

# Berks YFC Chit Chat

## County Chair's Chatter.....

My year started off with The Royal County of Berkshire Show where many of our members were stock judging, breed board carrying and helping out on our stand, it was great to see so many of you there. This followed by National Young Farmers Week, the Clubs put on lots of activities, including a great night bowling. Harvest festival this year was hosted by Shefford YFC at Fawley church, everyone brought along their wonderful singing voices. In October we recruited a County Administrator, it has been a great help having Suzi in the office, helping to keep me organised and chase me for when I'm inevitable late.

Then the public speaking competitions were held, it was fantastic to see so many members competing again at County and South East Area, Well done to everyone who took part, you all did an amazing job! With several teams getting through to national. We had a football and netball team due to compete at South East Area but unfortunately it didn't happen due to the weather and now Covid-19.


It was a busy start to the year on the competitions front but it's a great disappointment that it's all come to a stop, the pre-show and rally have been cancelled and the County ball and The Wurzels have been postponed. Fingers crossed we will be able to hold our ball in October on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> and we look forward to welcoming The Wurzels to Berkshire on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May, I look forward to seeing you all there to enjoy a long overdue pint!


I know live is boring at home but stay at home and stay safe and support local producers were possible.

*Henry Graham (Berks Chairman)*

## News From National



 As the number of Covid-19 cases continues to rise in the UK, NFYFC Chairman Dewi Parry is asking YFCs to support their local rural and farming communities during the crisis through a #YFCRuralSupport initiative.

 We know how challenging the weeks and months are going to be for YFC members who are missing their weekly club meetings and activities because of the impact of Covid-19. To help you get through the days ahead, NFYFC has come up with some ideas and suggestions for ways you can get the most out of YFC at Home!

We believe many of the things we love about YFC can still be enjoyed at home – just with a few online tweaks and a bit of creativity!

While everyone is usually practising for County Rallies and Shows at this time of the year, we thought we would bring some of this fun back into your homes with our YFC Isolation Challenges. These are all skilled-based too, so can be counted as a learning activity as well. Bonus for those looking for ideas to help with home schooling!

All of this can be found on

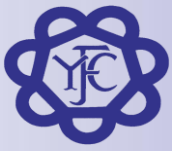
<http://www.nfyfc.org.uk/YFCatHome/YFCAtHome>

## County Chronicle....

Check out the Berkshire Young Farmers Facebook page or the website <http://berksyfc.org.uk/> for our weekly virtual YFC meetings on Wednesdays @ 7.30pm.

## Diary Dates ....

- 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020 County Ball - Regency Park Hotel, Thatcham, For tickets contact Hannah 07501 460051 or Henry 07789 775255
- 21<sup>th</sup> May 2021 - The Wurzels, Details to follow nearer the time.



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## County Competitions Communique...

We have been busy with competitions since the beginning of 2020. On 12<sup>th</sup> of January we were at Brightwalton Village Hall for the Public Speaking Competitions, this was a very entertaining afternoon with lots of fantastic entries. There were 3 teams entered in the public speaking, all of which delivered very passionate speeches about their chosen subject with Summer, Seb and Stephen from Bradfield coming first. The Junior Reading teams read very tricky extracts from the book Maze Runner, with a Bradfield team of Alice, Áine and Grace winning. Four teams in the Call My Bluff meant there was lots of competition, this is a competition the county hasn't run for a few years so to have two teams from Shefford and two teams from Bradfield was great! After some very clever definitions for rather obscure words, a team from Bradfield gained first place. Unfortunately, there was only one team that entered the debating, but they used both their debating and teamwork skills to have a practice go, well done to Stephen, Josh, Michael, Hannah and Becky. We were very fortunate to have a panel of 3 public speaking experts who kindly gave up their time to judge the afternoons competitions. The high standard of all entrants meant that the competition was very close, but the judges were able to provide lots of valuable feedback for all teams and individuals, which is very useful going forward to the South Each Area Round.

We had one entry for Situations Vacant, meaning Michael won. Seb and Stephen battled it out in the Junior Member of the Year, with Seb coming first and Stephen coming an incredibly close second. And finally, Henry impressed the judges with his YFC knowledge and enthusiasm as he answered questions set by the judges in the Senior Member of the Year. Congratulations to all those who took part in the Berkshire Public Speaking Competitions, it would be great if next year we could have entries from all four clubs.

The following Sunday we held the county 5-a-side football competition at St Bartholomew's School. We ran mixed junior and men's senior football, Bradfield winning the juniors and Windsor and Maidenhead winning the men's. It was a fun morning, but again a shame we didn't have many teams from across the County competing.



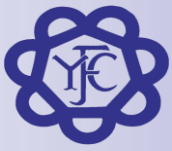
At the start of February, we all headed to Thame to compete in the South East Area Spring Competitions Weekend. On the Saturday all the public speaking competitions took place, it was a hugely successful day for Berkshire, winning almost every competition we entered! All the competitors were fantastic and their hard work paid off with some impressive results for the County. Seb was up against some tough competition in Junior Member of the Year, Michael was placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in Situations Vacant. The Readers, Public Speakers, Call My Bluffers and Debaters all won their competitions, and Henry won Senior Member of the Year!



A massive well done to all who competed and for all the hard work you put in during the run up to the competition. It's an amazing achievement to have so many members going through to National Finals.

Also, a big thank you to the parents who transported and supported our members, it is always very much appreciated. Unfortunately, our Netball and Football teams didn't get to play on the Sunday due to the arrival of Storm Ciara which caused the 2<sup>nd</sup> day to be cancelled, we are hoping they will be rearranged soon and hopefully the County can continue with its success.

*Hannah Walters (Berks YFC Comps Chairman)*



# Berks YFC Chit Chat

## Club Communication

### Bradfield's Broadcast....

As always, we have enjoyed a very busy start to the New Year, January saw Bradfield putting their public speaking skills to the test. We entered almost all of the competitions, Reading, Speaking, Call My Bluff, Debating, Junior Member of the Year and Situations Vacant. Our results were fantastic, and Bradfield had some very strong entries ready to represent Berkshire at the South East Area Spring Comps Weekend in February.



We had lots of fun meetings in January, these included Indoor Football, in preparation for Berkshire's 5-a-side football at St. Bartholomew's school. We had 2 junior teams and a senior team. We were successful in the juniors with Bradfield Gold winning against Shefford. Bradfield enjoyed an evening at the new Ice-Skating Rink at Thatcham, some members showed off their skating ability while others clung onto the sides! It was a great evening and we can't wait to go back.

'Field to Fork' cookery night was a hit with all our members, they cooked and ate a meal with locally sourced pheasants and duck and thoroughly enjoyed it.



Spring Comps weekend, held in Thame, was soon upon us and what success we had! Our members who were competing did themselves and Bradfield proud.

The Reading, Speaking, Call My Bluff and Debating teams all won and are going through to the National Finals in July. Congratulations to all Berkshire members who competed, it was a great day watching you all work as a team and support each other. Unfortunately, the sports events that were planned to be held on the Sunday were postponed due to the arrival of Storm Ciara.

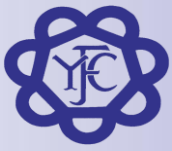
We made use of Bradfield Village Hall and had a couple of games of Kwik Cricket, some members proved very skilled with a cricket bat as well as being able to dodge the ball when needed! It was a good relaxed meeting following on from the weekend's competitions.

Thanks to Chris Webber we had a very informative and educational evening learning all about 'The Farming Year' and what happens on the arable farm, linking in with our Field to Fork meeting we had a few weeks earlier. At the end of the meeting we all took part in the #Februdairy Milk-boat Race Challenge. This was a challenge that started trending on social media and we wanted to take part and show our solidarity for the British Dairy Industry especially after the very highly publicised Veganuary. A great effort by club members, downing pints of milk proved to be one of our strong points! If you haven't already seen the video, you can find it on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

The following week was Pancake making! Our members had lots of fun flipping pancakes and seeing how much chocolate and cream they could put on them. All the previous years of pancake making have paid dividends as not one pancake landed on the floor!

Last week Gordon ran a car and bike maintenance meeting, this was very interesting, our younger members learnt how to inflate a bike tyre as well as changing the wheel on a car. Something that will definitely come in handy at some point!

*Hannah Walters (Bradfield YFC Chairman)*



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## Newbury's News....

After the summer holidays, the club returned to meetings in early September. We had lost a few members just before the break for various reasons, but from nowhere, we find we have gained 8 completely new members and our membership now stands at 21! What a great bunch of members we have, all very friendly and very keen on joining in with everything. What is a real bonus for us is the support we are getting from the new parents too. They have come to meetings, offered to host meetings and even joined the advisory committee already. We are incredibly grateful to them all for the support.

We were lucky enough to have a visit to Plantation Farm, Wolverton which is a racehorse breeding and training facility hosted by Richard Bandy.

Our AGM in October was a great evening of club reports and prize giving. It is always lovely to be able to share our successes with our members, their families, our vice presidents and supporters.



Our members had an evening of First aid training with M&M Medical where they were taken through resuscitation, recovery position, basic bandaging and also making a stretcher. These important skills were well delivered and everyone took part. Our smallest member was even able to put an adult in the recovery position without any effort at all.

Members were then presented with a certificate at the end of the evening.

No October would be complete without an evening of pumpkin carving and as usual our members came up trumps with some great carving. We were joined this year by Lorna Matejcek who brought along some Halloween things to decoupage. What fun that was! Keeping to the crafty theme, we started Christmas early in November where we visited Blue Beetle Ceramics studio in Thatcham, and members painted some Christmas items. The results were great, what an arty bunch we have.



Our annual trip to Willis Farm for Christmas Wreath making was, as usual, a great start to Christmas. In a barn, with soup, hot chocolate, cakes, marshmallows on sticks over the fire, and, of course, lots of wreaths. Members raised good money for our charity Newbury Cancer Care Trust.

We started the new year off in January with ice-skating at the new training centre in Thatcham. We had sole use of the rink great fun and great value for money, we will be sure to visit again!

A club quiz and games evening followed. Marshmallow towers and a beetle drive are always a good bit of fun. It will be great to be able to present our cup for the quiz at the AGM this year, as we haven't done a quiz in a while.

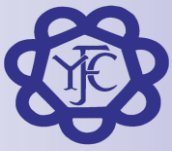
A visit to Donnington Grove Vets, hosted by Henry O'Neill was fascinating. It was interesting to see how big the equipment has to be for dealing with equine.

By far the most interesting and educational visit we probably ever have had, was a visit to Thatcham Research in February half term. It was fascinating to see and hear all about all the testing they do for car insurers and manufacturers to make sure that we are all driving around in safe cars. Did you know that for every crash test they do, the manufacturer delivers 20 cars, of which 4 are picked at random. This is to ensure no one can meddle with the results.

Our last meeting was a club evening discussing show classes and also had fun making and flipping pancakes. Always a favourite.

Obviously, we are all now on a break until the country has recovered from the current crisis. We wish all our members and families, friends and supporters all the very best. Stay safe and most importantly stay at home. We can beat this!

*Emma Collins ( Newbury YFC Club Leader)*



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## Shefford's Summary...

For Shefford Young Farmers it has been a great year so far with lots of fun had by all our members with an interactive programme. We have had loads of talks from local businesses, as well as fun indoor meeting in the hall at Brightwalton.

The Royal County of Berkshire Show kicked off the start of our Young Farmers year in September. The weekend was a great success, with everyone getting involved to really showcase what we are all about. A couple of our members were interviewed by Newbury Weekly News and made it into the newspaper which was a great way for more people to hear about us!

Following on from the show, we hosted the County Harvest Festival for Berkshire YFC at Fawley Church. It was a lovely service where the members walked the flags down, donated store cupboard food in aid of loose ends, and some of the members read readings. We were pleased to say that it was well attended and was a great evening for all the members.

This year we were able to book ourselves a tour of the Wessex Mill in Wantage. We were shown everything from where the lorries loaded, to where and how the flour was made, to where it was packaged. This again was extremely well attended, enjoyed by all and an informative evening, it's safe to say we all learnt a lot about the Mill and its history.

Following on from this we had a public speaking practice, where we were delighted to welcome back some ex Shefford members to give us coaching. It was a great night and entertaining to watch the teams come up with their answers, which gave us all some laughs!

Christmas then fast approached and in tradition we dusted off our carol sheets and hosted our annual Carol Singing at Brightwalton Village Hall. This was a joyous occasion attended by lots of people and members – both past and present. We also raised a lot of money for our chosen charity – The Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

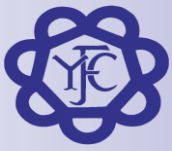
After the Christmas break, in January we had a pheasant plucking meeting at the hall. This was a very enjoyable evening had by members of all ages and we're still finding the odd feather scattered around the hall!

We have had many County competitions, from public speaking to sports, we participated in County football and netball which all of our members had fun coming together as a team and taking part. We also had an evening practicing stock judging, helping our new, younger members learn the basics of stock judging, and also letting our existing members get extra practice before the competition.

Our annual fundraiser quiz, was a very successful evening, with great attendance and fun was had by all.

Overall, we've all enjoyed the past few months as a club. It's a great shame that we can't continue with what was set out to be a great rest of the year, however it'll be all the better next year!

*Katie Goodman (Shefford YFC Chairman & Georgina (Shefford YFC Press Secretary)*



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## Windsor & Maidenhead's Words...

W&MYFC have had a very fun packed start to the year. From our very first Christmas ball, to sports and socials, we have packed quite a bit in so far.

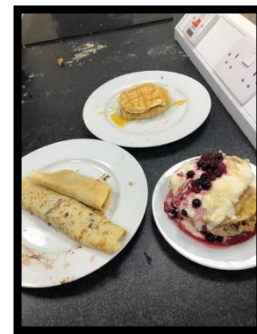
Most of us would like to say our Christmas ball went extremely well for our first ever money raising event. There were ups and downs whilst planning it and it was rushed quite a bit. However, for putting together, a club Christmas ball, for 70 people in 3 months, I would say is quite an achievement. And we can now say we've learned from our past mistakes and will be able to throw an even better event that we can all look forward to in the future.



Other meetings we have had are a party games night in the sports hall at BCA college. This entailed some team building activities where a few of our new members began to get to know the rest of us. We also had some sport activities and of course, a table of party food too.

We have had many fantastic nights that would not have been possible without the access to BCA college. We have had many outdoor meetings like, bushcraft and the wide game. The wide game is where a square was marked out in the willow and the objective is to enter the square without anyone seeing you and calling your name out. It is best played in the dark and with flashlights.

We have also had many cooking challenges. For example; cupcake off, pizza making and pancake off. We even have our very own Mary Berry and Paul Hollywood, in the form of Richard Dent and Oliver Whitby, to taste the finished master pieces and decide who wins the prize.



As a whole I think the most loved meetings are the cookery ones as these are the ones which most people enjoy themselves and get involved.



We do many craft meets as well, our most recent one was Valentine's Day card making, where juniors and seniors made cards for their loved ones.



Continued.....



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I'd say one of our biggest meets so far this year, has been the Shorts Agricultural tour. I think this must have been down to the fact most of our members are tractor crazy, and couldn't imagine missing out on an opportunity to see an agricultural contractors' yard. We had a BBQ at the end of the tour which gave some of the parents and older members a chance to chat "business" with Mr. Short himself. Where they may have got a few pointers. Shorts were extremely happy to have us and have helped us out many of times with resources and equipment. We are planning on having more meetings like this.



Last year and the year before we have held a stand and helped out at the REBAA ploughing match. This year they had their very first tractor run. This started at Shorts agricultural and finished at the York club on the royal estate. It went from Shorts through Rinder LTD's farm past the new Thames hospice site, who they were raising money for, through Windsor high street and up the long walk, which most would say was the highlight of the day. Afterwards there was a hog roast and drinks in the York club, with a brass plaque and a bottle of cider provided by James Heddington and Crazy Dave Cider. We had 8 members drive tractors, with 14 members involved from passengers to being stewards.

The W&MYFC team capturing a quick photo before they set off



Daisy Rinder & Ellie Smith causing traffic on the long walk.

Overall, I think we have had a great start to the year so far and I am proud of how well we are doing as a club. It is exciting thinking of all the fun we will be having after club meetings are allowed to resume. We all have something to look forward to in one way or another!!

*Ellie Smith, Windsor & Maidenhead Club Leader*