



THE MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION

AUTUMN 2020

## The best seat in the house

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## Kilimanjaro comes to Devon

### Page 13

We provide financial, practical and emotional support to farming people of all ages. We always work in confidence, with compassion and discretion.

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**Website:** [www.rabi.org.uk](http://www.rabi.org.uk)

**Registered charity number:** 208858

**COVER IMAGE:** Hayley Hanson, see page 14 for story.



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# From the Chair

How life has changed since the last R.A.B.I. News in March. I do not think that any of us foresaw the full extent of what faced us, but perhaps that is just as well as the challenges have been significant. Everyone has had to learn to live and work differently, and to react to ever changing circumstances and guidelines, and our charity has been no different.

In the spring, once the extent of the impact for R.A.B.I. became a little clearer, the Council of Trustees met (virtually!) several times to consider the many implications of such a significant pandemic for our people, our services and our finances. Of course, everything we do at R.A.B.I. is driven by our vision to ensure that no member of the farming community has to face adversity alone, and during this awful Covid-19 period our need to work with a range of partners has never been more pressing. However, I am very pleased that our council committed to continue providing welfare support at pre-covid 19 funding levels despite lost income from fluctuations in our investments and much reduced fundraising opportunities. At all times we have continued to reach out to those needing our support, and our welfare services team has been proactive in contacting those in need through a variety of means. Our residential homes staff have also been incredibly proactive in ensuring that our residents have stayed safe and well in very challenging circumstances.

One of the many very difficult decisions made was to furlough some of our staff, and all of us are pleased to have them all back again. Information technology systems and services have had to be improved dramatically during this period too; not just to enable some staff to work safely and productively from home, but also to ensure that those in need of help could still contact us (given that Shaw House is closed), and so that we could continue to use enhanced technology to 'meet' and discuss issues as they arose. I am confident that these improvements will now stand our charity in good stead for the years ahead.

Although the future of many things around us remains unclear, the need for R.A.B.I. and its services is unlikely to diminish, and so I am delighted that we are pushing ahead with a range of plans for different projects. This includes the launch of an online counselling platform for farming people which will be free at the point of use. I think that the need for members of the farming community, young and old, to be able to access personal emotional support has never been greater and hope that this will go some way to helping many people. As you will also see in these pages, many individuals, committees, and companies have gone out of their way to arrange virtual fundraising events on our behalf, displaying incredible imagination and creativity. Well done to everyone involved!

Finally, as we move into harvest, I am sure that we will all have the opportunity in some way or another to give our thanks for our farmers and farms, our agricultural communities and all that they produce for us. Our farmers continue to work with fortitude and expertise across the length and breadth of the UK and I hope and pray that festivals of celebration of this will take place this autumn.

Very best wishes



*Jeanette  
Dawson  
OBE*

# Whatever comes next, we'll be here to lend helping hand

**A**s this newsletter goes to print, it's hard to look ahead with any certainty. Predicting what life will be like a month from now, let alone six, is almost impossible. That makes planning difficult too. However, throughout the lockdown, R.A.B.I continued to provide support to the farming sector; quickly adjusting its processes and methods of working, despite being unable make home visits. The Shaw House office was closed but staff continued to work remotely, with Regional Welfare Officers manning the helpline and contacting those we support long-term, to check their needs. For some, just having someone to talk to was a huge help during times of social distancing and

self-isolation. Those we support long-term really appreciated receiving a call and knowing that someone was thinking of them. The pandemic created new concerns for many farmers. Since March 2, around 38% of those contacting us for help have cited Coronavirus as a factor for them asking for our assistance. The majority of these new requests for support came from working people, over 89%. Their needs were often complex and varied; caused by such things as low prices, loss of farm and off-farm incomes, the need to shield or self-isolate due to age or medical conditions or even having other medical treatments put on hold.

In some cases, dependants lost vital income streams which affected family finances. And of course, people continued to come to us with the same things that affected them before the pandemic, often finding these issues had been exacerbated by Coronavirus. R.A.B.I's income was hit hard by the pandemic with all fundraising events cancelled until further notice. However, many incredible people did many incredible things to raise money for us, some of which, are detailed in this edition of R.A.B.I News. Day to day, we're adapting and shaping the way we do things to ensure we continue to give support to those in the farming world who need it most.

**To all our supporters and committee members, thank you for your patience, loyalty and efforts during these extraordinary times. Your support is greatly appreciated. It's also been heart-warming to receive so many positive responses and wishes of goodwill from so many people.**

## A personal reminder: Why our work is important



**We are really struggling financially. We are trying to sort out benefits and any payments we may be entitled to. We are eating what we have in but**

**not sure where we go from there. We are trying to keep on top of all bills but not sure for how long. This is having a massive effect on my mental health as each day brings another challenge. I am hoping you can help with our situation.**

**R.A.B.I**  
Supporting Farming Families



# Remarkable dedication of staff in the care homes

**R**.A.B.I's two care homes have set up gazebos in their gardens to allow residents to see family after months of lockdowns and social distancing.

It's been a difficult period for all care homes but fortunately, to date, there have been no cases of Coronavirus at either Manson House in Bury St Edmunds or Beaufort House in Burnham-on-Sea.

Carole Smith, Head of Home at Manson House, said "For those who have received family visitors, it's made such a difference to them. It's been awful for residents, not being able to see loved ones for so long. You can't replace it and you can't underestimate how important it is to some people's mental health.

"Throughout the lockdown, residents had lots of access to technology so they could stay in touch with family and friends via things like Facetime and Skype but we found it didn't suit everyone and some didn't like it."

The visits in the gazebos are carefully planned.

It's one visitor at a time – or sometimes two if they are from the same household – but visitors must stay 2m apart from the person they've come to see at all times.

The gazebo is carefully cleaned down after each visit. Carole says the pandemic forced staff at the home to take on a lot of new ways of working. The day rooms and dining rooms were changed around to maintain social distancing and staff had to adjust to wearing face masks and other PPE for long periods. Tenants were not allowed into the main house and entertainers could no longer come into the home.

"It's been a strange time but we've been fortunate to have lovely gardens and lots of good weather," added Carole.

"The staff have been wonderful. They've taken their responsibilities to the residents and each other very seriously. "Now, it seems like life is getting back to normal, but we must continue to be careful and not take risks."

## Letters appreciated

R.A.B.I's president, HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO, acknowledged the work being done at Manson House and Beaufort House by writing personally to both Head of Homes. The letter to Carole Smith at Manson House included the extract: "Can I say how impressed I am with how effective you have been in protecting your residents from the effects of the Covid-19 virus. This is obviously to the credit of you and your team of staff but also to the residents who have abided by the requirements of the lockdown."

The letter to Paul Wright, Interim Head of Home at Beaufort House included the following: "You have organised activities for residents and I understand that the VE Day celebrations were full of music and memories. I hear that you also brought five ducks eggs into the home, all of which hatched successfully, and then developed them for a month before they had to go back to the farm. I'm sure the residents were entranced at having ducklings running around the place and making it more nostalgically farmyard-like. All of this has left me in no doubt that you and your staff are making every effort to make this crisis more bearable, for which you should all be congratulated."

## Vigilance is priority for keeping people safe



**LEFT: A visit in the gazebo in the grounds of Beaufort House. These visits started up during July.**

Paul Wright, Interim Head of Home at Beaufort House, praised the efforts and teamwork of his staff since the lockdown began in March.

He said: "Staff have been amazing – they always want to help and we haven't been short of staff for a single shift throughout the pandemic, which is testament to them.

"The last few months have gone quickly. There's been a lot of extra work, including much more

documentation, but people have pulled together."

Paul says Beaufort House introduced gazebo visits in the grounds of the gardens from July 13, restricting it to one visitor per person, 2m apart across a table. He explained: "We managed to arrange around 20 visits in the first week which was a lot of extra work for us but great for the residents."

At the end of July, Beaufort House said farewell to retiring Deputy

Manager Sheri Farrow, who has served the home loyally for many years. Abi Garrett-James started work as Deputy Manager on July 13. Looking ahead, Paul echoed the view that vigilance was still hugely important.

He said: "Personally, I feel lucky to have had the support of R.A.B.I these past few months. It's normal in a care home for residents to go in and out of hospital but we've not had anyone really poorly and we've done tests for Covid-19 on those returning from hospital.

"In many ways it's easy to shut everything down, but harder to get back to a sense of normal where residents can see loved ones again. "We want them to be able to do that but we also want to keep them safe."



## Our work in 2020 so far

**£1.3m**  
given in grants



**£325k**  
to working families



**£130k**  
Towards  
nursing home  
top-up fees, home  
help and home care  
costs

**£104k**  
On disability aids,  
equipment and  
adaptations

**£46k**  
to families  
directly affected  
by Covid 19



**£51k**  
For families  
affected by flooding

**Call our Freephone Helpline 0808 281 9490**

The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution, Shaw House, 27 West Way, Oxford OX2 0QH

Website [www.rabi.org.uk](http://www.rabi.org.uk) General enquiries 01865 724931 Email [help@rabi.org.uk](mailto:help@rabi.org.uk)

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Unaudited statistics above cover the period January 1 - July 20, 2020. Figures have been rounded up where appropriate.

Reg charity number 208858

# Online counselling platform to be launched this year



By Alicia Chivers,  
R.A.B.I. CEO

Over the past few months R.A.B.I. has been working hard to ensure the charity remains robust and equipped to focus on providing support during these increasingly challenging times. Before anyone had heard of Covid-19, R.A.B.I. had begun to lay the foundations for the pathway of service developments that will better recognise and support the emotional as well as practical needs of

our farming community. Whilst this pandemic has emphasised how impactful on our mental wellbeing these external events really are, R.A.B.I. understands that Covid-19 is simply another of the already significant uncertainties affecting those working in agriculture.

I am pleased to advise that R.A.B.I. is still planning to begin the roll-out of the charity's new services in the late autumn. We believe this work has become even more relevant as everyone continues to try to adapt to changing routines, regimes, challenges and expectations.

Working closely with an existing market-leading specialist provider, R.A.B.I. will soon be launching an online counselling platform for the farming community. Providing free access to information and services for farming people across England and Wales, as well as a facility to chat online with trained counsellors, you will be able to book online counselling sessions and tap into a wealth of specialist content, guidance, advice, forums and message boards.



**There are no right or wrong approaches, just different paths to help find some solutions.**

There will be two options, one for adults and a second targeted more specifically towards the younger farming community. Both will be launched under the R.A.B.I. umbrella with access via our website or through easy to use links.

Both sites will be farmer-friendly, full of articles, blogs and discussion boards, all of which can be accessed completely anonymously, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Farmers, farmworkers and their families will also be able to book confidential one-to-one sessions with experienced and qualified counsellors who understand the issues facing people in farming. For some, an hour of someone's time to talk

through a problem could make all the difference, whilst for others a series of supported sessions with a counsellor they get to trust might be just what they need.

Sometimes, reading about someone else's similar experiences or writing about your own can really help.

There are no right or wrong approaches, just different paths to help find some solutions.

We know that there is no one solution that could address the complex challenges our people face, however we are confident that this will provide an important and meaningful addition to our growing basket of support options.

## Working together to meet broader needs

*R.A.B.I.'s helpline has been open throughout the pandemic, but we also work with partners through Farming Help, which enables us to meet a broader range of needs than we could alone.*

The Farming Help charities Addington Fund, Farming Community Network (FCN), Forage Aid, RSABI and R.A.B.I., supported by The Prince's Countryside Fund, have been working together to support the farming community during the Coronavirus outbreak. People from the farming sector can access support from the various

organisations above by using the helpline number 03000 11199, which is operated by FCN.

Get in touch via this number if you:

- Feel concerned or anxious and would like to talk to someone who understands farming, will listen to you and help you think through your options.
- Would like help to draft a contingency plan to ensure you

**Farming Help**  
**03000 111999**  
Confidential help for all in the farming community

and your farm are prepared, should you be unable to work for a time.

- If you or people you rely on become ill or are self-isolating and you need to find help / support organisations locally.

## Trustee steps down after eight years



R.A.B.I said farewell to trustee Stephen Miles, who completed his second four-year term in May. Stephen was instrumental in helping to oversee the extensive redevelopment project at Manson House, which was underway when he joined the Council of Trustees. Stephen knew Manson House, where his mother was a resident for 10 years, and as a boy he used to call at the home with boxes of produce from the family farm at Christmas time.

A former High Sheriff of Suffolk he is now Deputy Lieutenant in the county and was also President of the Suffolk Show in 2019 – where a cocktail party he organised raised £3,000 for R.A.B.I. A keen gardener himself, Stephen's year as President was notable for the stunning woodland garden created as a centrepiece to the Flower Tent. In his eight years as a trustee, Stephen has been instrumental in engaging some important and very generous donors to R.A.B.I and he has been a loyal supporter of fundraisers organised by the Suffolk committee. Stephen said: "It has been such a privilege to be a trustee and I wish the charity well for the future."

## FarmWell: A hub of info for farmers in Wales

R.A.B.I teamed up with fellow Wales Farm Support Group charities and the Welsh Government to assist the Farming Community Network (FCN) produce FarmWell Wales – an online resource hub to help Welsh farmers gain access to up-to-date information.

Also involved in the collaboration are Farming Connect, the DPJ Foundation, Tir Dewi, The Addington Fund, Mind Cymru and Mind Monmouthshire.

The website ([farmwell.wales](http://farmwell.wales) / [farmwell.cymru](http://farmwell.cymru)) has three clear aims:

- To help Welsh farming people develop and keep their farm businesses resilient through changing times.
- To help Welsh farmers, their

families and staff become personally and mentally robust, enabling them to manage their personal and business lives more effectively.

- To provide ready access to a wide range of support.

A FarmWell directory contains contact details and website information to a wide variety of free and subsidised services. The directory is an essential resource for farmers who might struggle to access broadband in rural areas and hard copies were also posted out to approximately 16,500 farm businesses across Wales. The service is available in both English and Welsh languages.

To start using FarmWell Wales, visit [www.farmwell.wales](http://www.farmwell.wales) (English) or [www.farmwell.cymru](http://www.farmwell.cymru) (Welsh).

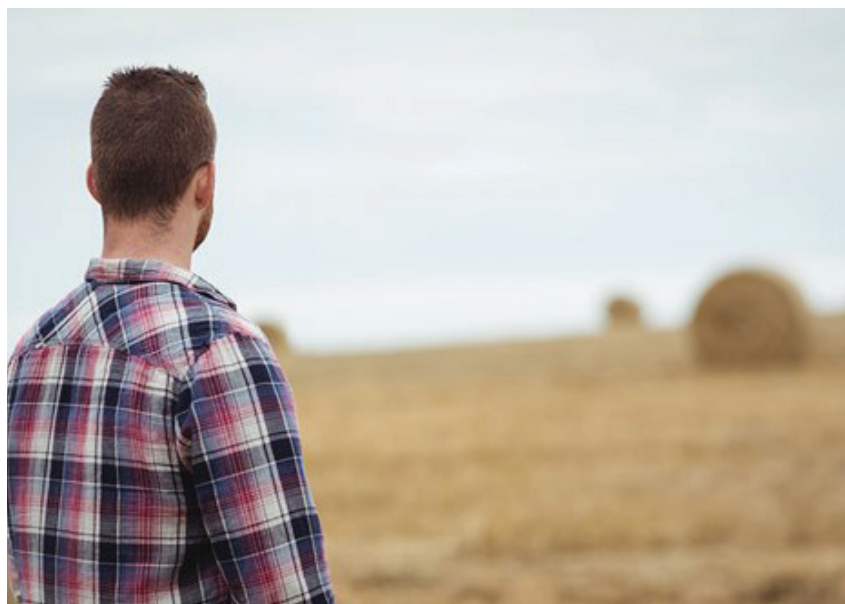
## AHDB and Co-Op launch series of charity webinars

A series of webinars, involving farming charities, were held by AHDB and the Co-Op in July and August.

Suzy Deeley from R.A.B.I took part in a webinar entitled 'Handling Financial Hardship' in mid-July. Also involved in the series were: the DPJ Foundation (Suicide

Awareness); Yellow Wellies (Supporting Yourself - Resilience); RSABI (Accessing Support in Scotland); FCN (Supporting Your Business) and YANA (Supporting Others).

The webinars are still available to view via the AHDB website [ahdb.org.uk](http://ahdb.org.uk)







# Our welfare staff are there for you



**Mel Jones**

"During the pandemic we have not been visiting farmers. Instead we have been taking applications for help over the phone.

"The main change for the farmers I talk to has been the 'drop and go' policy introduced due to the Coronavirus, where farmers need to drop their animals at the market to sell without going inside. After the initial reluctance, the scheme has been successful. As farmers always do in times of adversity, they adapt."



**Jackie Clegg**

**"I have focused on calling people we already support to ensure they are safe and well, in addition to checking they are in receipt of all eligible benefits."**

**"I have also been trying to keep up to date with the various government grants available and the changes in welfare entitlements."**

**"We have continued to receive helpline applications and we are now completing these applications by telephone."**



**Caroline Harrison**

"There are some people who I contact every week, some who I call once a fortnight and some who I just check up on every so often. Despite not being able to visit in person, maintaining a level of human contact is important. Some of the people I call are very lonely and tell me it's comforting to receive a call from a voice they know. Even if they do not need my help, they appreciate a chat, and the fact that someone is thinking of them."

## Regional Welfare Officers

Find out what we can do for you by calling 0808 281 9490

**TOM ARMSTRONG**  
**NORTH**

*Northumberland, Durham, Scotland*



**CATHY DENSLOW**  
**SOUTH**

*South Somerset, Dorset, Hampshire, Isle of Wight*



**JOHN BASNETT**  
**NORTH EAST**

*North, South & West Yorkshire, Derbyshire*



**LINDSEY CHURCHILL**  
**SOUTH CENTRAL**

*Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire*



**JACKIE CLEGG**  
**NORTH WEST**

*Cheshire, Lancashire, Cumbria, Merseyside*



**SALLY HUBBARD**  
**EAST**

*Suffolk, Norfolk*



**LOUISE WILKINSON**  
**LINCOLNSHIRE +**

*Lincolnshire, East Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire*



**CHLOE RIGLER**  
**SOUTH WEST**

*Cornwall, Devon*



**CAROLINE HARRISON**  
**HEART OF ENGLAND**

*Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire, West Midlands*



**JENNY TYLER**  
**EAST CENTRAL**

*Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire*



**MEL JONES**

**NORTH WALES & SHROPSHIRE**

*Anglesey, Conwy, Caernarfon, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Merionethshire, Shropshire, North Powys*



**DEANA CURTIS**  
**SOUTH EAST**

*Berkshire, West and East Sussex, Kent, Essex, Surrey, London*



**ELONWY WILLIAMS**  
**SOUTH WEST WALES**

*Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire*



**CLAIRE CRICHARD**  
**SOUTH EAST WALES & BORDERS**

*Brecon & Radnor, Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, Worcestershire, North Gloucestershire, Herefordshire*



*All enquiries to our welfare department will be handled in confidence*

**R·A·B·I**  
Supporting Farming Families



## Loyal backing from Frontier

Frontier Agriculture donated £5,000 to a number of charities, including R.A.B.I, during Mental Health Awareness Week in May. Ordinarily, Frontier staff celebrate Mental Health Awareness Week by engaging in various charitable activities. Group Finance Director, Diana MacDuff, explained "Our chosen charities do important work in supporting people from the agricultural community and more widely with mental health challenges. We are keen to ensure that these charities continue to receive financial support at a time when many of their normal sources of fundraising are unavailable."

# £15,000 donation from Morrisons Foundation

The Morrisons Foundation donated £15,000 to R.A.B.I in light of the Covid-19 crisis. The foundation aids charities via grants and match-funding. Since its inception in 2015, the organisation has donated around £29m to not-for-profit organisations across England, Scotland and Wales. Dan Whitbread, R.A.B.I Head of Operations, said: "We are exceptionally grateful to



the Morrisons Foundation for this generous grant. It will make a crucial difference to farming people who are struggling to cope." Morrisons also launched a seasonal food box containing meat, vegetables, milk and cheeses to help support British farmers during the pandemic.

Created to support vulnerable and self-isolating customers – and those limiting trips outside of the home, the British Farmers Food Box also supported UK farmers struggling since the outbreak of Covid-19. One pound from every British Farmers Food Box was donated to The Prince's

Countryside Fund which is coordinating donations on behalf of Farming Help charities. "Being the biggest customer of British farming, we want to help farmers while also playing our full part in feeding the nation," said David Potts, Chief Executive of Morrisons. "Our farmers produce some of the world's finest meats, vegetables and cheeses which we want to offer to our customers."

## 'We know there are extra demands on charities and we want to help'



### NFU Mutual Charitable Trust

R.A.B.I received a significant £75,000 donation from the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust. The trust is donating a total of £739,000 to nine charities after research showed nearly three quarters of people are feeling more isolated since the UK went into lockdown. Early in April, the NFU Mutual pledged £750,000 to the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust as part of a support package for the benefit of its members and communities affected by the Coronavirus.

Additional donations will be distributed by the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust to further this support over the coming months and, by the end of the year, it is expected that the Trust's overall donations during 2020 will reach £1m. Lindsay Sinclair, Group Chief Executive of NFU Mutual (pictured), said: "We understand how isolation is affecting people and families, and that our members need these services now more than ever. The emotional and



The emotional and practical support offered by these charities will be vital for all our communities at this challenging time.

practical support offered by these charities will be vital for all our communities at this challenging time. "Our members have told us that loneliness, the strain of juggling home and work, financial pressures, lack of broadband and access to general amenities, is impacting every inch of

their lives and leading to feelings of heightened anxiety and fear. "As a result of Covid-19, we know that there are extra demands on charities, which is why we want to help them take care of the 'now,' as well as the future financial health of their organisation."

## The greatest online show

More than 5,000 people visited the Greatest Online Agricultural Show, a virtual replacement for the shows that were cancelled this summer.

The show featured trade stands, livestock competitions, a beer tent and more. The event raised £16,000 for R.A.B.I, RSABI, FCN, the DPJ Foundation and YANA. It all came together in April when David Hill, an estate manager in Berkshire, had the idea. He explained: "It was the week when the Royal Highland and Royal Welsh Shows were cancelled. Driving into work past the Berkshire County Showground, something about that morning seemed extra empty. It seemed dark and sad. Sitting in the office, I thought 'I wonder if we can do something fun online'."

Andrew Lazenby, CEO of Innovation for Agriculture, got in touch with David and offered to help build a website for the show. Other organisations supported the initiative by donating prizes, sponsoring zones and providing content for the arena displays. Farmers were able to enter the livestock, equestrian and dog shows by submitting photos and videos of their animals. Voting was open to the public and more than 1,000 people took part in the polls. David added: "For farming, it's been a really difficult year. We've had the worst, wet winter for a long time.

"The event supported five rural welfare charities. I've experienced what they can do first-hand at times when I've been advising on BPS payments.

"Those charities have really stepped up to the mark. They're stretched more than ever and they're losing their opportunities to fundraise. They really need our help."

# Cereals LIVE attracts 10,000 visitors from 78 countries



**C**ereals LIVE – the online version of the arable event – was a big success, attracting more than 10,000 visitors.

The two-day online event was packed with webinars demonstrations of machinery, virtual tours and interactive chats as the farming industry got involved in a massive way. The top sessions attracted over 800 people and 9,000+ live viewers logged on to the show.

NFU president Minette Batters and Defra minister Victoria Prentis went head-to-head on the topic of food security and imports, with the NFU's recent petition on maintaining high food standards topping one million.

The reach for the 18 webinars was global with 15% of attendees joining from outside the UK from a total of 78 different countries.

Closing the event on each day was a virtual beer tent, where visitors could relax with friends, request live music from the resident DJ and show their support for partner charity R.A.B.I.

Suzy Deeley, R.A.B.I Corporate Partnership Manager, took part in the Young Farmers Forum webinar, looking at current challenges and discussing what help is available.

***Thank you to Comexposium for choosing R.A.B.I to be show charity again in 2020 and congratulations on a great event.***

- The Fruit Focus Show will go online on September 9 and 10 and R.A.B.I is set to have a stand.

Fruit Focus Live will bring together growers and industry professionals, giving them a unique opportunity to showcase products and services.

## Network of Downland retailers

Downland, a national network of independent agricultural retailers, celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2019 and spent the year fundraising for R.A.B.I and RSABI. Rachel Clarry of Downland said: "Throughout the year our franchisees hosted fundraising events and we're pleased to announce that we raised a grand total of £5,573.14, with

£1,824.91 going to R.A.B.I and £3,748.23 to RSABI. The world of farming is never straightforward, but now more than ever the support that these two brilliant charities offer is so important." The Downland network consists of 28 independently-owned agricultural retailers who work together to share knowledge and expertise to supply a wide range of animal health and nutritional

products to farmers. Suzy Deeley, R.A.B.I Corporate Partnership Manager, said: "I'd like to thank Downland for choosing to support us as one of their charities of the year. "It's inspiring to see their franchisees supporting the wider farming community and the donation made will really help us to continue to be there for those farming families who need us now more than ever."



# AGCO marks anniversary with £10k gift

**Saul Jones,**  
General  
Manager UK  
& Ireland,  
AGCO Finance,  
with Mark  
Casement,  
Director  
Distribution  
Management,  
AGCO, UK,  
Ireland, Turkey  
and Middle  
East.



**A**GCO Finance donated £10,000 to R.A.B.I. AGCO Finance is a joint venture between AGCO and DLL. AGCO is a

global manufacturer of agricultural equipment with brands including Massey Ferguson, Fendt and Valtra. DLL is a global partner for equipment financing and

is part of the Rabobank group. "We could think of no better way to mark our 30th anniversary than to make a donation to R.A.B.I. The

work that that the charity is doing to help people in the farming industry during this challenging time is incredibly important," explained Saul Jones,

## ‘Farmers are starting to make decisions in interest of safety’

**F**arm Safety Week has become a key focus on the farming calendar and this year's campaign ran from July 20-24.

The Farm Safety Foundation manages this annual campaign and works with key partners, including R.A.B.I., to reinforce farm safety messages.

In 2019/2020 a total of 20 agriculture workers lost their lives on British farms, a decrease of 37.5% on the previous year's total of 32.

Stephanie Berkeley, Farm Safety Foundation Manager, said: "This

has been a particularly challenging year but it is encouraging that, over the past few months, farmers have been recognised as key workers that play an essential role in producing food for the country.

"Like any farmer scanning his fields for green shoots, we are doing the same across the industry and we're optimistic that a change is happening.

"There has been a 37.5%



decrease in the number of agriculture workers losing their lives on our farms.

"Farmers are starting

to make decisions that are in their broad self-interest and in the interest of staying safe and staying alive.

"Young farmers are coming into the industry with improved attitudes to working safely. "More farmers are being open about looking after their physical and mental wellbeing and

using technology, learning business skills and taking innovative steps to make their farm businesses safe, resilient and more sustainable."



## Yorkshire still great

Welfare Officer John Basnett (above) recorded a short video about R.A.B.I.'s work for promotion at the Virtual Great Yorkshire Show.

John's video formed part of an hour-long charities showcase on the second day of the show.

The online show ran from July 14-16. Attractions included a performance by East Yorkshire-based TV stunt performers Atkinson Action Horses, a cook-off between top chefs Rosemary Shrager and Stephanie Moon, a Q&A with the stars of The Yorkshire Vet, Peter Wright and Julian Norton, and a behind the scenes tour with Olympic showjumper Graham Fletcher.

There were also performances from soprano Lizzie Jones and the Leyburn Band, as well as a comprehensive directory of businesses who would have welcomed show visitors to their trade stands at the showground.

Charles Mills, Show Director of the Great Yorkshire Show, said: "While the coronavirus has caused the cancellation of our iconic annual event, we were determined that the show must go on, albeit in a different format this year."

## Royal Welsh's 20 in 20 challenge



The Royal Welsh Show took on a new digital form this year, from July 20-23. In previous years, the four-day show took place at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society's (RWAS) showground in Llanellwedd.

Steve Hughson, RWAS Chief Executive, said:

"We continue to move with the times and used technology to educate people about the value of agriculture and local produce, share knowledge within agriculture around best practice, find new ways to entertain and also share memories, creating a nostalgic library of peoples' favourite parts of the show and reasons for coming. This is no substitute for the show, but was an opportunity to bring people together demonstrate our resilience at this difficult time."

In the lead up to the show, the event organisers kicked off a fundraising campaign, 20 in 20, to support R.A.B.I., the DPJ Foundation and Tir Dewi. The aim was to raise £20,000 in just 20 days.

Supporters were encouraged to complete 20 physical activities over 20 days and to nominate five others to take part in the initiative.

## Learning new skills and making friends



**By Frances Jones,**  
farmer, vet and  
treasurer of the  
Ceredigion committee

In 2007 when I qualified from the Royal Veterinary College, there was only one direction for a girl who wanted cattle

work to move – west! Devon and Cornwall were popular first job venues, but I wanted to return to the land of my mother and work in Wales. When a job in Aberaeron was advertised I did not hesitate to apply; I had happy memories of spending a day every summer in the town accompanying my grandparents' Volvo back to the home garage for servicing. The scenery was stunning, the fish and chips equally so, and the sea was beautiful – memorably cold, but for a girl from the Midlands, the thrill of being able to see the sea daily was magical.

What I did not know 13-years-ago was the strength and generosity

in spirit of the farming community I was forging a life within. Always honest, painfully so at points, and neighbourly, I used to sometimes get confused as to whose farm I was on as often a gaggle of farmers would appear to get the job done. Pragmatic too, always with lashings of rich, dark humour. Hard working people striving to do the best possible for their stock and their families. I only wish that the world at large showed this community the respect and kindness they showed me when I began to cut my teeth in the industry. It soon became apparent to me that many people, working all hours in all weathers, had few places to turn for

help when life took a turn for the worst. I am proud to have become involved with volunteering for R.A.B.I. to help fund the fantastic service they offer the farming community. Totally anonymously the charity allows people to seek help and advice – a real lifeline to those who perhaps cannot see what way to go next. My personal involvement has allowed me to make new friends and have new experiences (who knew how to run a duck race?) and develop social friendships with my clients where they are pleased to see me, rather than facing the disappointment of paying for my company on their farm!



# Regional News

Devon supporter John Hoare (right) completed a virtual Kilimanjaro climb over eight days around his home to raise over £3,500.

John said: "I had intended to climb Kilimanjaro after I retired in 2015, but unfortunately three months before my retirement I broke my ankle.

"Last year I received an email from Dream Challenges inviting me to climb the mountain, setting off on my 70th birthday of September 2. I felt I had to give it a go." Though the lockdown thwarted John's plans, he decided to recreate the climb in and around his South Brent home near Dartmoor.

Mount Kilimanjaro is a dormant volcano in Tanzania and the highest mountain in Africa. It's also the highest single freestanding mountain in the world, standing 5,895m above sea level and 4,900m above its plateau base.

John started his virtual walk on April 27, attempting to reproduce the same distances and altitudes he would face on Kilimanjaro in the lanes around his home – topping up with laps of his garden and by walking up and down the stairs of his home. He covered the same daily distances and altitudes as the Challenge's itinerary and even slept under canvas to recreate the experience. He said: "Marrying into a farming family who have always supported R.A.B.I, I am fully aware of the hardship many in the farming industry have to deal with. "Therefore, R.A.B.I was my first choice for fundraising."

John's wife Liz, is chair of the Devon committee and used to be R.A.B.I's Regional Welfare Officer in the South West. John covered 72 miles in total and celebrated at the end of it with a quiet roast beef dinner with Liz.



John sleeps under stars

## 1951 Ferguson grabs eye on Shropshire tractor run



Close to 70 tractors joined a trek around Shropshire earlier this year to raise funds for R.A.B.I and Hopton Rehab & Homing. The event, which made £700, was organised by staff at TFM, a farm store in Stableford. Participants stopped off at the Pigot Arms in Pattingham for lunch before returning to Stableford.

Pictured are: Steve Timmins, who drove the oldest tractor, a 1951 Ferguson TE20, with Shropshire committee Chair Lloyd Jones and Shropshire NFU Chair David Lee.

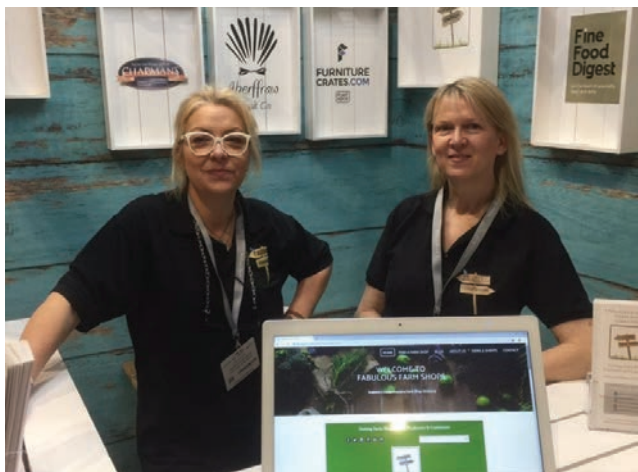


Hayley Hanson set her sights on raising £5,000 for R.A.B.I by raffling off a stunning and unique chair she made from a beautiful, huge Welsh bred Simmental hide.

Hayley is a fifth-generation cattle farmer born and bred in mid-Wales who diversified into tanning hides and crafting her own luxury leather fashion and homewares accessories alongside raising her British Blue and Aberdeen Angus cattle. Hayley Hanson was launched in 2011 and is now the only leather brand in the world using hides raised in Wales. Hayley has supported R.A.B.I for many years and has a green collection jar proudly displayed on her countertop. This year she was asked to give a talk at a charity fashion show but, like most other events, it was cancelled due to Covid-19. Hayley said: "Farming truly runs in my blood so I'm fully aware of the amazing work carried out by R.A.B.I all over Wales and England." Tickets for the raffle were available through August with the winner drawn by Welsh hill farmer and TV personality Gareth Wyn Jones on September 7. Details of the winner and the final amount raised were not available at the time of going to print.



## Fabulous offer from farm shops directory provider



Fabulous Farm Shops – England's comprehensive online farm shop directory – supported R.A.B.I through the spring and summer. The Fabulous Farm Shops online directory contains more than 1,000 farm shop listings and the site is updated daily with the latest information. The website offered

upgraded packages to farm shop customers, including email and farm shop website addresses. For £35, farm shops could have their listing enhanced for a whole year and, from April 5 until August 31, this fee was donated to R.A.B.I. Claire Mortimer, a Fabulous Farm Shops partner, who lives in

Somerset, said: "We wanted to give something back to the sector by supporting an amazing charity like R.A.B.I.

"Everyone wins because we ensure our website listings are up to date and the farm shops can get important current information out to the public at a time when they really need it.

"During unprecedented times, we are aware that R.A.B.I will have an important role to play in the months ahead."

Fabulous Farm Shops pledged to donate to R.A.B.I 100% of the annual fees received from any farm shop that upgraded its listing on the directory between the above period.

Pictured above are Fabulous Farm Shops partners Liz Tyler and Claire Mortimer.

## Leicestershire's picture show

To celebrate the best of British produce, the Leicestershire committee organised an online competition in August. The Leicestershire Online Produce Show invited supporters to submit photographs for judging in six classes: decorated cake (a sponge cake with a VE theme); vegetable animal (children only); longest runner bean; best flower arrangement (with a harvest thanksgiving theme); three carrots and best scarecrow. The competition closed on August 31 so winners could not be announced at the time of going to print.

Committee Secretary Sally Lane said: "I came up with the idea as I was conscious we haven't been able to fundraise recently.

"I put my idea to the committee, who were very supportive, and four of us built it up into a competition."



# Tour event goes virtual

Organisers of The Tour of Pembrokeshire – one of the most iconic cycling events in Wales – arranged a virtual event to raise funds for R.A.B.I.

The popular sportive, which regularly attracts around 1,500 riders, was due take place in May. It'll be back next year, when Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi in St Davids will play host, but cyclists were still able to tackle the virtual event this year – from the comfort of their own homes. The virtual event was open to riders from May through to the end of August.

"We wanted to do something positive after the disappointment of cancelling and being able to help disadvantaged farmers is very close to our heart," said organiser Peter Walker.

The regular Tour of Pembrokeshire offers a range of routes and distances for riders of all abilities. The virtual Tour sought to replicate these – and competitors were able to take part in more than one event in return for a donation to R.A.B.I. Former NFU President and ex R.A.B.I trustee Meurig Raymond agreed to be Patron of the Virtual Tour of Pembrokeshire.



**Left to right, standing, Sharon Green, Jill Thomas, Paul Hanson, Judy Stevens and Linda and Mike Elliott. Seated, Stuart and Christine Bish.**

Residents of Frognall entered into the spirit of VE Day by making bunting and taking afternoon tea in their gardens.

1940s music played out to residents, who socialised at a safe distance from each other in their front gardens. The event was organised by Christine Bish, chair of the

Cambridgeshire committee, who was also involved in upcycling ensign flags for the occasion (which had previously been used for a R.A.B.I. event celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar in 2005). Villagers were given their own DIY packs complete with instructions for making

the VE Day bunting. Many asked if they could pay for the bunting or make a voluntary donation to R.A.B.I. Situated on the Lincolnshire /Cambridgeshire border just east of Market Deeping, Frognall is a small village of around 60 homes along a single street.

## Barclays team sticks together

Four supporters from the Barclays East Midlands team collectively walked 182 miles to raise £205.

Ruth Bamford, Rob Barke, Kate Lee and Richard Freeman each walked around their local areas to cover the distance of the iconic coast to coast trek, from St Bees, Cumbria, to Robin Hood's Bay, North Yorkshire.

"We had been thinking what we could do in lockdown," said Ruth.

"We all love walking, so we decided this would be a challenge for us.

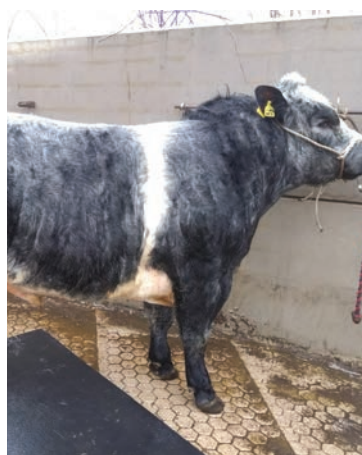
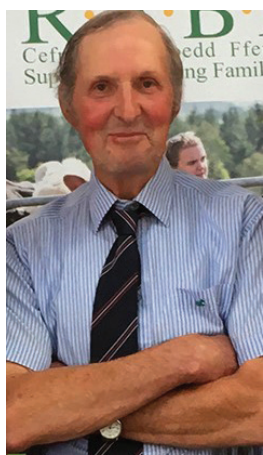
"I have walked the Derwent Valley before and would love to be able to do the coast to coast in future.

"Currently, this is the next best thing.

"It's a way to feel we are doing something together in these strange times."



# Inspirational Emyr's latest sale bring in £4k for chosen causes



**LEFT:** Narcosi, sold for £4,000. **RIGHT:** Ned, who went under the hammer at Carlisle Market. **CENTRE:** Emyr Wigley, the man behind the British Blue Cattle charity herd.

Powys farmer Emyr Wigley is an inspiration as he continues to raise money for R.A.B.I and Ovarian Cancer Action in his late wife's memory. Emyr developed a unique herd of British Blue cattle in 2017 and since then has raised around £50,000 for the two causes. Emyr's latest sale, a bull called Old Stackyard Narcosi, generated £4,000. The money was split equally between his chosen charities. Previously this year, he also sold Old Stackyard Ned for 3,000 Guineas at Carlisle Market in January and Old Stackyard Opal, in a private sale, for the sum of £3,000.

## Many happy returns

Dorothy Duggleby, pictured with her husband Alan, celebrated her 70th birthday on March 1. She asked for donations to R.A.B.I in lieu of gifts and this amounted to an impressive £1,100. Alan is a member of the East Yorkshire committee and Dorothy is a former Chair.



## West Country Layers team up with NFU



A cheque for £3,341.77 was presented to R.A.B.I, following a joint dinner of the NFU and the West Country Layers Association in early March. Sports journalist Rob Kitson attended the event.

## In memory of Denis

- Simon Wareham is raising funds for R.A.B.I in memory of his late father, Denis, who passed away at the age of 84. Simon said: "He was a country man through and through. He grew up in Shaftesbury before attending agricultural college at a young age. He met my mother, Sheila at school whilst in Shaftesbury and then managed a farm in Dorset. "He was Farm Manager for The Down House Estate, where he worked right through to his retirement at the age of 65. My brother Nigel and I grew up on the estate and have very fond memories. "After retirement from there, he started working for various rural companies as an agricultural salesman, mainly dairy farmers and travelled the length and breadth of the West Country selling his wares. He will be sadly missed by all his family and friends."

- The Good Day Out project supports R.A.B.I all year round, mainly by offering sheep dog sessions with young shepherd Ross Games. Good Day Out was founded by Julia Blazer and is based in the Brecon Beacons, offering unique experience days for good causes.

- A pre-lockdown farmhouse breakfast, jointly organised between the Gloucestershire committee and Gloucestershire YFC, raised £1,051 for the two organisations. The breakfast event was held at Stowell Park, Yarnworth. One of the young farmers auctioned off a wheelbarrow full of cider and wine bottles which Gerald Hyett bought for £120.



## Everest, one step at a time



Lisa Richardson set herself the challenge of climbing Mount Everest in her own home.

"I've seen just how difficult it is to continue day to day when the world around you is falling apart. It was this realisation that drove me to do something to help those farmers who would need it the most," she said. Originally, Lisa had planned to run the Liverpool Marathon but when the event was called off she set her sights on something different; climbing the equivalent height of Everest on her stairs at home, with a 10kg rucksack on her back. Everest stands 8,850m above sea level and Lisa calculated she would have to climb the stairs in her home 4,424 times.

A Lancashire farmer's daughter, Lisa regularly helps on her parents' farm, where they rear sheep, cattle and hens. She also manages a

community centre with her sister in Lancaster and works as a sports massage therapist. She said: "I treat many farmers for the injuries and aches and pains they pick up during day to day life. Particularly over the winter I listened to many of them speaking about how hard farming has been, because of the storms and floods, and how this would impact on their livelihoods. Most of them were more worried about how it would affect their animals and whether they could produce enough food for the country.

"No sooner had they weathered the storms, they had the obstacles that Covid-19 has thrown at them.

"I've also seen first-hand how much R.A.B.I can help farmers when they need it and the relief on their faces, knowing that they have somebody supporting them and believing in what they do."

## Wiltshire Horn Society show

The Wiltshire Horn Sheep Society turned to the internet to hold its first virtual show and raised £300. Four classes were available to pedigree breeders with entrants submitting photos of their livestock via the society's website.

There were a good number of entries from established showing flocks and members new to the ring. All entry fees were donated to R.A.B.I.

Judging was timed to coincide with the dates on which the Wiltshire Horn classes would have been held at the Royal Three Counties Show and undertaken by a panel of society approved judges.

The Show Championship was won by B and H Thomas & Sons of Anglesey with a 2019 born ewe from their Celyn flock. Reserve champion was a ram lamb from Mr W Fisher's Cremorgan flock, based in County Laois.

## Before lockdown

● **The beef dinner at Carnaby's in Alnwick, Northumberland was a sell-out and brought in over £600. Support from the likes of the NFU, local YFCs and Alnthumbria Vets ensured the March event was a big success.**

● **Thirty-six people sat down to breakfast together at Tapnall Farm near Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight (pre-lockdown). The breakfast brought in £184.**

## Newton St Cyres Young Farmers walk 400 miles



Members of the Newton St Cyres Young Farmers' Club walked and ran 400 miles from June 1-7 to raise funds for R.A.B.I., Cancer Research UK and the Devon Air Ambulance.

"Due to the coronavirus, Newton St Cyres Young Farmers' Club has been unable to go ahead with its original fundraising plans for this year," said club secretary Victoria Boxall-Hunt.

"Instead, we came up with a different idea – something that we could still do during lockdown."

The group chose 400 miles because this is the distance you would travel in order to visit every YFC in Devon.

The picture of the group, left, was taken prior to social distancing restrictions.

# 'These results under social distancing are amazing'

Undeterred by the cancellation of this year's Royal Cornwall Show, fundraisers from the Cornwall committee ploughed on and held an auction and quiz online to raise over £10,000.

Edward Buckland Auctioneers facilitated the auction through their online sales platform which saw a total of 40 donated lots fetch £6,221. Items such as breaks on Exmoor, hampers of local produce and agricultural contracting vouchers were hotly contested with more than 300 people registering to bid from Scotland to Essex to the Isles of Scilly, making it a truly international event.

Donations during the quiz, hosted by Brian Harvey from PKF Francis Clark and broadcast live on Facebook, topped £2,000 and were matched by Barclays. Brian also made good on his pledge to shave off his beard should donations on the night exceed £1,000.

Edward Buckland commented:

"Again we were bowled over by the level of support and generosity of the local community and their willingness to engage with this event and our inaugural online auction."

"It was a truly fantastic evening with such great level of support for the fun quiz where up to 150 people logged in to be part of this event and to support this worthy cause," added Brian Harvey. John Perry, Cornwall R.A.B.I Chairman, said: "To achieve this result under social distancing rules is testament to the all who contributed to this amazing outcome. The end result will make a difference to so many. Thanks to everyone who donated auction items, those who bought them and everyone who took part in the quiz and gave to this worthy cause."

Special thanks to Sam Oatey from Oatey Media for ensuring the live video broadcast of the quiz ran smoothly and to corporate supporters for their help.



**ABOVE: Members of the Cornwall committee.** The picture was taken prior to social distancing restrictions.

## Kate collects cheque for £2,000

Prior to lockdown, Regional Manager Kate Jones, centre, collected a donation of £2,000 from Burwarton Show Chairman, Alan Watkins, left, and former Chair Mary Williams, right, at Bridgnorth Livestock Market.



## Thoughts from New Zealand

- Farmer's daughter Catherine Robinson set herself the challenge of running 30km to support British farmers from her home in New Zealand. She raised £2,385.

Catherine's parents farm in England and, like many farmers in the UK, have been affected by the pandemic. Catherine said: "I have had to sit at home whilst my parents throw their livelihood down the drain as the milk price crashed in the UK." Along with Ben Galloway, Andrew Galloway, Dominic Stolten and Nellie the dog, Catherine decided to run from Dannevirke to Woodville on New Zealand's north island. Catherine added: "Farmers need our support now more than ever. Every donation goes towards helping people in the farming community when they need it most."

- Essex committee members collected a £500 donation from Thaxted Parish Church. This money came from the annual Plough Sunday service back in January. The church donated money to various charities from this popular service. The church was full, with a congregation of 200+ as the Thaxted Morris Men danced in the nave while the Bishop of Bradwell blessed modern tractors and plough outside. There was also a drive-past of 30 large tractors organised by Essex YFC members.

- The Bucks committee had planned to hold a 'pie and pud' evening at the Bell Hotel in Winslow to raise money during Great British Beef Week. When it had to be cancelled committee Chair Virginia Stollery and her husband Ray decided to hold their own event at home, for two, and give a donation instead. On their menu was steak pie from The Bell and rhubarb crumble.

- Thanks to Alltech UK who raised £1,050 through a live Webinar.



## High Sheriff award for Gwent couple



David and Margaret Spencer, members of the Monmouthshire committee, were presented with a High Sheriff of Gwent award for their contributions to volunteering in Gwent. The couple support various organisations, including R.A.B.I.

## Every mile tells a personal story

Malpas YFC surpassed their goal of walking, running and cycling 575 miles for charity by a whopping 3,000+ miles.

To date, they have raised £660 for R.A.B.I and the Trussell Trust.

Junior, senior and former members all got involved to collectively cover routes in Cheshire. The original goal of 575 miles was chosen in honour of the 575 deaths in Cheshire (at that time) due to Covid 19.

Other clubs around Cheshire soon got involved and the club ended up covering close to 4,000 miles.

Prizes were awarded to those who covered the greatest distances.

The awards went to: Mandy Cotton (past member), Stu Sadler (present member) and Harri Whittingham (young member). Winners of the Cheshire YFC categories were: Sophie Molloy (past member), Victoria Bennion (over-18s) and Peter Huxley (under-18s).

# 25 push-ups, 25 days and one cause: to get people talking

Gareth Wyn Jones, a sheep and beef farmer from Llanfairfechan in Wales, hit social media in June with the '25 push-up challenge' in aid of R.A.B.I, FCN, the DPJ Foundation and Yellow Wellies.

Over a 25-day period Gareth invited people to complete 25 push-ups and nominate others to do the same, to help raise awareness of mental health issues.

He said: "It's a strange time, there's a lot of stress and strain. It's been a rollercoaster for many people. In this industry, you have no idea how much your produce will sell for six months down the line and that causes a lot of stress."

"I'm a big believer in the need to be more open about mental health. The more we do to lessen the taboo, the easier it is for people to talk."

In 2014, Gareth published his autobiography entitled 'The Hill Farmer' about



his life on the farm, with wife Rhian and their three children. Since then, he's appeared regularly on TV and radio to promote farming issues and support the community. He now has more than 31,000 followers on Twitter,

who received daily videos of him doing his push-ups whilst sharing supportive mental health-related messages that also promoted the farming charities.

Gareth added: "It was a bit of fun, but also shared an

important message that we can all do our bit to help each other.

"I feel lucky that I have a beautiful wife and three healthy children. What I do is what I love, but I think if I can help someone else then I should try."



# There's no stopping JFC



Fundraisers from agricultural manufacturing company JFC Agri went ahead with their third annual charity cycling challenge.

The company organised three rides through August to raise funds for R.A.B.I., Riding for the Disabled, and the DPJ Foundation. The team's target this year is £16,500.

In 2018, fundraisers from JFC completed a 200-mile cycle from

Tuam, County Galway, to Oswestry, Shropshire, in just two days. They upped their game for 2019 by adding an extra day and 100 more miles to their journey.

This year's challenge took a different form, with three virtual rides planned for staff members of all ability levels.

The company's novice riders covered a 23-mile virtual route through the Cotswolds with an elevation of 1,250ft.

Later in August there was an opportunity for people to tackle a Welsh Ironman course of 109 miles with 8,175ft of coastal climbs.

The final round of the challenge was a 95-mile virtual tour of Lake Vyrnwy. Neil Mainwaring and Hugh Pinney, who founded the annual JFC cycling challenge, led the final effort.

Pictured above are JFC's intrepid cyclists in 2019.



**Donations can be made via [justgiving.com/rabi](https://justgiving.com/rabi)**

**We are extremely grateful for all donations, large or small, as we continue to do our absolute best to support farming people of all ages through these difficult and uncertain times**

**R.A.B.I.**  
Supporting Farming Families

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