



Society NEWS



News and information for members of the **East of England Agricultural Society**



Helping you make
the most of seasonal
British produce

For the love of the land

Brilliant new cookbook from
the wife of one of our Society
members

Market town focus

Learn more about the Oundle
Wharf area from the founder
of Nene Valley Brewery

Beds YFC

Youthful resilience from
the next generation

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Welcome to the spring/summer 2021 edition of the Society News

As I write these notes of welcome to our Spring Newsletter, some 12 months into the pandemic and third national lockdown; it's perhaps appropriate to pause and reflect on the past year; as we move forward with the sale and development of the showground and our positive plans for the future of the Society.

Quite apart from the physical costs, our thoughts are with those Society members, families, friends and staff who have been touched by the virus and the many challenges we have all had to face during the last year. Who would have thought, 12 months ago, that our elderly would be virtual prisoners in their care homes, denied family visits or that face masks would become a part of everyday life.

It's certainly been a difficult period for the events and leisure industry, one of our principal sources of income; with a very reduced programme of events possible through 2020 and significant restrictions still in place until at least midsummer 2021. There is now light at the end of the tunnel with the incredible success of the vaccine rollout; we can all be justly proud of the part that the Society, our security, SGS (our commercial arm) and the showground, are playing in delivering a successful NHS testing and vaccination centre.

The Trustees have been courageous in supporting the business through these extremely difficult times and it's a tribute to the loyalty, resilience and adaptability of our staff that has allowed us to carry on with our charitable works and achieve an outturn for 2020 well above that forecasted in the early days of the pandemic.

We are on the cusp of finally announcing at the Society Council meeting on 15th April, more detail on the exciting and

positive news, concerning the sale and development of the showground and future direction of the Society. I'm sorry we haven't been able to share this sooner but until recently the Trustees and senior management team have been restrained by commercial confidentiality. I'm very pleased to confirm that terms have now been agreed and completion is anticipated between writing this and Society News landing on your doormat. We will advise members of further details as soon as possible.

There will be a transition period for the Society of 2 to 3 years until the first receipts from the residential development are received, which gives time for the energies of the Trustees and management team to be fully focused on re-directing the work of the Society away from an event-based business towards our core charitable objectives, to become the leading agricultural society in the UK recognised as an influencer and facilitator right across the food and farming industry.

A significant start has already been made to build on the success of Kids Country, Marshal Papworth and our other charitable events, by developing joint venture and partnering arrangements across the region to raise the profile and improve the reputation influence and reach of the Society. The focus now is to concentrate on promoting our core values of agriculture, education and rural life. We already are in discussions over course content with the new University of Peterborough and are pursuing several food and farming initiatives across the region. Where appropriate we will be seeking opportunities to obtain sponsorship, grants and match-funding. Our advantage is that we have a proud heritage with very strong rural links and a membership base that we can build off to help farmers and



growers better understand and adapt to the profound changes that will revolutionise agriculture and the rural economy over the next few years. The last year has also demonstrated to us the benefit of being able to embrace technology and that continuing to fully adopt the digital environment can only help strengthen our other methods of knowledge exchange output.

With Brexit 'done', a strengthening light at the end of the Covid tunnel, a pathway beginning to emerge over the role out of ELM's, and clearer messaging over climate change, carbon footprint and sustainability, there is no doubt that agriculture needs to adapt and innovate to survive. As a forward-looking agricultural society and charity, we are uniquely placed to be that influencer and facilitator to lead the industry to an exciting and sustainable future.

Richard Bramley
Chairman,
East of England Agricultural Society

Big Skies. Big Thinking.



Recognised experts for agriculture

We're always on hand to advise farm businesses and their owners on agriculture, land sales, tax, wealth management and succession.

Tier 1 in the Legal 500 for agriculture and estates year after year

"A partnership with mud on its boots"
The Times best law firms

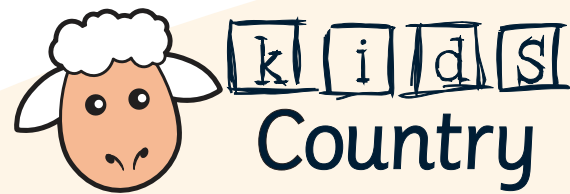
STOP PRESS: We are pleased to announce the Dog Show, Festival of Hunting and Equifest are being planned to go ahead subject to the continued progression of the Government roadmap out of lockdown. Be sure to keep checking our website and social media channels for the very latest news on these events.

You can also keep up to date by signing up for our monthly e-newsletters. We do not share your data with external third parties and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Sign up online at www.eastofengland.org.uk/members/
or email us at membership@eastofengland.org.uk

Contact us today: 01775 842500

Peterborough, Alconbury, Spalding
Nottingham and Birmingham



At Kids Country, the pandemic has certainly challenged us to think of innovative and creative ways to continue to deliver a programme of educational events to Key Stage 1 and 2 children locally and across the East of England.

Winter Warmer Soup Challenge

In December, after reviewing the many entries for our Winter Warmer Soup Challenge, head judge and MasterChef finalist Simon Spooner chose Heltwate School, Peterborough as the winners in the special educational needs school category, whilst Booth Wood Primary School, Loughborough, secured the mainstream school category top spot.

Both schools were awarded a Winter Warmer Soup Challenge trophy and a prize of £200 for their school, supported by sponsors Central England Co-operative.

After cooking up the finalist recipes with his own children over a weekend, Simon said: "Thank you to all the schools involved for these amazing recipes and putting in all the effort. The winning soups were very modern and with great textures. You guys were brilliant and could all give me a run for your money!"

He continued: "I loved being a part of the Kids Country Winter Warmer Soup Challenge this year. It was fantastic to see so many brilliant and tasty entries, that so many children and their

schools are engaging with where their food comes from and the skills necessary to cook meals from scratch."

The winning entry from Heltwate School, based at St Georges Primary in Peterborough, was headed up by team leader Davina and teacher Michelle Bull, who said: "The soup competition has been a great experience from start to finish - the students have thoroughly enjoyed it, as did the staff."

"We decided to enter the competition as it fitted in with our Topic and Home Management lessons, where our topic this term was Road Trip USA, hence where the Taco theme came from. We saw some excellent teamwork from all groups, and we will be keeping an eye out for any future competitions!"

Member and Community Relations Officer for competition sponsors Central England Co-operative, Kym Cooper, said: "We are delighted to once again be supporting Kids Country following our successful partnership in previous years. The



Children at Booth Wood Primary School celebrate their win

Winter Warmer Soup Challenge fits in perfectly with our long tradition of giving back to the community. We welcome the opportunity to make a real difference to the lives and education of local children and want to say a big well done to all the children who took part in this great challenge."



Kids Country education manager Sandra Lauridsen presents children at Heltwate School with their prize



The Kids Country team, head judge Simon Spooner, and children from Booth Wood Primary School find out the results!

Grow Your Own Potatoes



During March and April just over 600 children from seven schools signed up for our Grow Your Own Potatoes event. The format for this sell-out event usually welcomes children to the East of England Showground to take part in the planting event with help from the experts at Albert Bartlett and Produce World. Despite children only having just returned to school from #lockdownlearning at home, teachers and schools were understandably not ready for off site school trips. Though Kids Country still ensured participating schools received all the assets they needed to grow potatoes, including curriculum-focused learning resources delivered directly into the classroom in specially created KC learning boxes - we wanted children not to miss out of knowing and learning the importance of homegrown produce!

As children returned to school, classes across the area virtually welcomed the same familiar faces being streamed on screen into the classroom, along with Albert Bartlett sponsoring the 'Alexandra' chitted salad potatoes, Evergreen Garden Care providing the compost, and Westland Horticulture sponsoring all of the pots that children will grow their potatoes in. Our potato experts recorded specially commissioned videos as if they were stood in front of the children, covering everything from the machinery used to plant potatoes in UK farms to all about the potato plant, and from the importance of soil, worms and weather for a good crop to live Q & A sessions with each school.

Virtual Lambing Sunday

The barn doors were virtually thrown open for one day on Sunday 14 March, where children could learn all about sheep and lambing. Kids Country digitally located themselves at Shuttleworth College, in Bedfordshire with lecturer Anne-Marie Hamilton along with the help of local farmer Michael Gent at Oundle Lodge Farm to produce a range of fantastic content that can still be found on our website.

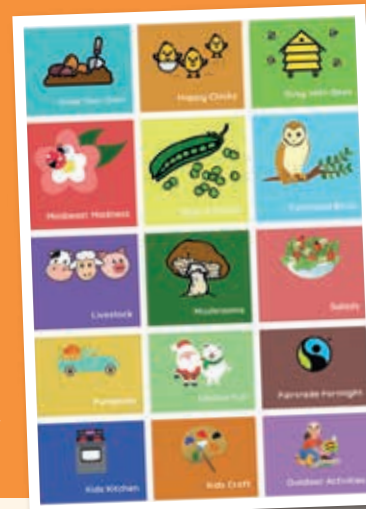


Free online activities & resources



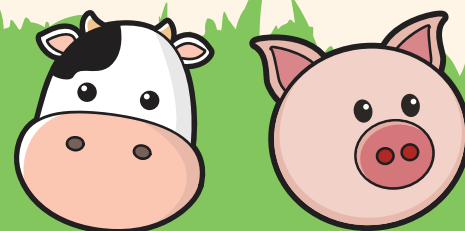
We have continued to promote our range of free online activities and resources across our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts, and they still prove popular with parents, carers and teachers. You can access all our free ideas online - they're great for teaching the National Curriculum in different ways, as well as getting children away from screens.

www.kids-country.co.uk/home-activities-resources/



Looking ahead

We continue to work hard to deliver our planned programme of events in whatever format required and following all of the latest Covid-19 guidelines. The best place to keep up to date is via our Facebook page here: www.facebook.com/KidsCountryUK, Twitter @KidsCountryUK, or Instagram @kidscountryuk





For the first time in nearly 20 years, the global pandemic has sadly paused welcoming any new students to the UK. Currently we have no students studying on a Marshal Papworth scholarship and with no clear prospect of a return to "normal" before the second half of the year, the Marshal Papworth committee recently took the difficult decision to cancel the 2021 Short Course, which would usually be hosted in the spring and early summer. We remain hopeful to welcome some MSc students in the autumn, but there is still some way to go.

Meantime, we are working on some exciting plans with Harper Adams to provide some new initial on-line training to those that had been due to come on the Short Course this year and last, so that they can hit the ground running when we can welcome them to the UK in 2022.

Despite the pandemic challenges in their own countries, it has also been a great pleasure to read updates from our inspiring Marshal Papworth alumni.

Marshal Papworth scholarship recipient leads charge against devastating maize pest in Zambia

As Zambia's agricultural sector continues to be faced with the challenges of climate variability and fall armyworm pest invasion in the main crop maize, our Harper Adams University graduate Sheila is making considerable headway in tackling this pest through integrated control measures.

Sheila, who studied for an MSc in Agricultural Sciences and Production Systems in 2018-19, says: "It is critical to ensure that farmers understand the local resources at their disposal and obtain knowledge of what works best at minimal cost rather than continually depending on chemical interventions." Sheila has used a combination of plant-based products that destroy the pest larvae and pheromone traps to trap the adult moths and minimise mating.



Sheila shows the damage that fall armyworm pest causes to maize plants



Sheila holding buckets used for trapping fall armyworm adult moths at the AGCO Future Farm in Zambia

Sheila highlights the scale of the problem in Zambia: "Since fall armyworms (FAW) were noted during the 2016/17 farming season, the devastating effect continues to hinder maize production, with crop damage across the country now over 300,000 hectares and yield loss of over 30% on this staple food. The pest has since continued to evolve and spread across the African continent."

Tom Arthey, chairman of the Marshal Papworth Fund, said: "Sheila fully immersed herself in the Marshal Papworth Fund scholarship experience, combining her studies at Harper Adams University with learning everything she could from farm visits arranged by both the university and the Fund, as well as her time at the AHDB conference, to find a sustainable solution to such a devastating pest in Zambia."

Practical sustainable farming skills put to good use in Kenya

Meanwhile, Marshal Papworth 10-week sustainable agriculture short course 2019 graduate, Florence Achieng Agunda, has been putting the skills that she acquired into practice in Kenya.

"My training at Harper Adams has been invaluable over the last year, enabling me to apply minimum tillage practices and develop good manure compost on my farm, as well as intercropping cassava crops with beans to improve nitrogen levels in the soil at training farms that I lead with Self Help Africa." Florence has to-date trained 89 women and 43 men in seven cassava training groups and has been able to demonstrate simple soil testing methods.

A key part of the Short Course is supplementary farm visits, which Florence has been able to simulate in Kenya to complement training by organising field days and exchange visits with other farmers to see new technology and practices. Florence says: "In the UK I learned so much about farming from visiting other farms and speaking to farmers, and I'm pleased to encourage this with my training groups. I have also benefitted from my fellow Marshal Papworth alumni; we constantly exchange ideas and the performance of different practices, which means I can make sure I am passing on the very best to my training groups."

Don't forget, help is always available

For many people, the last 12 months has been full of ups and downs as we come to terms with the global pandemic and sadly losing friends and family. It is more important than ever to speak about how we are feeling, whether it is a partner, friend or contacting a helpline. The East of England Agricultural Society is proud

to support the work of a number of great agriculture and mental health charities that work across the UK. These charities are helping to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health and offer support to anyone that needs it. We have compiled a list of some of these charities below should you or someone close may find useful.



Website: www.fcn.org.uk

Telephone: 03000 111 999

Email: help@fcn.org.uk

The Farming Community Network (FCN) is a voluntary organisation and charity that supports farmers and families within the farming community through difficult times. FCN exists to support all those in need in the farming community, with a particular focus on farmers and farming families.



Website: www.forageaid.org.uk/

Telephone: 07967 219991

Email: info@forageaid.org.uk

Forage Aid coordinate the goodwill of the agricultural community to help UK farms hit by extreme weather events or Acts of God. This help is often in the form of emergency forage and/or bedding donated by fellow farmers from across the UK.



Website: www.yanahelp.org/

Telephone: 0300 323 0400

Email: helpline@yanahelp.org

YANA offers specific help for those involved with farming or other rural businesses in Norfolk, Suffolk and Worcestershire through our work. Providing confidential support & counselling, building an understanding of mental health, investing in mental health first aid training & suicide prevention.



Website: www.mind.org.uk/

Telephone: 0300 123 3393

Mind provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.



Website: www.addingtonfund.org.uk

Telephone: 01926 620135

Email: enquiries@addingtonfund.org.uk

Addington Fund was set up in 2001 as the Churches' response to Foot and Mouth Disease when it distributed grants totalling £10.3 million to over 22,000 applicants. With their focus now on rural housing, they provide homes for families needing to leave or retire from the agricultural industry.



Website: www.rabi.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 281 9490

Email: info@rabi.org.uk

RABI is farming's oldest and largest charity, offering financial support, practical care and guidance to farming people of all ages, including farmers, farmworkers and dependants.

For the Love of the Land

A cookbook to celebrate British farmers and their food. Forty fantastic farmers have contributed their favourite recipes and stories about what British farming means to them including a foreward by Minette Batters, The President of The National Farmers' Union.

For many families, working the land and raising livestock is a true labour of love, and what they produce is the backbone of the country's food and drink. The recipes shared here make the most of local and seasonal ingredients, creating delicious meals, puddings and bakes that anyone can cook up at home.

This book was inspired by author Jenny Jefferies, witnessing her first ever harvest by her arable farming husband, John, a life member of the East of England Agricultural Society, from Little Gransden. Amazed at the hard work that goes into producing a bowl of cereal and a loaf of bread for her kitchen table, and having been brought up in a town; Jenny felt

so ashamed at her ignorance. She discovered a thirst to share her story and help give a voice to farmers who produce our fabulous array of British produce.

The idea of a cookbook came from weaning their eldest daughter, now 5, and with a revolving kitchen door; feeding John who was going up and down the fields on a tractor, and wondering what on earth to feed a new family, For The Love Of The Land was born.

The book intends to bridge the gap between producer and consumer, city and country, food and technology, and to educate and inform in an entertaining and accessible way, whilst flying the flag for sustainability and British agriculture.

A celebration of British farming, some of the royalties from the book sales will be donated to The National Literacy Trust. Jenny fundamentally believes where there's an opportunity to earn there's an opportunity to give. Reading



is a skill for life, and is why she wants her book to help support such a great cause.

For The Love Of The Land is published by Meze Publishing and is £22. It is available to buy directly from Jenny, see her website details below and is also available from Meze, Waterstones and Amazon. Opposite is a sample recipe from the book – enjoy.

Not content with just celebrating the land, Jenny has another cookbook about to launch this spring. For The Love Of The Sea, which celebrates British fish and seafood, with a foreward by Marcus Coleman, the Chief Executive of Seafish.org. This time prominent people from within the British fish and seafood industry contribute both a recipe and a story about what the sea and British fish and seafood mean to them.

Jenny Jefferies
www.jennyjefferies.co.uk



Pea and Mint Croquettes with a Beetroot Yoghurt Dip



"This recipe reflects the seasonal produce from Beeswax Dyson Farming. The classic and familiar potato croquette has been given a modern edge with flavours of pea and fresh mint. This dish can either be served as a starter or alongside roast lamb." – **Laura Smithson**

For the croquettes:

400g floury potatoes
(such as King Edwards or Mozart)
150g peas
1 tsp butter
40g Gruyère cheese, grated
1 medium egg yolk
Small bunch of mint,
finely chopped 30g plain flour
2 medium eggs, beaten
60g panko breadcrumbs

For the dip:

4 medium beetroots Rapeseed oil
1 lemon, zested and juiced Small bunch
of mint, chopped 6 tbsp plain yoghurt

For the croquettes:

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Peel and chop the potatoes, place them in a pan of lightly salted boiling water and cook for 15 minutes, or until tender. Meanwhile, cook the peas for 5 minutes in a pan of lightly salted boiling water then drain.

Drain the potatoes and put them back into the pan over low heat to steam off any excess water for 1 minute. Mash the potatoes with the butter then beat in the cheese and egg yolk until fully combined. Lightly crush the peas and stir these into the potatoes along with the chopped mint.

Leave the mixture to cool until it's the right temperature to handle. Divide into 12 balls. Put the flour, eggs and panko breadcrumbs into three separate bowls. Dip each croquette into the flour, knocking off any excess, then into the egg mix and finally into the panko breadcrumbs, covering each ball well. Drizzle with rapeseed oil and bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes or until golden.

For the dip:

This can be made ahead and kept in the fridge. Wash and trim the beets, leaving the skin and roots on. Lightly oil and place them in an ovenproof dish then cover with tin foil and place in the preheated oven for 1 hour 30 minutes or until tender and easily pierced with a knife.

Once cooked, peel off and discard the skins, roughly chop the beets and place in a blender. Season with salt and pepper, add a plug of rapeseed oil, the lemon zest, half the lemon juice and all the chopped mint. Blitz until smooth. Stir in the yoghurt and check the seasoning, adding more lemon juice, salt and pepper if required. Serve the dip with the warm croquettes.

**PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES | COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES
SERVES: 12**

Market Town Focus – Oundle Wharf



We caught up with Dick Simpson, founder of the Nene Valley Brewery and co-owner of the Tap & Kitchen to explore the development of the Oundle Wharf area and how they pride themselves on supporting local producers.

Background

The Brewery was a pilot plant first set up in an outbuilding at home in July 2011. We had been approached to buy the Oundle Wharf site earlier that year, though as it was in a fairly run-down state we were unsure of what we would do with the entire site. Feeling optimistic that we would gain traction with the brewery, we completed the transaction that December. Back then, as brewing was a massively oversupplied industry, and is still the case, we intended to diversify into a multi-use site with tenants whose businesses complemented each other to bring value to the whole wharf.

Early in 2014, we decided to gut the two wharfside buildings and refit them as a restaurant and bar. Mindful of the poor success rate of restaurant start ups, we promised ourselves not to not fall into that trap but rent the unit out to a successful operator. However, after a few prospective tenants we decided it would only be possible to achieve our vision was to run the restaurant ourselves. Appointing an experienced General Manager and an accomplished designer we

transformed the 'sheds' into the Tap and Kitchen in seven weeks; opening at the end of November 2014. We made a point of taking as much advice and direction as possible in the early days, and as our experience has grown it has become a great success in which we and our team take great pride.

In 2016 a large extension was added to the original building designed to provide shop units on the ground floor and offices upstairs. We continued to be selective in the businesses we admitted and ended up with the multi-award-winning Hambleton Bakery, AGA, and Amps Fine Wines as well as a very considerable and classy extension to the original Gorilla Firm shop who by now specialised in high-end custom road bicycles. Upstairs we have subdivided space into small office units which have been let to start ups and people escaping from working from home.

Present day, the outdoor shop is replaced with a yoga studio and reduced waste refill business, the AGA shop is the second busiest shop in the group in the UK, Hambletons

and Amps trade strongly and Gorilla's customers fly in by helicopter to buy bicycles that cost £20,000. Covid has been a challenge for everybody at the Wharf, but we are all confident that we will return to full activity as soon as restrictions are relaxed.

Locality of Ingredients

Almost without exception, food in the Tap and Kitchen is prepared from scratch on-site. We make our ice cream, cure our meats, triple-cook our chips from bags of spuds and take daily deliveries of fresh veg. Our meat comes from a local butcher, sourced mostly from local suppliers. When offered, we will buy in whole goats, lambs, pigs, venison and produce dishes through the week that use every part. Our menu is written each day to take account of what is available and new dishes that we want to try. The emphasis on ingredients is always on quality. Sometimes locality has to take second place, but we are very keen to maintain a low mileage on what comes in through the kitchen door. We operate a very successful swaps scheme: locals are encouraged to bring in surplus items they may have in their veg patches or allotments and we will buy them in against credit over the bar. We get some great quality game in as swaps. Some of our most supportive customers are local farmers whose produce ends up on our plates.

As a small restaurant, the only chance a small brewery has of distinguishing itself from the big boys is to focus on factors that favour small batch production. The quality of ingredients is again vital. We source the best-tasting and best-performing malts that we can find for each brew. Whereas a national brewer has the edge on scalability and cost reduction, a key

part of our production schedule is series of interesting, one-off beers that allows us to hone our skills as brewers and keep our customers engaged. A lot of these recipes become popular and come to form part of our core range, and these core beers are under continual development; not to reduce the cost per litre, but to push each one as near as possible to its original olfactory goal. Most of the malted grains are produced from East Anglian producers, but because we don't rely on the more traditional British beer styles some of our beers demand specialised malts which we source from the continent. Our Egyptian Cream milk stout, although having a core of Maris Otter pale malt, has a grain bill that includes seven other different specialised malts and grains. The goal is here as with all the beers is to achieve a wide yet balanced flavour profile that develops with each mouthful. Our hop choice leans heavily on varieties that are not grown in the UK, and with more hop-forward styles being so popular, the extra cost of making this choice is a very significant part of the overall ingredient expenditure.

Adapting in 2020

The last year has been tough and would have been tougher without the financial support that we have had from the government. It is a concern that we will have to pay for this in the future as a company or as individuals but for the moment we concentrate on adapting what we are doing to make the best of this difficult period.

The restaurant has been a fairly black and white experience. When we have been allowed to be open we thrived and took the opportunity to flex our business model to adapt to the new circumstances. We didn't feel that home delivery was a viable option out here in the sticks and our initial effort at takeaway just couldn't produce enough turnover to sustain a setup based on quite big numbers.

The knock-on effect of the restrictions on drinking made the demand for beer from the brewery drop off to fairly abysmal levels. During the first lockdown, we operated a mail-order and home delivery service as well as keeping our brewery shop going as usual. This was pretty popular and produced a useful income while most staff were furloughed. The second



lockdown has been much quieter, with people much more prepared to venture further and visit larger supermarkets to stock up with packaged beer. All of our wedding, party and barbecue off sales were hit by the social distancing measures. We look forward to getting out and delivering beer again as measures ease in the coming months.

For our tenants, we felt that we had to cut or forgive rents for those whose business was disrupted or curtailed by Covid. The combined effect of all of the above has meant a year of reduced income for myself and David who co-own the enterprise. We are both pleased that we have been able to support the staff while there has been so much uncertainty.

The Future

Ongoing we look forward to welcoming more customers back to the restaurant and using some of the lessons learned to improve the Tap and Kitchen experience. We saw a massive increase in new regulars over last summer and we take heart that they will be back again. We are looking at opportunities to perhaps open another venue fairly nearby ready for when Covid recedes.

When the brewery re-opened last summer we were getting great feedback from customers and the end consumers, so look forward to getting out amongst them again. We have some great beers that we are eager to brew again and move on toward brewing at our capacity. For the site as a whole, we are looking forward to it coming into full use as the restrictions are removed. The yoga studio never had a chance to get properly going before distancing rules closed them down. We have now both a fishmonger and a dairy van that visit us each week who are drawing queues of customers. Our private field here will be used for an outside concert in the middle of

July that we hope will start to bring Oundle back together again, hopefully in the sunshine of a long hot summer.

In addition to the Wharf the existing centre of Oundle offers a further excellent range of shops and local businesses supplying the area including the fantastic family-run, Seven Wells Family Butchers. There is also a weekly general market every Thursday and a Farmers Market on the second Saturday of each month offering a range of exciting local produce from local fishmongers, butchers and much more. www.oundle.info/

Oundle Wharf

There are several other businesses located at the Wharf that are known throughout the surrounding area including:

AMPS WINE MERCHANTS

Amps Fine Wines is a 4th generation independent wine merchant based in Oundle. They opened their second Oundle shop at The Wharf with their other shop located in the Market Place.

AGA OUNDLE

AGA is known for its iconic stoves and at their Oundle branch, you can find everything to help you create the perfect AGA kitchen.

HAMBLETON BAKERY

Hambleton Bakery is an award-winning regional bakery specialising in artisan bread and pastries with many of its suppliers located in the East Midlands. The bakery was established in 2008 and has shops located in Oundle, Oakham, Market Harborough, West Bridgford and Stamford.

GORILLA FIRM CYCLING

An independent bike shop based at The Wharf stock that specialises in bespoke builds and stocks the most desirable products and brands that cycling has to offer.

NENE EXTREME

At our location by the beautiful River Nene at Oundle Wharf, we have canoes, kayaks and inflatables available for hire to suit different ages and levels of ability.

REFILL REVOLUTION

Refill Revolution is a reduced waste shop in Market Harborough, Oundle & Stamford offering plastic-free alternatives, household liquid refills and dry foods available to buy by weight. All our products are packaging-free, so don't forget your containers!





Easy ways to #BackBritishFarming

The East of England Agricultural Society's core aim is to promote agriculture and rural life. Across these pages, we want to show you some brilliant ways for you to discover fantastic local farming and food businesses and educational resources to help you better understand how to back British farming.

NFU Online



No article about helping you back British farming would be complete without mentioning the thorough and interesting resources that belong to NFU Countryside Online. The National Farmers Union has been proudly supporting and lobbying on the behalf of UK agriculture for decades.

Their website has insightful and transparent information on how you can support British farming. We love the interactive seasonal guide to British fruit and vegetables that allows you to find out when different British grown produce can be found in our supermarkets.

Another resource we think you should know about is their handy supermarket guides. The NFU has looked through all of the main supermarkets to find where they source their products from, with

guides for beef & lamb, pork, eggs & poultry, dairy, fruit & veg and baking ingredients.

Did you know that all of Aldi's beef and lamb is sourced from the UK and 64% of Tesco's pork is sourced from the UK (Accurate as of July 2020).

Buying British food is one of the easiest ways to show your support for farmers in the UK. If you wanted to have a look through some of these resources by the NFU then visit the following website www.countrysideonline.co.uk/back-british-farming/

or scan the
QR code



Do you Eat Wild?

For many people in rural communities, wild game meat such as pheasant, partridge, venison, pigeon and rabbit are often found in freezers and fridges from the previous shooting season. Game is one of the most sustainable, environmentally friendly and versatile meats and why the Society supports the brilliant Eat Wild campaign.

Eat Wild is a recent campaign set up by the British Game Alliance (BGA) in late 2018. The campaign is targeted at the consumer, emphasising the benefits of game meat in a way that you likely have not seen before.

Their key aims are to celebrate the versatility of the different meats through different recipes to appeal to a wider audience. The website features recipes such as Fire Pit Pheasant Meatballs, Miso Pheasant Skewers, Venison Tagliatelle and Keepers Pie.

Their website also aims to educate the consumer of the nutritional values of game and the sustainability benefits (as wild game has a lower carbon footprint than most mass-produced meats). Did you know that compared to chicken, wild game is far higher in protein and selenium and lower in cholesterol?

If you wanted to learn more about wild game meat, BGA certified stockists near you and find out how to cook some of these delicious-sounding recipes listed above, check out their website by searching for www.eatwild.co

or scan the
QR code



Big Barn – Your one-stop shop for finding local producers

Over the last year, it has been so great to see so many people distancing themselves from the supermarkets and turning their focus to supporting great local businesses. In our last edition of the Society News, we spoke to Society member, Andrew Davies, about how he adapted Woburn Country Foods to survive Covid-19 which he saw online orders soar from eight a week to 80 a day!

If you haven't heard of BigBarn or visited their website then we thoroughly recommend you do so. BigBarn is the UK's number one local food website aiming to promote local food producers and independent retailers. Their mission is to reverse the anti-social trend of mass production food by reconnecting consumers with their local producers, direct, or through local retailers, and encourage local trade.

To achieve this, they have created a map of over 8,800 outlets that sell the freshest, locally produced food and drink in your area. As a consumer, you can browse the constantly updating map to find producers near you and also sign up to receive a postcode specific email from your local BigBarn outlets.

If you are a producer or independent retailer and want to feature on their extensive local food directory then visit their website to learn how you can get involved and increase your chance of being discovered.

Visit the big barn website by searching for www.bigbarn.co.uk/ or scanning the QR code and discover the very best local producers on your doorstep.



Love British food

Love British Food are a small, independently funded organisation with a passion for encouraging people and spreading the awareness of food that is produced in Great Britain.

The focal point of their activities is British Food Fortnight, the national celebration of our food that takes place every at the same time as the Harvest Festival, the traditional time for celebrating our food. The Fortnight is now established annually as the biggest national celebration of British food. Hundreds of activities and food promotions take place during it every year. In 2015, the city of Peterborough won their community competition with a series of events including an open-air British food lunch in the Cathedral square attended by hundreds of people. Most notably, Peterborough's city centre food and craft market was reinstated after 50 years providing a wonderful legacy from the competition.



This year the British Food Fortnight takes places from the 18th September to the 3rd October so let's get behind the campaign and make it the biggest one to date!

Their website has some fantastic advice on producing, buying and eating British. It includes features such

as a Local Business Directory of British producers, a range of recipes using British produce and reasons to back all areas of British agriculture and the food it produces.

Visit their website by searching for www.lovebritishfood.co.uk/





Queen Mothers Hand Writing awards

The ever-popular Queen Mother's Handwriting Awards have been running since 1977. Even in the technological age we now live in, handwriting is still an important skill. The awards are incredibly popular amongst primary and secondary schools across the six counties eligible to take part. This year's awards close

on Monday 19th April and judging will take place on Thursday 22nd April. The awards are sponsored once again by A.T Cross Company and we thank them for their continued support by providing our winners with an engraved Cross pen. Winners will be published in the next issue of *Society News* and on our website.

Society evening talks resumed in March

After the success of our evening talks throughout the second half of 2020, we were happy to relaunch our webinar series in early March. Hosted by our Cultiv8 Chairman Rob Wilkinson, we were joined by Heather Wildman of Saviour Associates and Joe Spencer of MHA MacIntyre Hudson. The talk covered how you can plan for the future when operating in a volatile market place covering aspects of diversification routes, succession and more.



We have several interesting evening talks in the pipeline to fill the upcoming months until we will hopefully be reunited in person with both Society and Cultiv8 events. If you have missed any of our evening

talks on cover crops, climate-friendly farming, diversification and more, you can find them all on our website by putting the following link in your search engine www.eastofengland.org.uk/all-events/our-evening-zoom-talks/

CULTIV ready to resume later in the year

Cultiv8, our group for young agri-professionals working in the rural sector, has run a series of talks on topics ranging from marketing to beef sustainability for McDonald's as well as visits to the likes of gin distilleries and local butchers. We are hoping to resume physical meetings later in the year and we will, of course, be following all Covid-19 guidelines.

If you know anyone who would be interested in attending one of our events (they don't initially need to be a Society member to see what the group is about), please encourage them to join in or get in touch with James at jburton@eastofengland.org.uk

Robert Dalglish retiring from Milton

Society Chairman, Richard Bramley, recently met with Robert Dalglish, Chief Agent at Milton Estate and their newly appointed Chief Executive, James Behrens. It was an opportunity to welcome James to the area and an introduction to the Society's historical links with the Fitzwilliam family. The chairman was also able to express our sincere appreciation and thanks to Robert for the many years of unstinting support of the Society as he reaches retirement from his role at Milton after 24 years. We wish Robert and his family all the very best.



Mr Robert Dalglish (pictured left) and Mr James Behrens from Milton Estate visiting the showground.

Call for long service award nominees

We are optimistic if the pathway out of lockdown continues to reach the various stages we will host the Peterborough Dinner, so please do not overlook any nominations to celebrate our Long Service Award.

Eligible for anyone that has been working for a Society Member for 25+ years or has been working on the same holding with different employers (current employer to be a member of the Society).

There are varying awards for 25, 40, 50, 60, 70 years' service so if you have an employee that you think deserves a level of recognition, please request an application form or further information by emailing membership@eastofengland.org.uk

Online Business Directory is live!

At the start of the year, we launched a new free online business directory on our website. It is aimed at promoting key local and national businesses in the agri and allied sector.

The Society's objective is centred around supporting and promoting agriculture and rural life in our region. One way that we wanted to fulfil this objective was to start a database of organisations and charities that offer products and services that we feel could be relevant to our members and the wider public. We aim to update and expand on this throughout the year.

We have near 100 businesses featured farm shops to mental health charities, national consultancy firms and agri-tech companies. The page includes a short bio, contact details and social media handles to stay up to date with their activities. This area

of website expansion replaces the existing 'Members Marketplace' to include businesses outside of just our core membership that we believe are doing fantastic work and deserve to be highlighted on our website.

If you were wondering how you could feature your businesses on our website email us at info@eastofengland.org.uk. We must emphasise there is no cost to feature on our website, where your business aligns with our core objective. You can view our directory by visiting www.eastofengland.org.uk/online-business-directory/

or scan the QR code



Anglia Ruskin University Peterborough

ARU Peterborough has been progressing their development of the new university curriculum with extensive input from businesses including the Society and those in the Agri sector. The university's objective is to become a major player in skills-led recovery in a post covid world. With an aim to attract businesses to the area, create the talent educationally, retain this

within the region and to increase the higher skilled population locally. ARU Peterborough is due to open its doors to the first student intake in September 2022.

The pandemic has created opportunities in some sectors, due to previously being difficult to recruit to locally. This is particularly true for

the Agri-tech sector, those who have been displaced from working in one sector, could now be attracted to work in this sector, and with the help of ARU Peterborough to upskill them. For individuals impacted by pandemic related unemployment this will generate career changes for people in the East of England. Many of the courses being developed are new to ARU, for example Agri-tech doesn't feature in other ARU campuses. Understanding what the demand for skills in the area has been a key approach to the curriculum development and Sector Interest Groups have been hosted for the last couple of months to assist the university. They are still keen to engage further with the agricultural sector.



If you want to be part of the discussion and help shape, to #BeTheFirst get in touch Fiona McGonigle; fiona.mcgonigle@aru.ac.uk

Farmers Weekly Agri-Careers fair coming to the showground

The FW Ag & Food Skills Show supported by the Society is coming to the Peterborough Showground on Nov 4th 2021. A new event to inspire you about the opportunities in agriculture and food. From how to get into the industry, to career and development advice, seminars from top speakers, skills required to progress and more. Keep an eye on our website and social media for more information

Continuing success for Beds YFC

We caught up with Bedfordshire Young Farmers to hear how they have adapted and grown in the last 12 months.

This past year has seen many aspects of normal life come to a standstill, however despite this, Bedfordshire Young Farmers clubs have had many success stories as they moved their weekly meetings, social events and charity fundraisers to the world of Zoom and social media.

The County's electronic calendar started back in April where the first event which had to move online was a virtual dog fest on Facebook, held by Silsoe YFC. Competitors entered their pooches by posting pictures on the page in a variety of different categories. The club wanted to ensure that despite changes to circumstances that they could still raise money for Diabetes UK and the Wood Green Animal Charity. With over 160 entries, a total of £638 was raised.

Bedford YFC was also able to keep up the charitable spirit of Young Farmers through hosting a Virtual Cheese and Wine Quiz evening in February 2021, raising £749 for the Macmillan Primrose Unit.

The County as a whole also supported the Bedford Blues Food Bank at Christmas with each club donating to the cause.



Along with these Charitable ventures, the County has also been getting involved in sharing videos to the public including their take on the loo roll video of 2020 (visit their Facebook page to check it out!). One club used this opportunity to produce a 'wash your hands' video in the spirit of Covid and exchanged the loo roll for a bottle of soap.

All clubs have been putting on a weekly meeting and it has been great to see clubs working together to provide members with a wide variety of different meetings. In 2021 alone we have had a reptile show, Lambing Live, a Butchery Demo by Franklins of Thorncliffe, talks from Tom Harwood at the Bedford Blues Foundation and the RSPB and we are only just into March. Over the past few months, clubs have also been actively involved in the competitions that have been hosted by County on Zoom, these include the Member of the Year competition, Situations Vacant and Public Speaking.

As I am writing this, we have just held a virtual wine tasting evening with over 70 participants. This event was a fantastic opportunity for ex and current members to socialise whilst learning a thing or two about wine.



Going forward, we are continuing to embrace Zoom and the virtual world by hoping to ignite some of the competitive nature of Young Farmers through our Covid Cup competition. This will be a range of competitions including handicraft, skills and also an online stock judging competition too. This is due to take place in May, with the idea that at the end of the month we will have a virtual celebration.

Whilst we all hope that some normality of face-to-face meetings can resume shortly it is clear to see that no matter what circumstances are thrown at members of Bedfordshire Young Farmers, we remain strong and active.

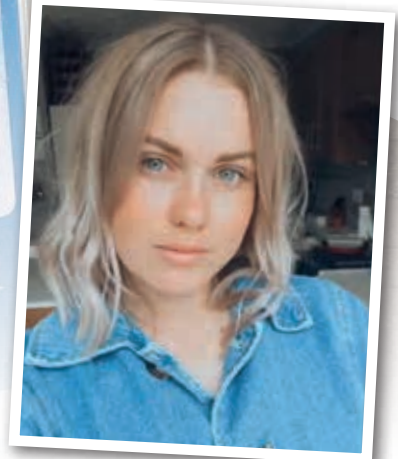
Contact Bedfordshire Young Farmers
Email: bedsyoungfarmers@aol.com
County Chairman: Tim Atkins
County Organiser: Jean Brodie
Facebook: @bedsyfc

If your YFC group is in the East of England area and you would like it to be featured in the Society News please get in touch with us.



Meet the team

Since March last year, the majority of the East of England Arena and Events Centre staff were placed on the Government's furlough scheme with events being restricted due to the ongoing pandemic. For some though this time has still been effectively used giving back to the local community, including Nicole Hankins, whose furlough journey you can find out about below...



As a more recent addition to the team, I joined as an Account Manager at East of England Arena & Events Centre in October 2019 after leaving Sheffield Hallam University with a first-class honours degree in International Events Management, there was no question a career within the events industry was a passion I've always wanted to pursue. Of course, for many people when the pandemic hit, it impacted upon work and especially in the events industry. However, one thing I did know was how much I like variety and productivity within my life and furlough was not going to completely hinder this.

Over the last year of furlough, I've tried to fill my time in many different ways in order to keep some normality. Being active for me not only kept my mind focused, it achieved other welcome health benefits and in the process raised money for charity. Further into lockdown I started volunteering at Bretton Food Bank, this gave me the opportunity to help the community and be of support for other people. Due to Covid-19, certain

communicational services had to be postponed, however, offering further support continues through leaflets and charity referrals. For me, volunteering has really felt like a beneficial way to spend my time and it's been great even at distance to talk to new people and listen to their stories.

Other furlough projects for me has included working at a Covid-19 testing centre, it's great to look into the future and see that the vaccination has not only been rolled out but we have a

new road map on what the next few months look like for our country. Which in turn equates to having a future back in the event industry. I have certainly missed all the team at the showground, our clients, suppliers and contractors, everyone central to events and being part of the industry that is my chosen career. Therefore I look forward as events start to re-commence and being back with such a fantastic team and company.



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Now, for tomorrow



Robin Hayden MBE, JP

It was with great sadness that we heard of the passing of Robin. Robin married later in life to Gill with whom he shared his many interests and they loved to take time off to go to their home on the coast for the weekend.

Robin was active in many ways in the village of Great Gidding where he was born and lived all his life. He was born during the war (1943) to Chick and Silvia Hayden. After graduating from school he was employed by the MOD and went on to serve as Air Traffic Control and Airfield Manager at USAF Alconbury. In this capacity, he was awarded an MBE for his contribution to air traffic control on the Ascension Isles during the Falklands conflict. He remembered going to the Palace to receive his award and walking down a corridor and turning to enter a door only for a suit of armour to say 'wrong door sir, the next one.'

The East of England Agricultural Society formed a long association with Robin, starting over 50 years ago as a Young Farmers representative on the Council, followed by being invited to become a full member of Council. During which he also served on the Audit Committee. He was a Showground Steward for many years until the final Show and was a Chief Steward, a job he relished, and during this time he oversaw the drainage project and the construction of the new toilet facilities, for which he was appreciated by all who came into contact with him. He was a great all-round supporter of the Society and

Show and as all of us was greatly disappointed when the annual Show ceased.

Robin was also very attached and involved with the Peterborough Royal Foxhound Society on behalf of the EEAS.

Having lived in Gidding all his life he was heavily involved in village life. He served on the Parish Council for many years as a member and Chairman, being involved in various projects over the years and making good friends with his fellow Giddonians.

Farming was a love of Robin's which he inherited from his father, Chick, who had a lifetime connection with livestock. Robin had a good eye for cattle and knew a 'goodun' when he saw one. Another of his great loves was field sports hunting and shooting and enjoying the company of like-minded people.

Running alongside these commitments Robin also served for many years as Justice of the Peace on the Huntingdon Bench becoming a Bench Chair, a role he greatly enjoyed and missed when retiring at 70 years as statue required. He will be missed by his fellow Magistrates and friends in the Judiciary. He had devoted many hours and thought to ensure his understanding of the requirements of his role were fulfilled to the highest standard.

Robin had lived a full and fulfilled life with the greatest commitment to all he undertook and in this, he was supported by his wife Gill.

Richard Parrish

We also received the sad news of the passing of Mr Richard Parrish. Richard was one of the founding members of the Council when the Bedfordshire Agricultural Society merged with the East of England. He was a member of the Light Horse committee and was Chief Steward of the Grand Parade for many years. He remained actively involved in Bedfordshire on the demonstration committee and the Parrish family generously hosted the cultivation days a number of times. He also played a major part in establishing the Bedfordshire Dinner which is still one of the events of the year.



The Society would also like to also extend condolences to the families of those who have passed away that we have not been aware of.

CEO'S UPDATE



The content of the Agri-food production will be built around five key themes:

- Agricultural production
- Environment
- Management
- Sustainability
- Technology and data science

With a focus on the resilience of food production, environmental responsibility, habitat evaluation and remote data sensing.

ARU are identifying potential collaborations with local landowners and farmers with the aims of delivering online farm projects, plus working with other stakeholders.

Other topics include novel farming techniques such as vertical farming and insect and algae farming and artificial environments.

Other means of accessing the course via further education are under consideration and foundation and apprentice-based degrees may drive a requirement to enhance literacy and numeracy skills for students who are not entering via traditional higher education access routes of A level qualifications.

The ARU team are keen to understand the need of local food producers and farming businesses so that they can address the demand for skills.

Alistair Beattie
Interim CEO

It is always a challenge to write a section at the end of Society News, when all of the interesting details have been revealed in previous articles throughout the publication. In this footnote, I shall therefore concentrate on adding some flesh to the bones of several key items that readers are now aware of.

The change of direction on the future of the showground is not a sudden development but has been under intense negotiation for more than eighteen months. It became apparent during late 2019 that the City Council were unlikely to accept a planning application that included the demolition of the Arena building and the loss of this important amenity to the city.

Subsequently, the Society was approached by the partners of a consortium who recognised an opportunity to continue and develop the events and leisure activities on the showground site, whilst also delivering much-needed residential development to create new homes for a rapidly growing city. After exploring various options for the deal, an agreement was finally reached and a huge body of due diligence work has been carried out to ensure that the agreed terms are captured in contracts that protect the interests of the Society, create future employment opportunities for the showground services staff and comply with Peterborough City Council's planning strategy for the site.

By working collaboratively, we have agreed terms with the consortium that mean a programme of events can operate on the site for the next few years until the planning application for residential development is approved and building work starts on those areas of the site earmarked for housing. This means that

the Dog Show, Equifest, Festival of Hunting, Kids Country and other Society events will continue. Additionally, the consortium has agreed to select Kids Country and the Marshal Papworth Fund as their preferred charities.

Over time, the focus of activity on the showground will inevitably eventually switch towards "multi-generational family-based" leisure activities which will see the creation of more than 400 new jobs.

The East of England Agricultural Society's heritage will be recognised and catering on-site will focus on healthy eating, farm to fork and local produce.

Moving on to other exciting topics; you will have read elsewhere the reference to the development of the University at Peterborough. The selected academic partner in the university is the Anglia Ruskin University which has campuses in London, Cambridge, Chelmsford and now Peterborough. The first BSc courses at Peterborough will be offered from September 2022 and will include Agri-food technology, Environmental management, Manufacturing and Mechatronics.

Over the last few months, I have been representing the Society by attending a series of zoom meetings aimed at developing the course content of the agriculture-related degree courses with the specific aim of making sure that the students graduating will be able to make an immediate contribution to the agriculture, horticulture and food production industries.

Promoting agriculture & rural life in the East of England

Be sure to follow our different social media channels to stay up to date with the latest news from in and around the Society, Kids Country and the Marshal Papworth Fund. By giving us a follow, liking our posts and sharing our content, it can assist us greatly in engaging with a wider audience and raising the profile of the Society. Our members are the key to our success!



FACEBOOK

See what we have been up to and what we have got coming up on Facebook

@eoeagriculturalsociety
@KidsCountryUK
@marshalpapworth



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Get in touch with Emily Pumfrey, our Head of Agriculture & Rural Business. Call 01733 887644 or email: erpumfrey@greenwoodsgm.co.uk

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