

NATIONAL FARMERS UNION (NFU) – Essex update



February, although a short month, is an important one in the NFU Calendar as members from across England and Wales assemble for the annual conference in Birmingham. 2021 however will stand out as the first online NFU Conference as we adjust to the current COVID-19 rules and guidance. Something was familiar - the line-up of high profile speakers including: Prime Minister Boris Johnson; Defra Secretary, George Eustice; DiT Secretary, Elizabeth Truss; Sir Kier Starmer, leader of HM Opposition; and

Tim Smith – Chair of the Trade and Agriculture Commission. Cabinet ministers were keen to reiterate the importance of British Farming and their intention not to undermine UK Food production in favour of international trade. This was followed by the Labour Leader addressing NFU members for the first time since 2008 admitting that the time had come for Labour to turn its attention to the rural – urban divide. In the first major engagement of the Trade and Agriculture Commission with farmers the message was much more sobering and highlighted the need for rural communities to remind policy and decision makers that UK food production should not be undermined in the pursuit of free trade.

Closer to Essex, NFU activity is getting underway to help our farmers navigate their way through the next year and beyond. During March we will be holding two online BPS meetings to help members with their applications for 2021. This year, is of course the first of the Post-CAP reductions in direct payments to farmers. We had the commitment at NFU Conference that every penny that is diverted from BPS would find its way straight into the agri-environmental schemes in the future. We will be working to ensure that this does happen and that it happens in a practical and effective way. We are also organising information sessions for members on Gene Editing, Low Carbon Agriculture and we have just announced our Levelling up rural Britain report which can be viewed here and sets out a plan for improving broadband connectivity, decreasing rural crime, fixing the planning system and investing in British Investment in British Food. <https://www.nfuonline.com/nfu-online/news/levelling-up-report-2021/>

As we head firmly into 2021 and with the road being paved out of social restrictions we continue to urge rural communities to work with farmers to remain vigilant to rural crime. In particular fly tipping and potential illegal raves which have seen an increased following the closure of music venues and outdoor events. There is the potential for some really positive joined up thinking between farmers and local residents to make sure that the rural landscape is no longer blighted by rural crime – I encourage you, where possible, to work together to prevent both of these crimes from occurring.



Jake Richards
County Adviser for Essex



TRI-SERVICE RURAL COMMUNITY OFFICER STARTS WORK FOR ALL THREE EMERGENCY SERVICES



A new Tri-Service Rural Community Officer, representing all three emergency services, has begun working in the Maldon and the Dengie Peninsular areas of Essex.

Les Davis will establish himself as a pivotal member of the community, making Essex safer while working collaboratively for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS), Essex Police and East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST).

With the support of Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, the role is part of a 15-month pilot between the services.

Focusing on priorities around protection, prevention and response, Les will offer a visible presence in these local communities as well as providing early intervention, prevention and an operational response for the EEAST.

Les will base his visits and work on data and risk, meaning he will be able to target safety messaging and advice to the right people at the right time.

Les will divide his time between street visits, joining both in-person and online community network groups and working as a first-responder for the Ambulance Service. He'll also regularly meet with each emergency service as he continues to adapt the role to target each area.

Tri-Service Rural Community Officer Les Davis said:

"Working for all three emergency services in a collaborative way is a real privilege, as it means I can either directly tackle or pass on safety concerns at a very local level.

"I'm hoping to really get to know the communities I work in so that I can understand what would make them feel safer and more secure in their daily lives.

To find out more and to hear Les Davis talk about what you can expect from his new role please click [here](#)

BRITISH FOOD BOXES FROM MORRISONS



Morrisons British Food Boxes are full of British produce. Featuring meat, dairy and vegetables, as the biggest customer of British Farming, Morrisons is pleased to not only provide you with a range of delicious ingredients, but to help support British Farmers too. £1 from each box you buy will be donated to British Farming Charities such as FCN via The Prince's Countryside Fund.

The boxes also contain products from the companies For Farmers range. This range helps to support the farmers Morrisons buy from by returning more money to them, which in turn helps farmers to invest in extra health and welfare measures for their livestock.

To find out more information and order a box please click [here](#).

NATIONAL SHEEP ASSOCIATION SHEEP WORRYING BY DOGS SURVEY (2021)



Each year the National Sheep Association (NSA) collects the experiences of farmers affected by sheep worrying by carrying out snap-shot surveys. By completing the survey you are helping to contribute to research which gives an important insight into this serious issue.

PLEASE NOTE: This survey will close to respondents on Monday 19th April 2021.

If you wish to discuss any of the matters highlighted in the survey please do not hesitate to contact us at enquiries@nationalsheep.org.uk or phone us on 01684 892661.

ESSEX LIBRARIES SERVICES READING FRIENDS



Essex Library Services is looking for volunteers to support the roll out of the Reading Friends scheme across Essex.

Reading Friends is an exciting UK-wide programme from The Reading Agency. It has been piloted in some other parts of the country over the last few years and now is being extended to Essex. Developed with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, Reading Friends tackles loneliness by bringing people together to read, chat and share stories.

What will it involve?

- Chatting to people, either one to one, or in groups, using reading to get people talking. Contact will be via phone or virtually initially. As restrictions lift it is planned to do in person sessions in libraries.
- Using reading – whether books, magazines, newspapers, or anything else – to start conversations. Nothing needs to be read before the session.

What skills and experience do you need?

- An interest in people.
- Good communication and people skills.
- Love of books and reading is not necessary, but would be a bonus.

What will you get from volunteering?

- The satisfaction of contributing to the community and potentially preventing loneliness.
- The chance to share the joy of reading.
- Develop your experience and skills to enhance your CV. To register your interest please [click here](#)

PLUNKETT FOUNDATION



Join the Plunkett Foundation campaign to help save local pubs through community ownership. With thousands of pubs across the UK closing or under threat action is needed now to help them survive. Community owned pubs offer a real life-line to those who want to save their much-loved local pub.

To find out more and become involved please click [here](#)

BE PREPARED FOR THE CENSUS 2021

The census is a unique survey that takes place every 10 years in **England and Wales**.

By taking part, you'll help inform decisions that shape your community.

census 2021



By taking part, you can help inform decisions on services that shape your community, such as healthcare, education and transport.

The next census takes place on **Sunday 21st March 2021**.

It's important that you fill in your Census questionnaire. Without the information you share, it would be more difficult to understand your community's needs and to plan and fund public services.

In one way or another, your information touches the lives of every single person living in England and Wales, whether it's through using Census information to plan new schools, doctors' surgeries or bike lanes. Because these things matter to us all, everyone needs to complete the Census. For further guidance please [click here](#).

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Essex Rural Partnership Future Meeting Dates

Date: Tuesday 27th April 2021

Time: Start time 10:30am until 12:30pm

This meeting will be held via Zoom

Date: Thursday 21st October 2021

Time: Start time: 10:30am until 12:30pm

Venue: TBC



What to do if you have issues with hare coursing on your land

1. Report every incident – if it's live 999, otherwise 101 or online (scan QR code using your smartphone)
2. Clearly state 'hare coursing'
3. Provide exact location (use what3words app)
4. Get photos or details of people and dogs
5. Get vehicle details – make, colour, registration
6. Be discreet. Approaching hare coursers may be inflammatory
7. Note down the crime reference number
8. Share intelligence with farmwatch, local whatsapp and speak to an NFU rep



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