposals with the support of the **Universal Feed Assurance Scheme (UFAS) Working Group**.

This move has been driven by the desire of some Red Tractor members for a simplified alternative to the scheme's existing Combinable Crops Standards, assuring crops for animal feed only.

Working with its Members and scheme Participants, AIC's priority is to ensure that the ELFE does not compromise essential food and feed safety requirements, thereby providing the supply chain with confidence in the proposed new scheme.



Gill Barrow,  
Technical Manager



Simon Williams,  
Technical Manager

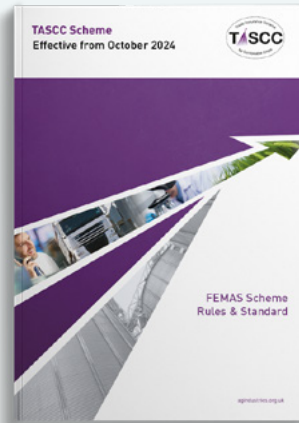
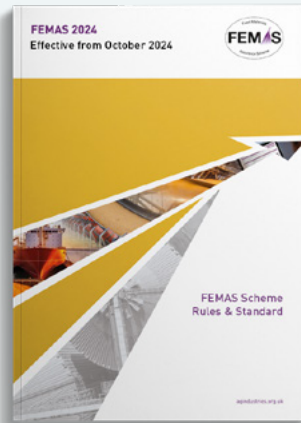
## Final 2024 FEMAS, TASCSC and UFAS Standards published



Final versions of the 2024 **FEMAS**, **TASCSC**, and **UFAS** Standards are now published on the AIC website, along with their corresponding "key changes" documents.

The "key changes" documents are designed to support Participants as they prepare for their audits to these new Standards, which are effective from 1 October 2024.

The documents can be downloaded by clicking the links above, or by visiting the [AIC website](https://www.agindustries.org.uk).



Sarah-Jane Godfrey,  
Technical Manager

# AIC Member survey 2024 invite

Members have been invited to participate in the 2024 AIC Membership Survey.

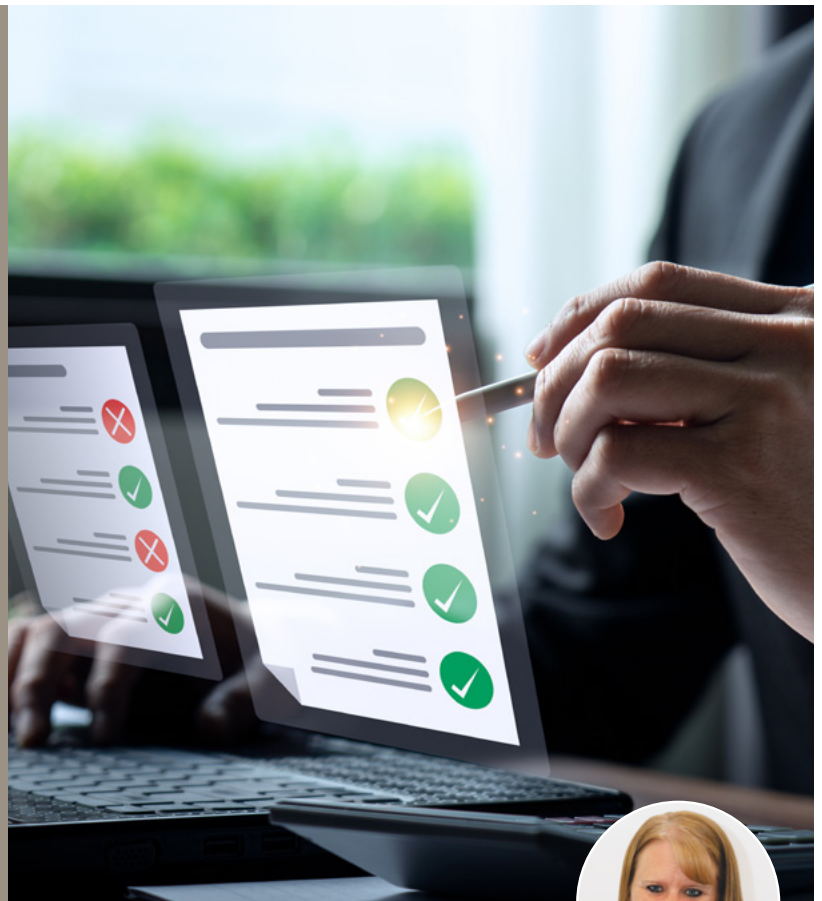
A full survey of Members was last undertaken in 2020, and your insights are crucial to enhancing the work of AIC as your representative trade association.

AIC has commissioned the independent supply chain research agency Grounded Research to conduct the survey and collect the information.

Primary contacts at Member businesses will have received an email from Grounded Research inviting them to complete a brief online survey to collect quantitative information, as well as a second survey to collect qualitative information which can be done online or over the phone.

If you have any queries or concerns, please call AIC on 01733 385230 or email [enquiries@agindustries.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@agindustries.org.uk).

Thank you for your ongoing support.



**Tracy Smith,**  
Membership Manager

## Dates for the diary

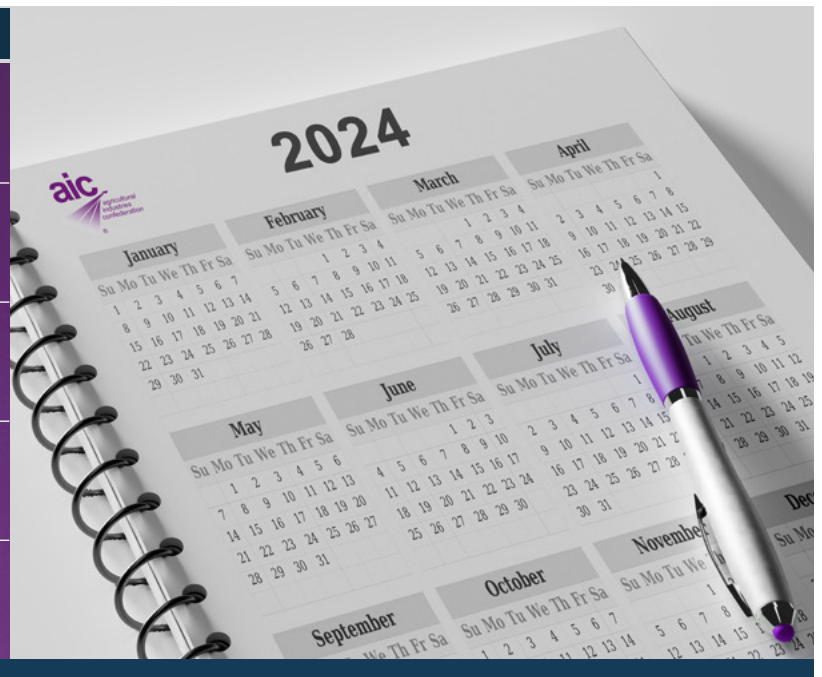
**AGM**  
9 October

**AIC Fertiliser Dinner**  
York – 7 November

**AIC Dinner & Conference 2024**  
Peterborough – 12-13 November

**AIC Scotland Meetings & Dinner**  
Cumbernauld – 28 November

**AIC Seed Trade Dinner**  
Cambridge – 5 December



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