

R·A·B·I news



SPRING 2017

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION

Supporting farming families www.rabi.org.uk



A tribute to Tom: Jane tackles Great South Run in husband's memory See page 10

More payouts to working farmers

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A home to be proud of

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Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution

We are a welfare charity that helps farming people in financial difficulty. In 2016 we gave out grants of £2 million to 1,357 individuals / families. We also offer practical help and always work in confidence, with compassion and discretion.

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Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

President: His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester

R.A.B.I. News is published quarterly by R.A.B.I. and edited by Rob Harris. Telephone 01865 811600 or email rob.harris@rabi.org.uk

COVER IMAGE: R.A.B.I. supporter Tom Nixey, who died last June. See page 10 for story.

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From the chairman

Spring really is a glorious time of the year with new planting, new growth and new life all promising a successful and promising period ahead in the farming calendar. Of course we all know that this can change almost overnight and the weather always has the capability to turn everyone's plans upside down as the floods and snowstorms of recent years have demonstrated only too clearly.

These sorts of disasters are when R.A.B.I. really can make a difference, whether it is through our regional staff on the ground or our ability to make swift and targeted financial support available to families who suddenly find themselves in the most difficult and unbearable situations through no fault of their own. Let's all hope that we have a good growing spring and that the farming industry remains free from any disasters, be they natural or manmade.

On a political front the uncertainty continues and our politicians continue to debate every conceivable aspect of Brexit, whether it is the timing, the content, potential outcomes or free trade deals. It seems to me that the only certainty at the moment is that we are in for months and years of debate and arguments, both here at home and across Europe, before our farmers will have any idea of what the future holds. Indeed, a part of me thinks that at some stage the US and Mr Trump in particular will also join this debate to a greater or lesser extent. Then, of course, there will also be the French and German elections in the next couple of years and Brexit will loom large in both of those events. Finally, to cap everything, we will still need all 27 other member state countries to agree the final package before Brexit is eventually laid to rest. How the individual farmer can be expected to make the requisite long term breeding and planting decisions – and equally important, family succession plans – against that sort of political background is almost impossible to figure out.

Within the R.A.B.I. family we had some tremendous news when our care home, Beaufort House in Burnham-on-Sea, was given an outstanding rating by the Care Quality Commission following a visit last year. This rating is so richly deserved and puts Beaufort House in the top one per cent of care homes across the country. Well done to manager Susan Dean and all her very hardworking staff for an outstanding achievement.

At the beginning of February we had a gathering of the trustees of R.A.B.I. and senior staff to review our strategy and objectives to ensure that we remain relevant and focussed on the mission and priorities of the charity. It was an extremely interesting and productive meeting and it was heartening to see that the vision for the charity, namely to reach and support farming people in need, remains as relevant today as at any period in our history. It was also great to see that the structure of the charity, with county committees, volunteers and supporters across the country and increasing numbers of corporate supporters, through to our professional staff both in the regions and at our Shaw House office in Oxford, remains as solid as ever. I would like to pay tribute to my fellow trustees who, based around the country, give considerable amounts of their time freely and selflessly to attend meetings and events to ensure that R.A.B.I. is properly and legally governed. Thank you to you all. R.A.B.I. is indeed well served and long may that continue.



Malcolm Thomas,
R.A.B.I.
chairman

'We were so fortunate to have friends and family to lean on'

Watching your child get struck down by serious illness is one of the toughest things that any parent will ever endure. If your livelihood is jeopardised at the same time it can leave you wondering where to turn. Rob Harris spoke to one family coping with extreme adversity, at home and at work.

The courage and determination shown by Devon farmers David and Tracey Grigg is inspirational. However, they admit they couldn't have got through their darkest days alone and needed to draw on the support of friends, family and organisations such as R.A.B.I and the Farming Community Network. The Griggs farm in the village of Monkleigh near Bideford, where they live with daughters Joanna, now 15 and Julia 10. In March last year their world was turned upside down when Julia took herself off to bed because she was feeling unwell. Tracey subsequently found her unconscious and called an ambulance, which took Julia to Barnstaple Hospital. She underwent a CT scan and it was quickly decided that she should be flown to the Bristol Royal Hospital for Children by air ambulance. It was discovered that she had suffered a form of stroke caused by a rare brain problem called an AVM, which forces the blood to effectively pump the wrong way. No one knows why AVMs happen; they are usually congenital but rarely hereditary. Tracey said: "Julia was in an induced coma for two weeks and in Bristol hospital for around three months. She underwent surgery to remove a blood clot which meant removing part of her brain." At the time, the couple had 220 milking cows and four milking robots,



RECOVERING: Julia Grigg, with her own cow 'Cowslip'.

300 followers and around 200 sheep. Apart from one tractor driver, David and Tracey did most of the work themselves. With Julia in hospital they needed to be with her around the clock, so relied on family and friends to keep their animals fed and the farm ticking over. It was a huge strain and the discovery of TB on the farm only exacerbated things. When they needed it most, their subsidy payment also failed to come through on time. "We were somehow getting by thanks to our

tremendous network of family and friends, but in truth we weren't really managing and we couldn't keep our eye on the ball because we were away from the farm so much," explained Tracey. "Eventually, David had to return home to the farm and we took on an apprentice – a local girl who we knew. David had to shoulder so much work, on top of everything else." The couple had never even heard of R.A.B.I until a chance meeting with the charity's regional manager Jenni Thompson. Welfare officer Liz Hoare

visited the couple on their farm and R.A.B.I was able to support the family with grants towards the new apprentice's wages and by clearing some domestic bills.

When Julia returned home in the early part of last summer, she needed her mum full-time and Tracey remains her daughter's main carer. Julia was able to return to school for a few hours per week in September and, luckily, her school is next door to the farm. She has, however lost 25 per cent of her vision.

The farm remains under TB, with one reactor found in the most recent January test. Their next test is scheduled for March, which means restrictions are likely to remain in place until at least late summer.

Tracey said: "We feel we've been through an awful lot but Julia is doing really well. Because she's so young she just deals with it, she's brilliant. I think living on a farm has been beneficial for her. It's a better environment for her recovery.

"Her school has been very supportive and they've had a quiet room built. I cannot thank our friends and family enough.

"Having an apprentice on the farm has made a world of difference too.

"When we go off to a doctor's appointment now we feel the farm is in safe hands.

"We're so grateful for R.A.B.I's help and we're happy to tell people what they can do and just how they've supported us."

Animal welfare ceremony set for April 5

Service Dealer Awards at Oxfordshire Belfry

R.A.B.I was delighted to be chosen alongside Perennial, the welfare organisation for horticulture, as a charity partner for the Service Dealer Awards, held at the Oxfordshire Belfry near Thame in November. Service Dealer is the voice and news resource of the agriculture, garden and turf care power equipment industry and the awards night is part of their annual conference, bringing together dealers large and small.

A free prize draw raised around £900 for the two charities, who were only too happy to present the prizes to the lucky



PRESENTATION: R.A.B.I head of fundraising and development Stephen Noble (right) at the Service Dealer Awards.

winners at the end of the ceremony. Thanks also to Kramp, sponsors of the

conference, for their role in introducing R.A.B.I to Service Dealer this year.

Shortlist drawn up by Ceva

The shortlist has been announced for the seventh annual Ceva Animal Welfare Awards.

Spanning seven categories, the shortlist was decided following a day of deliberations by a panel of esteemed judges chaired by retired veterinary surgeon, Chris Laurence MBE MRCVS. The awards celebrate the achievements of remarkable people from the farming, veterinary and charity industries who go beyond the call of duty to better the lives of animals around the world. Nominations were submitted by friends, family, clients and colleagues.

The Farm Animal Welfare Award (UK and international) is hosted in association with R.A.B.I and NADIS.

The nominees for that award are: Dr Othieno Joseph, a freelance veterinary journalist from Kenya; Katrine Bazeley, a retired veterinary surgeon from Dorset and Graham Duncanson, a retired veterinary surgeon from Norfolk. The awards will be presented at a glitzy ceremony in Birmingham ahead of the BSAVA congress on April 5 2017.

Record numbers at two-day LAMMA

Record numbers attended the LAMMA Show with many exhibitors saying the opening day was one of the busiest ever. There were lots of product launches and UK debuts from industry leading manufacturers. LAMMA is the UK's largest farm machinery,

equipment and agricultural services show and took place at the East of England Showground in Peterborough on January 18 and 19.

R.A.B.I had a prime stand in the show's main hall over both days. There were around 900 exhibitors at the show, which pulled in

close to 40,000 visitors.

R.A.B.I ran a raffle over the two days, which raised £108.

The prizes were a model Cat tractor donated by Kramp and a cow print by artist Lauren Terry.

Winners were Stuart Papworth (tractor) and PJ Lee & Sons (print).

Shop online and make a donation

Did you know you can help to raise funds for R.A.B.I when you shop online, at no extra cost to yourself? Simply register for Give As You Live and each time you shop online at more than 4,100 stores who are signed up to the scheme, they will donate a percentage of your total shop

to R.A.B.I. Retailers registered for the scheme include Amazon, John Lewis, M&S, Tesco, Ebay, Argos, Next and many more! So far, the easy-to-use scheme has raised over £7.75m for UK charities. Find out more about how it works at www.giveasyoulive.com/

SUPPORT CHARITY
JUST BY SHOPPING ONLINE

Step 1
Sign up to Give as you Live on your desktop, tablet or via the mobile app. It's fast, simple and 100% secure.

Step 2
Shop for millions of products at over 3,600 top online retailers including Amazon, John Lewis, eBay, Expedia and more.

Step 3
A percentage of every pound you spend online will be donated to us. The best thing is, it won't cost you a penny extra.

Give as you Live®

Sowing seeds for the future

Staff at Limagrain across various sites held a 'wear your Christmas jumper to work day' which raised £236. Fundraising breakfast events generated a further £376 for R.A.B.I. Limagrain is an international agricultural co-operative group specialising in field seeds, vegetable seeds and cereal products. The firm grows and markets agricultural and grass seeds for the UK market under the established brand

of LG Seeds and has chosen R.A.B.I as a charity to support. Pictured accepting a cheque for £300 is R.A.B.I regional manager Mary Martin, right.



Bloggers add a twist to the midweek roast



Georgina Davie, left, the face of this year's Great British Beef Week campaign, with R.A.B.I.'s Suzy Deeley.

Ladies in Beef, said: "We care passionately about beef and we know that today's young consumers spend a huge amount of time online.

"We want to capture imaginations online and seed the next generation of British beef eaters.

"We'll be working with the UK's most influential bloggers and tasking them to put their own twist on our mini-roast recipes during Great British Beef Week."

Look out for what's going on during 'Beef Week' at www.rabi.org.uk and [Twitter.com/rabicharity](https://twitter.com/rabicharity) and [Facebook.com/rabicharity](https://facebook.com/rabicharity)

It's Great British Beef Week from April 23 to May 1 and R.A.B.I. will again be promoting one of the nation's favourite meats. For the fifth year running, R.A.B.I. has been chosen by Ladies in Beef, an organisation of female beef farmers, to be the campaign's charity partner and help promote the quality and versatility of British beef.

The start of Great British Beef Week coincides with St George's Day on April 23. The campaign is supported by farmers and retailers, both regionally and nationally, and Suzy Deeley, R.A.B.I. corporate development manager, said: "We want people to get behind the British beef industry and everything it has to offer. All the money we raise will go directly to

helping farming families in financial difficulty." During Great British Beef Week, Ladies in Beef will be promoting quick and versatile beef recipes created by some of Britain's top bloggers. Research from YouGov found that 44% of consumers surveyed gained inspiration to try new recipes online. **Jilly Greed, co-founder of**

Regional Welfare Officers

For welfare enquiries please contact our Helpline number 0808 281 9490 (Oxford)

**TOM ARMSTRONG
NORTH**

Northumberland, County Durham, Scotland



**SUZIE PATON
SOUTH CENTRAL ENGLAND**
Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Somerset (north), Gloucestershire (south), Avon



**ELONWY WILLIAMS
SOUTH WEST WALES**
Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire



**JOHN BASNETT
NORTH EAST ENGLAND**
Yorkshire, Derbyshire



**CATHY DENSLOW
SOUTH ENGLAND**
Somerset (south), Dorset, Hampshire, Isle of Wight



**CLAIRE CRICHARD
SOUTH EAST WALES & BORDERS**
Brecon & Radnor, Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire (north), Herefordshire



**LOUISE WILKINSON
LINCOLNSHIRE**
Lincolnshire, East Riding of Yorkshire



**SALLY HUBBARD
EAST ENGLAND**
Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, Norfolk



**CHLOE RIGLER
SOUTH WEST ENGLAND**
Cornwall, Devon



**JACKIE CLEGG
NORTH WEST ENGLAND**
Cheshire, Lancashire, Cumbria, Staffordshire, Merseyside



**PAT DOBSON
SOUTH EAST ENGLAND**
Berkshire, Surrey, Sussex (east & west), Kent, Middlesex, Essex, London



All enquiries to our welfare department will be dealt with in the strictest confidence

**SARA GARNER
MIDLANDS**
Warwickshire, Northants, Nottinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Leicestershire, Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, West Midlands



**MEL JONES
NORTH WALES & SHROPSHIRE**
Anglesey, Conwy, Caernarfon, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham Merionethshire, Shropshire, Montgomeryshire,



67% increase in grants paid to working farmers in 2016

R.A.B.I saw a 67% rise in requests for help from working families in 2016. R.A.B.I paid out grants of £2,055,000 to 1,358 families last year. That represents a significant increase on the previous year, which saw the charity give out grants of around £1.88m. In the early part of 2016, R.A.B.I was extremely busy helping flood victims in the north of England (primarily Cumbria), giving out emergency grants of £91k. However, the real story of the year was the number of claims received from working farmers, farmworkers and their dependants with £450,169 given to 216 cases. In 2015, the charity paid out around £270k to 151 working families.

Paul Burrows, R.A.B.I CEO, said: "It's been a busy and challenging year for the farming sector with factors such as bad weather, animal disease, fluctuating commodity prices and late RPA payments all contributing to the difficulties faced by many. 'Farmers, in our experience, do not want or readily seek charity. However, our message to them is 'there is no shame in turning to R.A.B.I to help you through the bad times'."

Across the board, R.A.B.I welfare officers also helped people claim £286,691 in state benefits. The county that received

the most support was North Yorkshire, with grants of £152,428, while £283,252 was given out in Wales – with £92,599 going to working people. Trish Pickford, R.A.B.I head of welfare, added: "Welfare staff undertook a variety of training courses during 2016. The Universal Credit system is still being rolled out and staff are also getting to grips with more and more mandatory reconsiderations and appeals on behalf of people turned down for Employment and Support Allowance and Personal Independence Payments. "We have also been

involved with the Low Incomes Tax Reform Group regarding Universal Credit for the self-employed and are still very concerned about the impact this will have on farmers who have low incomes. "In October, members of the head office welfare team went to see the Ken Loach film 'I Daniel Blake' which was a very powerful and moving portrayal of how easy it is for people to slip through the benefits system's safety net. This is something that we recognise in our day to day work. We are also seeing the effects of local authority

and NHS budget cuts which mean that charitable assistance for some of the most vulnerable people in our society is needed more than ever."

Counties that received the most support in 2016

- 1) North Yorkshire, £152k
 - 2) Suffolk, £130k
 - 3) Devon, £128k
 - 4) Cumbria, £111k
 - 5) Norfolk, £100k
 - 6) Lincolnshire, £92k
 - 7) Shropshire, £80k
 - 8) Cheshire, £71k
 - 9) Cornwall, £68k
 - 10) Somerset, £63k
- (figures rounded up)



Certificates for long-serving staff

Congratulations to regional managers Georgina Lamb and Sally Conner and accounts assistant David Cooper who recently completed 10 years' service with R.A.B.I.

David is pictured receiving his long service certificate at Shaw House from CEO Paul Burrows.



Scythe wanted from World War I

Do you have a scythe from the First World War which you would be willing to donate to a new memorial?

To mark the centenary of the end of World War One, a permanent beacon will be constructed in London (site to be confirmed). A number of farming items will be placed in the base and a scythe from the war years is required, approximately 2ft long. Whoever donates it will be given an acknowledgment on the base of the beacon.

If you have a scythe you are willing to donate please contact Rob Harris at rob.harris@rabi.org.uk or telephone 01865 811600.

It takes real courage to ask for help

Farmers, in our experience, do not want or readily seek charity. However, there is no shame in turning to R.A.B.I to help you through the bad times. Farming can be an unpredictable business and many factors linked to profitability are simply beyond the farmer's control.

Don't suffer in silence, give R.A.B.I a call today. We are here to support farming families.

Our work in 2016



£2,055,000

How much we gave out
in grants



1,358

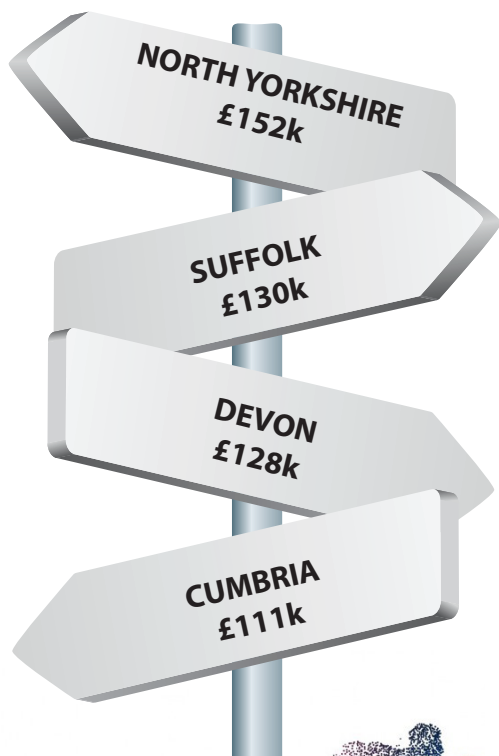
The number of families who
received financial support



£286,691

The amount we helped people
to claim in state benefits

The four counties where we gave the most



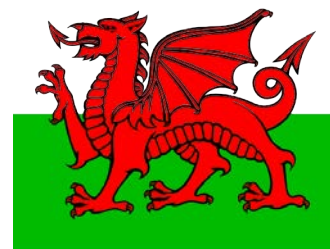
£450,169

Given to working people and their dependants



£91,000

Paid to storm / flood victims
in the north of England



£283,252

Paid out in Wales

We can help you get back on your feet...

If you, or someone you know, works in farming and is in
need of help please call our Freephone
Helpline 0808 281 9490 today





Farmhouse Breakfast 2017

Make someone's winter a little warmer

Hungry car park customers

Members of Ladies in Pigs cooked breakfast rolls for 135 people in R.A.B.I.'s office car park at Shaw House in Oxfordshire. Most of the hungry customers

came from surrounding businesses. The sum of £350 was raised – thanks to Jane Drewe for supplying the sausages and Wrightons of Fritwell for supplying the bacon.



A kitchen full of laughter



Helpers were out in force at Bartholomew's Barn in Kirdford, serving 118 full English breakfasts to raise a whopping £1,360 after costs. The kitchen was full of laughter, chatter and fun in a terrific team effort. Special thanks to Francis Attwell for allowing R.A.B.I. to use her

wedding barn for the ninth year.

Pictured front, left to right, Wendy Diggins, Helen Burden, Sally Field. Back, Judy Burden, Pauline Marks, Tina Finch, Jill Grigor, Francis Attwell, Richard Oatway, Keith Marks, Howard Pullen, Margaret Barlow.

Successful event in Piercebridge



Another successful breakfast at Sam Turner & Sons Ltd in Piercebridge, County Durham, raised a fantastic profit of £1,008.50. Thanks to all the staff, particularly those in the café.

Making time for breakfast matters

R.A.B.I. asked people to get involved with its Farmhouse Breakfast campaign, to promote everything that's good about British produce and make winter a little warmer for families in serious hardship.

Last winter, R.A.B.I. served more than 1,250 breakfasts across 25 campaign events to generate over £16,000 for farming people in financial need.

It's a shocking truth, but even in today's world farming people can sometimes struggle to feed themselves. In 2016, R.A.B.I. gave out £5,890 worth of food vouchers to 16 families and those struggling to

put food on their tables are often elderly, sick, disabled or retired. Many of these people have given their lives to the farming industry but simply fallen on hard times. Farming can be a volatile business and anyone can get into difficulty through no fault of their own. Things such as illness, accidents and animal disease can strike at any time.

Stephen Noble, R.A.B.I. head of fundraising and development, said: "There is no shame in turning to R.A.B.I. to get you through the bad times. We receive incredible support from the farming sector because



CENTRE OF ACTIVITY: Many thanks to the 40 supporters who attended a fundraising farmhouse breakfast at the Holmescales Activity Centre in Kendal, Cumbria.

most who work in the industry understand its uncertainties. "Making time for breakfast is important, but so is making time for others.

"By getting involved with our campaigns you are helping us to make sure that those within farming facing bleak futures are not forgotten."

15 helpers behind scenes



Mel Ellis from Barclays helped in the kitchen as some 235 breakfasts were cooked at Hellingly Village Hall in East Sussex. Gill and Brian Hesselgrave arranged the breakfast in the hall because the event had outgrown their small farmhouse. A magnificent team of 15 helpers cooked, served, cleared, washed and dried.

Knitted Aran blanket presented

There was a lively atmosphere at the Westlands Farm Shop at Pricketts Hill near Wickham on January 26 as 45 people gathered for breakfast.

Charlie Smith presented R.A.B.I regional manager Sally Field with a beautiful Aran knitted blanket. The event raised a total of £283.

£600 from Hollingbourne's Habit

David Chantler of the Kent committee helped organise breakfast at The Dirty Habit in Hollingbourne. Fifty-four guests attended and the event raised more than £600.

Smokery on the Somerset Levels

Around £140 was raised at a breakfast event at The Brown and Forrest Smokery at

Hambridge on the Somerset Levels, courtesy of Jesse and his team.



Farmhouse Breakfast 2017

Make someone's winter a little warmer

Bigger and better each year

Wiltshire couple Melanie and Jeremy Newman opened the doors of their Malmesbury farm to serve cooked breakfasts on February 28. The pair own Winkworth Farm in Lea, on the edge of the Cotswold countryside. The event raised £1,600. Jenni Thompson, R.A.B.I regional manager for the South Central region, said: "Melanie and Jeremy are loyal supporters of R.A.B.I and their Farmhouse Breakfast event has raised thousands of pounds."

"It gets bigger and better each year."

Sterling job

A fundraiser at the Stratford Livestock Centre was held jointly by R.A.B.I and the Addington Fund and 100 people sat down to eat breakfasts cooked up by Isella's catering team. A group of voluntary helpers from the Barclays Agriculture department were set to work in a number of roles and did a sterling job.

Picturesque setting by river

Forty people tucked into full English breakfasts at the Medway Yacht Club in Kent. The event was arranged by Karen Smeed, NFU group secretary for the Rochester and Dartford branches. The setting was picturesque on a crisp, frosty morning beside the River Medway, with



the scenery and boats providing a spectacular start to the day. More than £460 was raised.

Team from Wilfred Scruton at farm shop

The Farm Shop in Hutton Cranswick in Driffield, East Yorkshire hosted a breakfast event in January by kind permission of the Fry family and Helen Stone. Eighty-five guests attended, including the team from Wilfred Scruton Ltd, who took part in a sponsored bike ride last year to raise £4,500 for R.A.B.I. The breakfast raised £650. Pictured are members of the East Yorkshire committee with Helen Stone and staff from the farm shop.



'R.A.B.I meant a lot to Tom'

Jane Jennings's husband Tom Nixey died last June following a short illness.

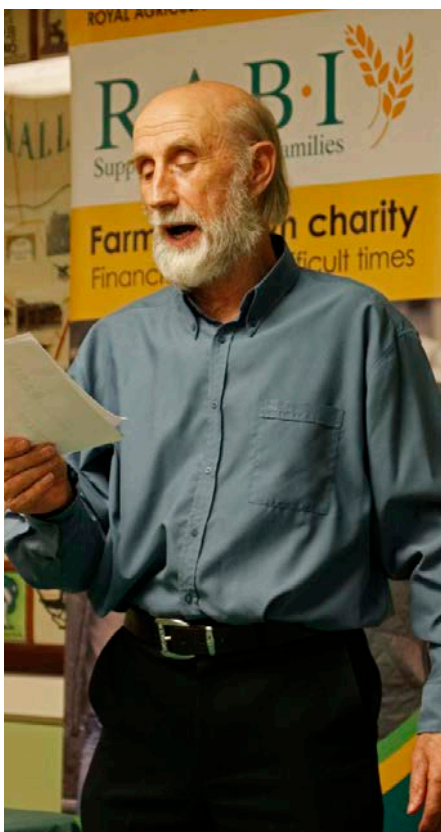
Tom, a farmer all his life, was a staunch supporter of R.A.B.I - as is Jane - and they regularly supported fundraising events in Buckinghamshire. The couple even helped organise two successful dinners. His death has left a big hole in the lives of many, but Jane continues to raise money for the charities that were important to Tom, helping to keep his memory alive. In October 2016, she tackled the Great South Run in Portsmouth, a 10-miler, raising £4,688.85. Of this, £2,012 was donated to R.A.B.I. Jane, from Marlow, is a Bucks committee member and a NFU Group secretary. She said: "Tom died on June 30 last year and we had very little notice because he was diagnosed with cancer on the Monday and died on the Thursday. "On the Thursday morning the nurse told us he was dying and we had about three hours' notice. I said to Tom 'Look, it doesn't sound like we've got long so would you like to talk about your funeral?' "We sorted out hymns, speakers and decided on donations for R.A.B.I and Heart and Souls, a cardiac rehab support group in Buckinghamshire (Tom had suffered a heart attack



LEFT: Jane Jennings and Lisa Cox after the Great South Run. ABOVE: Tom Nixey.

three years before). While we were talking I said 'I suppose I could do the Great South Run again and Tom said 'that's a good idea.' "The sun came out and he passed away with just the two of us together at home. Thankfully it was very quick in the end. I didn't want him to suffer. We had a lovely early morning and then he declined fast. It was all very peaceful though and you could see the pain seeping away." Jane persuaded her niece Lisa Cox

to do the Great South Run with her. Jane had to contend with a nagging hamstring but her main focus was to keep Lisa going. However, Lisa collapsed in sight of the finish and needed the camaraderie of other runners to get over the line, just one second in front of her aunt. Jane said: "R.A.B.I and the Air Ambulance Appeal were always extremely important to both Tom and I. As farming people we were brought up with both charities."



Preparing for first London Marathon at 71

At the age of 71, Mervin Mullard (pictured) is preparing to tackle the London Marathon for the first time. Mervin's wife Trish passed away last November following a two-year battle with cancer. The couple, along with their three daughters, have been fantastic supporters of R.A.B.I in Shropshire, setting up and running a successful annual quiz. Last summer, to celebrate their combined 140th birthdays, Mervin and Trish organised an evening of ceilidh dancing for friends and families. In lieu of presents, they asked for donations to be given to R.A.B.I and the charity was fortunate to receive in excess of £1,500. Mervin, a former

Shropshire committee chairman, took part in the London 10k event a couple of times and also completed a triathlon in 2014 to raise more than £300 for R.A.B.I. Running in the London Marathon has been a long-held ambition and he explained: "I felt I'd better try and do it before I'm too old". What he didn't realise was that to obtain a place in the London field he needed to get another marathon run under his belt and complete inside five hours. With that in mind, he hastily got a place in last May's Liverpool Marathon and Trish was there to cheer him on as he reached the finishing line in a time of 4hrs 53mins and 04secs.

He said: "I was told the Liverpool course was flat by someone, but they obviously lied! The last 10 miles were very hard but I'd never actually run further than 16 miles before." Mervin farms cattle and sheep in the Shropshire Hills on the Welsh border, with Offa's Dyke running right through his farm. He has farmed for his living for 52 years. "You're always active when you work on a farm," he said. "In terms of training for London I think I'm doing enough. I live 1,300ft above sea level and the flattest bit I can find to run takes me up to 1,600ft which is certainly good for the legs. "And the hills are not quite as bad as they used to be!"

Respected throughout their communities

Donations for R.A.B.I were collected at the funeral of Francis Powell (known as Bob).

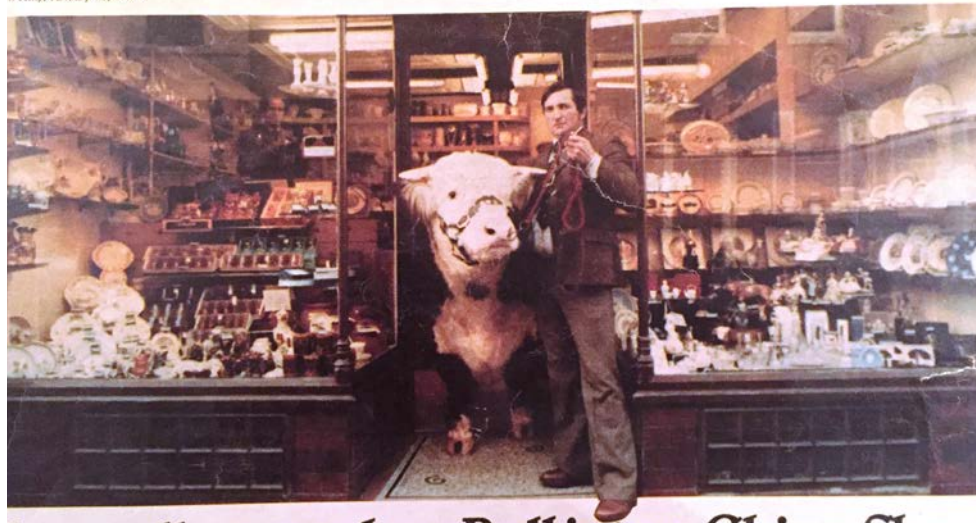
Bob, who died on January 31, was well respected throughout the Herefordshire farming community. For many years he was a freelance stockman, who began by looking after Herefords. Later, he cared for all cattle breeds and was named Stockman of the Year at the Royal Show three times. He trained and groomed animals for shows and sales and was also a cattle judge at agricultural shows. In 1979 the Hereford Herdbook Society approached Hereford

retailer Nancy Rutter – owner of the JW Rutter Ltd china shop – to ask if they could walk a bull around her shop, to illustrate how docile the Hereford breed was. Bob was tasked with leading the bull around the shop (below). It was so well behaved that it even stopped outside the shop to 'spend a penny' over a drain, rather than on the pavement! Bob's funeral took place in February at Hereford Crematorium. He was the proud father of three girls, Diana, Kate and Amy and grandfather of six.

● Former Devon

committee member Gordon Pringle passed away on New Year's Eve. Gordon was born in Newcastle into a family of farmers / successful builders, but he took to the sea for a career. He later worked in the design and management of tankers as well as troubleshooting and consultancy in the oil industry in the Caribbean. On retiring, Gordon returned to farming in the home counties before moving to Ashwell, near Totnes in Devon, where he was a leading Vendeen breeder. He served the Devon committee for many years as treasurer.

Weekly, January 12, 1979



You really can take a Bull into a China Shop if it's a Hereford

£7,386.91 + 60 Euros + 50 Yen = Excellent effort

The NFU is a strong and committed supporter of R.A.B.I and donations were collected at their dinner, held on the first evening of their February conference in Birmingham. There was also a prize draw, to win £250 in cash or two half-day Land Rover driving experiences. The total collected was £7,386.91 – plus 60 Euros and 50 Yen!



The NFU Conference sets the tone for the farming year and is one of the agricultural sector's biggest events. Suzy Deeley, R.A.B.I corporate development

manager, said: "It was a great conference and I'd like to thank the NFU for generously including us again this year and for our free stand space. I'd also like to thank the NFU for helping us to raise such an amazing amount of money at the dinner." Pictured left to right are Minette Batters (NFU deputy president), Meurig Raymond (NFU president) and Guy Smith (NFU vice president).

Be part of the story, spread the word...

R.A.B.I is always looking for new ways to spread the word about its work. We're regularly in the farming press but our reach goes much further than that. During 2016 we featured in more than 800 magazine and newspaper articles across England and Wales and appeared regularly on regional (and sometimes national) radio and TV. This newsletter is sent out to thousands of homes each quarter, in both print and digital formats. Our website is updated daily and last year we averaged more than 3,000 hits per month, attracting in excess of 34,000 visitors. Every day, we are letting people know about the varied services available – and the heroic efforts of our fundraisers – on social media. We now have more than 6,000 followers on Twitter and the figure is rising fast. In April 2014, our Twitter following was around 2,200.

Be part of the story and help promote R.A.B.I.

Go to www.rabi.org.uk or [Twitter.com/rabicharity](https://twitter.com/rabicharity) or [Facebook.com/rabicharity1](https://facebook.com/rabicharity1)

Messages of thanks

"I don't know how to thank you for all the help and hope that you have given me over the years. I believe that R.A.B.I does far more than any other charity or organisation I know to help and save people's lives. Working on the land is such a lonely life and it's hard to approach people for support and sympathy."

"A massive thanks for your financial help, when we were in absolute hell. We can now see the light at the end of the tunnel."

"Can I just thank you for helping my friend? Cancer is a life-changing event and a horrible disease and she does not deserve to have it. She is such a worker and a giver. Thank you for supporting her in all of this as she has to reorganise her life and make very final plans."

"On reading the R.A.B.I magazines we have come to realise the extent of what you do. It's immense."

Beaufort House is outstanding!



ABOVE: Resident Tui Clapp outside Beaufort House. INSET: Head of Home Susan Dean.

Beaufort House in Burnham-on-Sea, one of two R.A.B.I residential care homes primarily for farmers, has been rated 'outstanding' by social care regulator the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The inspection of the Somerset home took place unannounced over two days in September 2016.

Only five out of 421 care homes rated around the same time as Beaufort House received an overall 'outstanding' rating – with 231 rated 'good', 154 'requiring improvement' and 31 considered 'inadequate'. It's estimated that less than one per cent of care homes in England have received an 'outstanding' rating from the CQC.

R.A.B.I chief executive Paul Burrows, who regularly visits Beaufort House, said: "Our ethos as a charity is all about treating people with kindness, compassion, dignity and respect so it's especially pleasing to be recognised for providing a caring service. Beaufort House is a happy place and that's down to the people who run and work in the home. We can all expect to live longer nowadays and older people should not be afraid to make the move into residential care."

As well as receiving an overall rating of 'outstanding', Beaufort House was rated 'outstanding' for its caring and for being well-led. The home's services were rated 'good' for effectiveness, responsiveness and safety.

The CQC report stated: "Residents' wellbeing and happiness was central, staff had a positive rapport with people and they were gentle, attentive, kind and respectful in their approach. The culture within the service was open, friendly and welcoming. The registered manager was open and transparent in her approach."

Head of Home Susan Dean has worked at Beaufort House for more than 20 years. She shares R.A.B.I's vision for putting people first and said: "I am passionate about making Beaufort House the best place possible for our residents to live and I want it to feel like a family home, rather than a care home." The CQC report praised Beaufort House for forging strong links with the local community and helping residents to pursue hobbies and pastimes. Residents' personal histories and achievements were recognised and celebrated with

staff 'doing small acts of kindness' to support this.

The report also praised the clean and safe environment, the way medicines were managed and administered and the attention to detail given towards 'end of life' care.

It also said: "As the service was a registered charity for people who had worked in agriculture, good wholesome local produce was part of the philosophy of care. The grounds were easily accessible and maintained by a full-time gardener. People mattered and care and attention was given to every small detail."

Paul Burrows added: "The majority of staff have been with us for a long time and are extremely loyal and supportive. It's a team effort. We believe in an open culture and it is vital that residents have a say in what goes on. I am extremely proud of both R.A.B.I homes – Beaufort House and Manson House in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. I believe they are not just flagships for R.A.B.I but for elderly care in general."

To read Beaufort House's CQC report in full go to <http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-116677122>

Award for gardens that brighten up town

Beaufort House was also a winner at the annual Burnham in Bloom awards in November. Scores of residents, children and business owners gathered in the town council chambers for the presentation evening when awards were given to those who brightened up Burnham and Highbridge with displays in 2016. Beaufort House came first in the best overall commercial category, a credit to full-time gardener David Harrison.



Giving something back

Katy Last, from Suffolk, raised £700 by holding an afternoon tea for her friends. Katy's grandmother is a resident at Manson House and here, in her own words, Katy shares what inspired her to organise a fundraiser for R.A.B.I.

"It was with enormous pleasure that I hosted a Prosecco-fuelled afternoon tea at my house for 18 of my closest friends and family in recognition of the wonderful care my grandmother receives at Manson House, by the kindest and most dedicated staff.

"My grandma has been a resident at Manson House for nearly a year. We have witnessed her transform from an individual ready to give up on life to someone who has a renewed zest for living. Her accommodation is cosy and warm and she enjoys being so close to the town centre, the regular hairdresser visits, the range of activities and above all the fellowship of the other residents. "But, what we, her family, love is the fact that we know she is happy and safe in an environment where the staff genuinely have time and care for their residents.

"I knew I wanted to raise some money for R.A.B.I to show our appreciation and thanks, but running a marathon or a midnight walk was most certainly not my style.

"I have a group of girlfriends and together we have formed an afternoon tea club. We have frequented some of Suffolk's finest establishments and scored them accordingly. Last summer, during my 'harvest widow' existence I hosted the club at my house, scoring rather highly! It did plant the seed for my fundraising idea.

"My sister-in-law worked hard to source some incredible prizes and we took £350 on the raffle and auction.

"My beautiful friends rewarded our efforts generously. I was overwhelmed by this support, but am so glad we can offer a tiny bit back."

Recognised by Her Majesty

R.A.B.I received a £2,500 gift from The Patron's Fund, the charitable fund set up to acknowledge Her Majesty The Queen's 90th birthday and the work of the charitable organisations for which she acts as a patron. Around £750,000 is available to distribute between nearly 300 charities and other organisations in the UK and the Commonwealth. The fund received generous donations from a range of supporters including individual donors, businesses,

schools, community groups and the proceeds from The Patron's Lunch, the event on the Mall last June.

Sir Stuart Etherington, Chair of the board of trustees for The Patron's Fund, said: "The Patron's Fund is very pleased to be able to support R.A.B.I with its valuable work.

"R.A.B.I is among hundreds of organisations for which The Queen acts as a patron, which between them make a difference to causes and communities in the UK and the Commonwealth."

Thinking of others at 90



Dan Jones – father of R.A.B.I regional manager Linda Jones – recently celebrated his 90th birthday. In lieu of gifts he asked for donations for R.A.B.I and Macmillan Cancer Support and both charities will receive £400. Dan (pictured), who lives in Lampeter with wife Irene, had a small party for family and close friends at a pub in the town.

Regional News

R.A.B.I has county committees across England and Wales, who work at a local level to raise awareness of the charity as well as funds. Committees are the lifeblood of R.A.B.I and we very much value the time and effort that people put into supporting us.

Popping up all over Switzerland



STAYING MOBILE: Richard Beaumont and James Nathan on their Brompton bikes. Photo: Robert Guthrie Photography www.robertguthrie.co.uk

which have been partially paid for by our sponsors Brompton. They are designed for inner city commuting and not mountains, which should definitely add to the challenge ahead."

The pair will be raising money for R.A.B.I and Cancer Research UK.

"We met at The Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester," explained James.

"We have both seen the hardship and struggles that farmers face. I truly believe there are a lot of farmers out there that need the support that we, as a team, can offer."

In 2013, James and another friend cycled from London to Zakynthos in Greece in less than 23 days, having to contend with temperatures of up to 35 degrees.

They raised a fantastic £6,000 for R.A.B.I.

Though James is an experienced cyclist, Richard is relatively new to the world of 'lycra'.

To prepare for their Swiss adventure, the pair have racked up the miles on long distance training runs, taking in as many hills as they can find.

James added: "We are currently averaging 425 miles per month but it's time now to up our game!"

Fylde farmers show appreciation



North West regional manager Georgina Lamb was delighted to receive a surprise donation for £1,000 after taking a last minute booking to speak to the Fylde Farmers Club at Garstang Golf and Country

Club. Georgina stepped in at an hour's notice because the original speaker was taken ill.

Georgina is pictured with club chairman Richard Eccles, left and treasurer Tom Ibison.

Two pals from London, James Nathan and Richard Beaumont, are steeling themselves to ride across Switzerland on folding bikes.

James is a wine merchant with a catering background, while Richard, who has worked in recruitment, is currently taking a break from city living after overcoming testicular cancer.

James explained: "We do not have a direct route planned but this is part of the fun!"

"We aren't using maps, but we plan to leave for Switzerland on April 14 and set off from Basel (northern Switzerland) to the Gotthard Pass, one of the 15 most dangerous roads in the world.

"We then aim to drift down into Lake Lugano towards the end of the week.

"We'll be riding two custom-made bikes

Traditional service marks start of farming year

£8,600 presented by Worcestershire

Regional manager for the West Midlands, Becky Davies, was invited to the AGM of NFU Worcestershire to be presented with a cheque for £8,600 from various fundraising events within the county throughout 2016. This included £4,000 from Steve Morris who did the Great North Run for the 12th time in aid of R.A.B.I. Becky is pictured with Andrew Goodman, treasurer for Worcestershire NFU and also treasurer for R.A.B.I.'s Worcestershire committee.



Blessing the tractor

A large congregation gathered at Thaxted Church to take part in a traditional service to bless a tractor and plough and mark the start of the farming year. Morris Men pulled the plough into the church and a member of Essex YFC gave an account of the farming year. At the end of the service the Morris Men led the congregation back outside where the Bishop of Chelmsford, the Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell, blessed a Massey Ferguson tractor. The collection from the service was shared between R.A.B.I and FCN for their work in the Essex farming community.

Somerset's summer sizzler



R.A.B.I and FCN are £780 better off thanks to Somerset's 'Summer Sizzler', a fundraiser held in a former calving shed in Hutton that attracted around 1,000 people. The NFU helped organise the Sizzler last July on the Walnut Barn farm in Hutton belonging to Mark Orchard. Mark's son James is chair of Weston & Banwell YFC,

who joined forces with the NFU to put on the event. Live music and a hog roast helped pulled in the locals, with the YFC receiving bar takings and additional profits being divided between R.A.B.I and the Farming Community Network (FCN). In November, both charities were presented with cheques for £395 at a presentation ceremony

held at R.A.B.I's residential care home in Burnham-on-Sea, Beaufort House.

Pictured at Beaufort House, left to right, are Malcolm Thomas (chairman of R.A.B.I), Mark Orchard, James Orchard, Mike House, Paul Frost (NFU branch chairman) and Mark Stanley-Smith (representing the Farming Community Network).

Soup on Sunday at family home

- Shropshire's Soup on Sunday fundraiser was held at the home of John and Christine Downes. Some 50 people joined them for a leisurely lunch, selecting from seven different homemade soups, with coffee and cake for afters. Donations to R.A.B.I totalled more than £650.

- Gordon and Frances Bromfield from Burraton near Yealmpton in Plymouth celebrated their Ruby wedding (40th) with a lunch at the Cottage Hotel in Hope Cove for family and friends. The couple requested donations for R.A.B.I in lieu of gifts, raising a magnificent £795.

- A celebration of rural life brought people to Ripon Cathedral in January for a Plough Sunday service. Mayors and civic representatives from across the region attended, along with guests from Young Farmers, R.A.B.I, FCN and the Yorkshire Agricultural Society. The service was led by the Bishop of Ripon James Bell and the address was given by Poul Christensen CBE, president of the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs.

- The Monmouthshire committee's beetle drive at St Arvans Hall in Chepstow raised £374. R.A.B.I regional manager for Wales, Linda Jones, said: "It was good to see people of all ages socialising with new acquaintances, moving from table to table. It was like a rural version of speed dating!"

- The Soham branch of the Young Farmers Club held a ceilidh in January at Hiam Sports and Social Club to raise funds for R.A.B.I, their chosen charity of the year.

200 guests push Dorset auction past £14k mark

Yorkshire rural networking for women in farming



Regional manager Sally Conner accepted a cheque for £400 at a Yorkshire Rural Support Network meeting. The money came from a 'Women in Farming' event run by the YRSN. Pictured from left to right are Pauline Broadwith (Red Cross and FCN), Sally Conner, Charlotte Russell (Yorkshire Agricultural Society), Philippa Coulfish (chair of YRSN) and Kate Dale (coordinator of YRSN).

Keeping fit

Catherine Griffiths and Jenny Williams from Tudweiliog in Pwllheli regularly walk two to three miles per day to keep fit. The pair walked six miles to raise funds for R.A.B.I and raised £312.50. Jenny, on the right, is 86.



Colourful sell-out

- A floral art and musical evening at Caersws Village Hall was a sell-out, with £1,100 raised. Chelsea Flower Show exhibitor Christine Higgs skilfully put together five floral arrangements which were auctioned off by Philip Moyle, Christine's brother and a local farmer. Llanbadarn Fynydd Girls and accompanist Andrew Thomas provided the musical entertainment, with refreshments served throughout the evening by Mochdre & Penstrowed YFC members, Sam Morgan, Ryan Vaughan, Kieran Owen and George Turley. A raffle was also held to further boost funds.

- Stanfords Rural, a long established and leading firm of chartered surveyors, auctioneers, valuers and estate agents operating throughout East Anglia, raised £1,905 at their annual Primestock dinner in Colchester. The money will be split between R.A.B.I, CLIC Sargent and the St Helena Hospice.

Sir Oliver Letwin offers auction prize of Westminster tea for two



WITH FRIENDS: Ben Wightman, centre, with from left to right, Roger Whitting, Jane Crocker, Jane Whedden and Jenny Kelleway. Photo: Terry Fisher Photography

To mark his 70th birthday, Ben Wightman held an auction of promises which raised £14k for R.A.B.I, the Farming Community Network and the Addington Fund.

Ben has worked in agriculture for half a century. He was a general farmworker in Wiltshire, a herdsman in Oxfordshire and a foreman for the Co-op in Lincolnshire, before managing

a 1,500-acre estate in Herefordshire. He subsequently managed Yeo Valley Yoghurt in Bristol and Hanford PLC in Piddle Valley. Following redundancy, he launched his

own agricultural consultancy business. Together with a team of secretaries, Jane Crocker, Jenny Kelleway and Jane Whedden, Ben asked numerous organisations in Dorset and Somerset to support his auction and was overwhelmed by offers of more than 46 auction lots, raffle prizes and sponsorship. The Exchange at Sturminster Newton in the Blackmore Vale area of Dorset was filled with 200+ guests from the farming industry and Castle Cove Sailing Club (Ben is also a keen sailor). Andrew Robinson from Symonds and

Sampson, helped by Roger Whitting, took control of the auction to raise the fantastic sum of £14,000. Sir Oliver Letwin, MP for West Dorset, offered tea for two in the Palace of Westminster as well as a tour of the Houses of Parliament, while Duke's Auctioneers in Dorset offered a two-hour appraisal of house contents with award winning valuer Timothy Medhurst. Other lots included a vintage car for a wedding, two days shadowing a vet, golf vouchers, three course meals, will preparation and a winter break in a fabulous holiday cottage.

Hexham's Strictly attracts movers and shakers

Raffle at the Ruswarp Mart

A raffle at the Ruswarp Mart Café near Whitby in North Yorkshire raised £310. Pictured are local farmers and staff at the café. Anne Wheeler (dark hair, wearing apron) runs the café.



BACKING BRITAIN: Meurig Raymond (left) with Paul Burrows. The NFU president says R.A.B.I. is more important than ever to people in rural areas.

£108 billion industry that employs 3.9m

NFU East Anglia hosted a 'Back British Farming' event in support of R.A.B.I., with guest speaker Meurig Raymond, NFU president.

Thirty-six invited guests attended the function at the NFU East Anglia offices in Newmarket, Suffolk. The main conversation around the

room focused on what was in store for the farming world in 2017, with most agreeing it would be a year of uncertainties.

After enjoying a full English breakfast, Mr Raymond spoke to guests about the importance of the farming industry, highlighting the fact that

the food and farming sector is worth £108 billion in the UK and employs more than 3.9 million people.

He also stressed that R.A.B.I. was 'more important than ever' to rural communities. R.A.B.I. CEO Paul Burrows also spoke at length about the charity's work.

These vets love a foxtrot!

Scott Mitchell Associates, veterinary surgeons from Hexham in Northumberland, held a Strictly Come Dancing competition (pictured) at Hexham Auction Mart in aid of

R.A.B.I. The evening was a sell-out with a wonderful roast beef dinner served before the competition. Six couples from the farming world had previously received dance lessons before performing

in front of a packed audience and the judges. Hexham's own 'Len, Darcy, Bruno and Craig' gave mostly constructive advice with the audience also being involved in the scoring. The winners were

Jayne Longlands, a practice manager for Scott Mitchell Vets and local councillor Edward Heslop. A fantastic evening raised more than £5,000.

Photos: Anne Lawson



BEMs awarded

● Duncton farmer David Burden received the British Empire Medal in February at a special presentation at the South Downs National Park headquarters. Mr Burden has served on many farming committees and has been a member of the National Farmers Union since 1972. He is a past county NFU chairman and also serves on R.A.B.I.'s West Sussex committee. Congratulations also to Nottingham committee member Victor Hird, who was awarded a BEM in the Queen's New Year Honours. Victor is a farm and estates manager at the Brackenhurst Campus of Nottingham Trent University. He was recognised for services to land-based education.

● A reception at an Ellacotts & Robinson & Hall seminar at the Buckingham Ballroom raised £197.50.

Bringing home the bacon

Ithyl and Lynda Brown run the successful Neuadd Fach Baconry business in Llandinam, Powys, employing five people and processing around 10 pigs per week. They've won Gold in the Great Taste Awards, culminating in the 'Best Speciality in Wales' award in 2006 for their back bacon.

The couple also regularly support the work of R.A.B.I, giving out bacon hampers in the Montgomeryshire area at Christmas time and frequently offering meat prizes for auctions and raffles at R.A.B.I events. Lynda explained: "R.A.B.I helped us to feed animals many years ago during the Foot & Mouth crisis when we couldn't move them for 10 weeks. Giving something back now is our small thank you."



THINKING OF OTHERS: Ithyl and Lynda Brown with R.A.B.I chairman Malcolm Thomas (left).

The baconry was opened in October 1999 by Lembit Opik, then the local MP. Attention to detail is important and pigs are fed a ration that is mixed on

the farm. Carcasses are hung for five days before they are processed and curing takes place over 10 days before everything is sliced and packaged.

Sheep competition at Peterborough's Smithfield Show

The East of England Agricultural Society stages the Smithfield Show each November at the Peterborough Showground. It's a two-day event where prime stock is judged and sold. R.A.B.I hosts a sheep class and exhibitors are invited to bring additional lambs to the show and support R.A.B.I by donating 50-100% of auction proceeds. There were two classes; native lamb, won by MJ & JA Pinny and



continental lamb, won by R Garth. Both classes were judged by Adam Watson. The lambs were sold at the end of the second day and £736.80 was raised

for R.A.B.I. A cheque was presented at the LAMMA Show in January by members of the East of England Agricultural Society (pictured).



In class of their own

Six lambs were sold in aid of R.A.B.I in the single lamb class at December's Melton Mowbray Fatstock show.

The class was sponsored by Harry Baines, Duncan Burton and Tom Greenow and R.A.B.I provided a hamper as a prize. Simon Hubbard's winning lamb weighed 58kg and sold for £160. In total, £606 was raised from lamb sales.

Pictured left is Simon with his winning lamb and R.A.B.I regional manager Mary Martin, who covers the East Midlands.

Important date on the calendar

- Wiltshire's Farmers Ball raises funds for various rural charities and last autumn R.A.B.I was presented with a cheque for £2,000. This year's ball was held in Devizes and organiser Melissa Candy spoke about how important the event has become on the county's social calendar. Some 330 tickets were sold and the band Echo went down a storm. Annie's Catering served canapés, salads with new potatoes, cold meats, chocolate platters and cheese and biscuits. A good night was had by all with people partying through to 1am.

- Sausages and saxophones were on the menu at a winter warmer at Mochre Old School, Montgomeryshire. Sausage and mash and homemade puddings (made by committee members) were served up, with talented Powys saxophonist Phil Brown providing the entertainment. Potatoes were donated by local farmer Glyn Watkins and sausages were given by Ithyl and Lynda Brown of Neuadd Fach Baconry. The evening raised £1,028.

- There was a new venue for the Bucks December dinner, The Old Thatch at Adstock. A great night was had by all with a three course meal, good wine and sparkling company. The event brought in £1,107.25.

- Following talks from regional manager Georgina Lamb, donations were received from Goosnargh Farmers Club (£500) and the Stretton Discussion Group (£340).

- Leicestershire chairman Veronica Sutton hosted a fundraising lunch at her home in November.

Making their presence felt in Monmouthshire



A quiz night at the Monmouthshire Livestock Centre raised more than £1,000. This was the second quiz night at Maria's award-winning mart café and all 120 tickets were sold making the evening a resounding success. The Monmouthshire committee organised the evening with

Malcolm Thomas taking on the role of quizmaster. R.A.B.I regional manager for Wales, **Linda Jones, said:** "This was the fifth fundraising event hosted by our Monmouthshire committee and we are delighted that once again the kind people of Monmouthshire

have supported us. Committee members have worked hard to raise awareness of our work in the county and in 2016 we gave out nearly £15k in Monmouthshire, more than doubling the £6k given out in 2015." Quizzers enjoyed sausage and chips provided by Maria and her staff.

Gourmet dinner is under the hammer

Prior to the sale of stock at the Primestock Show at Rugby Market, the Warwickshire committee was given the opportunity to sell a dinner party by auction in the livestock ring! South Warwickshire based caterer Sue

Dalby generously offered to cook a gourmet five course dinner for the lucky winner and selected guests. The successful bidder was Warwickshire committee chairman Roger Campion and £520 was raised for R.A.B.I.

Shropshire YFCs unite

● The 72nd annual meeting of the Shropshire Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs, which has a membership of around 1,000 in 18 clubs, was held at Shrewsbury Town's Greenhous Meadow Stadium. Outgoing chairman Ed Potter of Dorrington YFC presented cheques for £5,000 each to R.A.B.I and the League of Friends of the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. Ed, who has been replaced as chairman by Becky Green, is pictured below with Shropshire committee member Christine Downes.



● A hunt at Pewsey Hill Farm in Wiltshire, organised by the Tedworth Hunt, raised £404.57. Regional manager Jenni Thompson attended and spoke to hunt followers about R.A.B.I's work. The Tedworth Hunt has now raised more than £5k for R.A.B.I over many years of loyal support.

● A reunion of Shropshire YFC members from the mid-1980s took place at Dorrington Hall and R.A.B.I was presented with a cheque for £150.

● NFU Cymru has chosen R.A.B.I to be its charity of the year. R.A.B.I has been given a page of editorial each month in *Farming Wales* and other fundraising initiatives are being arranged.

Bishop of Chester gives address at Reaseheath service

Parishioners from the United Benefice of Acton, Minshull, Worleston and Wettenhall, together with members of the local agricultural community and R.A.B.I supporters, gathered on February 5 for a Plough Sunday service in the new horticulture building at Reaseheath College.

Afterwards, guests enjoyed a soup lunch followed by cakes and tray bakes provided by church parishioners and R.A.B.I

committee members. Musical accompaniment was provided by a group from St Mary's Church, Acton. The service was led by the Reverend Anne Lawson with an address from The Bishop of Chester. A total of £333 was raised for R.A.B.I. Pictured left to right are Cheshire committee member John Parkin with his dog Rex, R.A.B.I regional manager Georgina Lamb, Rev Anne Lawson and the Bishop of Chester.



Waterlooville club remembers Joss

'Sum generated is measure of the man'

The Rotary Club of Waterlooville nominated R.A.B.I to receive the money that was raised at their annual golf day at Southwick Park in Hampshire, in memory of popular Rotary member Joss Cleeve who died last year. Roy Wilkins and Joss's widow Linda Cleeve

presented regional manager Sally Field (left) with a cheque for £5,000. Roy said: "Joss was loved by so many people but the amount raised was way beyond our expectations and way beyond anything we've ever achieved before. That just shows how amazing the man was."



Race night for busy branch in the East



R.A.B.I was one of three charities to each receive £1,000 thanks to the fundraising efforts of farmers within the NFU's Cambridge East and West Suffolk branch. The money was raised from various branch activities during 2016, including a successful race night. Branch chairman Andrew Blenkiron, estate director

at the Euston Estate, presented the money to Barbara McGee from East Anglian Air Ambulance, Lucy Bellefontaine from R.A.B.I and Ian Bell of the Addington Fund. During the presentation, Andrew paid tribute to the generosity of farmer Alan Bullen, who hosted the race night at his farm at Fulbourn in April 2016

but sadly passed away on Christmas Eve. Pictured left to right at Euston are: NFU group secretary Alex Walters, branch members Denise and Jeff Claydon, R.A.B.I regional manager Lucy Bellefontaine, branch chairman Andrew Blenkiron, NFU group secretary David Blackwell and NFU county chairman Colin Clifton-Brown.

Drop in for advice at Melton Mowbray

Representatives from farming charities are present at Melton Mowbray Livestock Market every Tuesday from 9.30am until 1pm to provide confidential help and advice. R.A.B.I has joined forces with the Farming Community Network, Nottinghamshire

Rural Support, Lincolnshire Rural Support Network and the market's chaplaincy service

to provide a regular presence at the market. Pictured are representatives from the various

organisations, including R.A.B.I welfare officer Sara Garner (fourth from right).



Society takes over Shropshire shops

● The Shropshire and West Midlands Agricultural Society has taken on three former Relate shops in Shrewsbury and Oswestry under its new brand, The Rural Charity. Proceeds will go to the agricultural and rural community. Bosses at the society, which organises the Shropshire County Show, said they were excited about their new venture. Ian Bebbington, society director, said: "It's a new development for the society and we hope it will bring in lots of funds to really make a difference to people's lives. "We expect to be able to make donations to our supported schemes such as the National Young Farmers' organisation, R.A.B.I and to individuals who find themselves in financial or other difficulties or who need retraining, financial support and temporary help."

● To celebrate 25 years in business, Goldingham Contracts, trading as Agricultural Supply Services, hosted a conference for their clients at their home in Whitminster, Gloucestershire. R.A.B.I was delighted to be chosen as a charity partner and R.A.B.I head of fundraising & development Stephen Noble attended the conference. Donations and an auction, which included a £500 crop-cooling fan kindly donated by Evans and Pearce, raised around £1,400.

● Aylsham's Agricultural Show Association celebrated its 70th anniversary by handing out 36 cheques worth £31,500 to various charities. R.A.B.I was fortunate to receive a cheque for £1,000.

Dawlish dinner brings in £20k over 12 years



HAVING A BALL: Guests at the Langstone Cliff Hotel in Dawlish.

Tanks for the memories

Andrew and Catherine Goodridge organised a spring ball at the Langstone Cliff Hotel in Dawlish which raised £1,000 for R.A.B.I and £500 for Devon Young Farmers.

The Washington Suite at the hotel is a tremendous facility and there was plenty of room for 84 guests to venture onto the dance floor to the music of Ceilidh band Spinach with Norman

– if they could still move after a four-course meal. It's a staggering statistic but in the 12 years this function has existed more than £20k has been generated for R.A.B.I with 1,300+ meals served and 350 bottles of wine quaffed.

To round off the meal guests were presented with trays of delectable petit fours classically prepared by Catherine Goodridge.

The auction included a varied range of lots including a Land Rover driving experience, courtesy of Mafford Land Rover. If that wasn't enough, bids were also sought to drive a tank, thanks to Dartmoor 4x4. While the auction was going on a silent raffle with 30 prizes was held which raised £617. There was a prize winner on every table.

Ball profits of £8k expected

● The Clydesdale Ballroom at the Doubletree in Milton Keynes was the venue for the 94th Bucks Farmers' Annual Ball. It took place on Saturday February 11 and was attended by over 420 guests. Following a reception and dinner, guests were able to try their luck at the casino and other gaming tables. There was also a chance to bid in the silent auction – and dance into the small hours to the band 'Rollercoaster'. It is hoped that this year's profits will exceed £8,000.

● Strixton Manor, home of Northamptonshire committee chairman David Hutchinson (pictured), was the venue for the Northamptonshire drinks and nibbles event. The evening raised an incredible £6,000, thanks largely to an auction which included some great lots including a lawnmower.



New chair for Cumbria

Pat Turnbull (left) has stepped down as Cumbria committee chair and will be replaced by Laura Wilson (right).

"Pat has been a fantastic chairman to work alongside over the past five years and has played an instrumental role in forging business relationships and fundraising opportunities across Cumbria," said North West regional manager Georgina Lamb. Pat will remain on the Cumbria committee.



Fine art display in Cambridge



The Cambridge committee once again joined forces with Cheffins to host a fine art preview evening at the Cambridge salesrooms. Guest enjoyed drinks and canapés and Cheffins experts were on hand to

deliver information on each piece of art. R.A.B.I trustee John Stanley (pictured, centre) also gave a talk about the charity's work. A raffle on the night helped boost the total raised to around £1,000.

S4C crew film at market show

● Ruthin Market's Primestock Show coincided with a carol concert organised by the Clwyd committee. The sum of £1,019.63 was collected on the evening with Barclays Bank providing match funding to boost the total to more than £2,000. Clwyd R.A.B.I county chair Glyn Coleclough spoke about the charity's work and a crew from S4C's popular farming programme *Ffermio* filmed on the night.

● Eighty people packed into the Lavender Farm tearoom on the Isle of Wight for a carol evening. Canon Graham Morris coordinated proceedings, with Karen Sheath accompanying on piano. The evening raised more than £800, special thanks to Reuben Abbott and family for use of the tearoom.

● The East Yorkshire committee put on an Advent afternoon tea at Bishop Wilton Village Hall, which raised £1,501.50. The Farmers Daughters sang Christmas songs and a Christmas tree was kindly donated by Chris and Nicki Hepworth.

● A carol evening at the cattle ring at Netherhampton Sales Room, Salisbury, was organised by the Wiltshire committee and raised £250.

● The Truro Primestock Committee kindly supported R.A.B.I at their events in Truro in December. Around £440 was raised at their auction of produce after their Primestock Show on the Lemon Quay in Truro and the following weekend they gave R.A.B.I a space at their craft fair where over £350 was raised through the sale of cards and calendars.

Fatstock society gives generously

Around 200 people attended an event in the cattle ring at Ashford Market on December 13, which raised more than £600.

At the start of the evening, Alan Mummery, a senior partner at Lambert & Foster, also presented R.A.B.I representatives with a cheque for £7,500. This money came from the Maidstone and District Fatstock Association, who held their last show in

2014. The society is being wound up, with funds donated to worthy causes. R.A.B.I received a second donation of £7,500 from the association at a farmhouse breakfast fundraiser at the Dirty Habit in Hollingsbourne, Kent in February. Alan Mummery (pictured right) was again on hand to make the donation to Kent committee members Charles Tassell and Sheila Adams.



Back by popular demand

Top class musical entertainment ensured the 600-plus audience went home from the Welshpool Livestock Centre full of Christmas spirit on December 4. Returning by popular demand were the Radnor Twurzels, who performed some much

loved Christmas favourites. However, being a fundraiser for R.A.B.I, they were also called upon to perform their version of *Combine Harvester* which went down a storm. The Montgomeryshire committee organised the event, which raised an estimated £1,200.

Mulled wine keeps on flowing

Supporters in Staffordshire were treated to an evening of floristry at Sandon Hall with demonstrator and radio presenter Anita Wright. Thanks to the Earl and

Countess of Harrowby for hosting. Organisers Margaret and John Read kept everyone supplied with mulled wine and mince pies and the night raised £1,445.

Live nativity held by candlelight

● A live nativity play was held by candlelight in Arundel. The play was staged by Chichester YFC and card sales on the day totalled £123.50 with donations of more than £400 collected in buckets.

● At Swinton Castle in North Yorkshire a carol evening was attended by around 100 people and raised £1,200. The evening was held by permission of Lord Masham and entertainment was provided by The Coverbridge Quartet. During the evening, Ian Smith, of the Wharfedale Farmers' Auction Mart, also presented R.A.B.I with a cheque for £700, following a charity walk along part of the Dales Way.

● A Christmas concert at Talgarth Town Hall, organised by the Brecon & Radnor committee, raised more than £750. Elaine Stephens, chair of the committee, welcomed guests, while compere for the night was R.A.B.I chairman Malcolm Thomas MBE.

● Petworth United Reform Church raised around £250 for R.A.B.I with their popular Christmas Tree Festival. Reverend Mark Betson led proceedings and Rosemary Thompson played piano.

● Archdeacon of Salop Paul Thomas presided over a service at Shrewsbury Livestock Market, organised by the Shropshire committee, which raised £1,124. Hosts for the evening were Halls Auctioneers.

● Pembrokeshire's ladies' committee raised £454 with a Christmas bingo night. The event was held at Haverfordwest Cricket Club.

Festive flashback: Carols and choirs galore

York school singers in good voice



The carol service at York Auction Mart Carol proved popular with the choirs of Sand Hutton and Warthill primary schools taking part. Reverend Canon Leslie Morley helped plan and take the service, with the event raising £375.

Golden sounds of silver



Young farmers from Bicester Juniors were out in force at a carol concert at Thame Farmers Auction Market.

The sum of £1,080 was generated, with more than 150 people packing into the sales ring. Music was provided by the Chinnor Silver Training Band. An auction was held on the night with donated

lots bringing in more than £300. R.A.B.I also had a stand at the Thame Fat Stock Show in December, with £236.50 collected from card and calendar sales. A cake make by market staff member Charlotte Baxter was put up for auction and raised £352.

Photo: Vicki Walton

Wigton is a winner

Carol services were held over consecutive nights at the Wigton Auction Mart and around 400 people attended. The services raised more than £5k for R.A.B.I and two Christmas cakes were even auctioned off for £200!



Tree-mendous jumper

Cheshire committee member and dairy farmer Phil Smallwood (pictured) took Christmas jumpers to a whole new level with this design, created by wife Dorothy. Phil wore it at the Christmas pub quiz at Brookfield Golf Club, which raised £1,200. Congratulations to Anthony Wildman and his winning team from Middlewich NFU.



Ring out those bells

- Around 100 people packed into the selling ring at Hailsham Market for a carol evening which brought in £450 for R.A.B.I and FCN.

- A hamper raffle, arranged by the Carmarthenshire committee, raised £1,329. Funds were further boosted by the presentation of £1,000 from West Wales Vintage.

- The Station Singers took part in a Christmas concert at a packed Richmond Church, North Yorkshire. The choir itself was 120-strong, creating a fantastic sound. Profits went to R.A.B.I and the Royal British Legion.

- Somerset YFC raised £285.78 at a Christmas service.

- Staff at the NFU's Stoneleigh Park head office in Warwickshire set an alternative dress code for one day in December. They raised £410 for R.A.B.I.

- A carol evening in the lambing barn at Sparsholt College generated £400.

- Proceeds from card and calendar sales at the Winslow Fatstock Show totalled £195.50. A further £135.90 was taken at the Salisbury Christmas Show and £157 at an event at Oxfordshire Golf Club.

- The Gloucestershire committee returned to the auction mart in Cirencester for the third consecutive year to raise £414.08. Committee members handed out mince pies and mulled wine.

- Around £100 was raised at the Farol Christmas Toy Fair in Thame, Oxfordshire.

- Gisburn Auction Mart's first carol concert drew in 200+ people and raised a fabulous £2,300. The night would not have been possible without the hard work of Ann Faraday of Richard Turner and Sons who was instrumental in bringing everything together.

Diary Dates

March

- 22 Aylesbury YFC talk
- 23 Staffordshire dinner, County Showground
- 23 Lincolnshire quiz night, Bourne
- 25 Breakfast, Plough Inn, Leigh
- 25-26 East of England Food Festival, Knebworth
- 28 Breakfast, Wheelbirks, Northumberland
- 28 Hansons auction event, Derbyshire
- 30 Joules seconds sale, Buckingham RFC
- 30 Beef dinner, Railway Inn, New Ellerby
- 31 Simon Ayshford Memorial Shoot, Kent

April

- 2 Agricultural lunch, Newark Showground
- 4 Dorset quiz night, Abbotsbury
- 5 Clwyd floral art demonstration, Northop
- 5 Beaufort House coffee morning
- 6 Joules seconds sale, Gs, Ely
- 6 Breakfast, Northallerton, North Yorkshire
- 6 South Yorkshire pub quiz
- 8 Farmyard sale, Buckfastleigh
- 14 Belper YFC pie night
- 16-17 Thame Country Show
- 19 Norfolk quiz and supper, East Tuddenham
- 19 Bingo night, Carmarthenshire
- 20 Meet the Chairman, Salle Farm, Norfolk
- 21 Joules seconds sale, Holbeach
- 21 Somerset beef supper, Frogmary Green
- 22 Beef dinner, London Beech Hotel, Kent
- 22 St George's evening, Herstmonceux
- 23 Ken Jackson family concert, East Yorkshire
- 25 Dorset beef lunch, Dorchester
- 26 Beef quiz night, Anchor Inn, Whitley
- 28 Colours fashion show, Penrith

May

- 1 North Somerset Show, Wrexham
- 7 Suffolk Young Farmers Country Fair, Easton
- 11-14 RHS Malvern Spring Festival, Worcestershire
- 12 Coffee morning, Whitchurch Civic Centre
- 13-14 Tatton Park Country Fair, Knutsford
- 14 Tour of Elmley Bird Sanctuary, Kent
- 14 South Suffolk Show, Bury St Edmunds
- 16 NSA Wales, Talybont-on-Usk
- 17 R.A.B.I AGM, Oxford
- 18 Beef Expo, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire
- 18-20 Devon County Show, Westpoint
- 20-21 R.W.A.S Spring Festival, Llanelwedd
- 21 Teddy Bears Picnic, Warrington
- 21 Shropshire NFU lunch, Oswestry
- 23 Rycote Park tour, Oxfordshire
- 24 Golf day, Headlam Hall, County Durham
- 26 Ceredigion quiz night, Aberaeron RFC
- 27 Warwickshire NFU lunch, Henley in Arden
- 29 Northumberland County Show
- 31 Suffolk Show, Ipswich
- 31 Royal Bath & West Show

June

- 1-3 Royal Bath & West Show
- 1 Suffolk Show, Ipswich
- 2 Golf day, Henley Park Golf Club, Oswestry
- 4 Merionethshire Sunday lunch, Tywyn
- 4 Tractor run, Elton, East Yorkshire
- 7 NSA North Sheep, County Durham
- 8-10 South of England Show, Ardingly
- 8-10 Royal Cornwall Show, Wadebridge

June (continued)

- 10 Fire & Rescue Service concert, Masham
- 10 Rocking in the lamb shed, Denshaw
- 11 Open farm Sunday, Bishop Burton College
- 14-15 Cereals, Boothby Graffoe, Lincs
- 14 Staffordshire NFU lunch, Ashbourne
- 14 Fashion show, Buckley Farm near Oswestry
- 16 Royal Three Counties Show, Malvern
- 17 Wurzels, Folly Farm, Berkshire
- 17 Cumberland County Show, Carlisle
- 18 Barn service, Leamington, Warwickshire
- 19 Golf day, Driffield, East Yorkshire
- 20 NSA Show, Tiverton
- 20-21 Royal Cheshire County Show, Knutsford
- 21-22 Lincolnshire Show
- 24 Isle of Wight County Show
- 24-25 Kent Game and Country Fair, Hole Park
- 25 Royal Isle of Wight County Show
- 25 Harden Moss Sheepdog trials
- 28 Glo'shire summer party, Woodmancote

July

- 1 Skelton Show, Cumbria
- 1 Monmouthshire Show
- 1 Hanbury Show, Worcestershire
- 2 Midsummer lunch, Petworth, West Sussex
- 6 Gloucestershire ladies night, Rodley
- 7 Cumbria dinner and dance, Kendal
- 7-9 Kent County Show, Maidstone
- 8 Skittles night, Daylands Farm, West Sussex
- 8 Liskeard Show
- 8 Herefordshire NFU dinner, Burghill
- 9 Summer lunch, Northumberland
- 8-10 Kent Show, Detling
- 10 Cream tea, Hartley Park Farm, Alton, Hants
- 10 Stithians Show
- 11-13 Great Yorkshire Show, Harrogate
- 15 Camborne Show
- 19 Driffield Show, East Yorkshire
- 19 Fruit Focus, East Malling, Kent
- 21-23 Truckfest, Abingdon, Oxfordshire
- 22 Mid Devon Show, Tiverton
- 22 Penrith Agricultural Show
- 23 Kitchenham Farm tour, East Sussex
- 23 A Taste of Shropshire, Wroxeter
- 24-27 Royal Welsh Show, Builth Wells, Powys
- 25-27 New Forest & Hampshire County Show
- 26 Yealmpton Show
- 27 Forde Abbey Summer Fair, Chard
- 27 Launceston Show
- 30 Totnes Show

August

- 2 North Devon Show, Umberleigh
- 3 Honiton Show, Devon
- 3-4 Thame Sheep Fair
- 5 Brecon County Show
- 6 Wessex Country Fair, Wilts
- 9 Vale of Glamorgan Show
- 10 Okehampton Show
- 11-13 Royal Lancashire Show
- 12 Ellingham Show, Hants
- 12 Halifax Show
- 12-13 Nottingham Food and Drink Festival
- 16 Gillingham & Shaftesbury Show
- 17 Denbigh & Flint County Show
- 17 Chagford Show

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157th AGM to be held on May 17

Notice is hereby given that the 157th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution will be held at The Manor, Weston-on-the-Green, Oxfordshire OX25 3QL on Wednesday May

17 2017 by order of the Council of Trustees. The afternoon's formal AGM will be preceded as usual in the morning by the 2017 R.A.B.I Conference (including the presentation of the annual awards for 2016).

Invitations will be sent to official members of R.A.B.I., as well as the charity's guests. A maximum of three people from each county, who are the official members, are entitled to vote.