

# RABI NEWS

SPRING / SUMMER 2021



## Highlights in this issue:

P3. Our evolution

P4. The value of relationships

P6. The Big Farming Survey

P11. Our County Committees

P12. Regional News



**Helpline:** 0808 281 9490



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



## Chair's welcome

Spring sunshine brings a welcome change as I write, but sadly, accompanied by drought, strong winds and frost. Grass and crops are struggling as farmers face the challenges of strange weather patterns, adding to anxieties such as the impact of Brexit, and making it clear that RABI should continue to be at the forefront of supporting working farmers as much as we are for the elderly within our communities.

However, on the twentieth anniversary of the tragedy that was 'foot and mouth' disease, we must be mindful that the Charity must also be prepared for any future emergencies. For these reasons, I remain thankful to all our wonderful volunteers. As we approach our second AGM in a Covid situation, I am reminded of my praise last year for the innovation, flexibility and persistence of local and regional fundraisers. This imaginative work continues and I thank you all.

Uncertainty brings worry and stress, and we know that the farming people who contact us rarely have one issue alone to deal with. Results from our 'Big Farming Survey', in which we asked about your physical and mental health and wellbeing, will provide essential information about how our services



Jeanette Dawson, OBE – Chair

can make the most difference to your lives. Over 15,000 farming families responded and the research team are now analysing the results to help us to develop what we do and how we do it.

As summer arrives, I hope we will emerge from this dreadful pandemic and some semblance of 'normal life' will return, albeit perhaps not exactly as we knew it. Like many of you, I have missed many facets of our rural lives. Once we hear that it is safe to do so, I very much look forward to meeting and chatting with supporters in person, but in the meantime please keep in touch in the various other ways available to us.

Very best wishes to you all,

*Jeanette*

## Contents

P2.....	Chairs welcome
P3.....	Alicia Chivers' big picture
P4.....	Stakeholder updates
P6.....	Project updates
P7.....	Kooth and Qwell updates
P8.....	Care homes update
P10.....	Events
P11.....	Operational updates
P12.....	Regional news
P19.....	RABI in the news
P20.....	Regional staff contacts





## Alicia Chivers' big picture

With the multitude of significant and complex challenges that are impacting on the physical and mental wellbeing of farming people, RABI's progressive strategy, to ensure that there is a toolkit of holistic support available for people to access as they need it, continues apace.

Building a comprehensive evidence library focussing on wellbeing in our farming community is the key objective of The Big Farming Survey. The findings will allow us, as a sector, to really understand how and where services and support can be improved and prioritised. Our research partner, the University of Exeter will be working hard over the summer to evaluate the data before the publication launch in the autumn.

In addition to the key collaborator group who have worked in partnership with RABI (more details can be found on page 4), I have been uplifted by the breadth and strength of support provided to this initiative. The ambitious level of responses achieved would not have been possible without this sector-wide support. My thanks to everyone involved.

Since launching the research project in January, it has been heartening to see the growing momentum around tackling poor mental wellbeing in farming. Farming people are raised to be 'robust' yet these expectations of being strong, healthy and virtually invincible simply aren't realistic. The normalisation of the concept of our own vulnerability is fundamental and RABI will be working to capitalise on the progress being made, bringing together key organisations to assess how we work together most effectively.

There has been some fantastic progress, however much more needs to be done before accessing support is really seen as the positive step it truly represents. Early preventative support and empowering



*Alicia Chivers – Chief Executive*

individuals with the tools to overcome challenges and move forward positively is fundamental if we are to make lasting change.

You will be hearing much more over the coming months and years about RABI's Community Pillars programme. The scheme brings together small forums of local farming people to discuss the key challenges and concerns in their area.

We believe that this type of safe, informal, but supported environment will be a key aspect of our service offering in the years to come. It's by no means a quick fix and will require continuous support to sustain the ripple effect that is needed. However, once established these community networks have the potential to grow and empower people with the skills and confidence to support others in their own communities and link easily to other services and wider support networks.

I believe that there is a real opportunity for 2021 to represent a turning-point for all of us in agriculture, to work together to establish a network of services and support that will ensure fewer farming people reach crisis point.

*Alicia Chivers*

# STAKEHOLDER UPDATES

## The value of building relationships



*"Delivering the level of response required for The Big Farming Survey was something we couldn't achieve on our own."*

Suzy Deeley – Corporate Partnership Manager

The past few months have been an incredibly exciting time. We have rolled out two major projects within months of each other. These ambitious undertakings would not have been possible without the ongoing support of our sector-wide stakeholder and influencer network.

We have great connections both regionally and nationally with numerous organisations across the agricultural sector. We are now focussed on building even stronger, lasting relationships with organisations that share our vision and values. It makes me enormously proud to be part of a community that does so much to support its people.

### A collaborative approach

To ensure the widest possible reach of The Big Farming Survey, we began by forming a key stakeholder group represented by members of the following organisations. Their input has been invaluable in shaping the project and raising awareness throughout the sector:



## Mind Your Head

There is much activity aimed at combatting the stigma around poor wellbeing in agriculture. To do this effectively it is essential we work collaboratively.

In February, Farm Safety Foundation's Yellow Wellies organised its annual, week-long, Mind Your Head campaign, which seeks to encourage those living and working in the industry to focus on health, wellbeing and safety. A huge thank you to Stephanie Berkeley, Farm Safety Foundation Manager, for her tireless work and her support in promoting RABI, giving us a platform to highlight the important work we are doing around mental wellbeing.



Stephanie Berkeley – Farm Safety Foundation Manager

# The Big Farming Survey

This important research project arose from the need to build a comprehensive evidence library of the issues facing farming people and the impact these issues are having on them. However, delivering the level of response required, was something we knew we couldn't achieve on our own.

Businesses, associations and media have all played a significant supporting role – spreading the word through social media, e-shots and newsletter features. Printed questionnaires were circulated through the NFU's publications, Farmers Guardian, Farmers Weekly, and by the CLA and TFA, as well as by our research partner, the University of Exeter. It has been a mammoth undertaking and we could not have achieved this level of response without such considerable support.

## A huge show of support

Many people made a personal contribution by encouraging others to participate in The Big Farming Survey. Here are a selection of highlights. Thanks to all our partners, both large and small who have assisted – they have all made a BIG difference.



## £100,000 donated!

We are hugely grateful to the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust, which has selected RABI as one of eight national charities to receive additional funding in 2021.

The Trust has provided RABI with a donation of £100,000 in response to the ongoing challenges faced by communities across the UK.

Lindsay Sinclair, Group Chief Executive of NFU Mutual, said: "A recent NFU Mutual survey showed that one in five respondents have felt uncertain how to cope with the potential emotional implications of the pandemic.

"These feelings are driving a growing need for support, and we want to help these charities meet the demand, enabling them to maintain practical and emotional support for our communities at a time which is proving to be especially difficult."

This unexpected contribution will undoubtedly deliver significant benefits to many farming people over the coming months. It emphasises again the importance of the relationships that RABI has developed throughout the sector and the value they deliver.



**NFU Mutual  
Charitable Trust**



# PROJECT UPDATES

## Stage one is a huge success

The initial stage of The Big Farming Survey is now complete. We have succeeded in obtaining responses from the largest ever cohort of farming people, who have shared their wellbeing insights and experiences with us.



There were those who said it couldn't be done! Thankfully, the response has been phenomenal. This is down to the huge commitment from people throughout the sector who have demonstrated what can be achieved when we share a common goal.



Professor Matt Lobley

### A leading role in research

Professor Matt Lobley, Director of the University of Exeter's Centre for Rural Policy and Research is leading the research team responsible for The Big Farming Survey. Now that all the data has been gathered and the process of analysis begins, Professor Lobley explains how this important project has been developed.

"In recent years, there has been lots of discussion about mental health in the farming sector, but a lack of systematic research. The Big Farming Survey has been the survey of a generation and achieved a phenomenal response.

"Unlike previous projects, the research has addressed not only mental and physical wellbeing, but also the health of farm businesses. These factors are often interlinked, but nobody has looked at all three domains before.

"If somebody's business is suffering, they are likely to be under more stress and working longer hours. They will often feel overly tired and become more susceptible to illness. Similarly, agriculture has a very high rate of fatal and non-fatal accidents, which is often linked to lone working. This can make people more willing to cut corners and take risks.

"We developed the framework of The Big Farming Survey using our experience of over 30 years of research. It featured established questions used by the Office of National Statistics, as well as the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, which we know are tried and tested. These provide an important

benchmark against data previously gathered from other sectors. We also designed unique questions to help gather very specific information to give us even greater insight into issues particularly prevalent amongst the farming community.

"Factors such as farm type, size, and individual business role are being examined and the data is also being analysed on a regional basis. Comparing the perspectives of those who identify themselves as 'the farmer' alongside partners, other family members and a variety of agricultural workers will allow us to identify particularly vulnerable groups.





"This is essential to informing the direction of RABI's future policy and interventions."

"The hugely rich data will establish a baseline for health and wellbeing in agriculture, allowing us to draw direct comparisons between the experiences of the farming community and the wider population."

"It provides an important foundation that will enable us to compare how the three domains of health and wellbeing change over time. We can then assess the impact of the initiatives that are introduced as a result of The Big Farming Survey's findings. The team and I are incredibly excited to work through the thousands of responses and share the findings with RABI in the coming months."

– Professor Matt Lobley

## Online service introduces Welsh counsellors



RABI's online wellbeing platforms, Kooth and Qwell have been boosted by the recruitment of two Welsh speaking counsellors.

Census figures suggest 43% of agricultural workers speak Welsh, compared with 19% of Wales' wider population. These new appointments are an important step towards reaching an even wider audience.

Many farmers live and work in remote rural areas and with the lengthy restrictions that have been in place, people may be feeling particularly isolated. Having a route to qualified professional support and resources is really important.

### Free and accessible 24/7

The online service offers free, anonymous resources to adults and young farming people. Users can access one-to-one counselling via a chat function, with British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy accredited counsellors. In addition, all counsellors receive dedicated farm knowledge training to ensure they are aware of the complex issues and challenges that many within the farming community face.

Visit [rabi.org.uk/kooth](https://rabi.org.uk/kooth)



## An update on Beaufort and Manson Houses

The Council of Trustees are responsible for ensuring that all RABI's resources are used to deliver the best possible outcomes for as many farming people in need as possible. Regular reviews of all the charity's activities and services are completed to confirm this remains the case.

In recent years, the charity has become aware of a continuing decline in the number of retired farming people RABI have been able to support at both homes. This has resulted in a high level of the charity's resources being used to support a small number of farming people in need, which isn't a position RABI can maintain in the longer-term.



### Why has RABI taken this decision now?

Most people now want to receive care at home or within the local community. RABI's two residential homes are in the east and west of the country, restricting the reach of this service for the farming community at a national level. It is not financially viable for RABI to increase the reach of these services directly by developing or purchasing additional care homes in other regions.

The delivery of support across the care sector has also evolved significantly over the last fifteen years and there is now a high demand for residential care services that support complex health care needs, such as dementia care. In-line with society, farming people are increasingly only seeking to move into a residential setting when they have complex health or dementia care needs.

Having been established to provide a traditional residential 'home-from-home' service, Manson House and Beaufort House are unable to support complex care needs. Redevelopment of the sites to support specialist care needs is not viable.

### Was COVID-19 a factor in the decision?

The decision has been made after a robust 18-month review process which commenced in 2019 prior to the pandemic. Beyond ensuring that the timing of the sale is still appropriate, the Council of Trustees have not taken any consideration of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### How will the money released from the sale be used?

The successful sales will enable RABI to support more farming people with care needs in their own homes or through local supported care – this is where the greatest demand for services lies. The net monies released from the sale of the homes will be designated specifically for this purpose.

RABI already provide financial support packages to facilitate retired farming people to receive care at home or within local care homes. The application of the monies released by the sale of the two homes will allow RABI to significantly increase this programme of support to farming people across England and Wales.



### What will happen to the staff and residents?

All current RABI beneficiaries at the homes will continue to receive financial support to allow them to continue living at the homes once they are sold, for as long as they wish to do so.

Providing stability and continuity to our staff team and residents is of primary importance and RABI will work hard to ensure a smooth transition of ownership occurs. RABI have committed to selling the homes as going concerns which means there will be continuity of resident care and employment during the sales period and after the sale completes.

### Will there be an impact on fundraising and support to RABI?

RABI understand that the homes have played an important role in many people's lives and that hearing about the decision will be emotive for some and there will be some concerns about the loss of these two RABI assets.

There is however a need to recognise that the use of these resources in this way is simply no longer effective in supporting farming people in the way they want and deserve and the sale will allow RABI to extend the services we can offer to farming people across England and Wales.

Some individuals have a personal reason that means they want to provide support purely towards the homes and that they may not wish to support the wider services RABI provide to the farming community.

Whilst of course appreciating they are saddened by this news, RABI Trustees believe that the vast majority of the fantastic individuals and groups who provide support and fundraise for RABI, ultimately understand and accept the reason for the decision as they share the charity's aim to support as many farming people as widely as possible.



## EVENTS

# Great British Beef Week

As part of our long-standing relationship with Ladies in Beef, we were delighted to be their chosen charity partner in celebration of the 11th Great British Beef Week, which took place in April.



This year, we invited people to join a three course cookalong hosted by AHDB's Karl Pendlebury and multi-award-winning chef, Chris Wheeler. Best known for his appearance on The Great British Menu 2016, Chris oversees the catering at Stoke Park, including the 3 AA Rosette fine-dining restaurant.

The sensational virtual cookery demonstration was a huge success, with one lucky participant also winning a chef-quality 'steak box', which was kindly donated by speciality Midlands Butcher Aubrey Allen.

"It was fantastic to see so many people come together to support RABI, have a superb evening and celebrate our fantastic beef industry," commented Karl.



Chris Wheeler – award-winning chef

### Cereals 2021: June 30 – July 1

The team at Cereals are planning to reopen the gates of Boothby Graffoe, Lincolnshire this summer. Thanks to the spacious outdoor venue, early biosecurity planning and the speed of UK vaccinations, we are very excited to have an opportunity to meet attendees face to face.

RABI remains Cereals' charity partner and we thank Compexposium for their valuable and ongoing support.

In the run up to June 30, RABI is being featured in many of the Cereals 2021 promotional materials.



At the event, we'll have a marquee located in a prime spot so please do come and say 'hello' and find out more about what RABI has been doing and how we're evolving. The exit collection from Cereals 2021 is a wonderful fundraising opportunity.

Register at [cerealsevent.co.uk](https://cerealsevent.co.uk)

## Every penny in every pound

RABI used every pound of voluntary donations received during 2020 to provide charitable support to farming people, helping to ensure 'no member of the farming community should ever face adversity alone'.





# Our County Committees

For decades our County Committees have played a fundamental role within RABI. Their significance is much greater than simply raising money for the charity. As the 'eyes and ears' of RABI at a grass-roots level, the passion and dedication of our volunteer Committee members enables us to be a national charity that really connects at a local level.

## A successful ballot

At the end of last year, we undertook an important consultation process, that proposed some changes to governance. I am delighted to say that following the voting period, over 95% of our existing County Committees opted to retain branch status, with the remainder choosing a less formal relationship, as 'Friends of RABI'.

This year, we will begin working even more closely with our County Committee branches to roll-out direction on four key project areas of financial compliance, health and safety, data protection, and a new 'volunteer code of conduct'. Each of these areas will be supported with an easily digestible training video and additional face to face support as required.

These measures are an important aspect of RABI's exciting period of evolution and present an opportunity to build RABI into an even more robust and dynamic charity for the years and decades to come.

**"Over 95% of our County Committees opted to retain branch status"**



*David Locke – Director of Finance*

## Making plans for the future

We will also be providing additional support to our County Committees throughout 2021 and beyond. This will include holding quarterly Zoom meetings with Trustees and members of the management team. These sessions will provide scope for knowledge sharing, as well as delivering regular updates from Shaw House.

As lockdown restrictions gradually ease, we are also intending to launch some exciting fundraising campaigns over the next twelve months. Plans are currently in development with input from our Regional Managers. If you have any ideas that you'd like to be considered, please do send in your suggestions to [info@rabi.org.uk](mailto:info@rabi.org.uk).

We appreciate that last year was incredibly challenging and all hope that 2021 gives us a chance to work in partnership with renewed vigour and sense of purpose.

Thank you to all the individuals involved in our network of County Committees, we truly appreciate everyone's ongoing commitment and involvement.

*– David Locke*

## REGIONAL NEWS SPRING / SUMMER



### Virtual GB coastal challenge

Suffolk County Committee is hosting a virtual challenge which will take place in June. Individuals can register during May to be part of the 'team' to complete the 11,023 miles distance around the coast of GB. Entrants are requested to submit the number miles walked, ran or cycled each week. There are prizes for the furthest distance travelled by a single person.

For more information, please email [secretarysuffolkrabi@gmail.com](mailto:secretarysuffolkrabi@gmail.com)

## New Hertfordshire County Committee formed

This May, we welcomed a new Hertfordshire RABI Committee. During 2020 the previous committee decided to retire after hosting many fundraising events over the years. Our thanks to all of the original hard-working individuals. A new County Committee has now been formed and we welcome Julia Camp as the new Chairman.

### Barrow of booze!

Oxfordshire RABI county committee drew their 'Barrow of Booze' raffle in April after selling 239 tickets at £10 each they raised £2,390. The wheelbarrow was kindly donated by Blanchford Building Supplies, which was filled with drink kindly donated by the committee and also Oxford Wine.



### Breakfast in kind

Gill Hesselgrave of East Sussex and David Chantler, former Kent County Committee chairman, who usually arrange annual fundraising breakfasts, personally wrote to many of their past supporters requesting donations in kind. Between them they raised over £2,000. This shows how a personal touch can make all the difference and has helped us stay connected during lockdown.





Kate Beavan

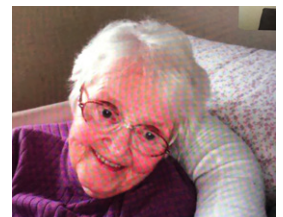
## MBE for Welsh RABI volunteer

Kate Beavan, a member of our Monmouthshire RABI County Committee, has been honoured with an MBE for her services to agriculture. Kate has spent her life working with animals and conservation in a variety of roles and she's worked at Coleg Gwent's Usk campus for 25 years. This is well-deserved recognition for a dedicated individual, who does so much to promote the benefits of farming, learning and volunteering.

## Our support makes all the difference

We recently received a lovely message from Anne Longbottom about her mother, a RABI beneficiary.

*"Since mum has had the laptop that I bought with the money you sent, I speak to her most weekends, the carers connect us on their lunchtime call and we remain on Skype until they return at teatime."*



## Essex auction of promises

Essex County Committee made dreams come true with an auction of promises. A wonderful selection of lots included a day's shooting, a week stay in a 17th century farmhouse, a weekend away on a floating pod, a professional dog portrait, a hand-crafted walking stick, golf for four, a signed cricket bat and shirt, a trip in a Russian aircraft, a boat trip from Titchmarsh Marina, use of a Frinton beach hut for a week, a Land Rover experience, trout fishing and more.



RABI is enormously grateful to Cheffins machinery for hosting the event, and Whirlledge & Nott, Howie, Kent & Co, Ensors, Ernest Does, Crawfords for supporting some of the lots. Thank you to everyone who bid – the auction raised a fantastic £7,195.

## Wine tasting online

In March, the East Yorkshire Committee held a virtual wine tasting evening with a local producer, The Little Wold Vineyard, winner of the Farmers Weekly 'diversification farmer of the year award 2020' – an amazing achievement. The evening consisted of a talk introducing the farm and how they started this new enterprise, some wine guidance and then the tasting. Wine samples were delivered to participants in advance. Restrictions permitting, there is a view to visiting the vineyard to have a 'proper' event when they can – something to look forward to later in the year!

## Banking on Barclays

Barclays Bank has generously supported RABI through match funding for many years, and to date has contributed close to £30k. Against the odds, during the pandemic they have still found ways to do this and even launched a COVID-19 £100m Community Aid Package. Their support has made a significant difference during a challenging time.

The Barclays Agriculture Team covering Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Lincolnshire supported RABI in January, when a team of 12 walked, ran or cycled a total of 2,021 miles, raising a total of £1,380.

This latest endeavour follows on from the Barclays South West Agriculture team's challenge, when 18 employees collectively walked 203 miles on December 16. This represents the distance from the Royal Three Counties Showground to The Royal Cornwall Showground. Each fundraiser walked ten miles, except for Rich Davies and David Hughes who both covered 26 miles each! The team raised £1,599.

On December 4, the grand Cornwall Christmas quiz and auction was held online and hosted by Brian Harvey. The evening raised over £5,774 from the auction, quiz and generous £1-for-£1 match funding from Barclays.

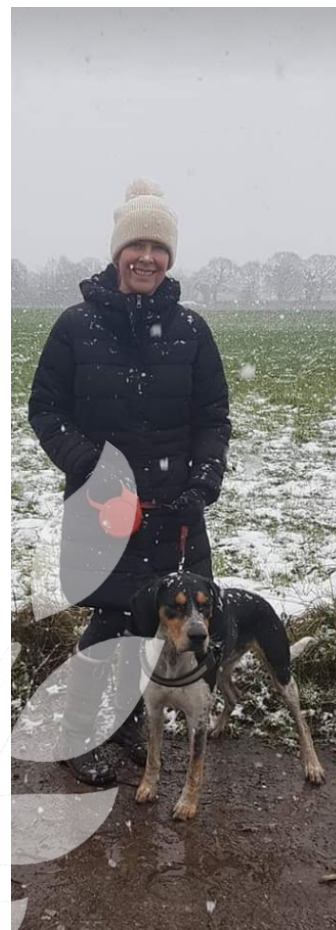
Additionally, Delyth Parry organised a sponsored walk for our Brecon & Radnor County Committee which, with Barclays match funding, raised a total of £1,370.

*"Many people begin the New Year with aspirations of being more active and so I wanted to combine this with a fundraising activity that would support the team's wellbeing and at the same time raise funds for the important work that RABI is doing."*

– Richard Thomas



(L) Barclays 2021 challenge – Rob Barke



(R) Barclays 2021 challenge – Kate Lee with Reggie the dog.



## Neighbourly gesture

Jane Williams, a former RABI Trustee, very kindly donated £1,200 to the Merionethshire County Committee.

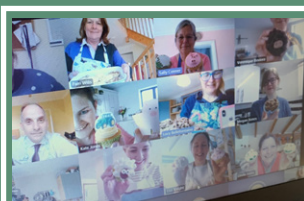
This contribution came from the funds Jane had received for looking after an elderly neighbour during the initial lockdown period.



## News in brief

Photo competitions, online auctions, quizzes, bingo and cake decorating, our County Committees and fundraising volunteers have been busy organising events in the virtual world.

- Deben Farm Club (Suffolk) donated £300 to RABI following a Zoom presentation about the charities work
- This Easter, Leicestershire RABI County Committee launched 'Ramble for RABI' encouraging individuals or 'bubbles' to take a walk and donate to RABI. They also held an online pet show.
- East Yorkshire RABI held a quiz with all the answers beginning with either R,A,B or I and containing 10 letters.
- West Sussex County Committee has been running a virtual quiz night every month. To date we raised from these over £400
- Devon County Committee Christmas cake competition raised in excess of £200
- Billie Jones, a member of Brecon & Radnor County Committee donated £150 in lieu of celebrating her birthday with family and friends
- The Wyvern Historical and Detecting Society (based in Wiltshire) donated £350
- Over the festive period, Gower New Life Church raised £250 through their nativity project
- Sue Davies from Brecon & Radnor County Committee raised £600 by taking part in the virtual tour of Pembrokeshire cycle ride
- Leicestershire County Committee photo competition, raised £628
- KiwiKit donated £500 from sales of their calendar
- Edenbridge and Oxted show make donations to South East RABI in lieu of no show, totaling £1000
- Northampton West Rotary Club donated £575 in memory of a past member, president and farmer, Hugh Adams.
- Sue Davies from Brecon & Radnor County Committee raised £600 by taking part in the virtual tour of Pembrokeshire cycle ride
- Gloucestershire County Committee held a virtual 'Zoom' bingo evening raising over £400
- Bucks County Committee refused to let lockdown spoil their festive preparations by holding a virtual wreath-making evening. A magnificent £3,765 was raised, and a great end to a strange fundraising year!



Devon County Committee cakes competition



Edenbridge and Oxted have donated a total of £1000



Billie Jones - Brecon & Radnor County Committee member



Bucks County Committee wreath-making evening

# REGIONAL RABI NEWS

## In recognition of service



Heulwen Charles with Chris Downes

### Shropshire

We start our acknowledgments by recognising the support of retiring Shropshire County Committee members, Heulwen Charles and Mabel Davies. They have both recently stood down from the County Committee after long service to RABI and will be sorely missed. Heulwen (and husband Mike) dedicated so much time and effort to fundraising events and Mabel would always rally friends for the annual lunch (providing a trifle without fail!). Best wishes to them for the future and a huge thank you for all you have done for RABI.

### County Durham

We would also like to thank two committee members in the North East. Firstly, the retiring Chairman of Co Durham, Tim Sedgewick, who has been instrumental in encouraging the County Committee to take fundraising to the next level, not least overseeing a garden luncheon that made £34,000 in 2019. He also married the secretary of the committee in 2019 too! Tim remains a key member of the committee, however we would all like to express our appreciation for his leadership and commitment.



Hosts of Thornton Hall Luncheon, with Tim and Jess his wife in the centre.



Derek and Mary at one of our Golf Days

### East Yorkshire

Derek Lamplough is retiring from the East Yorkshire County Committee after serving over 22 years. Derek and his wife, Mary, organised our first golf day at Driffild Golf Club over ten years ago which has now become a very successful annual event. The Derek and Mary Lamplough Trophy is named in honour of the couple and all that they have done for the golf day. We will miss them both and would like to pass on our gratitude for all they have done throughout their years of service.

### Welcome to Rachel

We have a new recruit on the Service Delivery Team. Rachel Masters is the regional Welfare Officer for the East of England, covering Suffolk and Norfolk. An arable farmer's wife, Rachel has previously had a career in criminal law and private practice. "Personally and professionally, I never met a dishonest farmer," Rachel explains. "The work that RABI does is very close to my heart and it is rewarding to know that when you pick up the phone, you're in a position to help turn people's lives around."



Rachel Masters, Regional Welfare Officer



## Appointments – new Trustees

**Alan Davies and Delme Harris have joined RABI's Council of Trustees. Their broad wealth of experience will be of great benefit to the charity.**

As a fluent Welsh speaker, Alan has held various senior roles in government and the public sector. This includes recently retiring from his role as Group Managing Director of the Farmers' Union of Wales. Alan has a strong and far-ranging network of Welsh farmers, meaning he truly understands the issues of the farming community.

At aged 12, Delme joined his local YFC, close to his family's farm near Haverfordwest, and has remained with the organisation ever since. Currently, Delme is Chair of the National Federation of Young Farmers Club's (NFYFC) Board of Management and Vice-President of the NFYFC of England and Wales. Delme has worked for the NFU Mutual for more than 30 years in Pembrokeshire, and from the company's head office in Warwickshire.

The response from the charity's recruitment campaign for new trustees was exceptional. It's positive to see so many strong and varied candidates from across Wales. We are sure that Alan and Delme will be real assets to RABI and ensure that the needs of Welsh farming people are fully represented in the years to come.



*New Trustees, Alan Davies and Delme Harris*

## In memory

"Auctioneer, countryman and Waveney Valley farmer Jeffrey Bowles, has passed away aged 73. In a career spanning almost half a century, he helped to raise hundreds of thousands of pounds for charities, including RABI, wielding his gavel. Known for his bright bow ties, his expertise was greatly valued. A man of many talents, Jeffrey will be much missed."

*– Michael Pollitt, Norfolk*

Andrew Brwon Barr MBE, Essex farmer and long-time member of the Essex County Committee and former Chair passed away in April. Andy was actively involved in the region and wanted to give back and help out a charity that was close to his heart. For his work with the RABI, he was awarded an MBE.

In recent months, we have sadly lost a number of long-time RABI supporters. We are very grateful for the commitment and enthusiasm they demonstrated through their volunteering activities. We want to express our gratitude for the generous in memory donations that have been received from so many families from the farming community.



## Reflections on the foot and mouth outbreak

As the world continues to grapple with an ongoing global pandemic, 20 years ago, the news in the UK was all about Foot and Mouth. First detected in February 2001, the disease spread rapidly. These accounts are a stark reminder of the devastating events, that had such a drastic impact, affecting livelihoods, wellbeing and whole communities. They are also a reminder of what an important role RABI can play to support people in times of crisis.

In response to Foot and Mouth, RABI volunteers new and old joined forces with staff to do whatever was needed. One trustee reflects: "I often think of the tragedy we had and the role that RABI played when we helped more than 8,000 families after their losses of stock to Foot and Mouth disease. Let us hope and pray that that never happens again."

RABI Welfare Officers involved at the time remember: "All animal movements were stopped, and sales of pigs, sheep and cattle were banned. Large scale culling took place with some 80,000 animals per week being slaughtered at the peak of the outbreak.

"I spoke to some farmers who were literally broken. Many were understandably devastated at seeing their life's work disappear."

As the disease gathered pace, more and more farmers were turning to RABI. The charity was thrust into the spotlight with the launch of an emergency fund and confidential national helpline. More than 23,000 calls for help were received and the charity distributed "£9m in nine months" in an extraordinary year that changed RABI forever.

The impact was not only financial, of course. Foot and Mouth is still a strong memory for many, many farming people and one that has been hard to deal with mentally as well as practically.

**"Many were understandably devastated at seeing their life's work disappear."**



"Mental health was not discussed then in the way that it is now," says RABI Trustee, Joshua Hosier, who saw some of the horror for himself. "Today, RABI is working harder than ever to normalise the conversation about the wellbeing of farming people. The new online service that RABI offers is an important step forward, is definitely an important step forward, especially in conjunction with the other support strategies that are in development."

Meanwhile, RABI still receives donations 20 years on. Whether they are in lieu of birthday or anniversary presents, via the wills of grateful farmers or from 'in memory' collections, they are in recognition of the exceptional response from the charity, its staff and volunteers at such a critical time and the wide ranging support it continues to offer to today's farming people.





## RABl in the news


Over the past few months, we've secured some fantastic exposure in the press, broadcast media, podcasts, webinars, on social media and industry newsletters. Highlights included an extensive report on the impact of COVID-19 on young farmers which aired on BBC Radio 1's Newsbeat programme on February 5 2021, reaching 9.72 million listeners. Our Chief Executive also was interviewed on Farming Today and Farmers Guardian's 'Over the Farm Gate' podcast.



# Wellbeing of farmers gauged in major survey



# Support for rural people



...ed "The Big Farming Survey" which aims to identify how  
... challenges within the sector are impacting people's  
... if wellbeing, as well as the health of farming businesses.  
... ham reports.

... the survey is the largest ever survey of its kind in England  
... to glean 26,000 responses from the farming community.

... are of the mounting pressures in the sector," says chief  
... nivers. "To serve our community effectively, we require a greater  
... how these factors affect daily life which is why we've launched  
... survey.

... and, it only takes 15 minutes to

work with a group of experts so that we can develop a questionnaire service that RABl can use to gather people and make a valuable collection.

**Big Farming Survey** aims to identify how increasingly complex changes within the farming sector are impacting people's physical and mental wellbeing as well as their farming businesses:

[Big Farming Survey](#) @RABlcharity


**Build a bigger picture in  
just 15 minutes**

Be part in the largest ever wellbeing  
survey of the farming community.

Your input will shape the future  
support we provide.

[ac.uk/BigFarmingSurvey](https://www.ac.uk/BigFarmingSurvey)

**#Big  
Farming  
Survey**

An illustration of a clipboard with a checklist, featuring a green clip at the top and several horizontal lines representing list items. The clipboard is rendered in a light green color with a thin black outline.

Find the #E

**OFC** 2021

**BUSINESS AS UNUSUAL**

Thursday 7th January 2021 - virtual via Remo

Grab a cuppa and take 15 minutes to complete the **#BigFarming** survey to help support **#mentalhealth** in the **#Farming** sector.  
**#MentalHealthAwareness** **#MentalHealthMatters** @RABI  
[rabi.org.uk/bigfarmingsurv...](http://rabi.org.uk/bigfarmingsurv...)

Be part of the largest e  
survey of farming peop  
RAB

Launching 11th January 2021

**RABI's online wellbeing service helps  
to remove barriers to support**

**R**ABI's new online wellbeing and counselling platform has seen a 90% return rate since launching in October. This statistic highlights the demand for easily accessible online support for the farming sector.



Normalising seeking early preventative support to maintain better mental wellbeing continues to be a fundamental challenge for RABI. Establishing the challenge for wellbeing platforms has been the first step in the charity's development of flexible, accessible programmes of

"Knowing there are repeat users accessing this service, even after just two months, is a really positive result. RABI has been encouraged by the initial use of the two websites and I would like to thank the many stakeholders, who have played a role in raising awareness of the new wellbeing websites," says **Alice Chivers**, RABI's Chief Executive.

"There is often an unrealistic perception that farming people are 'invincible'. The truth is, we all have the capacity to be affected by difficulties and challenges so it's vital there are these easily accessible and confidential tools available to help overcome some of these invisible barriers that can stop people seeking greater

**• Fferri**

[illegible]

4

# Farming Today

people, preventing them from feeling uncomfortable to access the many services available to empower them to move forward positively," she added.

The online service offers free, anonymous resources to adults and young people from the farming community throughout England and Wales. Users can also access one-to-one counselling with British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) members, who have the challenges of farming in mind.

<https://kabi.org.uk/>

BACP

# Service Provision Team



**EAST – RACHEL MASTERS**  
*Suffolk, Norfolk*



**EAST CENTRAL – JENNY TYLER**  
*Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire,  
Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire*



**HEART OF ENGLAND – CAROLINE HARRISON**  
*Staffordshire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire,  
West Midlands*



**LINCOLNSHIRE – LOUISE WILKINSON**  
*Lincolnshire, East Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire*



**NORTH – TOM ARMSTRONG**  
*Northumberland, Durham, Scotland*



**NORTH WALES & SHROPSHIRE – MEL JONES**  
*Anglesey, Conwy, Caernarfon, Denbighshire,  
Flintshire, Merionethshire, Shropshire, North  
Powys*



**NORTH WEST – JACKIE CLEGG**  
*Cheshire, Lancashire, Cumbria, Merseyside*



**SOUTH – CATHY DENSLOW**  
*South Somerset, Dorset, Hampshire, Isle of  
Wight*



**SOUTH EAST – DEANA CURTIS**  
*Berkshire, West and East Sussex, Kent, Essex,  
Surrey, London*



**SOUTH EAST WALES & BORDERS – CLAIRE  
CRICHARD**  
*Brecon & Radnor, Glamorgan, Monmouthshire,  
Worcestershire, North Gloucestershire,  
Herefordshire*



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



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

All enquiries to our welfare department will be handled in confidence

# Regional Managers



**EAST / EAST MIDLANDS – LUCY  
BELLEFONTAINE**

*Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex,  
Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire,  
Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Rutland*

Email: [lucy.bellefontaine@rabi.org.uk](mailto:lucy.bellefontaine@rabi.org.uk)



**MIDLANDS – KATE JONES**

*Staffordshire, Shropshire,  
Worcestershire, Herefordshire,  
Derbyshire*

Email: [kate.jones@rabi.org.uk](mailto:kate.jones@rabi.org.uk)



**NORTH – SALLY CONNER**

*Yorkshire, County Durham,  
Northumberland, Lancashire, Cumbria*

Email: [sally.conner@rabi.org.uk](mailto:sally.conner@rabi.org.uk)



**SOUTH CENTRAL – LAURA RACTLIFFE**

*Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire,  
Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire,  
Warwickshire, Northamptonshire*

Email: [laura.ractliffe@rabi.org.uk](mailto:laura.ractliffe@rabi.org.uk)



**SOUTH EAST & NOTTS – SALLY FIELD**

*Hampshire, IOW, Surrey, Sussex, Kent,  
Nottinghamshire*

Email: [sally.field@rabi.org.uk](mailto:sally.field@rabi.org.uk)



**NORTH WEST – GEORGINA LAMB**

*Cumbria, Cheshire, Lancashire,  
Merseyside, South & West Yorkshire*

Email: [georgina.lamb@rabi.org.uk](mailto:georgina.lamb@rabi.org.uk)



**SOUTH WEST – PAM WILLS**

*Devon, Cornwall, Dorset, Somerset*

Email: [pam.wills@rabi.org.uk](mailto:pam.wills@rabi.org.uk)



**WALES – LINDA JONES**

*Brecon & Radnor, Carmarthenshire,  
Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Glamorgan,  
Merionethshire, Monmouthshire*

Email: [linda.jones@rabi.org.uk](mailto:linda.jones@rabi.org.uk)