

# MILLENIUM FARM TRUST AGM

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2011 at 3:45pm

Education Room, West Stow Visitor Centre, West Stow Country Park,

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Chair: Bernadette Shrubshall

Minutes: Beth Barham

Attending: Keith Sparks; Mike Jesky; David and Patricia Webb; Andy and Nicky Hunter; Geoff and Ann Davies; Kevin Chapman; Nigel and Doreen Newell; Miriam Newell; Jean Rodwell; Mark Richardson; David Cook; Pat Higgins; Alex Waters (Harry and Grace); Alex Quinn

Apologies: Nigel and Chris Oakley; Yuk-Lun Wong; Jane and Stuart Taylor; Marisa Davey; Richard : Hopper; Geoff Bailes; Jane Broomhall Jackie Cooke; Susan Boucher; Paul and Chris Harrison; Ritchie Tennant; James Willer Tom Bright; Shelagh Everitt; Sally Webster; Sarah Smith; Chris Storey; Doeke Dobma; Sara Hall; Mr and Mrs Chapman; Phillip Mellor; Victoria Lawson

The meeting commenced after the group had time visiting West Stow Country Park and refreshments.

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## 1. Welcome:

1.1 Introductions were made by Bernadette to David Cook and Pat Higgins with a brief reference to their retirement as trustees. Beth Barham, minute taker, was introduced and thanked for her time.

1.2 New visitors and guests were welcomed; Alex Waters with Harry and Grace; David and Pat Webb; Jane Rodwell; Andy and Nicky Hunter who were thanked for photocopying information for the meeting.

1.3 After the apologies were read, reference was made to (farmhelper) James who is now recovering after his operation.

1.4 It was noted that the Reports to be discussed were for the year April 2009 to March 2010.

## 2. Annual Review

2.1 Bernadette gave a summary of the printed report and asked both David and Pat to give a brief rundown of the activities they had been involved with.

2.2 David Cook:

- The horticulture and gardening side had increased but there was a problem with getting locations with livestock; although approximately twice a month there was access at East Bergholt and Tuddenham.
- Initially students were from Otley College and required minimum assistance. This is changing as those with more severe difficulties are attending because of the financial input this has through support from social services and other government funding. As some farmhelpers now have mental health difficulties this could require further training of staff and support workers.

- The year had been tough financially however at Rede the workshop has now provided an increase in woodworking.

### 2.3 Pat Higgins:

- Listed the methods by which the profile of MFT had been raised and also how funding had been raised:
- At shows and events such as Euston Country Fair and the south Suffolk Show, car boot sales, selling birdboxes. Posters had been placed around villages.
- Also there is now a trailer to assist in transporting what is needed for the shows; Daisy and Percy, in particular, generate a lot of interest at events.

2.4 There had been 48 operational weeks; 170 farmhelper days. There had also been social and countryside awareness activities, walks and a sponsored swim.

2.5 There were no questions and the Annual Review was accepted by those present.

### 3. Financial Review:

3.1 Bernadette thanked Andrew Winearls of Whiting and Partners for his continued assistance as the independent examiner and gave a summary of the printed financial statement indicating that 'miscellaneous' also included placement fees.

3.2 It had been a demanding year for finances and changes of personnel. Although there was continued funding there had been a shortfall in the balance and this had been made up from the Trust's reserves. This situation is now in hand and the savings are being gradually reimbursed.

3.3 Travel costs had increased especially as there is a lack of direct bus services and this was despite reliance on volunteer car drivers, staff or community car services assistance.

3.4 As not everyone claims expenses this is not a complete assessment of the total cost of service provision.

3.5 There is a good relationship with the host farm and the Trust is looking towards opening five days at this lovely facility and will therefore require more volunteers and staff. Farmhelpers and volunteers are being canvassed at, eg: priory Special School, Otley College, volunteer centres, etc.

3.6 There has been an increase in production from both the workshop and vegetable growing.

3.7 There were no questions and the Financial Statement was accepted by those present.

### 4. Presentations:

4.1 Alexander Quinn gave a presentation of the work he does at Old Hall that included a description of growing potatoes and the machinery he uses for the crop and also about his work feeding the cattle to ensure they have the nutrition they need.

Alexander with Geoff Davies then presented a bird table and explained how he had constructed and painted it in the MFT workshop in Rede

Q: regarding cost and time - £35 each and took about a day to complete.

4.2 Keith Sparks, with the assistance of Mike Jesky, presented boot jacks and how he had assisted in creating these and he also gave a demonstration of drilling.

4.3 Bernadette offered apologies to Miriam Newell and Kevin Chapman , which were accepted, that they would not be able to give their presentations at this meeting due to a lack of time but would ensure the photographs would be used in the report.



Miriam removing staples from fencing post Nov 2010 at Longwood Farm Tuddenham. Miriam has helped with fencing tasks on many occasions and at Longwood Frm particulalry enjoys seeing he Galloway cattle.



Kevin with MFT mebers and Bury Ramblers at community woodland, Horham which Kevin helped to plant. Photo taken on day of 5 mile walk October 2010 which Kevin jointly researched and led with Chris Barker

## 5. Changes in Personnel

5.1 Bernadette offered thanks on behalf of the Trust of Pat Higgins and David Cook for ensuring the continuation of the charity, which may not have been able to continue without their commitment to it. There will be a function later in the year recognising the invaluable contribution they have both made over the years to MFT.

5.2 Bernadette also acknowledged the contribution of Phillip Mellor who has now stepped down as Farm Manager. A new Farm Manager is being recruited.

5.3 Other personnel who have retired in the last year included Eve Mathers, Felicity Driver, both volunteer support workers, Victoria Lawson (publicity and marketing officer), and Ritchie Tennant no longer has students to bring to the farm.

5.4 Bernadette then introduced those interested in becoming Trustees and asked them to speak to the membership:

5.5 David Webb - from Sudbury, has been in horticulture for over 20 years and has already spent time at Rede and East Bergholt. David brought pictures of his journeys in Australia and Malaysia.

5.6 Andy Hunter - Bury St Edmunds; was in Civil Engineering and Business Development now runs a jazz club. Andy's parents were farmers.

5.7 Nicky Hunter - Bury St Edmunds; qualified physiotherapist running her own out patient business, with experience in young persons with learning difficulties. Nicky presented an interactive exercise session and information.

5.8 Bernadette thanked them all for their willingness to assist with MFT and felt that their contributions could progress the Trust particularly with their combined business acumen. All three volunteers were formally accepted in the role of Trustees.

## 6. AOB

6.1 Apologies were given by Bernadette as there was insufficient time left for the election of officers or discussion of the filling of the following roles: Minutes Secretary; Treasurer; Publicity and Marketing Officer or a full AOB session.

6.2 Further details regarding these aspects of the agenda would be detailed within the completed minutes and on the website.

6.3 The next meeting will be in April; date and venue are yet to be arranged. Thanks were given to all those who were able to attend.

6.4 A very brief presentation was given by Geoffrey Davies regarding the opportunities presented by River Stour Boating - Community Interest Company - for the Trust and leaflets were distributed for anyone interested in taking part in public canoeing trips

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The meeting finished at 5pm.