



Society NEWS



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



GAME ON!

**AGRICULTURAL
COLLEGE MILESTONE**
Moulton College celebrates
100th anniversary

AGROFORESTRY
Stephen and Lynn Briggs
diversification journey

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE
At the East of England Farming
Conference

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What's Inside

4 Chairmans Welcome

Education

6 Kids Country

8 Marshal Papworth

Agriculture

9 East of England Farming Conference
Peterborough Dinner

10 Moulton College Centenary Event

12 Member Focus – Stephen & Lynn Briggs

14 Summer reflections on Society Events

15 An update from Cambridgeshire YFC
16 News from in and around
the Society

18 Obituaries

The Society

19 CEO Update



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Now, for tomorrow

Welcome to the Autumn/Winter 2021 edition of the Society News

A very warm welcome to all our Members to the Autumn/Winter edition of the Society newsletter. The last 18 months have been particularly challenging for the Society and our staff, as we move forward with maximising the potential for the development of the Showground and finalising arrangements with a new partner.

I was delighted to be able to announce, in early September, that the Society has completed a Land Promotion Agreement with the Asset Earning Power Group Ltd (AEPG). I would just like to put on record my admiration and a very grateful thanks to the Society 'deal team' – Alistair Beattie, Julian Turner and John Hawksfield, who together with our professional advisors have secured a very positive result for the Society and a viable future for our commercial subsidiary, Showground Services.

AEPG Ltd, led by Ashley Butterfield, have an extensive background in land and residential development, health, leisure and hospitality. They have assembled a formidable team of professionals and advisors who are already well advanced with a "Masterplan" for the whole site and an initial, local plan compliant, first planning application. Both Ashley

and ourselves see the deal very much as a collaboration; we both want the same thing. A first-class residential development that we can be proud of, with a vibrant community-based leisure element to maximize returns from the comprehensive development of the site.

As part of the arrangement the East of England Showground Services business has been sold to AEPG, and the staff transferred across; with the team busier than ever as the gradual easing of covid restrictions has allowed the Showground to re-open for larger events. Many of which have been rescheduled from earlier in the year.

I would like to emphasise the importance of this moment in the history of the Society and in particular, to highlight the opportunity it gives us to make a fresh start and move forward with our charitable objectives. That is to support agriculture, education and rural communities in the most effective way possible when the agriculture and horticultural industries are entering a period of profound change. With a significant shift in agricultural policies, a raft of new legislation (including a new agricultural support system), COP26 and climate change, carbon



offsetting, biodiversity, soil science, energy efficiency, a greater awareness of food miles and the supply chain, animal welfare and sustainable farming; it's a "perfect storm" for farmers and growers who will need assistance to navigate a positive route through these challenges. I firmly believe the Society can assist as a facilitator, to link the science, politics and innovations to our members, farmers and the wider agricultural industry.



Ashley Butterfield chief executive of Asset Earning Power Group (AEPG)



STOP PRESS: There is still time to get your tickets for the East of England Farming Conference on the 18th of November. Visit our website for more information and don't forget, Society Members receive a 20% discount on the ticket price.



Our new 'home' for the next few years

I can also confirm that the senior management team and Society administration will, in the next few weeks, be moving to the old AIC building near the entrance to the Showground. This is a temporary measure, but available for several years, to give us time to finalise our business plan, completing the review of our governance, firm up future site requirements, and acquire and develop a new long term home. We have also negotiated the ability to continue to hold Society internal events on the Showground at least for the short to medium term.

Whilst activities on the Showground have been restricted by the pandemic, a huge credit to Alison our COO (Chief Operating Officer), our staff and volunteers who have managed to put on very successful, covid compliant summer events including the EoE Championship Dog Show, Equifest and the Festival of Hunting, with reduced staff and a very short lead-in time. Looking forward, all Society event committee's need to embrace positive change, understand the essential

requirement of prudent financial management and review the charitable benefits of their event to the Society.

Our Kid's Country educational team have successfully tailored their output to the revised requirements of primary schools, by taking their message directly into schools with their Happy Chicks, Lambing Sunday, Grow Your Own Potatoes and Winter Warmer Soup Challenge events. They have also created a range of online activities linked to the National Curriculum across a range of IT platforms and social media. The Marshal Papworth committee is working closely with Harper Adams University to develop an online short course induction for this autumn and hope to revert to in-person courses for 2022.

Alongside preparations to move to Confederation House, we are also planning an auction sale on the 19th of November to dispose of much of the plant, machinery and equipment now surplus to requirements. We are also looking to reinvigorate Cultiv8 who are currently planning their 2022 programme so stay tuned for information about

their upcoming meetings. Plans for the Farming Conference on the 18th of November are well advanced, with an excellent panel of thought-provoking speakers, to be followed on the same evening by the Peterborough Dinner; you will need to book your places soon, as I gather that availability at both events is selling fast.

The Trustees are very aware of the need to recruit new members to the Trustee Board and a number of the Society committees. Having carried out a skills audit earlier in the year, we have identified several areas where we require additional support, particularly around education, encouraging young entrants into the industry, the digital environment, innovation and diversity. We are setting up an Appointments and Nominations Committee to actively search for suitable candidates to refresh our structures with innovative ideas and a fresh perspective. If any members would like to be involved with this initiative or have names to put forward, please contact Alistair Beattie our interim CEO: Alistair@eastofengland.org.uk

Yes, it's been a challenging year, but we have made progress, the future of the Showground site is secured, with a clear route to significant funds for the Society, we can look forward to concentrating on our charitable objectives and leading the industry to a sustainable and exciting future.

Richard Bramley
Chairman,
East of England Agricultural Society

Keeping the farm in the family

Our Agricultural team provides advice to farming businesses and families on the wide range of commercial, property and private matters affecting those who own agricultural land or businesses.

What sets us apart from other agri legal teams is that team members have personal experience of working on a farm and within the agricultural sector. We fully understand what matters to you and how your business operates.

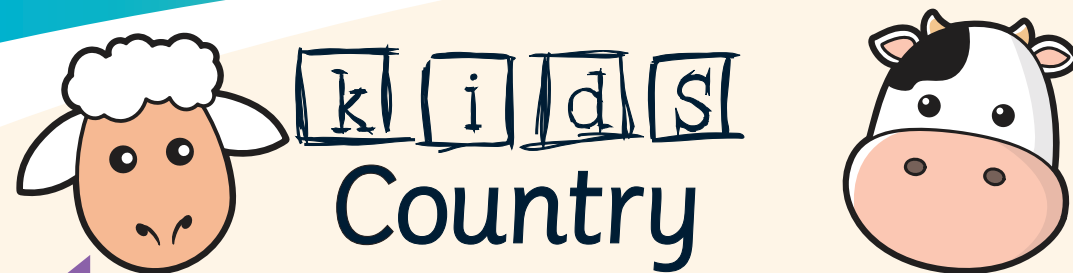


Get in touch with Stephanie Wilcox or Alastair Gunn on 01733 887700 to talk through issues you are currently facing.

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At Kids Country, we are thrilled that despite the challenge of pandemic restrictions, we have been able to get back to some face-to-face educational events for Key Stage 1 and 2 children locally and across the East of England. Our new 'event in a box' format devised for delivering our Grow Your Own Potatoes (planting), Happy Chicks and Inside the Hive events also allowed us to provide schools with all the information and raw materials they needed to run these activities themselves when pandemic restrictions were tighter – we even delivered a bespoke 'Soil to Sandwich' event in a box to Broadwater Primary School in Tooting, London following their direct approach asking for our help.

Virtual Food and Farming Day and free online activities and resources

Whilst we wished it were otherwise, the Virtual Food and Farming Day returned to schools via our website and social platforms on Friday 2nd July, taking the place of our annual showcase event that usually takes place at the East of England Showground. We are already making plans for the 2022 Food and Farming Day, which will take place on Friday 1st July 2022.

In the meantime, a range of online resources remains available for teachers, teaching assistants and home educators to access via our



website – check the 'Virtual Food and Farming Day 2021' tab, or 'Activities and Resources' tab. They're great for teaching elements of the National Curriculum in more creative and hands-on ways!

Soil to Sandwich Journey Event-in-a-box for Tooting school

March brought a new challenge for Kids Country, delivering our first event to a London primary school! With the help of Cambridgeshire farmers, Luke Abblitt and James Burgess, we supported Broadwater Primary School's (Tooting, London) spring term topic of 'Fabulous Food' with our 'Soil to Sandwich' event-in-a-box, including a virtual lesson with Farmer Luke.

Miss Norma Nelson, teacher at Broadwater Water Primary Schools, said: "It has been such a delight seeing

this through from our first telephone call with Sandra, the resources provided were very impressive and the whole process of planning this with Kids Country was very swift and well organised.

"On the day it was great for Farmer Luke to be able to reinforce the farm to fork message and how important it is to shop for locally grown produce wherever possible, as well as growing things at home. Once again, thank you for enabling the children to have experienced such an amazing event!"

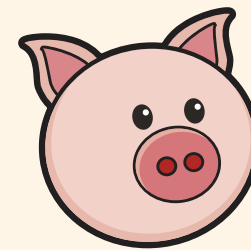


Children from years four and five at Broadwater Primary School, Tooting, learn about the soil to sandwich journey of wheat

Looking ahead foodie fun for schools!

We continue to work hard to deliver our planned programme of events as we think about the autumn/winter term and into 2022. Coming up we have:

- Breakfast Week
November 2021 and January 2022
SOLD OUT
- Grow Your Own Produce (planting)
2nd March 2022
SPACES AVAILABLE
- Happy Chicks Day
4th May 2022
SPACES AVAILABLE
- Bee Observatory Visits
May-June 2022
SPACES AVAILABLE
- Grow Your Own Produce (harvesting)
7th June 2022
SPACES AVAILABLE
- Food and Farming Day
1st July 2022
SPACES AVAILABLE



Kids Country at Gransden Show

We had a busy day at Gransden Show in September, making biodegradable paper plant pots out of recycled newspapers with lots of children! The children then planted these pots up with lettuce seeds and took them home for their own little winter salad. It was great to get out and about spreading the word about Kids Country and our range of educational events.



Kids Country Education co-ordinator Amna Bell at Gransden Show

Cracking good day for primary schools Happy Chicks event-in-a-box

Alongside primary schools across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, The Priory School, Spalding, enjoyed a jam-packed day of learning about the science of eggs, farming poultry and birds within the countryside with Kids Country's 'Happy Chicks Day' events delivered into schools, in partnership with sponsors Central England Co-operative and the Happy Chicks Company.

Lesley Perry, teacher at The Priory School, Spalding, said: "The children all enjoyed the day, especially making the mini quiches with the donated eggs

and being able to take their recipes home. We have hens at school so we have been able to use our newfound knowledge of different chicken breeds to go out and identify our hens. Thank you for a great day of learning and fun!"

Each event-in-a-box, delivered within Covid-19 guidelines, contained educational videos and resources relating to chicks, chickens and alternative birds as well as physical eggs and an egg-citing competition for schools to enter with the opportunity to win gift vouchers from Co-operative Food!



Children at The Priory School make mini quiches

Grow Your Own Potatoes planting and harvesting

In March, over 600 children from nine primary schools across Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire planted their potatoes, with thanks to our sponsors Albert Bartlett, Westland Horticulture and Evergreen Garden Care, who, alongside our local potato farmers, provided Kids Country potatoes, compost, pots and all-important planting advice that we were able to remotely drop at the schools.

Fast forward to June and July and we were thrilled to get back in schools to help them harvest those potatoes, with help on the day from sponsors Co-operative Central England and Produce World. Nothing quite compares to being in school with children!

Michelle Norbury, headteacher at Folksworth C of E Primary School said: "It is great to see the children so excited to see the products of their labour. They have been carefully looking after the potatoes from the point that they planted them and it's fantastic to see their faces now as they realise all of these potatoes have been growing under the soil!"

Children at Folksworth Primary School harvest their potato crop with Kids Country education manager Sandra Lauridsen





Marshal Papworth Short Course returns

We are really looking forward to welcoming the Marshal Papworth Short Course class of 2022 into the virtual classroom later this year when initial online training starts with Harper Adams University. This is for those students that had been due to come on the Short Course this year and last so that they can hit the ground running when we are finally able to welcome them to the UK in 2022.

We continue to work on a new website to better showcase not only the scholarships that we offer to prospective students and university and charity partners but also as a library of

all the amazing research and papers that our alumni have written. We look forward to sharing this with you as soon as it is ready!

Despite the many and varied challenges of the last 18 months, our alumni continue to work hard to put into practice what they discovered on both our 10-week short course and our Masters scholarships. We were also thrilled to see so many alumni getting involved with the #Farm24 social media campaign – did you spot the photos on our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or LinkedIn?



Marshal Papworth alumni getting involved in #Farm24

Stories from our Scholars – Shakeb Nabi

It is always pleasing to hear back from Marshal Papworth Fund scholarship beneficiaries – especially those who graduated towards the start of our development programme. Shakeb now works as the Country Representative for India at Dutch non-profit organisation, ICCO Corporation.

“My journey from one of the most underdeveloped states of India to being a senior executive in the development sector is a journey of struggle, passion, empathy and wanting to do good for the society at large,” explains Shakeb.

Shakeb’s first international travel and first international exposure on development issues were with the Marshal Papworth Fund. Shakeb says: “Landing at the London airport I had a mix of curiosity and excitement; curiosity in the sense that I was born and brought up in a small town in India and whether I would be able to adjust to the new environment, and excitement that I had stepped out to explore the unknown as my knowledge about Europe was mostly restricted to books and television programmes.”



Shakeb (centre, back row) as he embarked on his Marshal Papworth scholarship

“Since then it has been a journey full of excitement, new friends and new learnings. Thanks to Marshal Papworth Fund for giving me the opportunity to learn, grow, contribute and help me take leadership roles in this sector.”

The scholarship helped Shakeb develop a “Culture of Learning and Sharing” which he intends to continue through his work. During his course, Shakeb made many friends with whom he interacts regularly to understand what is happening in different parts of the world – this alumni support network is a key part of the Marshal Papworth Fund development programme.

“Following my Marshal Papworth scholarship, the quest for learning created a desire within me, which led me to do other Masters studies focusing on humanitarian aid, conflict and peacebuilding across three universities in Europe. A perfect blend of field-based expertise and academic excellence has equipped me with the skills and expertise to work on some of the most complex programmes in the world, including the massive earthquake in India in 2001, the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2005, the Rohingya Crisis in 2017, and various small level disasters across South and South-East Asia.”

Shakeb has now managed various teams, totalling more than 200 colleagues, and managed budgets up to £20million. “Most of my work has been around working with the most vulnerable and the marginalized communities towards increasing their income whether it is through livelihoods support, skills development and social enterprise promotion.”

We are very proud of the achievements and impact that Shakeb has made in South and South-East Asia, and we can’t wait to hear what he does next.



The East of England Farming Conference is back!

There will be two groups of people reading this article; those who’ve been to a previous East of England Farming Conference, and those who haven’t...yet!” says conference Chairman Tom Martin.



Those who have previously attended could think back to hearing Commons EFRA Select Committee Chairman Neil Parish MP, airing his cutting views on the government’s plans for agriculture, or perhaps you’ll recall NFU President Minette Batters speaking passionately about the challenges in farming, or even UEA Professor of Value Chain Management Andrew Fearn sharing some pretty blunt and – given the current crises – prescient home truths about changes in food production.

Here at the East of England Agricultural Society, we challenge ourselves to make an impact in UK farming and rural life, sharing knowledge and inspiring a generation in our amassed county districts, and across the UK, and in bringing the likes of Patrick Holden, founder of the Sustainable Food Trust,

Lord Melchett of the Soil Association, Farmer Weekly Farm Manager of the Year Mike Shapland, and William Wells of Hummingbird Technologies in previous years, we’ve been doing just that, and we can be proud of what we’ve achieved.

This year’s event on Thursday 18th November will take us a step further with a raft of key national decision-makers addressing the conference including former Secretary of State and now Chairman of the Committee on Climate Change, Lord Deben, National Food Strategy Author Professor Tim Lang, and MP and Minister of State for Defra, Victoria Prentis, all brilliantly chaired by Joe Stanley.

You can hear from cutting edge practitioners looking at ways to profitably reduce artificial fertiliser inputs and considering the economic and environmental sustainability of plant protection products, from speakers offering to pay land managers hard cash for farming sustainably and fixing carbon, and from entrepreneurial farmers bringing in extra income from diversification; inspiring us all to reduce

costs or bring in extra revenue. With Teresa Meadows chairing that inspiring and informative session, who wouldn’t want to hear about all that?!

And in a brand new session – our Skills Masterclass – we’ll be bringing in an internationally renowned negotiation coach to help us all get more from our negotiations and interactions at work, and perhaps at home!

This conference will inform, excite, and inspire anyone. If you’ve never been before, then you can book today at <https://eoeefc21.eventbrite.co.uk> and use special, Society members’ discount code ‘**easmember21**’ to get a 20% discount. If you’ve never been before, I suspect you’ll have already booked, but if not, you know what to do!

As conference chairman along with the committee of Richard Bramley, Mark Dodds, James Burton, Megan Marshall, Teresa Meadows, Joe Stanley, Paul Waberski, Amelia Woolford, and sponsors Brown & Co, Roythornes, Oxbury Bank, British Sugar, John Deere & Ben Burgess, Bulley Davey, Opico, Soil Fertility Services, Oakbank, NFU Mutual, and Hutchinsons we all look forward to welcoming you.

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Moulton College celebrates 100 years of teaching history with a commemorative event

Moulton College in Northamptonshire has celebrated its 100th anniversary and hosted a commemorative event to mark the occasion. Guest speakers included previous alumni, employer partners and BBC Countryfile presenter Adam Henson. The event held to celebrate the College's past, present and future included fond memories from previous students dating back to the '50s, and a video timeline displaying the College's history. The event also recognised the hard work of the College staff with long service and achievement awards presented during the main event.

Corrie Harris, CEO and Principal at Moulton College said "100 years of teaching is a remarkable achievement and it was only right for us to celebrate this major milestone. With our renewed focus on providing an excellent experience for our students, developing a curriculum which meets the needs of employers and providing quality training for both young people and adults, I am confident that the College will continue to thrive for the next one hundred years!"



Moulton College Senior Leadership Team

Corrie added: "It was great to hear from Adam Henson who highlighted the opportunities in farming and the exciting technologies being developed in this sector. It was a brilliant event acknowledging the College's wonderful history and rewarding our staff for all of their hard work."

The history of Moulton College

Established in 1921, Moulton College – formerly the Institute of Agriculture, was opened by the Minister of Agriculture at the time, Sir Arthur Griffith Boscawen. It initially welcomed 26 students through its doors to study General Agriculture. Mr A. Stewart was the newly appointed principal.

During the 1930s, the College acquired additional land following a donation by Mrs A.S. Harrison, a prominent figure in the life of the Institute. Mrs Harrison's farm in Wellingborough offered a supplementary learning resource, and she also donated £10,000 to build the Thomas Harrison Hostel on West Street in Moulton. This new facility provided accommodation for up to 40 students, as well as a new dining hall, lecture rooms and laboratories for testing. Mrs Harrison died in 1939 leaving a wonderful legacy, the Thomas Harrison Trust Fund, which still benefits students today.

The Institute played a significant role during the war years, with all traditional farming courses cancelled to support the war effort. On 18 September 1939, a wartime course for Women's Land Army trainees began, training over 1,500 land girls. The Institute also played an important part in the national 'Dig for Victory' campaign, increasing the production of home-grown food and helping to relieve shortages. In 1944, the Institute began training ex-servicemen and women.



A first week Land Girl student operates the milk cooler and separator



BBC Countryfile presenter, Adam Henson

The 1950s marked a period of change with a new Sports Pavilion and the Institute's first engineering workshop. A Mr Cobb kindly donated a herd of Guernsey cows, which led to great excitement amongst staff and students! Mr Stewart retired after dedicating 38 years to the Institute, increasing its profile nationally and internationally and boosting numbers from 11 in the early '20s, to over 80.

In the 1960's a new era followed the arrival of Mr T. Park, the new principal. Courses in Farm Management and Animal Husbandry were introduced along with part-time and evening classes. New capital projects totalling £250,000 began including the construction of a new teaching block, demonstration shed, woodwork shop and buildings for pigs and poultry. The Institute was renamed the 'Northamptonshire College of Agriculture.'

The College celebrated its 50th birthday in the 1970s by inviting HRH Prince William of Gloucester to open new buildings. A new dairy unit was opened with a state-of-the-art rotary parlour, and the College increased its number of Friesian cows and poultry. The very first computer terminal was also installed at the College; a monumental day that received the following response from the then principal:

"To some of you this may seem a little futuristic, but computers are being used to an increasing degree as time goes on."

– Mr T. Park, Principal

loganberries, gooseberries and rhubarb! Following the arrival of Chris Moody O.B.E., the new principal, a period of significant investment began. Significant investment was complete by 2012 to provide some of the best practical teaching resources in the country. A new Social Centre, Construction Services Centre, Learning Resource Centre and Equine Therapy Centre were constructed as part of this development phase.

The investment in facilities has continued in recent years with a state-of-the-art Food and Drink Innovation Centre opening its doors in 2019. The Centre provides invaluable teaching and learning resources for the College's new Food and Nutrition courses.

New courses in Electrical Installation and Uniformed Public Services have recently launched and student numbers have increased by 30%. Additionally, despite lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic, students achieved a 99.8% pass rate in their January exams demonstrating the resilience of the College's staff and students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MOULTON COLLEGE
VISIT: www.moulton.ac.uk



Moulton College Alumna, Georgina Wallis



Prince William of Gloucester at the Opening of the New Building 1971

MEMBER FOCUS

Stephen and Lynn Briggs

It is always nice to hear success stories from our members and their businesses so we recently caught up with local farmers Stephen and Lynn Briggs to learn more about their diversifications and their journey into Agroforestry.

Stephen and Lynn Briggs are first-generation tenant farmers at Whitehall Farm in Cambridgeshire. Since starting farming in 2007, they have integrated trees into their organic wheat, barley, clover and vegetable-producing business, establishing the largest agroforestry system in the UK.

The system was implemented to reduce wind erosion affecting the fine grade one soil on the farm. It also enhances biodiversity, creates a mix of perennial and annual crops better able to meet the challenges of climate change, and diversifies their cropping.

Apple trees were planted in rows as windbreaks, but also to produce fruit and 24m alleys were left in between the tree rows for cereal production. Tree rows are orientated north to south to minimise shading and tree canopies are managed by annual pruning.

A diverse range of pollen and nectar species and wildflowers has been established in the 3m wide tree

understorey strip beneath the trees. This benefits a range of pollinating insects and farmland birds.

The arable crops primarily use water, nutrients and sunlight in spring and early summer, whereas the trees need these resources from late spring right through to late autumn.

Tree roots gather nutrients and water from deep in the soil, beneath the zone used by the arable crops. Tree height enables this system to use another dimension of space above the ground enabling maximum energy to be captured from sunlight and turned into food.

The 52-hectare silvoarable agroforestry scheme cost an initial £65,000 to establish in 2009. In total 8% of the land is planted with trees and the remaining 92% is cropped under the existing cereal rotation. It took five years for the trees to mature into full production. With the trees now seven years old, fruit yield per ha is



Stephen Briggs



Apple trees used as windbreaks

similar to the surrounding arable crop, with gross margins typically c.£1000/ha. The young fruit trees will continue to grow and increase to peak yield in year 15.

Central to profitability is the ability to add value to farm outputs. Adding value to commodities like cereals is difficult, whereas there is greater potential to increase the value of the fruit through processing into juice, or direct sales. Stephen and his wife Lynn have built and opened a farm shop and cafe in 2018 (Harvest Barn Farmshop) to benefit from direct retail and better engage with the local community. The Farmshop sells a wide range of local and seasonal produce working closely with independent grocers, butchers, suppliers and growers. These include supporting local businesses such as the Peterborough Game Company, Lymn Bank Farm Cheese Co, Grasmere Butchers and Ely Gin. There is also a coffee shop on site selling a range of homemade cakes, pastries, paninis, jacket potatoes and British favourites from scampi and chips to hunter's chicken.

Speaking about agroforestry Stephen Briggs says: "It has delivered everything we wanted. It's making us more income and delivering soil protection and biodiversity benefits. There is a lot of talk about cover crops at the moment. Trees are the ultimate cover crop because you do not have to plant them each year.



There is increasing interest in Agroforestry amongst farmers and land managers and Stephen is working with other industry partners to help Government to look at a more multi-functional use of land, adding; "Nature doesn't do monoculture. If you do nothing with your land for 40 years nature will revert it to trees and bushes - this should guide you that it's what nature wants to do." Agroforestry builds on this principle while enabling productive profitable farming. The new scheme has simultaneously provided Stephen and Lynn with another

income-earning crop, protected and nourished the soil, attracted pollinators and encouraged local wildlife.

As well as the farm hosting numerous undergraduate and postgraduate students to generate data to better understand what agroforestry delivers, the farm is also a regional monitor farm for a DEFRA Test & Trial on agroforestry, working with DEFRA & Natural England to determine how agroforestry can be built into the new Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme.



Harvest 2021 between our rows of apple trees



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Learn more about Whitehall Farm and Harvest Barn Farmshop at www.harvestbarn.co.uk

FESTIVAL OF HUNTING

Hunts and spectators celebrate the best of hunting in the sunshine at the Festival of Hunting

Returning to the East of England Showground for the 133rd Peterborough Royal Foxhound Show, 25 packs of Modern and Old English Foxhounds and over 5,000 spectators were delighted to be back at this popular rural event on Wednesday 21st July, supported by the Countryside Alliance.

Organised by the East of England Agricultural Society, the Festival hosted the prestigious Peterborough Royal Foxhound Show, the blue-ribboned competition of the summer showing calendar for Foxhound packs up and down the country with the Vale of the White Horse (VWH) and Heythrop hunts taking the top prizes in the Modern Foxhound classes.

The Festival of Hunting allows the next generation to show off their skills at hound showing, with 16-year-old Thomas Hopkins showing a bitch hound from the Wheatland Hunt to take the Young Handlers Class top spot, sponsored by Countryman

Feeds. After 10 years of involvement with hunting, Thomas is enjoying a summer at the hunt kennels before he starts a course in agriculture at Brooksby Melton College, Leicestershire.

Also returning for 2021 was the hotly contested Hunt Picnic Competition. Over 15 picnics were judged with the Warwickshire Hunt claiming the best picnic spot and a prize of the Stirrup Cup crate of port and whisky alongside cookbooks from local author, Jenny Jefferies.

Alison Queenborough, Secretary of The Peterborough Royal Foxhound Show Society, said: "We are thrilled that the Festival of Hunting was able to return this year, with so many packs returning to not only compete for ribbons but also to catch up with acquaintances from the hunting community that they may not have seen during the last year. The feedback that we have had from trade stands, hunts and spectators



Best Hunt Picnic Stirrup Cup winners, the Warwickshire Hunt

alike has been nothing but positive and we look forward to returning for the Festival of Hunting on Wednesday 20th July 2022 better than ever!

"We thank all those that attended for maintaining a sensible approach to the current Covid-19 situation and for observing the recommendations that we made on site."

Return of the East of England Championship Dog Show

The East of England Agricultural Society held a very successful open and Championship Dog Show from 8 – 11 July at the East of England Showground.

This year's show had a very different format with more space being utilised than normal to cater for social distancing. Apart from the main ring which was held in the Livestock Pavillion, the remaining 23 rings took place outside with marquees added to provide some protection for the judges and stewards.

The show had a relaxed and somewhat colourful atmosphere as the exhibitors were permitted to bring their gazebos, shelters, and umbrellas to protect

themselves from the weather which was thankfully on our side again this year. Who'd have thought there could be so many different types and colours! We had five days of good weather meaning lots of happy dogs and owners which was great to see.

The overall entry numbers for the Championship was slightly down on previous years. This was expected but we are hugely thankful to everyone that turned up to make this year's show such an enjoyable experience for all.



We would also like to thank our stewards and helpers who were invaluable in the day to day running of the show.

It was a busy but enjoyable five days for the hard-working committee and we look forward to seeing everyone back at the showground next year.

Pat Dufty
Dog Show Secretary

photo credit Hattie Austin



Cambridgeshire Young Farmers Update

We recently caught up with Tom Foulger, the soon to be Chairman of Cambridgeshire Young Farmers to hear his plans over the next year to strengthen the YFC offering in the county.

My name is Tom Foulger and im looking forward to becoming the New Chairman of Cambridgeshire YFC for 2021-22. My main aim is to return Cambs YFC back to normality and take a step forward in further improving the county with fundraising and bring the county close together again.



into team building and social events for all of the clubs to join in on. To get the clubs integrating together again is one of my main aims it would be great to see strengthened relationships in the county at the end of my term as chairman.

We have ideas to start a tractor road run and also continue the annual Cambridgeshire YFC County Ball. I ideally don't want to go completely over the top with new ideas so we will be sticking with some of the past events but certainly listening to and exploring new ideas to be put forward in the short-term future. We are also looking

We picked up a lot of new members over lockdown, which is great! It will be key that we involve them as much as we can within the clubs and the county over the next few months so that hopefully then they can feel comfortable to take on roles within their clubs or even spread the word of YFC to potential members.

I am really looking forward to this next year! More so as it was slightly delayed by a late harvest but I am keen to get back to normal and further improve the county for the future. I think the other members within the county are also itching to get going with all four clubs hosting their AGM's within the next five weeks or so and from what I hear, all of them have very full programmes which is brilliant.



Our September Quiz Night



Recent talk from Massey Ferguson

Cambridgeshire is a small Young Farmer County made up of four clubs, Comberton, Huntingdon, Soham and Newborough. If you were interested in getting involved with one of these clubs or know someone that could be interested, get in touch with Cambridgeshire YFC or our surrounding counties via the contact details below.

Cambridgeshire YFC
cambsyoungfarmers@outlook.com
01480 830907

Northamptonshire YFC
office@northants-yfc.org.uk
01604 670562

Bedfordshire YFC
bedsyoungfarmers@gmail.com
07494 163512



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Queen Mother's Handwriting Awards

The Queen Mothers Handwriting Awards, organised and managed by the Society since 1977, returned to primary schools across Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Leicestershire, Norfolk and Northamptonshire earlier this year.

We were pleased to announce a fantastic turnout out for the 2021 awards which saw over 3,300 entries

from 85 schools across the region. Of these schools, 49 were taking part for the first time so it was great to welcome so many new teachers and students to the awards.

We would also like to thank A.T Cross Company for the continued support of the awards and for providing our winners with an engraved Cross pen.

Call for Long Service Award nominees

The Long Service Awards ceremony return to the prestigious Peterborough Dinner taking place on 18 November 2021.

The Long Service Award is 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 or call 01733 234451.

CULTIV is planning a packed 2022 programme

Cultiv8 is our networking group for people working in and around agriculture and horticulture, creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, socialising and building working relationships. We have run a series of talks on topics ranging from marketing to beef sustainability for McDonald's as well as visits to businesses including gin distilleries and local butchers.

We are looking forward to resuming physical events in January and planning is currently underway for a fantastic programme of talks and visits for 2022.

Whether you are a farmer, vet, land agent, ag engineer, student, a new entrant into the industry or your work has recently brought you to the area, Cultiv8 has something for everyone with an interest in the rural sector. Come along and see for yourself.

If you are interested in getting involved or want more information, contact Amelia at awoolford@eastofengland.org.uk

Back British Farming Section on the Website

Over the last six months, we have taken the time to improve and expand our website with new features that we feel would be beneficial for members and non-members alike. With our key charitable objective of promoting agriculture and rural life, we wanted to create a resource that made it easier for you to support British agriculture.

A key area of website expansion is our new "#BackBritishFarming" section. This space includes a number of external resources that make it easier for you to buy locally produced food, support local businesses and in turn help British agriculture.

Whether you want to locate your nearest bakery, find your nearest cheesemonger, discover your nearest farm shop or buy a range of British produce from online retailers, our new area on our website helps you to do this.

With the game season now in full swing, it is the perfect time of year to take full advantage of the wild game offering whether it is pheasant, partridge, venison or duck. Did you know, compared with chicken, wild game is far higher in protein and selenium and lower in calories? EatWild features a fantastic range of recipes from Partridge Paella to Pheasant Meatballs and you can learn more by visiting this new section on our website.

We also have several resources to help you understand why you should #BackBritishFarming and what you can do to reduce food waste from businesses and initiatives such as Red Tractor, NFU Online, LEAF and the Soil Association.

To explore the new section on our website, visit www.eastofengland.org.uk/backbritishfarming/ or contact us for more information.



Equifest returned to the Showground in August

It was great to welcome back over 1,200 horses and their riders to the Showground in late August for Equifest.

Now in its 13th year the event was sponsored by Gallop Equestrian and saw the return of the much-loved evening performances in the main grandstand, which was greatly enjoyed and provided much nostalgia.

We will report in more depth in the next issue though this year's results can meantime be found on the Equifest website by visiting www.equifest.org.uk/. Next year's event will be taking place from 18-20 August 2022 so make sure to follow Equifest on Facebook (@EquifestShow) or Instagram (@_equifest_) for the latest news and updates.

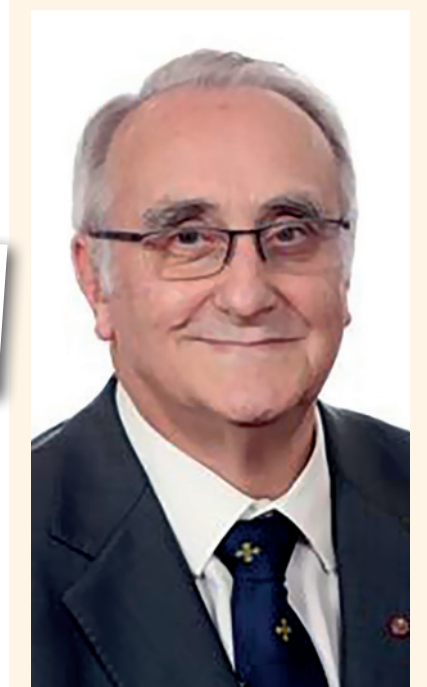


The Society announces its new President

The Society AGM returned to a physical meeting taking place on Thursday 16th September in the Peterborough Suite at the Showground.

One of the key items on the agenda was to elect the new Honorary Society President for 2021/2022 and we are pleased to announce that former city councillor, John Holditch will be taking on this role. After more than 40 years in local government, last year, John stepped down from his role as the leader of the Peterborough City Council.

We would like to thank our outgoing president, former Harper Adams University Vice-Chancellor, Dr David Llewellyn for his contribution to the Society over the last year.



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Joyce Shrubbs

Joyce Shrubbs who has died aged 94 rose through the ranks of the Royal Observer Corps (ROC) to become the Corps assistant commandant in the rank of Observer Captain, the only female officer to achieve this rare distinction.

In April 1944, she joined the 7 Group centre at Bedford as a plotter and teller. Working in the operations room, she and her colleagues plotted the movements of aircraft and alerted the observer posts in the field when any significant air traffic was entering their area.

She watched the huge armada of aircraft and gliders heading out on D-Day, a few months later she witnessed a similar event and recalled: "I expect some people knew what it was, but certainly we didn't, all we knew was that there was a huge amount of flying across

our group area with all the Dakotas and gliders taking airborne troops to Arnhem. We didn't know that until later when we read it in the newspapers."

A fifth of six children, Joyce was born into a farming family near Swineshead, Bedford, on April 6 1927. After leaving school she worked as a shorthand typist in the Ministry of Supply, during which time she spent two nights a week as a firewatcher from the roof of the telephone exchange in Bedford. In her spare time, she was a hostess in the UK forces club in Bedford and recalled dancing to the Glenn Miller Band.

At heart, Joyce Shrubbs was a country girl, and for almost 70 years she provided secretarial and accounting services to the Bedfordshire Farming community. Joyce was a recipient of a long service



award for 50 years of service presented to her by the Duchess of Gloucester at the East of England Show. Twenty years later she received a bar to the medal.

She met her farmer husband, George Shrubbs, at a Young Farmers club and they were married for 50 years before George died in 1999.

As Joyce Shrubbs was laid to rest, a lone Spitfire flew over the cemetery in salute.

Roy Gilmore

It was with great sadness that at the start of August, Roy Gilmore, Head of Security at the East of England Showground suddenly passed away after collapsing at work.

Roy was also well-known to clubs and fans across the city, acting as security at Peterborough United, Peterborough Phantoms ice hockey, Peterborough Panthers Speedway in addition to various events at the East of England Showground.

Roy was a larger than life character and hugely respected by his friends and peers. He was always smiling and was always willing to help anyone and everyone, if it needed doing he would sort it. In his soft scouse accent, nothing was too much trouble for Roy. "I'll sort it mate!"

In memory of Roy, the family has set up a 'Just Giving' page called 'The Roy Gilmore Trust' to support charities within the Peterborough area and in his home town of Liverpool, to help with underprivileged children, getting them into clubs if they're unable to afford it, help with animal rescue charities, and community support groups.

His dry sense of humour and calmness in almost every situation will be very much missed by us all. You can donate to 'The Roy Gilmore Trust' by visiting the following link www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/theroygilmoretrust

or scan the QR code



We would also like to share our condolences to the families of Society members Enfy Morris Chapman and Mr A H Hand of Eye who have been members for 54 and 55 years respectively.

CEO'S UPDATE



You will already have read a little about the development of the Showground site and the promotion agreement with AEPG, so I would like to take the opportunity to add a few more details. Under the previous proposals, the Showground was due to close in December 2021 and the Peterborough Arena building was scheduled to be demolished. It is estimated that in pre-Covid times, the arena and Showground contributed significantly more than £10m to the local economy each year. It is therefore easy to understand why the City Council were reluctant to welcome a planning application that would have resulted in the loss of this valued amenity to the city of Peterborough and the loss of employment on the Showground site.

The deal team were charged with achieving the best possible return for the showground, whilst protecting the Society's assets and preserving employment for all staff. Under the deal that we have agreed with AEPG, the leisure offering at Alwalton will be enhanced and expanded. This has provided continued employment for the Showground Services staff and is projected to create approximately 400 new jobs. Proposals are being developed for a policy-compliant planning application for approximately 650 residential units on the site and we believe that the leisure opportunities will be an attraction for both new and existing residents of the area that will generate increased value for the Society through an uplift in property prices.

I would like to add my personal thanks to John Hawksfield and Julian Turner who have worked tremendously hard through a long and arduous period of intense

negotiations to achieve what I believe is an outstanding result for the East of England Agricultural Society. It has been a privilege to work with and learn from them both and I believe that they are owed a huge debt of gratitude by everyone at the East of England.

It is pleasing to report that we also enjoyed strong support from our professional financial and legal advisers who ensured that we complied with Charity Commission guidance and operated within the Charities Act at all times, thus protecting the position of the Trustees.

For the next few years, we will continue to work in collaboration with AEPG to organise our programme of Society activities on the Showground site and we will build on the successes of this year's events. At this point, I must mention the patience and forbearance of both the Society and Showground Services teams who have continued to work hard throughout such a challenging period where uncertainty dogged every step. Planning, organising and delivering the Dog show, Festival of Hunting and Equifest at such short notice, whilst also meeting financial targets was a stunning achievement and a credit to Alison and all of the team involved.

We are now entering a period of significant change so we must chart a sustainable course for the future that provides financial stability, contributes to our charitable objectives and creates a relevant role for the Society into the coming decades. As the Chairman stated

in his opening address, agriculture in the UK is also undergoing rapid and dramatic changes; this creates opportunities that the Society is perfectly placed to exploit. Making no apologies for using current terminology, I believe that we can become "influencers" through our future role in facilitating, promoting and educating. We are seeking partnering opportunities so that we can work with other organisations to attract matched funding and deliver positive change. We also plan to build on and expand our current activities in education.

You may recall that a governance review was started a few years ago, but was never implemented. I have been asked to pick this up and plan to streamline the structure and policies so that we can be more effective and make more efficient use of the Board members' valuable time and channel our resources towards the achievement of charitable goals.

This should allow the Board to focus on policy and strategy for the Society and enable the professional staff to deliver their vision. We must recruit new Trustees who can add the benefit of wisdom and experience, but who also bring fresh ideas, energy and diversity to equip the Society for the future.

Finally, as we are now into the closing quarter of the year, I would like to pass on my best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous season ahead.

Alistair Beattie
Interim CEO

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!



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

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Whether you are a farmer, vet, land agent, ag engineer, student, a new entrant into the industry or your work has recently brought you to the area, come along and see for yourself.



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