

County Chair's Chatter.....

What a change we have had since April. For one the weather has picked up with the heat wave recently, and everyone making hay whilst the sun was shining. Thankfully we are able to do more activities in person with COVID restrictions reducing. We have had more clubs meeting in person, which I think everyone is enjoying and it's a relief we can undergo more face-to-face activities than we could a few months before. Zoom meetings are still about and I feel that it will become a lot more common to hold both in person and zoom linked meetings for people who are unable to attend in person.

Recently we have been ploughing through the national competitions with Berkshire participating in almost all of them, from debating and Public Speaking to Stock judging, we are definitely getting involved. Over the last weekend the South East Area Stock judging took place it was great to see we had multiple entries in Junior, Intermediate and Senior categories. It's great to see that Berkshire's spirit has not disappeared!!

Country Spotters took place this week, with a walk around Snelsmore Common whilst answering some questions along the way and a picture quiz of different wild flowers, trees and animal tracks. It was great to see so many teams take part, everyone had fun and the rain stayed away too.

We have the County Rally this Sunday, hosted by Windsor and Maidenhead. Good luck to everyone involved and I hope it's a great day and the sun shines.

Everything is progressing nicely as we now move into the summer period, most of the clubs are slowing down for the summer and hitting September with a bang, whilst others are continuing with the odd meeting which is nice, especially for the younger members and anyone not directly involved with harvest.

Big things are happening to YFC, at the National Council meeting the motion was passed to increase the age limit from 26 to 28 to encourage more senior members and to allow anyone who was in there last year during COVID to participate when it's all a bit more normal!!

A date for your diary for the New Young Farmers year, Newbury Ploughing match on the 3rd of October of which they are holding a specific competition for anyone over 16yrs old, to have a go at ploughing, even if you have never ploughed before, which is a great opportunity to have a go.

I hope that everyone enjoys their summer and farmers have a good harvest, but remember stay safe.

Henry Graham (County Chairman)

County President's Proposal.....

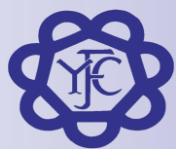
I am writing this before the Country Spotters competition so hopefully all will have gone well, well done to everyone who took part and congratulations to the winners.

As some of the restrictions have now been lifted it should be possible to enjoy some of the things that Young Farmers excel at once again. Please take care, not only for yourselves but for friends and family too.

As most of you will know Tom Copas passed away. He was a strong supporter of YFC. Being a member of Maidenhead Club for many years he was very active in guiding the county during the boundary changes with Oxfordshire. He will be missed.

I am looking forward to things gradually getting somewhere near normal and attending the Ball in October.

Andrew Kimber (Berks President)



Berks YFC Chit Chat

July 2021

News From National



- NFYFC's 90th Anniversary Summer Ball in Northumberland on 11th June 2022

County Competitions Communique

At the start of June, we finally held our first 'face to face' competition since February 2020. This was a junior mixed Kwik cricket tournament. Three teams from Berkshire entered and played some great games resulting in Shefford coming first, Bradfield second and Newbury third. Meaning Shefford will go through to the NFYFC National Final in October. It was great to finally be able to run a physical competition after a long 18 months of 'zoom' meetings and competitions.

Throughout June NFYFC held all the Public Speaking Finals via Zoom. The competitions were held over several weekends. Berkshire had lots of members competing over the weekends; Stephen, Aine and Zoe from Bradfield competed in the Junior Public Speaking – well done to Stephen for being awarded the best individual speaker award.

A mixed team of Hannah, Summer, Becky, Henry and Michael all took part in the Senior Debating Final and I competed for the Senior Member of Year. Big congratulations to all our members who took part in the various competitions.

On July 18th a mixed team from Berkshire headed to Sparsholt College to compete in the South East Area Men's Five-A-Side Football Competition, they competed against Hampshire to come 2nd place.

Sunday the 25th July, South East Area Junior Stockman of the Year and Stockman of the Year Stockjudging took place virtually over Zoom. We had Alice and Bradley take part in Junior Stockman of the Year who came joint 2nd and Henry coming 1st in Stockman of the Year, very closely followed by Will in 2nd Place.

They all did very well, as judging stock is tricky enough via videos, but these were not the best quality.

Country Spotters took place this week after being postponed due to a clash with England getting through to the World cup semi-finals. We had 14 teams, with both juniors and seniors take part in a walk around Snelsmore Common answering some observational questions along the way and completing a picture quiz at the end. Luckily the rain stayed away and everybody made it back safely to the start, with a few signage errors along the way. Well done to the winners.

Juniors;

- 1st Emma Legs-Smith & Olivia Jeremy (Shefford)
- 2nd Sophie & Luke Lawrence (Newbury)
- 3rd Marnie Wye & Alice Phillips (Bradfield)
- 4th Scarlett Slatter & Kate Perry (Bradfield)
- 5th JP Perry & Will Plank (Bradfield)
- 6th Grace Collins & Flo Waite (Newbury)
- 7th Skye Saville & Alicia Bosley
- 8th Honor Pilditch & Hattie Brown (Shefford)
- 9th Louise Hayward, Annabelle Hudson & Georgia Pilditch (Shefford)
- 10th Archie Brown & Harry Hayes (Shefford)
- 11th Charlie Hayes & Harley Page (Shefford)
- 12th Barney Bosley & Eddie (Shefford)

Seniors;

- 1st Josh Plank & Ben Plank (Bradfield)
- 2nd Katie Goodman & Will Denton (Shefford)

It's been a busy few weeks for our members and we hope we can continue face to face competitions and eventually get back to normal next year!

Hannah Walters (Berks YFC Comps Chairman)

Club Communication



Berks YFC Chit Chat

July 2021

Bradfield's Broadcast....

As the both the restrictions and the weather improved, Bradfield has made the most of the local area. Being unable to use Milehouse for the whole Club, Countryside walks and species identification evenings were the order of the day. We covered Englefield Estate looking at the trees we planted. We visited Rushall Farm woodland and had a pond dipping evening. It was great to just get out as a club and see each other, but also to acknowledge the amazing Countryside we have right on our doorsteps.



Pond dipping might seem somewhat childish, but there is something intriguing about what goes on underneath the surface and there is always something to see and learn, even the parents got involved.

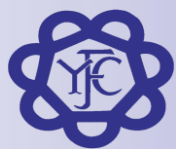


The Club has played rounders and Kwik Cricket at Bradfield Village Hall, again making use of the local facilities where possible – we have maintained our Covid protocols, with Risk Assessments, Track and Trace records and temperature checks at arrival to meetings and of course a plentiful supply of Hand-Sanitiser. Our members have been respectful of the process and keep us informed of their Lateral Flow test results. We are grateful to all our members and families for their support with these elements that have become second nature on a Weds eve.

We managed a respectful second place at the County Kwik Cricket competition at the wonderful East Woodhay Cricket Club. Despite our somewhat limited experience of Cricket the members played well and it was great to see the other Clubs and Berkshire members being able to compete Face to Face. Thanks to everyone who made this happen.



The Games continued with unmounted Prince Phillip Cup Games at Malthouse Farm, Tug of War antics caused some interest with the juniors pulling against parents – no pictures as I'm saving the images of contorted, pained expressions!



Berks YFC Chit Chat

July 2021

A bike ride at Greenham Common just about managed to miss the showers, but several members took the opportunity of the flooded ground to get wet anyway...



The getting wet theme then continued as headed towards Bucklebury Ford. What started out as a game of Dodgeball in water, soon degenerated into a full-scale water fight! Of course!

Of course, it hasn't all been fun and games. We had a fantastic

farm visit and talk with Chris Webber and family at Amners Farm, learning about grass! Harvesting grass for silage, haylage and hay – Chris's enthusiasm for grass made this an interesting and informative evening. It was great to see what goes into a contracting set-up of this size and the investment and commitment that it requires – and yet to understand that it all relies on the British weather, makes you realise what a knife-edge farmers are working on.



Our members have been busy behind the scenes too. Training and practicing for the virtual National Finals that have been taking place over the last couple of weekends. Multiple evenings have been spent with the members on Zoom or Teams.

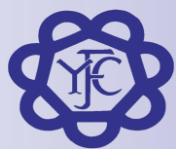
Hannah Walters represented Berkshire in Senior Member of the Year, and although not placed is to be congratulated on making it to the National Finals. The Junior Speakers, Zoe, Aine and Stephen gave a fabulous account of themselves, and despite a wobble moment, came an excellent 5th overall as a team against some excellent opposition it really does come down to some very fine margins at this level. Stephen showed that Berkshire really area force to be reckoned with in winning the overall Best Speaker award. A fabulous result and thoroughly well deserved.

The Debating team was quite fluid in its composition, with Becky stepping back in to cover Jess who was committed to her new job. Hannah, Michael, Summer, Becky were joined by Henry and worked hard to research and probe the motions to be proposed and opposed as they formulated their arguments and predicted what the other teams would say and argue. It goes without saying that National Finals are a massive step up, but the team acquitted themselves well, and despite Henry's last-minute attempt to pull-out (breaking your collar bone does not get you out of Public Speaking I'm afraid!), they all learnt a lot and as always, should be proud of their achievements. Thanks to the team for their commitment and to Wendy Webber for her tremendous support.

We are working to support our Area Stockjudgers and Ben and Josh joined W&M YFC at Sparsholt for the Area men's football on what was the hottest day of the year so far. Well done to them. As we wind up for the year we are hurriedly trying to support and address the Rally classes, members will compete in Country Spotters and we will try and put on some sort of 'camp-out' at the end of August, before starting all over again in September.

Thank you to our committee, members, parents and supporters for making it another memorable year, despite the restrictions and the loss of many opportunities, it's still been a busy and eventful year.

Gordon Fletcher (Bradfield YFC)



Berks YFC Chit Chat

July 2021

Newbury's News....

What we have been up to since the last update?

We have had a fun time in the past couple of months. We have made the most of being able to have face to face meetings, at a great venue Little Wyford Farm, Charter Alley. Our thanks as always to the Englefield family for hosting and allowing us to keep going in these very difficult times.

In April we got ready for the Pre-Show stock judging and were able to get up close and personal with some sheep! It's the first time our members have been hands on with stock so was a great to be able to put into practise what we had learned on our previous Stockjudging evening via zoom. This obviously paid dividends as we had lots of new competitors this time and they all did very well at the county competition

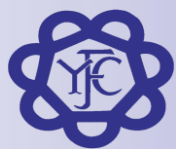


We then had lots of fun at our next meeting making scarecrows out of recycled materials. Watch this space for a reappearance of the scarecrows in our new programme out in September!

We had a Kwik cricket practise at Kingsclere rec and Police dog handling was a really interesting evening. We learned about what types of dogs are used and what they are trained to do. One size does not fit all and each of them specialise in different disciplines i.e., money, drugs, missing person. We had a look at some of the training equipment and then had a demo where the dog searched for discarded items. The climax was the dog chasing the 'offender' and catching them. Rather him than me!



In June we had simply the best fun ever! A novelty assault course at Little Wyford Farm. Huge thank you to Carli, Jenny & Michael for organising this for us. Members were exhausted at the end, but loved it and we have planned another one in the next programme as it was so popular.



Berks YFC Chit Chat

July 2021



If you like mint and chocolate then a visit to Malshanger Farm Estate, Oakley, home of www.summerdownmint.com is a must. They are part of the Colemans (mustard) empire, who turned their attentions to mint 25 years ago. Members were shown the planting and management of the lavender, peppermint and camomile fields, through to the harvesting and subsequent production of essential oils, perfumes, body & bath products, teas and chocolates. Needless to say, the chocolates were a big hit!



During the year members also took part in NFYFC Give it Some Welly. We covered the miles by walking, running, with dogs and even on horseback! Thank you to everyone who supported us and made a donation.

After our last meeting which was a family BBQ & rounders evening at Manor Farm, Brimpton, kindly hosted by Michael and Mandy Bowdon, we now have a well-earned break for the summer. Below please find details of our new programme and watch this space for details of a possible new meeting place for the club. Currently in negotiation!

What's coming up!

A sneak preview of some of the meetings we are planning for the first part of our new club year from September:

September – Club meeting and AGM preps; a walk with the Sandhurst & Aldershot beagles; 19th AGM

October – scarecrow hunt and pumpkin carving

November – Club evening and wall Climbing

December – Christmas Wreaths

Emma Collins (Newbury YFC Club Leader)



Shefford's Summary...

Our first in person meeting was a success, with everyone enjoying a game of rounders at Brightwalton village hall. For some of our newer members it was their first time actually meeting everyone in person, so I think everyone appreciated being able to put faces to names, and of course a good catch up for those not so new!

Then came the stock judging competition – virtually, of course due to the restrictions. Shefford managed an entry in every class at every age level, which was amazing so a big thank you to those who competed. We were in charge of organising the competition as a whole, so with videos of the stock sourced by Steve Ackrill and timings worked out down to the minute by Steve and Milly West, the day ran without a hitch. We definitely got our money's worth out of our zoom subscription that day! Shefford came away with 6, 1st places and many other placings and commendations from the judges, so well done to all the competitors, many of whom had never competed before.

Keeping in with competitions, then came the under 16's Kwik cricket. After a practise at Brightwalton village hall beforehand (and a few lost cricket balls), the team arrived at East Woodhay Cricket Club. They played brilliantly and managed to beat Newbury and Bradfield's teams to first place, so huge congratulations to the whole team! Skipping South East Area level due to there being no other teams entered, our under 16s are headed straight to nationals in autumn, which is amazing for a smaller club so we're all very proud of them.



We've had various meetings in between all these exciting competitions such as hobby horse racing and bricklaying, but our most recent one was canoeing in Newbury with outdoor academy. This was a really well attended meeting, and despite there not being any swimming involved, everyone seemed to end up soaked head to toe! We had races and games all up and down the canal and were also taught the best techniques for splashing the other teams, which was very helpful.

Shefford has had a busy few months and it's been amazing to start to resume outdoor meetings to see everyone again.

Victoria Ackrill (Shefford YFC Acting Club Chairman)



Windsor & Maidenhead's Words...

We have all had an amazing past couple of months with some really good face to face meetings.

We have been meeting with juniors and seniors separately due to Covid guidelines. Our first face to face meeting back was with the juniors and we had a pizza making night at BCA. It was fantastic that the juniors could meet inside as it gave us a lot more opportunity to meet especially with the weather still being a tad cold and rainy.

The week after we then had our first senior meeting. Unfortunately, we had to meet outside due to the Covid restrictions for over 18's. However, everyone seemed to have a great time at the bushcraft night and it was lovely to all be back together again. Even though we had a little bit of rain.

We've been running all meetings on alternate fortnights. The other junior meetings we have had are human horse course, this is where we used the indoor arena at BCA and set out the jumps and had competitions in who could do it the quickest or the highest. We also had some giant space hoppers to play on, courtesy of club secretary, Charlotte Costard.



Another one was at Smewins farm in Shurlock Row, this was to watch a stick and ball match ready for in 3 weeks' time, where the over 13's that were experienced riders got to have a lesson in polo. At the polo lesson meeting, we met with seniors and juniors, however we had to limit our number to 30 as the rules hadn't yet changed and we had over 18's attending. Luckily no one who was able to have a polo lesson missed out and there was also a very scrumptious BBQ afterwards thanks to, Kim and Carlitos at White Waltham Polo Club.





Berks YFC Chit Chat

July 2021

In Between the stick and ball match and the polo lessons we had an air ambulance talk by Matthew Campling. It was brilliant and we were surprised on how informative and interesting it was for the juniors. We found out it was a very fitting meeting as we have a junior who wants to become a paramedic.



We were meant to have a capture the flag night after the polo lessons but unfortunately it got cancelled as everyone was very busy working and we wouldn't have had enough members for two teams. However, we have got a night planned for all of us if restrictions lift as an end of year BBQ and open water swimming.

Our senior meets have included some sports nights like football and rounders. Even though it rained on our football night everyone stuck around and had a great time. We even ran over time we were having so much fun.



We were meant to have a BBQ and camp out at Angus Edgley's farm however lots of us became busy with work due to the change in weather and unfortunately not many went.

We are hoping we can all meet together for our last meeting of this Young Farmer year and are also looking forward to us holding our first ever rally.

Ellie Smith (Windsor & Maidenhead Club Leader)