

At the heart of farming, food and the countryside.



NEW PRESIDENT

North Yorkshire landowner Sir William Worsley has become the new President of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society.

Sir William, who runs and lives at his family's award-winning Hovingham Estate in the Howardian Hills. He is a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Societies and of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and is a Deputy Lieutenant of North Yorkshire.

Earlier this year, Sir William was appointed as Chair of the Forestry Commission. He is also Lay Canon of York Minster and Chair of the Howardian Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. He also serves on the North Yorkshire Rural Commission. He has previously served as the Government's Tree Champion and has chaired the National Forest Company.

Sir William has also held office as President of the CLA, the Country Land and Business Association and as a member of the North York Moors National Park Authority.

Nigel Pulling, Chief Executive of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society, said: "We are delighted to welcome Sir William as our new President and look forward to working with him as we plan for the Great Yorkshire Show's return in 2021."

Sir William succeeds Charlotte Bromet, who handed over the President's Crook in a short and socially distanced ceremony held at the Great Yorkshire Showground. The handover marked the finale of the Great Yorkshire Virtual Show.

Sir William said: "I am hugely privileged to become President of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society.

For a Yorkshire landowner, it is probably the greatest honour you can be given.

"It is sad that we have not had the Great Yorkshire Show this year, but we very much intend to make up for it next year. The Show is a very special county event and I used to enjoy stewarding at it many years ago.

"Agriculture and Forestry are really important industries in Yorkshire, and we need to ensure that they are celebrated, that new support schemes are right and that their introduction is properly managed."

The Society's new President Elect is Margaret Chapman, the Great Yorkshire Show's long-serving Chief Cattle Steward.

The 2021 Great Yorkshire Show dates are Tuesday 13 - Thursday 15 July 2021.

WHAT A YEAR (!)

CURRENT OPERATIONS AT THE GREAT YORKSHIRE SHOWGROUND

During lockdown all our activities were reduced to minimum levels with only Fodder shop continuing to trade more or less as normal.

The good news is that we have now moved to the next stage where most of our operations can, or will soon, be able to open, albeit with significant restrictions and in a 'Covid-19 Secure' environment.

Great Yorkshire Show and Countryside Live

Sadly, both events have had to be cancelled due to the restrictions imposed to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

Yorkshire Event Centre and Pavilions of Harrogate

As far as other activities on the Showground are concerned, some smaller events (less than 30 attendees) are sporadically taking place in Pavilions. More are booked in the coming months although this is still well below our 'normal' number of events.

From 1st October larger events will be able to go ahead but although we had a couple of new shows due to be held in the autumn, the recent tightening of restrictions means they are now unlikely to proceed.

We expect it will be 2021 before events restart in earnest.

We are pleased to confirm all our operations are Covid-19 Secure and 'Good to Go'.



Fodder shop and Fodder on the Hoof continue to trade well, and we reopened Fodder café in August, which is operating well.

Harrogate Caravan Park re-opened at the beginning of July and is now busy with customers 'staycationing'.

The Farm Retail Association continues to support farm shops nationally as they contend with the new environment. It has been heartening to see the use and appreciation of farm shops increase hugely during lockdown and our aim is to ensure this continues.

The Society was appointed managing agents for the British Christmas Tree Growers Association in July, and we are now working with the committee to proactively support their members.

Financial position

This has been, and continues to be, a very challenging period financially. With the lack of events including the Great Yorkshire Show, our income is well down on normal.

Even using the furlough scheme extensively, we are forecasting a loss of over £2 million for 2020 and a further loss in 2021 as the economy slowly recovers.

While the Society is well funded, we decided to borrow £1.5 million from Barclays Bank under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme to help bridge the cash outflow until events can resume.

We have to plan for further disruption to our business while hoping for an improvement.

Unfortunately, it looks as though we are all in for a long haul.

Members

The whole country is facing unparalleled uncertainty and the Society is facing one of the most difficult and testing periods in its long history.

Members are the foundation stone on which the Society is based, and we have been heartened by your support during recent months. There is no doubt that by standing together we are better placed to face the challenges ahead.



GREAT YORKSHIRE SHOW

Virtual



Edward Hudson, giving a tour of his family farm



Gardening with Martin Fish



Show Director Charles Mills

OUR FIRST VIRTUAL GREAT YORKSHIRE SHOW

It may not have happened for real this summer but that has not stopped us from celebrating the Great Yorkshire Show and all that is great about farming, food, and the countryside.

Taking our flagship event online for the first time in the Society's history, the Great Yorkshire Virtual Show saw 42 video features go live on the show website during the event's original dates, 14th July to 16th July.

With the help of more than 60 supporters, the virtual show took viewers behind the scenes on farms and in workshops to showcase and explain many aspects of agriculture and food production across Yorkshire, whilst offering a dedicated Shopping area for all our stallholders.

Among the headline acts were Atkinson Action Horses, Sporting Soprano Lizzie Jones, The Yorkshire Vets, a Cook-Off Challenge using ingredients from Fodder farm shop starring top chefs Rosemary Shrager and Stephanie Moon and a mini concert by Leyburn Band. There were also special video messages from NFU President Minette Batters, Defra Secretary of State George Eustice and the Bishop of Ripon, Dr Helen-Ann Hartley.

Defra Secretary of State, George Eustice delivered an exclusive video address in which he responded to questions from the Society about the Government's role in supporting farming.

Mr Eustice told of his hopes for a greater appreciation of farming as a result of the health crisis which has

stopped events such as the Great Yorkshire Show from going ahead this year.

He said: "As we come out of this virus, I think there will be an increased appreciation of the importance of food production in this country and the value of our key workers working in the food sector."

Rather than try to replicate the real show, the virtual show was an attempt to represent a broad flavour of the event's great variety of content. It set out to deliver a spectacle that was informative, entertaining, and accessible to all, whether from a farming background or not. We hope too that the virtual show came as a cheerful and welcome diversion for all our supporters.

Such was the virtual show's success that viewers tuned in from more than 40 different countries. It attracted coverage from BBC Look North, ITV Calendar, BBC Radio York and many more.

Charles Mills, farmer and Show Director of the Great Yorkshire Show, said: "I am absolutely delighted by, and grateful for the support for our first ever virtual show. I hope that everyone who tuned in found something to smile about, something that entertained them and hopefully they learnt something new about farming, food, and the countryside.

"One important thing I do hope the virtual show has achieved is to have helped lift people's spirits during what has been a tough time. I'm now looking forward to next year when we hope to welcome everybody back to the Great Yorkshire Show in Harrogate."

The 2021 Great Yorkshire Show dates are Tuesday 13 - Thursday 15 July 2021.

UPDATE ON SUPPORT FOR THE INDUSTRY

A big part of what we do as a charity to support the farming community is bring people together. Of course, that has not been possible for much of 2020, but we are continuing to support farming and the countryside.

Our **Women in Farming network** has blossomed in recent months with the creation of the Yorkshire Women in Farming group on Facebook. This private membership platform has been driven by a small team of a determined rural women, backed by YAS. It offers a safe and supportive space for likeminded women who live and work in the countryside to stay connected and already has nearly 250 members.

Planning is now well underway to take the Women in Farming's annual conference online on Tuesday 13th October 2020. Look out for more details soon on the YAS website and on social media.

The YAS-supported network was one of several to feature as part of the recent Great Yorkshire Virtual Show with **Women in Farming** members recording a Zoom chat for the event. NFU President Minette Batters gave a personalised video address to the **Future Farmers of Yorkshire** including answering members' questions and the **Yorkshire Rural Support Network** introduced a video highlighting the wealth of support available to all from the farming help charities.

After a busy start to 2020, **Future Farmers** put their programme of debates, socials, workshops, farm walks and industry visits on hold. The 1,000 strong group are now planning to resume activities with a winter online debate on 'Entrepreneurship in Agriculture' and also organising some face to face training, to better equip members meet the challenges that undoubtedly lie ahead.

Our farming networks may not be able to meet in person at the moment, but we continue to support the industry and we are well aware of how important this support is in the absence of agricultural shows and other events this summer.



Meanwhile, our **Farm To Fork** campaign was launched on social media in April to raise awareness of the role of farmers and farm retailers amid the coronavirus outbreak. To date, 45 farmers and farm shops have shared anecdotes about life on farm and how businesses have adapted to give communities uninterrupted access to quality British food.

The campaign has attracted support from the Guild of Fine Foods, CLA, NFU, York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Delicious!Yorkshire and Visit Harrogate, and we recently celebrated the campaign by having 'Farm To Fork' mown into the Showground's Main Ring.

With the help of our members and supporters, Farm To Fork will continue to tell the story of farming through the seasons and why farm retailers merit long-lasting support as coronavirus restrictions ease. To be featured as part of the campaign, get in touch with **Charitable Activities Manager, Ben Barnett** by emailing benb@yas.co.uk

COUNCIL ELECTIONS AND AGM THURSDAY 15TH OCTOBER 2020 AT 2PM

When the lockdown started way back in March it brought many aspects of life to a halt.

This included our Council elections and the AGM which would normally have been held in May 2020.

We are now proceeding with both of these albeit the AGM will be virtual for the first time.

If there is an election in your area, included with this newsletter is the voting paper and details of the candidates, and we would encourage you to vote. The Society is run by its members and now more than ever the Society needs enthusiastic and forward-thinking individuals who want to help us through these challenging times.

Notice is hereby given that the thirty seventh Annual General Meeting of Yorkshire Agricultural Society will be held by a 'Zoom' meeting for the following purposes:

1. Receive any apologies
2. To receive the result of the election of Members of Council
3. To receive the Report and Financial Statements including the reports of the Trustees and the Auditors for the year ended 31 December 2019.
4. To re-appoint Garbutt and Elliot Audit Ltd as auditors and to authorise the Trustees to fix their remuneration

5. Any other business

- At the close of the formal business meeting, an opportunity will be given to Members present to put forward any suggestions or ideas for consideration by Council.

**By order of the Trustees, Nigel Pulling,
Chief Executive, August 2020**

If you wish to attend the virtual AGM please e-mail jayned@yas.co.uk before 2 October 2020 and we will send the appropriate joining instructions and documents.

YORKSHIRE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY