

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE

WINTER 2015
£3.50 (when sold)

countryside-alliance.org.uk

2015:
a year in
review

BRITAIN'S BEST SPORTING PUB

Celebrating rural heritage

WILD DEER

Scotland's national asset

SUFFOLK FOOD HALL

The Rural Oscar winner's story

The Grove & Rufford Hunt

Expanding horizons, welcoming newcomers

The magazine of

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE

CLASSIC TWEED JACKETS

ONLY **£99** SAVE **£150**
(WAS £250)

New can now purchase any of our 100% wool tweed jackets from our superb collection for £99, saving £150 on the original price.

Made from the finest 100% new wool, our classic tweed jackets will add a distinctive country feel to your wardrobe. With a quality half-canvas construction, they have clean simple lines for a modern silhouette and a two button fastening. The finishing touches include working cuffs, notch lapels, double vents, two single-welt pockets to the front and two internal pockets. Beautifully finished with well-appointed herringbone lining, they feature a contrasting striped sleeve trim to the arms for a sharp and modern finish. Dry clean only.

Sleeve: Short, regular, long. Chest: 36" - 48".

Full chart available at: www.samuelwindsorshoes.co.uk.



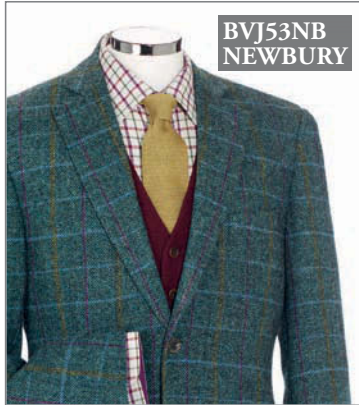
**BVJ53TH
THIRSK**



**BVJ53WR
WARWICK**



**BVJ53SD
SANDOWN**



**BVJ53NB
NEWBURY**



BVJ53ET EXETER



Samuel Windsor
tailored quality ~ outstanding prices

0871 911 7044*

*Calls cost 13p per minute plus your phone company's access charge. **QUOTE 55954**

www.samuelwindsorshoes.co.uk/55954

Post to: Samuel Windsor (55954), PO Box 87, Brecon, LD3 3BE

ITEM DESCRIPTION	CODE	SLEEVE	CHEST	QTY	TOTAL
				P&P	£5.95
				Total	

PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH. Offer subject to availability. Please allow up to 7 working days for delivery. If you are not completely satisfied with your purchase then return the item to us within 30 days, worn or unworn, and we will refund you, no questions asked. Any unsuitable item can be returned using our returns service - details supplied with every order. Please note a signature is required upon delivery.

Our 'was' pricing refers to the original selling prices offered on our website www.sws shoes.co.uk, and in our retail store between 10th August and 10th November, 2015 (items sold at 'was' prices represent the lower proportion of sales).

55954

I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to **SAMUEL WINDSOR OFFER (55954)**. Please write your name and address on the back of your cheque. Alternatively, please debit my Visa/Master Card/Switch/Maestro card:

Mr/Mrs/Ms: Initials: Surname: _____
 Address: _____
 Postcode: _____ Tel No: _____
 Card No: _____
 Switch Issue No: _____ Valid from date: _____
 Expiry date: _____ Security Code*: _____

*Last 3 digits on back of card



Contents

WINTER 2015



34

"...clear expectations placed on deer managers and land managers to deliver an enhanced range of public interests alongside their private objectives. Whatever that means."



Photo: Grant Glendinning/Alamy Stock Photo

EDITOR'S LETTER

This issue is something of a "foodie" special with features on the diverse and delicious produce of Suffolk Food Hall, Vicars Game and Chalk Stream Foods. We also bring you information on Christmas hampers - whatever you do this season, eat well and eat British.

The heritage of our sports is in the frame with the fascinating story of gunmakers William Evans (p46) and the colourful world of the Vintage Tack Room (p36), while the Grove & Rufford is looking firmly to the future by opening up its country and welcoming new faces (p16).

Readers will expect us to report on our frontline work and our campaigns team's review of 2015 (p28) shows how much has been achieved. Sadly, with the hunting issue still unresolved and the lead shot debate still simmering, we certainly still have a lot to do. Chief Executive Tim Bonner urges the BBC to follow its own guidelines when it comes to presenter Chris Packham's vocal backing of an animal rights agenda (p11).

"Our campaigns team's review of 2015 shows how much has been achieved..."

Our partnership with *Country Life* magazine to find Britain's Best Sporting Pub was fraught with hard decisions, but we are proud to present the winners (p24).

Sadly, our 2016 events listing (p49) is lacking the CLA Game Fair which will not run in the same guise again. What next for country shows? We ponder that question but it's a fact that in the countryside, enterprising souls rarely let the grass grow.

Merry Christmas to all readers

Jill Grieve, Editor
@CAupdates

➔ IN THIS ISSUE

4 News

Great British Game Week, the 2015/16 Hunt Tumblers' Club and our Christmas card collection

11 The BBC and Chris Packham

Tim Bonner urges the BBC to stick to its own guidelines, come what may

FEATURES

12 A joyful fishing legacy

Late *Shooting Times* journalist John Humphreys' Fishing 4 Schools bequest

14 Impact IT Solutions

The company that is getting the countryside online

16 A return to old country

The Grove & Rufford is expanding its horizons as Charlotte Cooper discovers

20 The perfect rural business?

Suffolk Food Hall's Rural Oscar is only part of the success story

22 Labour's rural credentials

Jim Barrington considers the vision for the countryside of Corbyn's Labour

24 Britain's Best Sporting Pub

We teamed up with *Country Life* to celebrate the pubs that welcome sportsmen and women

28 A year in review

Our campaigns team looks back at 2015

30 Yorkshire Dales Gundog Society

Tony Raine combines his passion for gundogs and photography with a great outfit

32 Vicars Game

The Berkshire butcher and game dealer with a dizzying output

34 Deer management in Scotland

Jamie Stewart on the importance of managing Scotland's wild deer

36 The Vintage Tack Room

Heritage hunting clothier Mia Woodford has anecdotes to spare

38 Citizen Science

How you can help the Garden Wildlife Health project

41 Game recipe

Sloe gin & wild game sausage rolls are perfect for a day in the field

43 Chalk Stream Foods

Harnessing all that's best from Hampshire

GET INVOLVED

45 Feedback

Letters to the Editor

46 English gunmaker Wm. Evans

Celebrating the company that is 132 years young

49 Events

Highlights for 2016 including Badminton, the Great Yorkshire Show and the Festival of Hunting

50 My Countryside

Village shop owner Dave Hull's love of countryside keeps him very busy up in Blanchland

COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE

Chairman
Simon Hart MP

Chief Executive
Tim Bonner

Editor Jill Grieve

Publisher
BPG Media

Membership hotline
020 7840 9300

24-hour legal hotline
0871 919 3505

Insurance hotline
0871 919 9172

Campaigns
020 7840 9250

Events and fundraising
020 7840 9298

PR and media
020 7840 9220

Countryside Alliance Ireland
info@caireland.org
02892 639911

Scottish Countryside Alliance
infosca@scottishcountrysidealliance.org
0131 335 0200

By post
Countryside Alliance,
1 Spring Mews
Tinworth Street
London SE11 5AN

Fax
020 7793 8484

Website
countryside-alliance.org

Email
info@countryside-alliance.org

Advertising
Charlie Coups
Bethan Watson
ads@bpgmedia.co.uk
01476 859838

Countryside Alliance magazine is published four times a year on behalf of the Countryside Alliance by BPG Media 01476 859849 www.bpgmedia.co.uk



Review

Round-up of the stories that matter to you



Welcome from our Chief Executive



Many of you will remember the trepidation with which hunts approached the first full season under the Hunting Act

in 2005. Fewer will know that the League Against Cruel Sports (LACS) that year passed a motion at its AGM to “dispose of properties that were purchased to further the anti-hunting campaign” and “acquire new areas of land... for the anti-shooting campaign”. As far as the animal rights movement was concerned, the battle for hunting had been ‘won’, and the battle for shooting had started.

Ten years on, nearly every hunt that met in 2005 has had its opening meet in 2015. LACS has disposed of 2,000 acres of anti-hunting ‘sanctuaries’, but not a penny has been spent acquiring land for its anti-shooting campaign. Instead, it has gone to fund a pointless campaign of ‘investigation and surveillance’ which has yielded little evidence of illegal hunting. In fact there was not a single prosecution relating to a registered hunt in the whole of the 2014/15 season.

It could not be clearer how crucial the campaign against the hunting ban is for shooting, and for all the many other activities on the animal rights agenda. That is why the Alliance will never retreat from its aim to legalise all legitimate forms of hunting, nor will it ever apologise for prioritising this issue. The Hunting Act is not just an attack on people who hunt, it is an attack on our whole way of life.

I hope you enjoy our magazine and have a happy and sporting Christmas and New Year.

Tim Bonner
Chief Executive
Follow Tim on Twitter
@CA_TimB

HUNTING

No Hunting Act cases from the past hunting season

Legislation’s credibility continues to be eroded

THE GOOD NEWS, as the new hunting season gets underway, is that not a single hunt has been prosecuted for breaking the Hunting Act during the 2014/15 season, despite the best efforts of “hunt monitors” and sabs.

There had been hopes that important amendments to the Hunting Act would be introduced for the 2015/16 season, but they were dashed in July, thanks to the posturing of the SNP, keen to flex their new-found muscle in Westminster.

The amendments would not have been repeal of the Hunting Act – which continues to be our ultimate goal – but the changes, small as they

were, would have made a real difference to those using the exemptions for wildlife management, particularly in upland areas.

However, the frustration this caused is mitigated, in part, by proof that the antis’ ever more desperate attempts to criminalise hunts came to nought last season.

Our chief executive, Tim Bonner, said: “We must not forget that 10 years ago nobody, not us and certainly not the antis, thought we would still be here in 2015. We will not underplay the difficulties faced by hunt staff and masters because of the current legislation, but hunts still have tremendous support in their communities and we are still hunting, albeit within the law.

“The credibility of the Hunting Act continues to be eroded, and this news from the past season is further proof, as if it were needed, that the law has failed totally. Ten seasons of hunting under the Act are long enough – we know that, and the Government knows that.”

“We will not underplay the difficulties faced by hunt staff and masters...”



SPONSORED BY

ROXTONS
FIELD SPORTS

For all your sporting requirements

t: +44(0)1488 689 788
e: info@roxtons.com
www.roxtons.com

SHOOTING

Standing up for British shots in Brussels

THE COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE is working with other UK organisations and our European counterparts to ensure that law-abiding shots do not get caught in the firing line of attempts to fight black market trafficking of firearms.

As part of its action against the illicit trade in firearms, the Council of the European Union has asked for a review of the European Firearms Directive, which was drawn up in 1991.

Adrian Blackmore, director of shooting for the Countryside Alliance, said: "Recent moves by the Council of the European Union make it increasingly likely that the European Commission will re-open the 1991 Firearms Directive, in an attempt to help fight the illegal trafficking of firearms into and within the European Union.

"The proposals are expected to



include the improved sharing of information on firearms, reinforcing their traceability, standardising marking, and introducing appropriate standards for the deactivation of firearms amongst member states.

"Throughout the process, the Countryside Alliance's firearms team will be working with the European Federation of Associations of Hunting and Conservation in order to make sure that the Commission stays focused on those areas designed to reduce illegal trafficking, without impeding those firearms legally held by UK licence holders."

The Alliance believes that fundamental changes to the EU Firearms Directive are unnecessary, and that national governments are best placed to decide how to implement a proper system of firearms licensing in their own countries.

The Quarter

OUR HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST THREE MONTHS

SEPTEMBER



● **Tim Bonner** took over as chief executive of the Countryside Alliance at our AGM, following Sir Barney White-Spunner, who

was executive chairman for three and a half years.

● **Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn** courted controversy by choosing committed vegan and LACS vice-chair Kerry McCarthy as his shadow Defra secretary.

● **The final Casting for Recovery** retreat of 2015 took place at the Forbes of Kingennie Country Resort. For next year's dates, go to www.castingforrecovery.org.uk

OCTOBER



● **Stars, including Elizabeth Hurley**, bid for the luxe lots at our Wine Auction Dinner at the Victoria & Albert Museum.

● **A new code of** conduct for fox snaring was agreed in Wales, with much input from our Wales director, Rachel Evans.

● **It was announced** that former Chief Executive Simon Hart MP has returned to the Alliance as Chairman.

NOVEMBER



● **Team GBR's equestrian** Olympic hopefuls attended the Cheltenham Countryside Day, where AP McCoy was given a crash

course in dressage from supremos Carl Hester and Charlotte Dujardin.

● **The deadline for** the Countryside Alliance Award 2015 is now passed, and our judges will soon be out on the road, making the hard decisions as to who will join us at Westminster for the finals in April.

GAME TO EAT

Great British Game Week returns

Great British Game Week is running right now in a celebratory event that runs until 29th November.

Great British Game Week, run by our Game to Eat and BASC's Taste of Game campaigns, is aimed at introducing new people to these healthy and natural meats.

This year sees even more restaurants and pubs cooking up new and exciting dishes, more events to introduce game to new audiences and more businesses



running special offers.

Jack Knott of Game to Eat said: "It's a great opportunity for everyone who shoots, who sells game or just enjoys eating it, to get involved and celebrate this fantastic British, seasonal produce, so why not get your game on?"

You can find a list of events here: <http://tasteofgame.org.uk/great-british-game-week/> and there are recipes galore at www.tasteofgame.org.uk or www.gametoeat.co.uk

LUXURIOUS CORDS

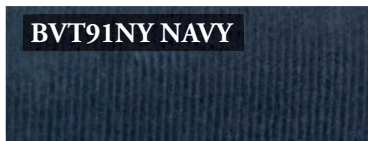
ONLY **£30** HALF PRICE
(WAS £60)

We are delighted to offer Countryside Alliance readers the opportunity to purchase any pair of corduroy trousers from our superb collection for just £30, half the original price of £60.

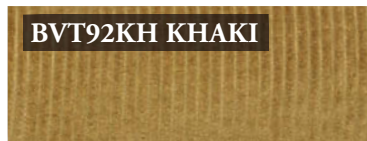
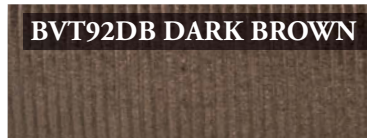
These luxurious cords from Samuel Windsor offer a comfortable, classic fit and are beautifully constructed from tough and hardwearing 100 per cent pure cotton. Perfect for work or play, these versatile trousers come with a choice of either jumbo 8-wale or needle 11-wale construction, with five seasonal colours in each style. They feature deep quarter pockets, two rear pockets and a sturdy zip. All Samuel Windsor clothing includes a 30-day no quibble worn or unworn guarantee.

Sizes: leg length 27" available with waist sizes 34" - 42",
leg length 29" and 31" available with waist sizes 30" - 46",
leg length 33" available with waist sizes 32" - 42".

NEEDLE CORDS



JUMBO CORDS



LIGHT OLIVE JUMBO CORDS

Samuel Windsor
tailored quality ~ outstanding prices

0871 911 7044*

*Calls cost 13p per minute plus your phone company's access charge. **QUOTE 55960**

www.samuelwindsorshoes.co.uk/55960

Post to: Samuel Windsor (55960), PO Box 87, Brecon, LD3 3BE

ITEM DESCRIPTION	CODE	LEG	WAIST	QTY	TOTAL
				P&P	£5.95
				Total	

PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH. Offer subject to availability. Please allow up to 7 working days for delivery. If you are not completely satisfied with your purchase then return the item to us within 30 days, worn or unworn, and we will refund you, no questions asked. Any unsuitable item can be returned using our returns service - details supplied with every order. Please note a signature is required upon delivery.

Our 'was' pricing refers to the original selling prices offered on our website www.swshoes.co.uk, and in our retail store between 10th August and 10th November, 2015 (items sold at 'was' prices represent the lower proportion of sales).

55960

I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to **SAMUEL WINDSOR OFFER (55960)**. Please write your name and address on the back of your cheque. Alternatively, please debit my Visa/Master Card/Switch/Maestro card:

Mr/Mrs/Ms: Initials: Surname:

Address:

Postcode: Tel No:

Card No:

Switch Issue No: Valid from date:

Expiry date: Security Code*: *Last 3 digits on back of card

SPONSORED BY

ROXTONS
FIELD SPORTS

t: +44(0)1488 689 788
e: info@roxtons.com
www.roxtons.com

For all your sporting requirements



News



HUNTING

Join the Tumblers' Club, back for the 2015/16 season

THE COUNTRYSIDE ALLIANCE and Champagne Pol Roger are delighted to team up, once again, to celebrate heroic hunting falls in our Hunt Tumblers' Club competition.

It's happened to us all, that moment when gravity takes over and you and your mount part company. However, if there was a photographer there to capture the moment, it need not all be mud and bruises – you could console yourself with a magnum of champagne!

Our competition celebrates the daring and elasticity of those who hunt, while capturing the tumbler's moment of misfortune forever.

Photos must be from the 2015/16 season, and no serious injury should have befallen either horse or rider.

Entries close on 1 March 2016. The best three photos will be chosen by a judging panel featuring representatives from Pol Roger, the Countryside Alliance and The Field, alongside three-day eventer Harry Meade. The winning tumbler and photographer

will be awarded a magnum of Pol Roger champagne, while second and third placed tumblers and photographers will each receive a bottle of Pol Roger. These three top-placed photos will also feature in the summer 2016 edition of the Countryside Alliance magazine and on the Pol Roger website. In addition, all six tumblers and photographers will receive a special glass champagne tankard from Pol Roger.

Please send photos to **hunting@countryside-alliance.org** including your name, address and a photo caption. If the photo is not of you, please obtain permission to send it to us from the 'tumbler' in question, and include his/her name and address. Please remember to send us your photos in as large a size as possible, so that they will reproduce for publicity purposes (ideally 1MB minimum.) Please note that copyright of entries passes to the Countryside Alliance. We look forward to seeing your photos and hope you have a soft landing!

FUNDRAISING

Another successful Hampshire Country Sports Day

HAMPSHIRE COUNTRY SPORTS Day, a have-a-go fun day for country enthusiasts and families, held at Tichborne Park near Alresford on 13 September, was a great success, with many people trying their hand at the sports on offer.

Entertainment included classes for terriers and lurchers and a gun dog scurry, clay pigeon shooting, a fun dog show, a relay competition between local hunts, and fishing demonstrations and tuition. Our new show sponsors, GMK Ltd of Fareham, generously donated a Benelli 828U gun to auction. It was bought by Nigel Lockton of Emsworth, raising £1,500 for the work of the Countryside Alliance, and was presented to Mr Lockton by Robert Frampton of GMK Ltd.



FUNDRAISING

SHOW YOUR SEASONAL SUPPORT



There's still time to show your support for country sports by sending Countryside Alliance Christmas cards. This year's offering of eight cards ranges from traditional hunting and shooting scenes by the likes of John Trickett and Fred Haycock, to the stylised hounds and reindeer of Mary Ann Rogers, and the sly cartoon foxes of Jonathan Walker.

To buy yours, or a Countryside Alliance calendar, go to www.countryside-alliance.org or call **01295 680180**.



Garages • Outbuildings • Barns • Complexes • Offices • Studios • Pool Enclosures • Boat Houses • Residential • Commercial

RADNOR OAK BUILDINGS



Tel: 01544 260727

www.radnoroak.co.uk



Morlands
Glastonbury
Established 1870

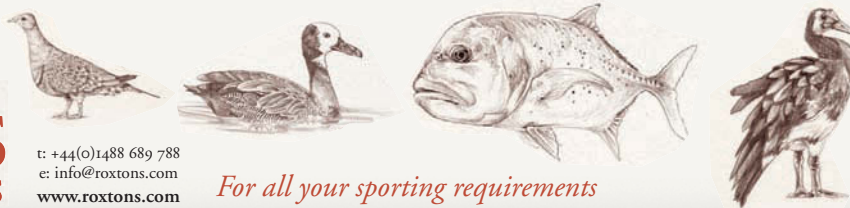
Feel the Luxury



Morlands Sheepskin Slippers & Boots

www.morlandssheepskin.co.uk

Freephone 0800 373 891


GAME SHOOTING

Hen harrier chicks thrive, but not on RSPB land

DEFRA FIGURES RELEASED in September revealed that six of the seven hen harrier nests over which the RSPB had primary control in 2015, failed. The figures show there were 12 hen harrier nesting attempts in England this year - a 300% increase from 2014, when there were four.

Six nests were successful, of which four were on or by grouse moors, and six failed. Five of the 12 nests, monitored by raptor workers and organisations including Natural England and the Forestry Commission, were successful in fledging chicks. However, of the remaining seven nests monitored by the RSPB, six failed.

Adrian Blackmore, director of shooting for the Countryside Alliance, said: "It is marvellous news that 18 hen harrier chicks fledged in England this year, but to build on this success Defra needs to implement the Hen Harrier Joint Recovery Plan.

"Given its failure with hen harrier nests this season, the RSPB's resistance to the full publication of this plan, is increasingly questionable. Either it wishes to conserve the hen harrier in England, or it doesn't."

POLITICS

Spotlight on rural issues at party conferences

THE ALLIANCE WAS at the heart of the Party Conference season, hosting well-attended fringe events on rural policy issues at the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Conservative conferences.

At the Liberal Democrat Conference we asked, "How can the Lib Dems win again in the countryside?" Issues discussed ranged from rural housing and broadband to fair pricing for farmers, and mobile banks to support remote communities.

The panel, which included Ceredigion MP Mark Williams and grassroots campaigns spokesman Tim Pickstone, agreed that the party must reconnect with its former strongholds. Our head of policy Sarah Lee, suggested rural votes lay in addressing issues including rural transport, housing and broadband. She urged the Lib Dems to display openness on hunting and shooting.

At the Labour and the Conservative conferences, we asked "Who are the real conservationists?" There was



consensus among our panel at Labour, including former Shadow DEFRA Minister Angela Smith, GWCT chief executive Teresa Dent and David Bowles of the RSPCA, that country sports play a large role in conservation. It was particularly good to hear Angela Smith confirm she would "not support moves to ban driven grouse shooting".

The same question was posed to Conservatives by our panel that included David Bowles, Ian Coghill of the GWCT, and DEFRA minister Rory Stewart. We also held fringe events to discuss broadband in rural areas, which highlighted how far we are from universal superfast provision.

FISHING

CASTING FOR RECOVERY ATTENDEE WILL FISH FOR ENGLAND

Tricia Cooke, who started fishing on a Casting for Recovery weekend, will represent England at an international fishing competition.

Casting for Recovery UK & Ireland, which is run by The Countryside Alliance Foundation, helps women overcome the challenges of breast

cancer with healing fishing retreats in peaceful settings. Tricia, from Salisbury, joined the retreat at the Arundell Arms Hotel, Devon in 2010.

She said: "When I was diagnosed with cancer for a second time, I applied to Casting for Recovery. I really enjoyed it and carried on fishing afterwards."

Tricia will fish at the Ladies' International Fly Fishing Championships at Carron Valley Fishery, Stirlingshire on 2 June.

Director of Casting for Recovery UK & Ireland, Jill Grieve, said: "We are proud to have inspired Patricia. Her achievement is a real testament to the joy our retreats so clearly bring to participants."

Check at www.castingforrecovery.org.uk for dates of retreats in 2016.



Cherry Roller Snaffle Bangle®,
available exclusively at Hiho



**Exclusive
COUNTRY Silver Jewellery**

Beautifully handcrafted Sterling Silver jewellery including equestrian designs, especially created by country lovers for country lovers.

hihosilver.co.uk
tel 01460 221 006



12% off. Enter code CA11 at checkout (exp. 30/11/15).

**EMMA WYATT
GIFTS**

Emma Wyatt Gifts design and make impressive range of gifts, tableware, awards and trophies.

P to P awards, game bird tableware for shoot parties.

Bespoke and personalised orders a speciality.



**For more info
www.emmawyattgifts.net**

Next Day
Trackable
Delivery

Printed Catalogue
now available

at home in the country
INSPIRED BY THE BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE



Home Accessories and Gifts that last a Lifetime in the Country



Enter code "ALLIANCE" for 10% discount - Expires 18th Dec 2015



01484
865359

www.athomeinthecountry.co.uk

Christmas is coming!

**SAY GOODBYE TO
COLD FEET !**

Any leg height and calf width.

Gaiters ladies' and men's,
any calf width.

Never suffer again !

Equitector Climate Control Technology.
Prevents cold feet even at minus 20 C

Other features;

- Hoof Proof toe protection
- Water proof leather
- Stirrup foot balance system
- Rot proof soles and uppers.
- Super comfortable
- Long lasting quality.



EQUITECTOR
Riding & Hunting Boots

Manufacturers of fine riding boots
For more information www.equitector.com ☎ 0208 090 4029

Packham and the BBC

→ Countryside Alliance Chief Executive **TIM BONNER** says that if the BBC is to have standards, it must stick to them, even when popular presenters cross the line.

The countryside and the BBC have a strange relationship. From the BBC's point of view the countryside is a seemingly endless source of fascination for many of its viewers, making programmes like Countryfile sure-fire hits. Some of the harsh realities of rural life are, however, less appealing to metropolitan editors and viewers. Meanwhile, many in the rural community feel patronised by superficial coverage of their way of life which can skew their attitude towards the corporation as a whole.

My view, having worked with the BBC on rural issues for over 13 years, is that BBC news coverage is generally balanced and that factual programme makers try to present a fair representation of the countryside, but one which is accessible to as many viewers as possible. This has not always made me popular with everyone in our own community, some of whom are determined that the BBC is staffed entirely by 'pinko vegans' with an agenda to turn the countryside into a theme park, but I stand by my belief that any less than perfect coverage of rural issues is as much about our failure to properly represent ourselves as it is about any 'anti-rural' agenda.

If there are problems between the BBC and the countryside they lie in two other areas. First, the almost complete absence of any programmes made 'for' people who live and work in the countryside rather than programmes 'about' the countryside. For insomniacs, 'Farming Today' is still an early morning staple of Radio 4, but the rest of the network is a desert. The BBC Trust's review of rural coverage, published last year, found that "there is a deficit in UK-wide coverage of rural issues in England".



Tim Bonner is Chief Executive of the Countryside Alliance. While working in our press office he had wide experience of working with the BBC. Follow him on Twitter @CA_TimB

"IN SEPTEMBER BBC WILDLIFE MAGAZINE CARRIED A COLUMN BY CHRIS PACKHAM WHICH... PICKED A FIGHT WITH PRACTICALLY EVERYONE."

A more serious problem, however, is the increasing engagement of high profile BBC presenters in political animal rights campaigns. This was a trend started by comedian turned wildlife presenter Bill Oddie who presented the 'Autumnwatch' and 'Springwatch' wildlife programmes, whilst doing little to hide his support for the League Against Cruel Sports. In fairness to Oddie his behaviour was not nearly as blatant as his successor at the BBC, Chris Packham, who both in print and in action vocally supports the animal rights agenda.

In 2013 the BBC did reprimand Packham for using "intemperate" language when on social media he described farmers involved in the badger cull as "brutalist thugs, liars and frauds", but that has not stopped him using the fame given to him by his work for the BBC to promote an increasingly extreme agenda.

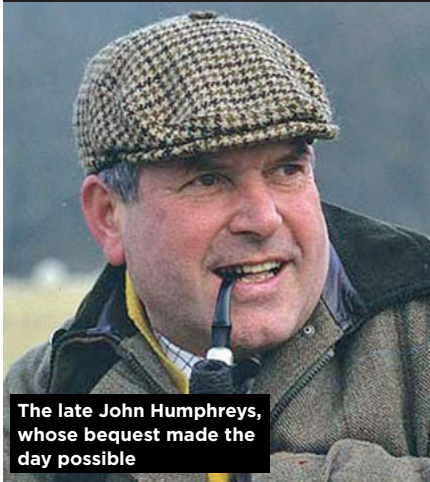
We are lucky to live in a liberal democracy where people are able to hold any number of bizarre views and should have no issue with people voicing such opinions, but using the position granted by a public service broadcaster to promote an extreme agenda is a different thing entirely.

In September BBC Wildlife magazine carried a column by Chris Packham which was remarkable in that it picked a fight with practically everyone. Fox hunters and game shooters, obviously, but also, the National Trust, the Wildlife Trusts and even the RSPB (of which he is vice-President) because they would not join his obsessive crusades. Apparently these organisations are "hamstrung by outdated liaisons with the 'nasty brigade'" (that would be us). It is bad enough that a BBC magazine should print such blatant political propaganda, but worse that it comes from the pen of one of its high profile employees.



We have complained (although we should not have had to) and there will be the usual excuses about contracted employees, BBC magazines being a separate division and Chris Packham not presenting 'at the moment', but these are all nonsense. The article was an obvious abuse of the position the BBC has given Chris Packham and is a clear breach of its editorial guidelines which state that: "it is not normally appropriate for [BBC presenters] to present or write personal view programmes and content on public policy, on matters of political or industrial controversy, or on 'controversial subjects' in any area". This would seem cut and dried, at least to everyone but the BBC who have already leapt to Packham's defence, and indeed there is a clear precedent. In 2002 the BBC Today programme editor Rod Liddle wrote an article in a national newspaper which included a description of "belch-filled dining rooms" of Countryside Alliance supporters. The BBC said the piece was "not acceptable" and "does not square with the BBC's obligation to be impartial and to be seen to be impartial". Liddle subsequently resigned from the BBC.

For the life of me I cannot understand how what Liddle (who is at least amusing) wrote can be judged to be unacceptable, whilst Packham is apparently allowed to proffer any views he likes. More importantly this is becoming a test of whether the BBC is really willing even to pay lip service to address what the Trust report described as "a gulf in understanding between the BBC and a significant segment of the rural community". ●
A version of this article was originally written for The Field magazine.



The late John Humphreys, whose bequest made the day possible

Sixty youngsters enjoy a special fishing day in Norfolk

→ A day of fishing-related fun was enjoyed by children from schools around Norwich in early October when Fishing 4 Schools (F4S) held an open day at Lenwade Pike Club.



Sixty children from four local schools - The Clare Special School, Norwich, Hockering Church of England Primary School, Dereham, Aylsham High School, Norwich and Great Witchingham Church of England Primary School, took part in activities including coarse and fly fishing, fly tying and float making, and learnt how to fillet and cook their catch.

The open day was held in memory of Cambridgeshire sporting journalist John Humphreys, who died in 2012. A service of celebration for Mr Humphreys, who contributed to Shooting Times for more than 40 years, raised a £1,500 donation to F4S to promote angling in the East of England.

Mr Humphreys' widow, Angela,

said: "My husband was a teacher for many years and loved to take young people out and teach them about fishing. He would have been delighted to see so many children thoroughly enjoying themselves today."

Director of F4S, and award-winning angler, Charles Jardine added: "We are very grateful to Mrs Humphreys for the generous donation, and the smiling faces of the children are a real testament to the magic of Fishing 4 Schools."

F4S also runs longer courses for schools, which integrate aspects of the National Curriculum into the activities. If you know of a school that would like to run a course, or for more information, contact Catrin Robinson on 0207 840 9212 or catrin@ca-foundation.org.





The technology provider for the rural community

➔ Impact IT Solutions helped the Countryside Alliance with wi-fi in a range of fields across the country over the 2015 show season. Here they tell you what they can do for you.



Lack of broadband? Insufficient or ineffective CCTV? Software packages not linked? We solve the IT challenges for forward thinking rural farms and estates, specialising in implementing technology solutions that work for you, supporting existing environments or new ventures.

As more and more landowners diversify the use of their land to generate much needed income, they need a trustworthy IT provider that understands the problems within the rural community.

We have been implementing technology solutions to a wide range of industries, especially within farms and estates, for over 10 years. We have a broad portfolio of clients including Lee Abbey Fellowship in Lynton, North Devon and the IT savvy Overbury Estate in Evesham. We supply our customers with CCTV, door and gate entry systems, superfast broadband solutions, and with phone systems inbound and outbound billing. We also have a dedicated software department delivering software solutions, including website design and hosting, bespoke software applications, mobile apps and software apps to link all your systems together. We deliver enterprise class networks and offer first class pre and post-sales support.

BROADBAND AN ISSUE

One of the biggest complaints we often hear from the rural community is the slow or, even, non-existent broadband. This is why we teamed up with Tim Bonner and his team at the Countryside Alliance to provide free wi-fi and CCTV for their stand, throughout the show season.

We supported the shows with a very neat satellite solution which doesn't rely on phone lines at all. It doesn't matter where you are in the country or what phone lines you currently have installed, by using the latest satellite technology we can deploy high speed internet which, depending on your location, can be between 10mbps and 100mbps which is three to four times faster than most networks. The whole solution can be set up within a couple of hours. It proved to be a huge success at the Royal Welsh, The Great Yorkshire, the CLA Game Fair and the South of England Show.

At the Great Yorkshire Show, we went one step further and implemented live coverage of the hounds section via CCTV and streamed it back to the Countryside Alliance hospitality tent on the hillside, where members of the public enjoyed a cup of tea whilst watching the dog show!

"IMPACT CAME UP TRUMPS FOR US, PROVIDING CCTV COVERAGE OF THE HOUNDS SECTION AND FREE WI-FI WITH A SIMPLE SOLUTION AND IN A NOTORIOUSLY DIFFICULT AREA TO GET SIGNAL. WE WERE ALL VERY IMPRESSED."
TIM BONNER - CHIEF EXECUTIVE

"HAVING IMPACT IT SOLUTIONS ON THE STAND AT THE ROYAL WELSH SHOW WAS A GREAT SUCCESS FOR US, WITH MANY TAKING UP THE OFFER OF FREE WI-FI WHICH ENABLED US TO ENGAGE WITH THEM. IT WAS PRETTY BUSY, SO MIKE ENDED UP OFFERING THE WI-FI AND MAKING CUPS OF TEA! GETTING A SIGNAL WAS AS DIFFICULT AS WE EXPECTED ON THE SHOWGROUND, BUT WE GOT THERE IN THE END AND IT DIDN'T FALTER ALL WEEK."
RACHEL EVANS - DIRECTOR FOR WALES

Communication on large estates is, of course, key. Often rural entrepreneurs are travelling through different areas of their farms and estates, so need a solution to solve connectivity problems and allow different areas of an estate to communicate effectively with each other. Or they need a connectivity offering for short-term visitors, which can provide an additional revenue stream.

We understand farmers and land-based entrepreneurs, and have a team which specialises in designing bespoke solutions for rural areas. With the fast-changing pace of technology, we can help to transform IT within your business or estate, whether that's with new software to help run your day-to-day processes, implement a wide range wi-fi network to give you internet and network access across a large area of land, install a secure gate or door entry system, and CCTV enabling you to view your farm or estate from anywhere on the planet, or simply manage your computer workstations and servers. ●



Email: sales@impactitsolutions.co.uk
Web: www.impactitsolutions.co.uk
Tel: 0117 2020 200

Think Silky!
when you want Quality and Innovation

NATANOKO 60 330-8
HAYATE (9m reach)
SUGOI 360-6.5
ZUBAT 390-7.5
ULTRA ACCEL 240-7.5

Silky Fox Handsaws
www.silkyfox.co.uk • 01981 590224
Visit silkyfox.co.uk to find your local stockist

Lejeune
CAR MASCOTS

MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN

LOUIS LEJEUNE LTD.
01353 740444 www.louislejeune.com

GAME FEEDING EQUIPMENT
... THE KEEPERS FRIEND

Looking for game feeding equipment?

- Automatic feeders & timers
- Lamps & battery supplies
- Remote camera systems
- Fox traps & vermin controls
- Drums for food & water

View online shop now!

Wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable season

FREE DELIVERY on all automatic feeders & cameras **Quote CA1** when ordering!

Tel: 01403 822471
Email: info@game-keepers.co.uk
Web: www.game-keepers.co.uk

Game Feeding Equipment is a trading division of
RUDGWICK METALS LTD
Rudgwick, West Sussex

From Clays, to Quarry, to Vermin,

Currently there are
20,500+ guns for sale on the
guntrader.co.uk website

It is a vast choice of makes,
models and calibres and the
numbers are being added to
all the time.

**With this choice you will
be able to find a gun
for any pursuit.**

Opening up old country

→ It's a lucky hunt that is able to open up new country, but that's just what the Grove & Rufford is doing. **CHARLOTTE COOPER** visited for a morning's autumn hunting to find out how.

There is something very exciting about visiting a different hunt country. If one's own patch is like dinner with an old friend, whose ways and foibles are loved and overlooked in equal measure, visiting is like a first date: full of promise but also potent with the unknown.

So how much more thrilling to find new land to visit within your own hunt boundaries? In these days of ever encroaching towns and cities, where country roads get upgraded to dual carriageways and land available for hunting keeps dwindling, it is a very fortunate hunt that can open up new country. But that is exactly what's happening at the Grove & Rufford.

Long and thin, the Grove & Rufford country stretches from Nottinghamshire right up to the Humber, bordering at least six hunts along the way. But for around three decades the north of the country, around Doncaster and into North Lincolnshire, had fallen out of use. An isolated autumn hunting meet at West Woodside in 2013 sowed the seed, and this season very active joint master Jane Bowen, who is responsible for the



area from the village of North Wheatley (mid-way along the road from Retford to Gainsborough in Nottinghamshire) to Goole, has arranged numerous meets in her patch.

"We have not had the number of masters in the past to cover the whole of our country - you can't have a job and a life, and clear umpteen acres of land for hunting - but we have five new masters this season, bringing us up to seven, so we can expand," said Jane. "Two weeks ago we met at Crowle [North Lincolnshire] for



the first time in 30 years. We got around 25 new faces out. There are a very large number of horse-owners in this area but they have not known much about us or how to get involved."

Another good reason for the Grove & Rufford to try to find more country for the early part of the season is the rise of small shoots in the middle of their country which means they are really restricted to hunting that area only from February, once the pheasant season is over.

On the day I visited they met on the 700-acre arable farm of Simon and Lynn Clark at Epworth on the historic Isle of Axholme. The area on which we stood was surrounded by bog until the 1600s when it was drained under land reclamation methods introduced by the Dutchman



Charlotte Cooper is the Countryside Alliance's Head of Media. Previously a journalist at Horse & Hound she has written about hunting for many years.



Cornelius Vermuyden. The area was also the birthplace of Charles and John Wesley and is studded with current and former Methodist chapels.

From our position on the brow of the former island we had a 360° view of the surrounding land across three counties and out to the Drax Powerstation at Selby.

It was a beautiful dawn and as 7.30am came around, the sun was low and rosy in the way you only seem to get on autumn hunting mornings, with mist in the fields and a clear, pale blue sky.

Around a dozen were out mounted – the majority of the field in their first or second season, including local artist Joanne Johnson and Sarah Farmer, who lives close by but generally hunts with the Burton.

Joint master Jane Strawson (the hunt

“OUR HOUNDS... NEITHER TOO FAST OR TOO SLOW, THEY HAVE GOOD NOSES FOR SCENT, MAKE A GREAT CRY AND HAVE EXCELLENT CONFORMATION, WHICH IS TERRIBLY IMPORTANT...”
JOINT MASTER JANE BOWEN

confusingly has three Janes – two masters and whipper-in Jane Wright) started proceedings by informing us that lines had been laid and they would be hunting within the law, and they were off.

Having such a large country means the hunt boasts all types of terrain, from the forestry of the south of the country, through livestock land in the middle to the

open arable here in the north. But today was ditch country and Jane Strawson, who was field mastering, had spent many hours acquainting herself with the country and working out the best places to cross these obstacles. However, even then she very nearly came to grief over a tricky ditch with a false edge of grasses, which claimed visiting master Isabel Barker of the newly formed Yorkshire Farmers’ Bloodhounds.

The trails described a merry dance across the country, from little copses or meres as they are known locally, along field edges to an old quarry and back, with hounds trying hard. As foot followers we not only had a perfect view of their work but also hares, fallow deer, a buzzard and even a show by the Red Arrows, all to the accompaniment of skylark song.

Photos: Penny Fillingham www.pennyfillingham.co.uk

Huntsman Paul Larby has been in charge of the breeding of the Grove & Rufford hounds for nine years and is very proud of the result. And rightly so. Grove & Rufford hounds were unequalled in every class in which they were entered at the Great Yorkshire this year, then at Peterborough, Duchess 12 was acclaimed champion bitch and Bellman 13 reserve champion dog.

“Our hounds have great results in the show ring but they hunt well too,” said Jane Bowen proudly. “They are neither too fast or too slow, they have good noses for scent, make a great cry and have excellent conformation, which is terribly important as they cover a lot of miles each hunting day. They go back to lines Paul had at the Meynell and Eggesford.”

Both the Grove and Rufford hunts, which amalgamated in 1952, have a long history, and the hunt boasts fabulous red brick Victorian kennels at Barnby Moor, near Retford.

But for a hunt with such a pedigree, the Grove & Rufford is very convivial. “Our plan is to make ourselves the most friendly and welcoming hunt in the area,” said hon secretary Simon Bower. And they certainly seemed to be living up to that aspiration. Among the foot followers that day was the owner of a beauty salon



who hadn't followed for years but turned out to be from farming family and was quickly signed up by Jane Bowen to help with liaison; Martin Horrocks, who is in his 80s and only stopped riding in the past decade or so and lays claim to be the hunt's oldest follower, and farmer Pat Thornton, whose land we moved onto after the Clarks', who had popped along with his young daughter before school, piggybacking her to avoid mud on her good shoes.

Relationships with local farmers are at the heart of the Grove's success in

“TWO WEEKS AGO WE MET AT CROWLE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 30 YEARS. WE GOT AROUND 25 NEW FACES OUT.”

opening up their country. It's a long and sometimes thankless task, going around all the local landowners, asking if they welcome the hunt on their land, but slowly and steadily they are achieving their aim. And soon these new areas will be old friends. ●



Beautifully British.



now
£989
was £1299


TIMELESS
CHESTERFIELDS
by SAXON

Experts in the finest Chesterfield Sofas, lovingly hand crafted in our workshop.

Visit www.TimelessChesterfields.com or Call 01204 368413

A Natural Warmth



Yeoman
A NATURAL WARMTH

WOOD • MULTI-FUEL • GAS • ELECTRIC • BOILER STOVES

For more information on all Yeoman stoves, (including high output boiler models), please visit www.yeomanstoves.co.uk





Suffolk superior

➔ Suffolk Food Hall took the Local Food Champion of Champions title in our 10th anniversary Rural Oscars this year. What does it take to beat off national competition?

JILL GRIEVE finds out.

One many great things about the Countryside Alliance Awards is the diversity of the businesses we encounter. There is no blueprint, but hard work and an understanding of what their customers want is vital. For this, Suffolk Food Hall at Wherstead near Ipswich must come close to being the perfect rural business, as owners and farmers Oliver & Robert Paul know exactly what suppliers and customers need and works tirelessly to meet demand. That knack has not only played a role in the development of an extremely successful rural enterprise, it has also won Oliver, Robert and their team enough devoted loyalty and support to pull in a public vote in the Rural Oscars earlier this year, trouncing rivals from across Britain to win them the “Local Food Champion of Champions” title.

As Suffolk farmers, the cousins were frustrated that friends often had limited access to much of the fantastic food produced locally. The concept of a showcase for quality local food with

provenance, took shape and the Suffolk Food Hall collaboration was born in 2007 in, appropriately, a converted cattle shed. Since then, the Food Hall has become firmly established as an exemplar bringing together the best possible food and drink specialists under one roof.

Suffolk Food Hall is run in conjunction with family farms at Wherstead and Broxtead, either side of the River Orwell, together totaling just over 4,000 acres. They currently grow potatoes, onions, cereals, sugar beet; also rearing pigs and pedigree Red Poll cattle under an extensive system. Vegetables produced at Broxtead are sold through the Food Hall along with their own pork, beef and game. As a fifth generation farmer Oliver feels strongly that the land should be farmed in harmony with the community and the natural environment. His cousins’ shoot at Broxtead ensures the farm shop and restaurant are well supplied with local game, while Oliver welcomes the local foxhounds and bloodhounds for meets at his Freston farm several times in the season and singles out



the Essex & Suffolk’s children’s meet as a seasonal highlight.

Conveying the provenance of their produce is key at Suffolk Food Hall and that it is down to the service and welcome given by frontline staff, meaning recruitment is vital. All staff are not only trained in customer service, they are encouraged to visit suppliers, try new products and immerse themselves in the ethos of the business. With just short of 100 local people working at Suffolk Food Hall; several a going through NVQs/ apprenticeships. The butchery counter is a case in point – the five strong team usually has two apprentices in its midst, helping to pass on butchery skills to the next generation.

Produce from the farm is sold alongside that of a huge range of local producers, and the ways in which that growing list of goods gets to customers is ever-expanding. Alongside the farm shop itself (with butchery, fishmonger, bakery, café, wine merchant, delicatessen and greengrocers) there is a gift shop and garden centre. Next door to that is an exciting new development that enhances the original business – the new two storey Cookhouse. On the ground floor of the Cookhouse is a cookery school, alongside eight commercial kitchens for rent. Here, local businessmen and women can develop businesses that have outgrown their own kitchens. When I visited, these units were buzzing, and businesses currently housed in the building, include an innovative cake making outfit and one producing an impressive range of local jams and chutneys. The cookery school itself holds regular classes and demonstrations, from bread making to pasta and curry, as well as providing corporate days to enable team building over the local produce. Upstairs is a vast restaurant with panoramic views of the River Orwell and the iconic bridge that

“AS SUFFOLK FARMERS THE COUSINS WERE FRUSTRATED THAT FRIENDS OFTEN HAD LIMITED ACCESS TO MUCH OF THE FANTASTIC FOOD PRODUCED LOCALLY”



Photos: Jon Hawkins at Surrey Hills Photography www.surreyhillsphotography.co.uk



“SMART MARKETING IS VERY MUCH THE ORDER OF THE DAY AT WHERSTEAD AND CANNY USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA HAS NO DOUBT ENABLED THE BUSINESS TO BROADEN ITS APPEAL...”



forms part of Suffolk Food Hall's distinctive logo. The restaurant, extremely busy during the rainy weekday I visited, is a huge, light space serving delicious and classic local dishes from fish & chips to bangers & mash. The restaurant also has party event space for hire, as well as running various events from drawing classes to quiz nights, Great British Bake Off inspired parties and Rugby World Cup match viewings.

The mantra that the business is run *by farmers for farmers* resonates and the team is always on the lookout for local producers and growers to support in fledgling small businesses in the area. To those not in easy reach of Suffolk, an online shop promises “Suffolk prices nationwide”, and having road-tested the online shop I can thoroughly recommend the Broxted Bangers. The hottest sellers at the butchery counter, Oliver reports, tend to be different cuts of beef from the on-farm Red Poll cattle. Traditional Sunday roasts and steaks, yes, but also cheaper cuts which have become ever more popular in times of austerity. Slow cooked shin of beef is a top recommendation from the butchers who have plenty of cheery cooking tips and recommendations for customers.

Suffolk Food Hall is an educational resource as well as a shop and restaurant, and you are always reminded that this is a busy working farm. The business actively supports the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB and donates £1 from every breakfast sold to this cause. Farm tours are provided for local school children who can meet the animals and learn more about where their food comes from. Oliver would like to do more tours, which he agrees are an increasingly vital component in any modern farm business,

but getting buy-in from schools, parents and educational authorities (particularly meeting transport costs) represents a challenge in itself. As we always hear, once the youngsters are at the farm they have a great time, it's just getting them there that's the issue. All visitors are able to enjoy the surroundings and in co-operation with the AONB unit a map has been produced offering circular walks around the farm. Not only this but special events, including the popular Tractor Fair held in the summer, entice young and old to the farm with a slice of farming's heritage in a modern setting.

This worthy Rural Oscar winner is many things – a family farm, a food co-operative, an educational resource, an entertainment & events venue and a local business hub. Every strand of the business compliments the whole, which is to ensure a thriving future for farming in Suffolk. Here is a great example of the local farming community really pulling together not just to survive but to thrive. When Suffolk Food Hall won the Local Food title initially in 2011, the Countryside Alliance judge observed “I feel that winning this would really help put good food produced in the East of England on the map, show that the area is not just a big prairie producing thousands of tonnes of cereals and draw attention to some very talented food producers in the area. This winner is a great advert for the East.” Hear hear, we look forward to hearing what Oliver is planning next. ●



The Environment Secretary with the SFH team



Suffolk Food Hall is delighted to offer Countryside Alliance members an exclusive 10% discount on any hamper ordered between 1st and 21st December, including delivery. Visit www.suffolkfoodhall.co.uk/hampers and use the coupon code **CA2015** when completing your order.

Suffolk Food Hall, Wherstead, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP9 2AB.

- Food Hall: 01473 786 610/
shop@suffolkfoodhall.co.uk
- Home & Garden: 01473 786 617/
garden@suffolkfoodhall.co.uk
- Restaurant: 01473 786 616/
eat@suffolkfoodhall.co.uk
www.suffolkfoodhall.co.uk
- Follow Suffolk Food Hall on Twitter @suffolkfoodhall

Labour and the countryside

→ Countryside Alliance
Animal Welfare consultant

JIM BARRINGTON

considers Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party and wonders what Labour's vision for the countryside will be.



A Labour MP who had been invited to this year's CLA Game Fair said words to the effect that if Jeremy Corbyn became leader of the party she would be out of her front bench position, Labour would lose the next general election and the Hunting Act would probably be repealed. Well, for now the first prediction has come true.

I suspect she, along with most people at that time, never really thought that he would actually manage it – but he has, and now we are in a truly extraordinary political period. Though some liken the Labour party under Jeremy Corbyn to that of Michael Foot's in the early eighties, there are important differences. I don't recall experienced Labour politicians on the right of the party refusing in such numbers to sit on the Opposition front bench. So not only do we have a leader of Her Majesty's Official Opposition who has never held any ministerial office, but it appears that only a few of those who have accepted his invitation to be in the Shadow Cabinet have such experience. If the Westminster rumours are correct, Jeremy Corbyn was scrabbling around virtually begging MPs to join him. You don't have to be an avid viewer of the BBC's *Daily Politics* to



know that it's usually the other way round.

So it should come as no surprise that the new Shadow Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is Kerry McCarthy, an anti-hunting, anti-badger cull vegan and a vice president of the League Against Cruel Sports. Now, I speak as a vegetarian of many years and I certainly do not criticise people who wish to abstain from eating meat, but I also appreciate that just opposing everything you don't like doesn't necessarily result in good outcomes.

For my part, I want British farming to flourish, and I want to see high standards when it comes to animal welfare. I want people who shoot for the pot and avoid the extremes of factory farming to be praised, not criticised. I want to see a diverse countryside in which those who create that diversity are congratulated, not condemned or banned. I want diseases in wildlife, especially those that affect humans and other species, to be brought under control as much as possible. I want politicians who are prepared to stand up to the social media bullies and make the correct decisions, even if it means implementing unpopular measures. In

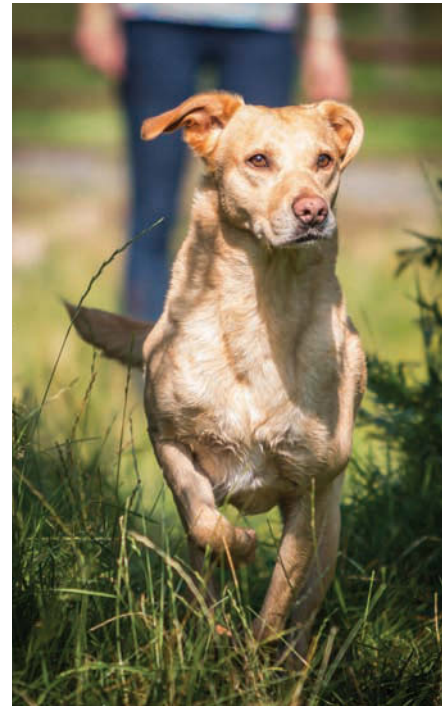


Photo: Tony Raine

short, I want wildlife to be properly, sensitively and humanely managed by various methods and that includes using the unique qualities of dogs.

Does Kerry McCarthy see things that way and does her appointment inspire the countryside lobby? I doubt it somehow, yet the various organisations representing the differing aspects of country life will

“WE HEAR SO MUCH ABOUT WHAT CAMPAIGN GROUPS DISLIKE, BUT WE RARELY HEAR WHAT THEY ACCEPT.”



Jim Barrington is animal welfare consultant to the Countryside Alliance. A former Director of the League Against Cruel Sports he is passionate about animal welfare.



"I SPEAK AS A VEGETARIAN OF MANY YEARS AND I CERTAINLY DO NOT CRITICISE PEOPLE WHO WISH TO ABSTAIN FROM EATING MEAT, BUT I ALSO APPRECIATE THAT JUST OPPOSING EVERYTHING YOU DON'T LIKE DOESN'T NECESSARILY RESULT IN GOOD OUTCOMES."

faces challenges on a variety of views even within his own cabinet, let alone the Labour Party as a whole and saying that everything is up for review may be a useful tactic to avoid giving a straight answer, but what he seems to be forgetting is that, after considering and reviewing all these opinions, at some point decisions have to be made. That is, after all, the role of a leader.

As everything in the Labour party now appears to be up for a review, isn't it reasonable to include the Hunting Act? It's a law that has been criticised not only by hunting people, but also many unconnected to hunting such as judges, veterinarians, police, senior civil servants, legal experts and even Tony Blair (though including him in the list may have the reverse effect, given that Jeremy Corbyn voted against virtually everything Blair tried to do).

Some years ago, before the Hunting Act was passed, Jeremy Corbyn came to a 'drop-in' session in Parliament to discuss hunting with dogs. Former anti-hunt people were present to explain that a simple ban would not be beneficial to wildlife and certainly not improve welfare. He listened intently, but made no real comment, yet since then Jeremy Corbyn has consistently voted against hunting with dogs and supported a hunting ban. Was there any evidence ever produced to justify the Hunting Act? Could the fact that Jeremy Corbyn was a member of the League Against Cruel Sports in his native Shropshire have clouded his judgement? Will he, as his record shows, continue to just go along with the left's perception of what nasty Conservatives do to animals?

It's worth remembering that during his leadership election campaign, Jeremy Corbyn used the slogan: "straight-talking, honest politics". Let's see if that holds true in a Corbyn-led Labour party... or in a Corbyn government if ever it came about.

We hear so much about what campaign groups dislike, but we rarely hear what they accept. They're very good at issuing demands from on high, expecting those on the ground simply to comply as if we all see things in a similar way. Just what is Labour's vision for the countryside, its wildlife and its management? This question should be put to the new Labour leader and his new Shadow DEFRA Secretary in as many meetings and forums as possible, because, as seems to be the case, if the Labour party would prefer to take a lead from the LACS instead of the NFU then we really should fear for our countryside. ●



Shadow Defra Secretary
Kerry McCarthy MP

pressure groups rather than the realities of country life? It's worth noting that at the Labour Party conference in Brighton, the newly-appointed shadow DEFRA minister could not find time to attend a fringe meeting organised by the National Farmers Union, but could find space in her diary to speak at the RSPCA and LACS fringes. Of course there is never enough time to do all the meetings at these conferences, but to some commentators her priorities appear to be a little skewed.

Labour's new leader has said that he wants to introduce a new kind of politics and that he will listen to all views on a wide range of issues. Clearly he already

meet the new shadow minister and, as usual, be courteous and accommodating. But will they really take her seriously? Just as importantly, will she be swayed more by the tweets of celebrities and will her policies be influenced more by



Where to find a sportsman's welcome

→ In the summer, Country Life and the Countryside Alliance launched a search for Britain's best sporting pubs. **KATE GREEN** reveals the winners.



Worcestershire gem, the Talbot at Knightwick

Historic country pubs everywhere have recently hosted opening meets while shoot dinners are essential to their survival. The criteria, by which this competition to find the best fieldsports pubs in the land was judged, was all about atmosphere and welcome. Will the bar staff know where the meet is or what to do with a fish? Are hounds welcome? Do the locals go? Are tall tales told in the bar late at night by people still in muddy breeches or shooting breeks? One pub among our nominated entries had been described as smelling of wet dog – and we didn't necessarily think that was a bad thing. Appetising local food, comfort and cleanliness are important, but this contest – not for the ubiquitous gastro or chain establishment – was all about the pub, and character was more important than chic décor. Most of our winners – and, indeed, some of the landlords – are long established and have a genuine feel of rural history.



Kate Green is Managing Editor & News Editor at Country Life. Kate is the author of 10 books and has worked as an equestrian reporter at four Olympic Games. Her favourite place in the UK is Exmoor, close to where she grew up in West Somerset.

Overall winner and best in the Midlands

THE TALBOT, Knightwick, Worcestershire.

This pub's USP is that it's 'unbranded, independent, old-fashioned and unspoilt' and, it should be added, there is a much-loved landlady, Annie Clift, who is an indispensable member of the community.

The Talbot Arms, which has a hunting dog on its sign, started as a coaching inn in about 1450 and is on the banks of the River Teme. It has its own pigs, a kitchen garden and a brewery (Teme Valley). Game served includes pheasant, mallard, partridge and, in summer, rabbit, pigeon, muntjac and even Canada goose.

The Worcestershire Foxhounds and Leaddon Vale Basset Hounds meet here, and the pub hosts a monthly farmer's market (the next one is on November 8), morris-dancing 'hoolies', the Green Hop Beer Festival and shoot breakfasts and beaters' lunches. There's a stuffed salmon caught by the owner in the bar. The locals say they couldn't survive without it.
www.the-talbot.co.uk; 01886 821235

Best for shooting and best in the North

LORD CREWE ARMS, Blanchland, Co Durham.

Once a 12th-century Abbot's Priory, the Lord Crewe Arms is a pearl of a sporting establishment, handily located for the glorious grouse moors that pepper the



Lord Crewe Arms

North Pennines.

With a boot room, a drying room and a secure gun safe – as well as its own stretch of fishing on the River Derwent – 'The Crewe' couldn't be better equipped. But, aside from the hostelry's quirky architectural appeal, it's the standard of food that keeps visiting sportsmen – and locals – coming back for more. The head chef favours grouse from the owner Michael Stone's moor, at Weardale, and other game in season, spit-roasted in The Larder restaurant's cavernous fireplace. There are 'fell-feeding' lunches for shoot days and foraged tipples, such as damson gin and lavender vodka, in the convivial Crypt bar. Dogs can doze in front of the fire with a pint of 'doggie beer' or flake out in most of the bedrooms.
www.lordcrewearmsblanchland.co.uk;
01434 675469

Best for hunting and best in the South-West

THE EXMOOR WHITE HORSE, Exford, Somerset

Exmoor is well off for sporting inns, but this 500-year-old, creeper-covered pub on the banks of the River Exe positively echoes with hunting songs and stories. It's next door to a long established livery yard in a village that buzzes on hunting days; you can hear hounds singing from the Devon & Somerset Staghound kennels, just up the hill, and the constant clip-clop of hooves.

The public bar, which was once known as the Dalesman Bar after famous hunting scribe Bay de Courcy Parry, is stuffed with hunting photographs, antlers and other memorabilia.

The staghounds meet here on Boxing Day and the Exmoor Foxhounds at other times of the season and, being in classic high-bird country, local shoots make good use of the pub. Landlord Peter Hendrie can organise angling instruction with his son Lewis - an international fly-fisherman, hunter livery or hirelings and deer safaris. Unsurprisingly, venison is on the menu, and Exmoor ale is served. A gun safe is available and dogs are allowed in some bedrooms.

www.exmoor-whitehorse.co.uk;
01643 831229

Best for fishing and best in the South

THE GREYHOUND ON THE TEST, Stockbridge, Hampshire.

By all accounts, the proprietor, Lucy



Exmoor's White Horse is the top hunting pub

Townsend, has worked wonders at this 15th-century former inn in Stockbridge (the birthplace of dry fly-fishing), which she took over three years ago. Having run the nearby Peat Spade Inn, Miss Townsend obviously knows a thing or two about managing fine fishing establishments in Hampshire. Our fishing correspondent, David Profumo, says it's ideal for all the county's chalk streams - the Test flows through its beer garden - it's two minutes' walk from a brace of excellent tackle shops 'and the charming staff

don't mind if you need to dine late after an evening rise'.

Breakfasts - of paramount importance to an angler - are superb and can include chargrilled venison liver with devilled scrambled eggs and smoked bacon, a favourite with stalkers returning after a Greyhound-organised dawn pursuit of roe, muntjac or fallow. Partridge and pheasant days, with the use of the pub's Land Rover, can be arranged, too.

<http://thegreyhoundontbetest.co.uk>;
01264 810833



The Greyhound on the Test

Best in Scotland

**THE BUCCLEUCH ARMS,
St Boswells, Borders.**

Originally built as a hunting lodge in 1836 by the 5th Duke of Buccleuch, the Buccleuch Arms is now run by Billy and Rachael Hamilton, who hunt with the Lauderdale twice a week. Favoured by members and staff of the Duke of Buccleuch's Hunt – who visit the pub so frequently for masters' meetings, AGMs and fundraisers that it's known as their HQ – it also hosts shoot dinners and organises mixed-species days for Guns, with the kitchen serving up what they've shot that evening.

Thanks to its proximity to the Tweed, The Buccleuch Arms is also frequented by fishermen, who appreciate flexible meal times to fit around early and late spells on the river, the rod storage and drying room, as well as being able to get their catch smoked. With local game (including pigeon and roe deer) served,



**Billy and Rachael Hamilton
of The Buccleuch Arms**



dogs welcome in the bar and racing at nearby Kelso or point-to-pointing at Friars Haugh overlooking Floors Castle, The Buccleuch Arms – which nobly launders the number cloths – is a true sporting all-rounder.

www.buccleucharms.com;
01835 822243

Best in Wales

**CRESELLY ARMS,
Kilgetty, Pembrokeshire.**

This famously old-fashioned, no-nonsense pub, part of the Cresselly estate, is a nucleus for the South Pembrokeshire hunt, as well as local cricket, and is sporting MP Simon Hart's favourite. It doesn't serve food, but that doesn't dent its popularity, and beer is served from the barrel in jugs – it's hardly changed since its last update in the 1890s.

It's on the quay (you can arrive by boat) on the Cleddau estuary, a famed salmon run, and the highest tides lap the bar, which has a fire and lots of sporting memorabilia, including a piece of the goalpost at which Welsh rugby legend John Taylor scored a crucial try against Scotland in 1971. Dogs are welcome.

01646 651250

Best in the East

**SARACEN'S HEAD,
Wolterton, North Norfolk.**

This secluded Georgian inn – designed by Repton to look like a Tuscan farmhouse – in sleepy countryside, but near the bustling coast and the delightful market town of Holt, is perfectly placed to take advantage of the county's plentiful game,

such as a steady supply of rabbits and duck (mallard and teal) from a local gamekeeper and venison (whole red or fallow, which the chef, Mark Sayers, butchers himself) from neighbouring Gunton Park.

Run by Tim and Janie Elwes, who recently returned to Norfolk from the French Alps, the pub – which welcomes dogs in its six bedrooms and bar areas – hosts meets of the North Norfolk Harriers (when followers get to feast on Mark's special sausage rolls) and lots of shooting parties – one team has booked 18 lunches this season.

www.saracenshead-norfolk.co.uk;
01263 768909 ●



This article first appeared in Country Life in October and is reproduced with kind permission. Subscribe at www.countrylife.co.uk

www.kennelmate.co.uk

DOG BEDS THAT WORK!!

EASY CARE COMFORT COMBINED WITH PRACTICAL DURABILITY
 THERMAL CUSHION WITH HARDWEARING REMOVABLE COVER
 WE ALSO MANUFACTURE LEADS, DUMMIES AND LANYARDS.
 OTHER GUNDOG EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE.

- ✓ Tear resistant
- ✓ Water resistant
- ✓ Odour resistant
- ✓ Mite resistant
- ✓ Machine wash
- ✓ Hose down
- ✓ Wipe clean
- ✓ Quick to dry

AVAILABLE IN 6 SIZES & 6 COLOURS

SMALL	64x76cm	£35.00
MEDIUM	76x89cm	£45.00
SLIMLINE	61x122cm	£50.00
LARGE	89x114cm	£55.00
X-LARGE	101x127cm	£65.00
JUMBO	127x152cm	£80.00

Plus P&P

CONTACT SUSIE AT WBH
 TEL/FAX: 01902 798 167 or 07970 765637 MOBILE: 07778 835785
 WEBSITE: www.kennelmate.co.uk EMAIL: info@kennelmate.co.uk

mulberry cottages

01962 813 518 mulberrycottages.com

MAKE AGES & PAINS THINGS OF THE PAST

Enhance your quality of life with our amazing Magnetic Therapy product range

Benefit from drug free pain relief that boosts your energy levels, gives you a good night's sleep, puts a spring in your step and a twinkle in your eye.

Arthritis, Muscle and Joint Pain, Fibromyalgia, Poor Circulation, Insomnia and Stress can all be improved by the daily use of MagneHealth products.

From Mattress Toppers to Pillow Pads and Covers, through to Seat Cushions and Supports, at Magnehealth there will be the perfect product to suit your individual needs. To find out more why not call or visit our website.

With our 60 day return policy on all Mattress Toppers you have nothing to lose but a lot to gain.

(Magnetic therapy is not recommended if you are pregnant, have a pacemaker or are undergoing cancer treatment).

To order your MagneHealth products visit: www.magnehealth.co.uk
 info@magnehealth.co.uk
 or call: 01989 721010



White Cloud, PO Box 8, Newent, Gloucestershire GL18 1WU

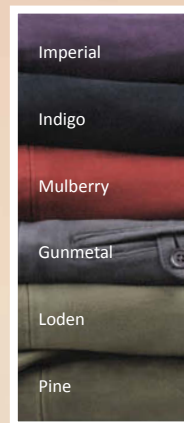


Quote code MHCA and enjoy a 5% discount

**SPECIAL READERS OFFER
 100% COTTON FLAT FRONT
 MOLESKIN TROUSERS**



£50
 or 2 for £90
 + £5 P&P



Waist: 32 34 36 38 40
 42 44 46 48 50
 52 54 56
 Leg: 28 30 32 34
 Code: MT20

Winter weight, warm and smart, with a classic flat front. Soft 100% cotton moleskin in six great colours.

- 100% cotton soft moleskin
- Peter Christian Comfort Waist System
- Free returns service and money back guarantee

Featuring our Original Peter Christian Comfort System. The ultimate waist comfort system that flexes with your every move. Too tight? The waistband expands to give you more room.

★★★★★
"The trousers arrived well within the promised time scale and proved to be everything I had hoped they would be. First class material and first rate tailoring..." Mr Jesty

PETER CHRISTIAN
Gentlemen's Outfitters

ORDER NOW QUOTE 19V47
01273 493 393 Mon-Sun 8am-10pm
peterchristian.co.uk/cav

Peter Christian, 25 Mackley Estate, Small Dole, West Sussex, BN9 9XR.
 Division of Hills of Bramley Ltd Co Reg No 04767802

2015: a campaigning year in review

→ 2015 has been a huge year for the countryside. May's General Election brought the first Conservative majority Government since 1992, we appointed a new Chief Executive in Tim Bonner and Chairman in Simon Hart MP, the Hunting Act and the Rural Oscars both turned 10 and our diverse campaigning work was high profile in the media, in politics and on the ground. Our campaigns team brings you just a few highlights.

OUR POLITICAL YEAR



● In General Election year not only did we publish a well-received Manifesto, but all three party leaders at the time – the Prime Minister, David Cameron, Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, and Leader of the Opposition, Ed Miliband, wrote for this magazine outlining their vision for the countryside. These articles were picked up widely by the national and regional press, especially the Prime Minister's as he used his piece to reiterate his support for hunting.

- Our e-lobbying platform has been used to lobby MPs on a range of political issues, including face coverings, the General Election and fly-grazing, as well as on amending the Hunting Act. Over 65,000 Alliance members and supporters have participated.
- Over 18,000 briefing papers have been sent to parliamentarians on Alliance campaigning issues, including rural services, broadband, and wildlife management.
- The Countryside Alliance has responded to 16 consultations covering

issues ranging from the draft Charities Protection Bill, access to land and water in Wales, mobile planning and broadband to schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. We have had over 80 meetings with government and officials in England and Wales representing our members' interests at the highest level.

● Significant successes include the approval of the Firearms Fees Order and the passing of the Control of Horses Act 2015, as well as reaching agreement on the Snaring Code in Wales.

● Diverse cross party groups we sit on include shooting, waterways, rural affairs and horses. The Alliance's then Executive Chairman, Sir Barney White-Spunner, also gave a presentation to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Broadband, and we held briefings in Westminster for parliamentarians on rural broadband and mobile phone coverage.

- Since January until the time of writing, the Alliance has been referred to in Parliament 17 times making it the most frequently referenced organisation that campaigns for the whole countryside.
- The Alliance had

the greatest presence among rural organisations at the political party conferences, hosting a reception and several fringe meetings. These were well supported by parliamentarians and delegates.

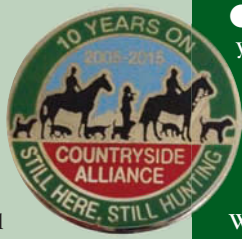
- The Alliance has worked with over 100 other stakeholders on issues affecting our members' interests, ranging from unions to business groups.
- As a part of the National Rural Crime Network, we were instrumental in publicising its rural crime survey in September. Findings showed low satisfaction rates for police performance in rural areas, that crime is under reported by rural people, and that the cost of crime to rural communities is much higher than thought.

● To mark the 10th anniversary of the Countryside Alliance Awards, aka the Rural Oscars, "Champion of Champions" competitions were run with previous winners attending celebration receptions at Westminster and in Cardiff Bay. Environment Secretary Liz Truss spoke at our Westminster reception, while the Welsh reception saw huge cross party turnout in support of Welsh rural businesses.



HUNTING'S YEAR

● In February we marked the 10th anniversary of the Hunting Act coming into force by creating a new badge bearing the phrase "Still here, still hunting." Thousands have been sold. The badges are £5, available from our website, and we encourage you to wear one on Boxing Day.



● In March, the RSPCA dropped its final case against a member of a hunt. Tim Bonner, then Director of Campaigns, commented at the time that the Society "needs to decide whether it is going to follow its erstwhile partners at IFAW and LACS down an ever more insane road calling for legislation that would criminalise dog walkers, or whether it chooses the path of animal welfare." We still await news on the appointment of a new Chief Executive following Gavin Grant's departure in February 2014.

● A new Hunt Country Map, by talented young artist George Butler, went on sale and has proved to be a popular update to the traditional BFSS and Bailys maps (available on our website for £50).

● In the summer we launched an e-lobby to ensure English and Welsh MPs were well briefed on the Government's proposed amendments to the Hunting Act in England and Wales. These amendments, which had the support of a majority of English and Welsh MPs, were to be voted on in July. The vote was cancelled following a U-turn by the Scottish National Party, which has frequently said its MPs would not vote on the Hunting Act as it does not apply in Scotland. SNP MPs said they

would vote, and the vote was therefore shelved. Work continues to ensure we build on this support and make a strong case for hunting.

● Hunting Newcomers' Week returned in October and our second Hunt Tumblers' Club in association with Pol Roger is currently open to entries.

● The Scottish Government is reviewing the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act to "ensure that it is providing the necessary level of protection for foxes and other wild mammals, while at the same time allowing effective and humane control where necessary". The Scottish Countryside Alliance is contributing to this review.

● In January Tedworth Hunt Master Mike Lane (pictured) was hospitalised via a beating from hunt thugs. Nobody has been charged because the attackers were wearing face coverings. Our response is a campaign to allow the police to order the immediate removal of face coverings.



Photo: www.sarahjanebullockphotography.co.uk

SHOOTING'S YEAR

● We have been actively involved in: a revision of the current codes of practice on snaring in England and Wales; Natural England's consultation on General and Class Licenses; the Law Commission's review of Wildlife Law, addressing a symposium of stakeholders on areas where the law governing firearms could be improved; the Association of Police Chief's Firearms initiatives; Home Office firearms licensing fees; and international agreements which would prevent the use of existing traps for the control of stoats.

● We have lobbied against attempts by the European Commission to re-open the 1991 Firearms Directive; and continued to work to persuade the Commission to keep the Birds and Habitats Directives, closed to counter the possibility of species being removed from the quarry list.

● We have fought calls for further restrictions and phasing out of lead

ammunition that are coming from the UK, Europe and internationally. We represented the shooting community on the Lead Ammunition Group until abuse of process and evidence by a number of the Group rendered that work so flawed, it could never reach a scientific conclusion. We, along with the representatives of the CLA, National Game Dealers Association and Gun Trade Association therefore had to resign, but with the assistance of BASC we have submitted a separate report that provides the evidence based advice sought by Defra.

● We have successfully prevented the implementation of a global guideline for the immediate substitution of lead ammunition in an international treaty, and helped prevent a recommendation that was to be put forward at the General



● Our Game to Eat campaign's continued success in opening up new markets for game meat has seen over 80,000 recipe leaflets circulated this year. A new survey has identified gaps in the market

Assembly of the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation which called on all governments to phase it out.

● We have taken every opportunity to promote the enormous benefits of shooting to conservation, the economy and rural communities in Parliament, in the national, regional and sporting media, and on the ground.

● We have challenged threats to shooting, in all their forms, that come from Westminster, the devolved administrations, the European Commission, non-governmental organisations, the animal rights movement, and the public. These include the often unsubstantiated and misleading allegations that are made against the shooting community as a whole, and grouse shooting in particular.

● The Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Act was passed in June. The Scottish Countryside Alliance lobbied hard on this issue, but despite advice airguns in Scotland are still to be licensed.



For the love of the Gundog!

→ TONY RAINE on his twin passions: photography and gundog training

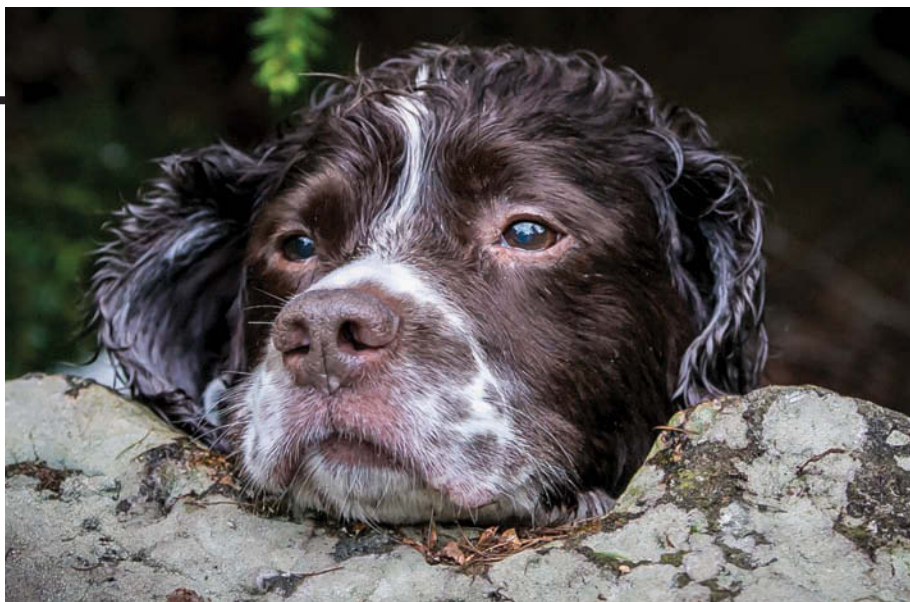


Photo: Tony Raine

Without dogs, or, to be more exact gundogs, we'd still be out on the moor picking up for ourselves. To see a well-trained gundog doing its thing is a marvel. I first witnessed the skills of the gun dog more than 20 years ago when I first started shooting. I had just started a new career in farming, and before long I had a shotgun certificate then a brand new shotgun. I had some great times shooting and was always amazed to see the skills of the labradors and spaniels whilst working on the moors or in the forestry.

Move on 20 plus years and things have changed a little. Different career, less time, other priorities, shotgun sold and then certificate not renewed. I then found myself with a springer spaniel called Sprocket (more about him later).

I am now shooting again but with camera instead of a 12 bore shotgun. I used to dabble with a camera long before my interest in country sports, but had not done so for a very long time. It's only been a couple of years since I picked up the camera again, but getting out and about with Sprocket has given me an excuse to start taking photographs of him and kick-start my interest in all things country sports. The main big advantage I have is my location. Within 20 to 30 minutes I can be on the North Yorkshire moors, over in the Yorkshire Dales or heading off into the Durham Dales for some of the best sporting country in the UK.

For the last 12 months I have had the opportunity to photograph the training sessions of the Yorkshire Dales Gundog Club, started by Andy Brook who I have

"IN HIS OWN MIND HE IS A WELL DISCIPLINED AND OBEDIENT SPRINGER SPANIEL."

known for nearly 15 years but only found out about his interest in gundogs last year. Andy invited me along to one of the training sessions, and I was hooked. Everyone in the club is an amateur, but an amateur with a love of gundogs and a passion for seeing them fulfil their potential. It's been a real pleasure watching the dogs develop; as has meeting the owners and seeing their enthusiasm for their dogs grow. Watching the dogs gain experience and new skills required to take part in tests, and to be confident enough to get out on local shoots with their handlers, is a real joy.

Looking at the qualities needed to be a good gundog (see box) I am not sure how many I would tick off with regard to my dog Sprocket. He's now 12 years old but still believes he's a two-year-old and has a genuine love of retrieving, mostly the socks out of the laundry basket. He also has a great nose; he can always find the Sunday roast no matter where we hide it. In his own mind he is a well disciplined and obedient Springer Spaniel; in reality 95% of the time he is, the other 5% always seems to clash with when I am showing off his skills and he decides to do it his way. He would swim the Channel given half a chance, he is a proper water dog, the only thing being its mostly muddy smelly water that he tends to find and he does make the most of it! His battery is running a little lower these days, but I think he thinks he can re-charge it by the amount of sleeping he does. Morning walk, sleep, eat, sleep, afternoon walk, sleep, eat, sleep, things dogs need to do last thing at night walk, sleep and repeat. Sprocket is a Springer Spaniel, so of course, he's family friendly. He would be barking on your arrival for the attention he so rightly deserves (his opinion I think) and be on your lap giving you a great big sloppy welcome, if you gave him half a chance.

I wouldn't change one thing about him, he may be seen as a typical gundog to lots of people, but to me and my wife he's a lot more, and I suspect that will be the same for the majority of gun dog owners out there. ●

We know that gundogs are intelligent and energetic, and training is the ideal way to channel their natural drive and enthusiasm, resulting in a happy relaxed dog. Below are just a few qualities this amateur gundog enthusiast/photographer thinks that go towards making a good working dog

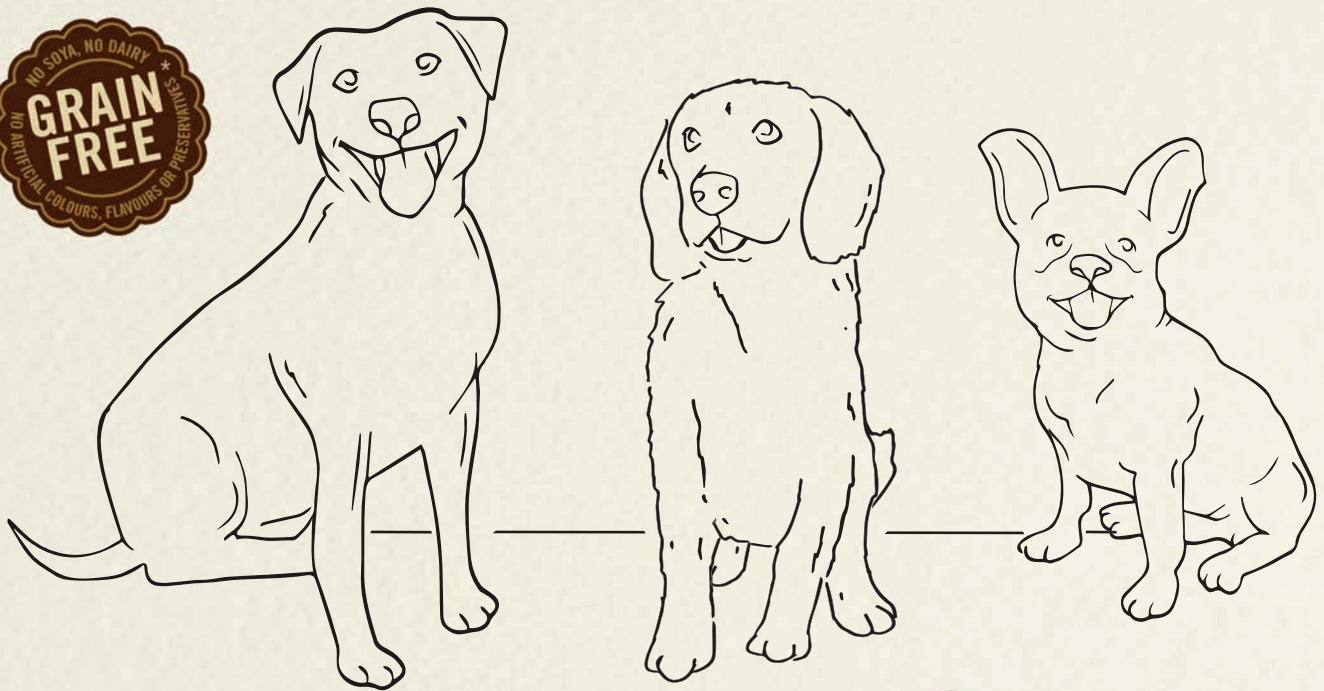
- Genuine love for retrieving
- Great nose
- Disciplined
- Gentle touch
- Obedient
- Water lover
- Energetic
- Family friendly

The Yorkshire Dales Gundog Club, run by Andy Brook, is firstly about fun.



As Tony explains, it is an amateur club focussing on seeing dogs fulfil their potential. Those who come to the club may be completely new to gundog training and want to find out what it entails, or may have been, or are involved with the game shooting aspect but now want to learn more about the competitive side. Training takes place every two weeks on a Sunday morning and is divided into Puppy class and Novice Class. For more information and to book, visit www.yorkshiredalesgundogclub.org.uk

As delicious and tasty as ever, but now in wet.



Green Lipped Mussel
Rich source of Omega Fats



Green Tea
Rich in Natural Antioxidants



Rosehips
Rich in Vitamin C



Chicory Extract
Promotes Digestive Health



Made with pride
in Britain

Introducing the new range of wet dog food from Harringtons. It's what dogs have been waiting for. All the taste and quality you'd expect, with four delicious flavours in 150g and 400g packs for a more varied diet.

www.harringtonspetfood.com


HARRINGTONS
The Natural Choice

More game, Vicars

→ **JACK KNOTT** visits Vicars Game in West Berkshire and discovers an impressive output and a hardworking ethos at play.

Popular Berkshire butcher and game dealer, Vicars Game is a textbook rural business. Never one for sitting still for too long, their forward thinking and positive outlook keeps them up-to-date on all sides of their business, keeping them ahead of the game and their customers extremely content.

Having been in business since 1886, it is no wonder that Vicars Game have racked up multiple awards, including a few of our very own Awards, the Rural Oscars. The mastermind behind the ever-evolving business model is Alan Hayward, whose lifelong interest in game and deer management has stood him in good stead in the rocky market that is wild game.

Since they moved to their present home in Ashampstead 13 years ago, Vicars Game have enlarged their game and meat processing floor space, opened a whole farm shop and catering business, developed and started new product lines, and increased their sausage manufacturing side, now making over two tonnes daily. Alan also offers butchery courses at the shop, with an eye firmly on teaching customers that meat doesn't just come in a plastic box from the supermarket, and helping them appreciate the huge skill involved in butchery.

If this was not enough, next year's plans includes creating a deer park in the field behind the shop, contributing both to the farm shop and retail, welcoming educational visits and applying for planning permission for a new modern game processing plant.



As Defra Minister and Vicars' MP, Richard Benyon (l) honoured Vicars at our Rural Oscars alongside Clarissa Dickson Wright in March 2012

"INSTEAD OF PROVIDING A BRACE OF PARTRIDGE AT THE END OF THE DAY, AT BETTWS HALL THEY ARE HANDING OUT PACKETS OF FLAVOURSOME VICARS GAME SAUSAGES."

It is therefore no wonder when asked how the game business is, Alans responds with a wry smile on his face. He says pheasant and partridge are going well, but the real market grower is venison, hence the new deer park.

Vicars Game is proud of its forward thinking focus, and there is no doubt that direct sales through the farm shop help both profits and ingenuity. For example, two years ago they were having trouble shifting venison tenderloins, being too small for steaks and too good for mince. The result was creating the perfect marinade and kebabs ready for the BBQ. By targeting the hot weekends over the summer, it was not long until they had to order more tenderloins.

A new mean and lean sausage maker has given Alan and the team the ability to produce a huge number of game sausages, adding further success. From personal experience their duck, spring onion and plum sauce sausage is a match made in heaven, and it's well worth the visit just to buy some! Also on the list are partridge and pheasant sausages, as well as the record-selling wild boar and



apple sausage. The partridge sausages are made in co-operation with Bettws Hall in Wales, who have come up with an idea that I hope other shoots will mimic. Instead of providing a brace of partridge at the end of the day, at Bettws Hall they are handing out packets of flavoursome Vicars Game

sausages. This is a truly fantastic and innovative use of wild game, and our congratulations must go out to both Bettws Hall and Vicars Game for once again pushing the game market forward and as a result strengthening shooting as a whole.

With each type of wild game, Vicars Game are able to produce a number of different products, be it oven-ready, breasted, diced, minced – the number of choices is beginning to rival that of chicken. This choice, beautifully laid out within the Farm Shop, is what keeps customers coming back and helps to bolster Vicars Game and propel them on to the next phase of their business.

A recent Countryside Alliance Game Dealers survey showed roughly 30% of game is still being exported to the continent. Alan agreed, stating many of his pheasants and pigeons are still heading over the channel. However, much is coming straight back as pâtés and terrines! When Vicars Game started in the game business that 30% figure was more like 80%. There is no doubt that it is because of businesses like Vicars Game that we are witnessing vast improvements within the game market, and we should all support them accordingly. ●

Casey Fields Farm, Off Dog Lane, Ashampstead, Reading, Berkshire RG8 8SJ. www.vicarsgame.co.uk info@vicarsgame.co.uk 01635 579662



Wellie™
Web



We stock a wide range of quality wellington boots for all the family. Whether you are looking for boots for work, gardening, country pursuits or for the kids we will have a wellington to meet your needs.



Shop online or in store
www.wellie-web.co.uk

☎ 01299 851767
✉ sales@wellie-web.co.uk
🐦 @WellieWeb
📘 Like us on Facebook

Cedarstone Ltd, Callimore Farm,
Rushock, Droitwich, Worcestershire, WR9 0NS



LGS

LONDON GUN SERVICES

London Gun Services are delighted to announce the opening of our new store and armoury.

498 Kings Road
London SW10 0LE

With new and pre-owned shotguns, plus leather slips and bags (hand made in the UK) together with the finest English pewter ware and shooting gifts, we have everything you need right here in central London.

Christmas offer - free embossing on all leather items purchased from the new Kings road shop!

Call us to make an appointment to access all of the shooting and gun services we are famous for.

Or why not visit the other member of the LGS family:

Frederick Beesley
132 White Lion Road
Amersham
Buckinghamshire
HP7 9NQ

Call on 01494 762370 or visit
www.frederickbeesley.co.uk
for more information

Call Us On +44 (0) 207 351 0005 Email: Info@LONDONGUNSERVICES.CO.UK ; Web WWW.LONDONGUNSERVICES.CO.UK

Monarch management

→ **JAMIE STEWART** recounts the emergence of Deer Management Groups in Scotland but wonders how management can “deliver an enhanced range of public interests” as required

I cannot think of another species anywhere on the planet that has generated as much political interest as Scotland’s wild deer, specifically our red deer. From the glorious Landseer portrait of the iconic “Monarch of the Glen” commonly used in tourism brochures and marketing literature to represent the untamed nature of Scotland’s vast landscapes to section 7 control agreements issued via Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to facilitate culls to populations deemed out of control, it would seem that red deer divide a nation, or at least the legislators who govern our nation.

For many, wild red deer are viewed as an asset to Scotland. Important to our rural economy through direct and indirect employment, a healthy and nutritious meat they also provide recreational opportunities and are integral to Scotland’s ecosystems. Recent studies estimated that deer stalking was worth £105 million per year to the Scottish economy and supports the equivalent of 2,520 paid full-time jobs. These jobs are often in fragile and remote communities. Wild deer are also an important species for wildlife tourism in Scotland.

The deer management debate is politically charged at the moment. We are told that deer management must provide wider public benefits with the



The iconic painting ‘Monarch of the Glen’ by Sir Edwin Landseer, 1851

least impact on our natural heritage. It would seem that when not well managed, deer can impact negatively on the natural heritage, forestry, agriculture and public safety. Who knew...

Scotland led the world in wild species management with the development of the Red Commission in 1959 furthering the causes of conservation and control of red deer. Statutory close seasons were set, introducing the seasons we now observe and greater penalties to reduce poaching. Subsequent legislation made the RDC responsible for all species of deer in Scotland then replaced the RDC with the Deer Commission for Scotland (DCS) with arrangements for appointing the Commissioners. The protection of natural heritage and public safety interests were then added to the responsibilities of the DCS.

After more legislation, Scottish Natural Heritage is now responsible for securing the conservation and sustainable management of deer. Where deer are impacting on agriculture, forestry, the natural heritage or other public interests, SNH negotiates a control agreement with landowners. There are 10 control agreements currently in force, all of which relate to protection of habitats on sites designated for nature conservation. There are also backstop powers for SNH to implement a control scheme, including for SNH to carry out deer control, and recover costs.

Most recently deer have been the subject of a Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee review

“WHERE DEER ARE IMPACTING ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, THE NATURAL HERITAGE OR OTHER PUBLIC INTERESTS, SNH NEGOTIATES A CONTROL AGREEMENT WITH LANDOWNERS.”

and subject to a chapter in the Land Reform Act.

With specific Act(s), Wild Deer a National Approach guidance and Codes of Practice all these legal goings-on could lead you to forget that the actual management is carried out on the ground by the deer managers, land owners, recreational stalkers and others

Deer Management Groups (DMGs) have been established over the last 30 years to coordinate deer management between neighbouring landowners, and to manage conflicts which can arise where different land uses require different densities of deer. They are



Jamie Stewart is Director of the Scottish Countryside Alliance. Jamie is a third generation gamekeeper/deer manager with a lifetime’s experience of managing wildlife and habitat in the UK.

voluntary and are run by representatives of the landholdings in the group's area. Landowners, however, also have a responsibility for the welfare of deer and their natural habitat. This involves management of deer numbers, mainly by regular culling, to ensure that there is sufficient grazing for the herd and other animals, without causing damage.

The arrangements for deer management in Scotland reflect the fact that deer can freely cross boundaries between estates, farms, forests and landholdings. For red deer in particular,

**“RED DEER DIVIDE A NATION,
OR AT LEAST THE LEGISLATORS
WHO GOVERN OUR NATION.”**

a collaborative approach to deer management has developed with the DMGs, of which there are now more than 70 in Scotland. DMGs mostly cover the Scottish Highlands but are now becoming established in other areas where there are large commercial forests. The same collaborative approach is also emerging for the management of roe, sika and fallow deer in lowland areas to prevent damage to land and reduce the risk of road traffic accidents.

The Scottish Government continues to support the voluntary approach to wild deer management, for now at least, but stresses the clear expectations placed on deer managers and land managers to deliver an enhanced range of public interests alongside their private objectives. Whatever that means... ●



Scottish venison is world renowned



Photo: Grant Glendinning Alamy Stock Photo



Introducing the Vintage Tack Room

→ **MIA WOODFORD** has come from an urban background to starting a business based around vintage hunting garb.



Photo: www.jsbeephography.com

Unlike many of my customers, I was not born into a hunting family but grew up in the middle of London, keeping my New Forest pony, Golly, at Lilo Blum's Stables, tucked behind Hyde Park Corner. My sister and I were always dressed immaculately for riding, by my mother. Sadly, the huge cost of riding in London brought an end to my idyll when I was 12.

At last, in 1998, I achieved my dream of moving to the country and took up riding again. Happily ensconced in a new home with a few acres, I received a call from the local hunt. I knew nothing about hunting – other than a vague notion that maybe it wasn't terribly nice – and the phone call, from the lady of the manor, did little to enlighten me with her confusing and repeated mentions of Charlie. Once we had established that she was not, in fact, offering me Class 'A' drugs, I agreed to let the hunt draw the covert at the edge of our fields, and went to watch my first ever hunt. I will never forget seeing huntsmen and their hounds, followed by the field, framed by tall hedgerows, coming down the lane towards me – I was spellbound, hooked!



So, hunting it had to be – and the clothes would have to be as good as those I wore 40 years ago. I started to collect for my own use, and enjoyment, beautiful vintage hunting clothes. Then, three years ago, I decided to turn my, by now, somewhat obsessive hobby into

a business, bought the stock and customer base of a small going concern called Field & Country Antiques and started The Vintage Tack Room.

'Vintage' is a word much bandied about; vintage is not just 'old'. Vintage has provenance and can be clearly attributed to a tailor, an era, often even a life story of a hunter or huntress of yore. We also sell 'secondhand',

but these are simply items previously used; they don't have provenance, they are 'ordinary' brands. Useful and good value, but minus the magic.

We do also sell some (very carefully chosen) new items. One of the beauties – but also difficulties – of vintage, is that everything was usually made bespoke to a person, and to fit into their coat, you have to match their measurements. Sometimes, it just doesn't work, and you need something right away. We create our own new items too, which we hope will become vintage in the future.

We've gathered skilled artisans – tailors, leather workers, whip makers and silk restorers – who can tweak hunt coats and breeches to fit you perfectly; restore your top hat to its former glory – or rewhip your beloved hunt whip (never 'crop'

– they grow in fields). So you can look immaculate in your clothes that carry many silent stories of other hunting fields before you.

Finding out the provenance of each item is the best part of my job, as there are so many wonderful tales.

Capt Jonny Lea has an amazing collection of vintage clothes, part of which he kindly allowed me to sell on the strict proviso that they were not sold to be stuck in a glass case. Last December, we put up for sale a red hunt coat made in 1914 by Sandon of Savile Row for Capt FA Bates MC of the Denbigh Yeomanry & Royal Flying Corps. Following a post on Facebook, Captain Bates's great granddaughter contacted us. She was thrilled to hear of the survival of his coat, which the Captain would have worn when hunting with his home hounds, the Flint & Denbigh, as well as other packs around the UK. The coat was bought by an MFH of a hunt local to Vintage Tack Room, here in Sussex, and, 101 years later, is now again enjoying active service.

Every vintage coat, whip, hat, pair of boots or breeches carries so many stories. Every hunting day is a unique performance, never to be repeated. At Vintage Tack Room, we are very proud to provide the irreplaceable costumes for this wonderful drama. ●

**The Vintage Tack Room,
Midhurst, West Sussex
www.vintagetackroom.com
Tel. 01798 867517**



Capt Bates' coat



DRIVEWAY INTRUDER ALARM 0814



A wired Beam Type Infra-red device. An alarm to give security and knowledge. An automatic door buzzer for your gateway. External silent and noisy options.

New Radio Paging option

Not to be confused with passive infra-red systems



Fit a Driveway Intruder alarm

www.drivewayalarm.co.uk

Email: sales@drivewayalarm.co.uk

Tel: 01233 634191

Sutcliffe Electronics, 15 West St Hothfield, Ashford, Kent. TN26 1ET

**Push. Click.
It's that quick.**

EasySet Mole Trap

Revolutionary EasySet Mole Trap.
£17.50 each

Mole Catchers Kit

Everything you need
for only £95.00

Accessories also available separately.

www.beagleproducts.com
or call us on 01223 927216

Endorsed by
Master Mole
Catchers in
the UK



Firelighting without Fuss

- NO Paper
- NO Matches
- NO Sticks
- NO Chemical Firelighters



The CLEAN, SIMPLE, EFFICIENT way to light a solid fuel fire - and it's exceptionally fast and economical too!

The award winning Grenadier electric firelighter is guaranteed to light all types of solid fuel.



Use it

- on the hearth
- with the barbecue
- with the garden incinerator

GRENADIER

Tel: 01829 741649

email: enquiries@grenadier.co.uk

www.grenadier.co.uk



Mackrell
Turner
Garrett

SOLICITORS FOR RURAL BUSINESSES AND LAND OWNERS

Mackrell Turner Garrett is a multi-award winning, full service law firm, headquartered in London.

The firm has many years' experience working with rural businesses, land owners and farmers to ensure their legal needs are met. As a firm we offer a diverse range of personal and commercial services to a wide range of clients.

Our commercial services include:

- Agricultural Tenancies
- Commercial Agreements
- Standard Terms and Conditions
- Supply Contracts
- County House and Estate Sales and Purchases
- Company Disputes
- Mediation and Arbitration
- Employment Law
- Property and Land Disputes
- Farmland Sales and Purchases
- Company and Commercial Law Advice
- Wills, Trusts and Probate
- Sporting Rights

We also provide full service advice for individuals and companies in areas ranging from Employment to Family, Property to Wills & Trusts and also Crime and Regulatory disputes.

For further information contact Kunjal Raval on 00 44 (0) 20 7240 0521 or email kunjal.raval@mackrell.com.

www.mackrell.com



4600 Lawyers
90 Firms
60 Countries
www.mackrell.net

The Vintage Tack Room

www.vintagetackroom.com



Everything for hunting people

We stock both new and vintage hunt clothes and equipment, to kit you out from top to toe:

• Pateys/hunt caps and regulation crash hats • Hairnets • Stock-shirts, stocks & stockpins • Breeches - new, vintage and our own made to measure • Hunt Coats - every colour, new, vintage and made to measure • Tweeds - new, vintage and made to measure • Boots - new and vintage • Gloves, whips, thongs, lashes • Hunting flasks, sandwich tins and wire cutters • Sidesaddle - habits, veils and saddles • Unique Christmas Gifts, designed by us, for you.

We can breathe life into your own hunt clothes, with our full tailoring and refurbishment service for all your kit, from re-covering your hunt cap to putting tops on your boots.

We're online, but our service is entirely personal - with measurement charts, Skype calls and personal advice, we do our best to make you feel like you're in the shop. Visits to us by appointment are always welcome, and we are often 'on tour'!

Discounts and savings for all hunts

see www.vintagetackroom.com/the-hunt-scheme

www.vintagetackroom.com

mia@vintagetackroom.com - 01798 867517 - 07774 565355

Whatever you need for your hunting life, we can help

GWH: Harnessing the power of citizen science to protect Britain's garden wildlife

→ Wildlife vet **LYDIA FRANKLINOS** is project coordinator on the Garden Wildlife Health project and explains the project.

The term 'citizen science' describes the process whereby members of the public effectively act as volunteer field researchers to help scientists investigate particular issues. By enlisting keen volunteers, we are able to collect far more data than would be possible working alone, whilst technology advances make it easier than ever before to share and compare data contributed by thousands of individual 'citizen scientists'. One area where this approach is making a real impact is in the monitoring of wildlife.

Garden Wildlife Health (GWH) is one such project. A collaboration between the Zoological Society of London the British Trust for Ornithology, Froglife and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the GWH project was conceived to assess the health of Britain's much-cherished garden wildlife, as well as enlisting members of the public to provide an 'early warning system' for emerging disease threats. GWH provides a platform for concerned citizens to report sightings of sick or dead garden birds, amphibians, reptiles and hedgehogs, enabling scientists to measure the impact disease is having on these animal populations and devise conservation plans to safeguard their futures.

People reporting sick or dead animals through the GWH website receive guidance from our specialist project vets and if an animal is reported as dead, we also help volunteers to submit the carcass for analysis. By capturing data on the likely cause of

death and archiving tissue samples, we help to turn these unfortunate situations into positive outcomes for the species involved.

GWH volunteers have so far enabled a number of important discoveries regarding threats facing UK wildlife. For example, it was through the help of citizen scientists that we were able to detect the emergence of the finch trichomonosis disease affecting British finches back in 2005. This condition, caused by the parasite *Trichomonas gallinae*, causes lesions in the gullet of these birds - leading to complications including lethargy, fluffed-up plumage, regurgitation, emaciation and, often, death. To date, the disease is thought to have caused a decline of around 50 per cent in Britain's greenfinch population. Without the contributions of hundreds of citizen scientists, we might not have been able to collect the data that revealed this worrying trend in the first place and which now helps us to recognise future outbreaks and provide practical guidance on how to prevent them.

We're also interested in any reports of ill-health amongst hedgehog populations. These creatures are currently suffering declines in both rural and urban areas, potential reasons for which might include habitat loss, pesticide use and either infectious disease or non-infectious health problems (e.g. trauma or pollution). There is currently a relative dearth of information regarding the health of free-living wild hedgehogs, so we are particularly keen to hear of any sightings of sick or dead hedgehogs.

GWH makes its findings available to the general public, as well as to government and non-government organisations. Our website includes links to factsheets about common diseases, along with interactive maps detailing reported incidents and any relevant post-mortem examination findings.

Despite our name, GWH is not limited to



Photo: Steve Clayton

"VOLUNTEERS HAVE SO FAR ENABLED A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES REGARDING THREATS FACING UK WILDLIFE."

garden habitats; we also welcome reports of sick or dead wildlife found anywhere in Great Britain. It's free to get involved and participants receive feedback from a project vet about the reported incident. Without public participation, it would not be possible for GWH to learn about the health conditions affecting native species - so next time you spot sick or dead garden wildlife, please report it to us at: www.gardenwildlifehealth.org.

If you have any questions, contact the team via email at gwh@zsl.org, Facebook or Twitter, or alternatively submit a Disease Incident Report with your question in the comments section. ●

Tips for creating a healthy environment for garden wildlife

- **Amphibians:** Avoid moving amphibians or their spawn between sites in order to prevent spreading diseases to new locations.
- **Birds:** Ensuring optimal hygiene at garden bird feeding stations can help to control disease transmission.
- **Hedgehogs:** If you feed hedgehogs in your garden, make sure that you rotate feeding sites and clean the areas regularly to prevent hedgehog faeces accumulating.
- **Reptiles:** Leave an area 'wild' with a log pile and build rockeries for reptiles to bask on.



Lydia Franklino

is a wildlife vet working at the Zoological Society of London and project coordinator on the Garden Wildlife Health project.

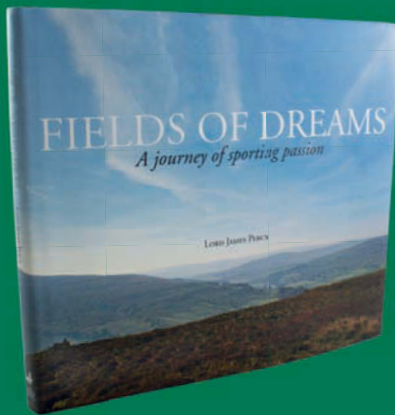
INNOVATIVE SHOTGUNS MADE WITH PASSION IN ENGLAND



Longthorne®

- 100% ENGLISH MADE (IN-HOUSE)
- BESPOKE 'TRUE' SIDELOCK FOR UNDER £20,000.00
- ASSISTED OPENING
- PATENTED BARREL TECHNOLOGY
- NEGLIGIBLE RECOIL & MUZZLE FLIP
- PROOFED FOR MAGNUM STEEL

WWW.LONGTHORNEGUNS.COM ADMIN@LONGTHORNEGUNS.COM
PH 01772 811215



Fields of Dreams
— A journey of sporting passion
Lord James Percy (The Sporting Library £30)
ISBN 978-0-9574677-7-4

Growing up in the wilds of Northumberland and Scotland, James Percy has enjoyed a privileged life dominated by sporting adventures. In this lavishly illustrated coffee table book, he shares his deep respect for the Great British countryside and his passion for conservation, wildlife, shooting and fishing in a series of beautifully written pieces. It is a colourful mosaic of unapologetic nostalgia, quiet comedy and Northumbrian humour – the hard truths and gentle reflections of a northern countryman's way of life.

**IDEAL
CHRISTMAS
GIFTS**



The Sportsman
Philip Fussell, with Rupert Godfrey
(The Sporting Library £20)
ISBN 978-0-9928318-5-1

Philip Fussell is a legend of the shooting world. Born in Wiltshire in 1931, he has spent most of his life shooting and is widely regarded as one of the finest game Shots of all time. In this brand new book, Philip tells his remarkable life story. And with hundreds of sporting memories and anecdotes about many well-known names in the shooting world, it is both a fascinating and entertaining insight into the life of one of our great sporting characters. Sit back and enjoy.

**THE ABOVE TWO TITLES ARE AVAILABLE DIRECT AT:
WWW.THESPORTINGLIBRARY.CO.UK**

Christmas

HAMPER GIFTS

The finest selection of hampers for the Christmas season



Hillers Farm Shop

A Hillers hamper makes a perfect Christmas present. We have a range of ready-made hampers to choose from or, alternatively, you can pick the items yourself and we'll make up a bespoke hamper for you. For full details visit our website (www.hillers.co.uk) or call us on **01789 772771**.

Our Farm Shop, Restaurant, Gift Shop & Gardens are open daily from 9.00am – 5.30pm in Dunnington, Alcester, Warwickshire.



Keelham Farm Shop

Food tastes better from the farm. This is the philosophy we live by, championing 400+ local producers to give you an unrivalled taste of Yorkshire. Our taste boxes are crammed full of award-winning products, are beautifully packed and wrapped for you to enjoy at home, and they come with full tasting notes.

Next day delivery available. Order from www.keelhamfarmshop.co.uk or find us in Bradford & Skipton.



Gonalston Farm Shop

Here at Gonalston Farm Shop we pride ourselves on creating perfect hampers, packed full of artisan and award winning food. Our hampers range from £15 to £150 with bespoke hampers made to order. Purchase one of our hampers and quote GFS15 to receive a voucher worth £5 to spend between January 2 and February 29. Postage available.

Call us on **01159 665666** or visit our website: www.gonalstonfarmshop.co.uk



The House of Bruar

Our Sporting Hamper (FC29240) includes House of Bruar Sloe Gin & Champagne, a chocolate chip biscuit tin, a large Genoa cake, Godminster cheddar, Maclean's Oatcakes, a 2lb pork pie, Rannoch smoked chicken breast, smoked duck breast & roast smoked venison, a 1lb fudge box from The Toffee Shop and Negronetto Salami. Plus everything you need for the perfect Bloody Mary and dog treats for your companion! Call **0345 136 0111** or visit www.houseofbruar.com



Suffolk Food Hall

In the run up to Christmas we will have several carefully selected, pre-assembled hampers for you to choose from or you can also build your own hamper. We have several different options to choose from and we will pack, wrap and label it for you with festive flair. We can also courier your hamper to its recipient for you, even if it includes refrigerated items, at a cost of £9.95 + VAT. Visit www.suffolkfoodhall.co.uk/christmas for details or call **01473 786610**.



Dean's of Huntly

Send a Dean's shortbread and biscuit hamper this Christmas... For 40 years Dean's have been baking their shortbread in Huntly, Aberdeenshire, using their own special family recipe. Visit their website (details below) where you'll find a tempting selection of traditional Scottish shortbread and biscuit hampers – all perfectly hand-baked to melt in the mouth. Dean's will deliver your hamper by courier (UK addresses only) with a personal message card. Delivery is free for hampers of £30 or more. www.deans.co.uk/shop



Recipe by Game-to-Eat
Development Chef
LEE MAYCOCK.

Lee has written several popular recipe booklets for our campaign as part of his mission to take game to as wide an audience as possible. He also runs game courses at catering colleges culminating in a "Young Game Chef" competition. Follow him on Twitter @LeeMaycock1.

{An ideal snack for
a day in the field}

Sloe gin & wild game sausage roll

We think these sausage rolls will be perfect to hand round during a day in the field this winter. The recipe is just one of many featured in our brand new Winter 2015 recipe booklet. For your copy email Jack at jack@gametoeat.co.uk or download it from www.gametoeat.co.uk.

Serves 4

YOU WILL NEED...

- 100g Game Mince
- 100g Pork Mince
- 500g Puff Pastry Sheet
- 50g Diced Onion
- 50ml Sloe Gin
- Chopped Fresh Thyme
- Chopped Fresh Sage
- Cornish Sea Salt
- Milled Black Pepper

PREPARATION METHOD

- Mix the game mince, pork mince, diced onion, chopped herbs and sloe gin
- Season well
- Place the mixture on the pastry and roll over to form a sausage roll
- Crimp the edges, score the top and brush with egg wash
- Place into a hot oven 180° for 25 minutes
- Once cooked, remove from the oven and allow to rest
- Slice and serve warm with a little spiced apple chutney



FOR MORE GAME
RECIPES PLEASE VISIT
WWW.GAMETOEAT.CO.UK

FOLLOW THE TEAM ON
FACEBOOK AND ON
TWITTER @GAMETOEAT

game-to-eat

BIOFLOW BEATS JOHN'S BAD BACK!

BIOFLOW PRODUCTS MAKE GREAT CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FOR FAMILY FRIENDS AND PETS!

For 3 years, agricultural worker, John Dunston was unable to work or even to climb the stairs to go to bed. He tried osteopathy, acupuncture and was taking strong pain-killers but nothing eased the pain of his badly damaged spine until his wife, Pat, bought him a Bioflow magnetic therapy wristband.

Pat found out about Bioflow from a friend whose Jack Russell suffered from severe arthritis and had been unable to move freely. Pat was amazed that when the dog started wearing a Bioflow magnetic collar he was back to running around like a pup. She felt that Bioflow must be worth a try for John and bought him an Elite wristband.

Although not totally free of pain, John is now back at work full time and is able to live a normal life. Pat, her horse and her spaniel, now all benefit from wearing Bioflow products for different problems.

Over 3 million people and animals in Britain now use Bioflow products to help with a wide variety of problems.



www.magneticpower4u.net

0114 2307844 - 07817671259 - jennyryan@magneticpower4u.com
Jenny Ryan, 16 Den Bank Crescent, Sheffield S10 5PD

Dunster Wood Boilers 

Save on cost Heat your home with Vigas



Log burning central heating system

50% Saving on the cost of oil

MCS Certified, RHI Payments

Easy to use, Sustainable

Want to know more?
Contact us



t: 01643 709 009

www.dunsterwoodboilers.co.uk

DEVON HAMPERS BRINGING DEVON TO YOU



Last orders for
Christmas
Friday 18th
December

Our Festive Hampers are now ready to order, delivered to any UK address and on a date of your choice.

www.devonhampers.com | 01566 784318 | sales@devonhampers.com



A gin-clear marketing success

→ Fans of produce unique to Hampshire's beautiful chalk streams can enjoy it no matter where in the country they are, thanks to the vision of Chalk Stream Foods.



As a county, Hampshire has a huge amount to offer. From Jane Austen and Winchester Cathedral to its sporting traditions, both cricket and fieldsports, and the uniquely Hampshire produce of watercress and chalk stream trout, it is a beautiful and well recognised county. Where previously the bounty of Hampshire's chalk streams, its trout, were once the preserve of fly fishermen and river keepers, now this delicious and distinctively Hampshire speciality is more widely available, alongside crayfish and watercress, thanks to Chalk Stream Foods.

Chalk Stream Foods is the brainchild of Hugo Hardman, who believes: "Hampshire trout has so much to offer, we should give it the same status we give salmon." Hugo hit upon the idea of the business while speaking to a friend about the provenance of the fish. "We were discussing how unique Hampshire's trout is thanks to the chalk stream rivers that it inhabits. My friend, Nick, farms trout but at the time sent most of it away to be sold across the country, losing its Hampshire identity and making it impossible to know just what you were buying at the point of sale. Unless you were able to fish on our local rivers, it was a challenge to get your hands on a Hampshire trout. It was then that we decided there had to be a way for traceable Hampshire rainbow trout to make a return. It is part of our heritage and we should be proud of it."

Having sold his London-based coffee wholesale business, Darlington's, Hugo

"CHRISTMAS IS THE IDEAL TIME TO ENJOY CHALK STREAM TROUT WITH A GLASS OF HAMPSHIRE FIZZ!"

moved quickly and soon after Chalk Stream Foods was born. "I sold the coffee business in pursuit of a job based near my roots in the Meon Valley. My heart has always been in Hampshire, and I wanted to live and work here doing something I am passionate about."

Chalk Stream Foods works closely with four local fish farms, which are all part of Test Valley Trout and run by one of the farm owners and the 'master of trout' Christopher Saunders-Davies.

Hugo's focus is on producing large fresh trout which offer flavour to rival salmon, and are sold and distributed locally under the label Chalk Stream Trout.

"We rear each fish for at least two years as this results in large and fit trout, which is what we are after. This means our fish are as big as salmon, weighing in between two or three kilos.

"We have carefully selected the sustainable farms that supply our fish. The fish are kept in a unique natural habitat. They live in 'gin-clear', spring-fed chalk streams with constant flowing water, which means they are always swimming against the current just as they do in the river. Whilst the excellent light and vegetation creates a haven for them."

Chalk Stream Foods also has the ultimate accolade - the backing of many local chefs.

As Hugo says, "Having their support has really helped put us on the culinary map. I am very fortunate to have an amazing local pub owner, Adam Cordery at The Bakers Arms in Droxford, who is a superb chef and regularly tests our products, which gives me the confidence to take them to market.

"It's not just been the chefs that have been invaluable. The best thing we did was join Hampshire Fare, which has been incredibly supportive. They have introduced us to many fellow producers and, more importantly, potential customers." We at the Countryside Alliance have long felt that every county should set up an equivalent scheme to Hampshire Fare, as it is a powerhouse of marketing muscle and works closely with a huge range of producers.

"Hampshire is a larder of superb produce," continues Hugo. "We want to tell leading chefs in London about the county, so we have sourced additional products that are synonymous with Hampshire. We can then take these to London too and really help to spread the word about what we have." These other offerings include crayfish from the Kennet, water buffalo from Broughton and watercress, as well as wasabi. The business is also offering a mail order service, selling sides of hot and cold smoked trout. Chalk Stream Foods have already attended Christmas fairs in the lead up to the most important culinary time of the year and they await your order.

Hugo urges readers to ditch the Scottish smoked salmon this Christmas and try something just as delicious. "I know the flavour our smoked trout offers and Christmas is the ideal time to enjoy it with a glass of Hampshire fizz!" ●



Hugo Hardman

To find out more about Chalk Stream Foods visit www.chalkstreamfoods.co.uk. Tel: 01794 330 000. Email: sales@chalkstreamfoods.co.uk. Old Salisbury Lane, Awbridge, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 0GD. Follow Chalk Stream Foods on Twitter @Chalk_Stream



Discover our range of country sports performance clothing selected for quality, comfort and style for the great British outdoors.

- Mens, Ladies & Kids Clothing
- Footwear • Accessories



Shop online or in store
www.sportingkit.co.uk

- 01299 851767
- sales@sportingkit.co.uk
- @SportingKit
- Like us on Facebook

Cedarstone Ltd, Callimore Farm,
 Rushock, Droitwich, Worcestershire, WR9 0NS



CREATE A
CABIN
 DIY MODULAR BUILDINGS



BUILD YOUR OWN



DELIVERED READY TO ASSEMBLE
 INSULATED METAL PANELS
 MADE TO MEASURE
 ASSISTED BUILD



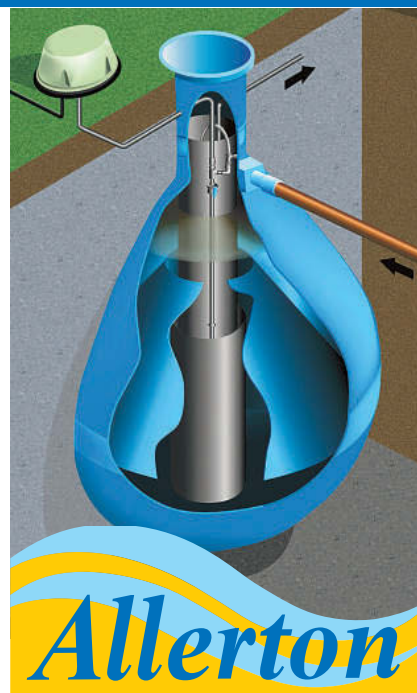
01227 389 895

sales@createacabin.co.uk
www.createacabin.co.uk

A NEW CONSEPT

- Septic tank not meeting the required standard for discharge?
- Existing soakaway failed or a method needed to raise effluent to a new high level soakaway?
- Blocked soakaway, drains backing up, obnoxious smells?
- A sewage plant needed but with minimal disruption?

The Allerton **CONSEPT** is the answer!



The **CONSEPT** from Allerton will save you time and money by converting your existing septic tank or cesspit into a fully functioning sewage treatment plant. High grade composite materials and non ferrous fixings ensure a long and trouble free life.

Talk to us and we will help you find the correct solution to ensure you are properly treated!

Freephone:
0800 328 5492

Head Office: Woodbridge Rd,
 Sleaford, Lincs
 Tel: 01529 305757
 E-Mail: sales@allertonuk.com
www.allertonuk.com

Specialists in Sewage and Effluent Treatment Systems

➔ **PLEASE SEND** emails to news@countryside-alliance.org and letters to Editor, Countryside Alliance magazine, 1 Spring Mews, Tinworth Street, London, SE11 5AN - for a chance to **win a £50 Chudleys voucher**

{ RURAL VOICES }

Your letters

Send us your grassroots views

Win a **£50 CHUDLEYS VOUCHER**

to spend in any Chudleys stockists



Help RABI make a difference this Christmas

RABI'S CHRISTMAS HAMPER CAMPAIGN is a wonderful and tangible way in which people can help those in the farming community who are in need.

Every year, on a case-by-case basis, RABI sends out hampers to beneficiaries with some essentials and a few festive treats.

This year, more than 880 people will receive a hamper, and RABI's Christmas Hamper Campaign aims to raise around £40,000, which is the cost of providing the hampers.

Depending upon our beneficiaries' preference, some of our volunteers even deliver

hampers personally - it's part of a proud tradition and it helps make that much-needed connection with our beneficiaries at Christmas time. Mary Passmore from West Sussex and Anthony Jepps from Wiltshire have been delivering hampers for more than 40 years!

I've occasionally been asked why we send hampers. Aren't they old-fashioned, Dickensian even? The answer is, that they are a perfect way to meet a basic need and at the same time bring happiness to people whose lives are very difficult.

The knowledge that

someone has remembered them at Christmas time lifts the spirits at a time of year that can be bleak and lonely to many. That is what we aim for in all that we do - to make a real difference to people's lives.

Donation forms for the 2015 campaign are now available on the RABI website www.rabi.org.uk or telephone 01865 724931.



Editor's choice

TRISH PICKFORD
Head of Welfare
The Royal Agricultural
Benevolent Institution
Oxford



Congratulations to Trish, winner of the £50 Chudleys voucher.

www.chudleys.com

'A Cautionary Tale' Part 2

IN THE SUMMER 2015 EDITION you published a letter telling a tale of a reader's dealings with both a local gundog trainer and owner of the dog she used at stud with her bitch.

I own the dog that was used at stud. It is fair to say that both of us were inexperienced breeders although a number of people went out of their way to offer help and advice in the lead up to the puppies being born.

I feared Mrs McKinley would renege on the agreement to allow me a pick from the litter in lieu of a stud fee and

sought advice, leading me to withhold my signature from the puppy registration documents, a common condition on written stud agreements. Signing occurs once the agreement is met and the stud dog owner receives his dues. At the time Mrs McKinley was offered a contract to sign but refused, failing to follow her own subsequent advice.

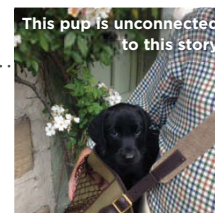
Eventually a puppy, albeit of her choice, was collected by my gundog trainer on my behalf.

She commenced court proceedings against me and my gundog trainer for the cost of the puppy refusing any opportunity

to discuss our differences. A District Judge exonerated mine and my trainer's action and her claims were dismissed.

My advice to any potential breeders is to research thoroughly and plan accordingly. You will not go far wrong if you follow the wealth of advice readily available on the Kennel Club website.

M BRYAN
Shefford, Bedfordshire



This pup is unconnected to this story

The CLA Game Fair

THE CLA REGRETS that it will no longer run the annual CLA Game Fair. This decision includes cancelling the planned event scheduled to be at Ragley Hall in 2016.



The decision has been taken by the CLA Board after the event failed to generate enough income in each of the last three years.

Unfortunately an increasingly crowded summer calendar of outdoor events has contributed to falling attendance. This has led to the event failing to generate enough income and has made the event financially unsustainable.

Over the last three years the Board made the decision to invest in the Game Fair because of our strong desire to turn the event around. We have been able to make this investment because of the

otherwise robust financial position of the CLA. However we can no longer ask CLA members to allow their membership subscriptions to underwrite the losses the event makes.

We are clear that the Game Fair can no longer be run by the CLA in its current form. We will, however, begin a period of consultation in which we will invite proposals from other organisations on how the Game Fair might be able to continue.

HELEN WOOLLEY
Director General of the CLA
16 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PQ

Leading gunmaker William Evans is 132 years young

→ We are running a gun draw in association with William Evans and bring you the story of the well-established and illustrious English gunmaker that wartime bomb damage couldn't close.

William Evans have been making superb quality sporting guns since 1883 and the company's range continues to expand, now featuring not only sporting shotguns and rifles to suit every pocket, but also shooting accessories and clothing.

With the products and knowledge to cater for every client and type of shooting, William Evans appeals to those who prefer to deal with a relatively small, bespoke manufacturer which treats them as an individual rather than buying from a large 'corporate' gunmaker. Clients are very loyal, and the descendants of several families who purchased guns in the early 1900s still bring them to William Evans for servicing.

The craft of making sporting guns as we know them today developed under the Victorians and Edwardians when the sport of game shooting became popular and fashionable. Bolstered by the patronage of the royal family, the gun trade flourished, and demands on gunmakers' skills were high as clients looked for individuality in their guns, combined with the best quality materials and craftsmanship.

William Evans founded his business in 1883 at 95a Buckingham Palace Road and in 1885 moved to 4 Holden Terrace in Pimlico. By 1888 his reputation had grown and the business progressed enough to justify a move to prestigious premises in Pall Mall Place. In 1896 the company moved yet again to 63 Pall Mall, opposite St James's Palace, but on 23rd February 1944 a bomb badly damaged the company's premises, forcing it to move to the current location, 67 St James's Street.

In the early days, the backbone of William Evans' client list was firmly established, notably with ranking officers in the Guards Regiments who ordered sporting guns and rifles before being posted to various parts of the Empire. The move to St James's, the heart of London's 'club land', further strengthened its client list and the company



"TODAY, WILLIAM EVANS IS ONE OF LONDON'S FEW-REMAINING INDEPENDENT ENGLISH GUNMAKERS AND OFFERS A RANGE OF MODELS TO CATER FOR ALL BUDGETS."

was patronised by members of several prestigious gentlemen's clubs such as White's, Boodles and Brooks. Being close to the Houses of Parliament, the company also became popular with members of the House of Lords and House of Commons, distinguished clients including HRH Duke of Connaught and HRH Prince Arthur of Connaught.

William Evans made its name catering for the requirements of the professional classes and, by offering London-quality guns at affordable prices, became world-renowned for hand-built sidelock and boxlock side-by-side shotguns, together with bolt-action and large-calibre double rifles. During the 1920s and 1930s William

Evans was one of 30 or so such businesses operating in the St James's and Mayfair areas of London and sold up to 200 guns per year. The majority were based on boxlock-style actions produced by Webley & Scott in Birmingham, a company which was synonymous with the manufacture of high quality, yet reasonably-priced sporting arms.

In addition to its London shop William Evans now has another at The National Shooting Centre at Bisley in Surrey. There, clients can try any second hand gun before purchasing on the adjoining Bisley Shooting Ground or National Clay Shooting Centre, where instructors also offer a gun fitting service.





WILLIAM EVANS TODAY

Today, William Evans is one of London's few remaining independent English gunmakers and offers a range of models to cater for all budgets. The majority of clients purchase their guns with a view to handing them on to subsequent generations, so lasting quality is paramount.

Each year the business sells a small number of bespoke William Evans sidelock side-by-sides costing upwards of £42,000 (+VAT) and over-and-under models priced from £65,000 + VAT. In keeping with tradition, William Evans' best-quality London sidelock game guns are hand-made using only the finest quality materials.

Many sportsmen are attracted by the prospect of purchasing a new, high-quality English shotgun made to their own specifications but are looking for a more cost-effective alternative. Made-to-measure in the classic English style, the William Evans Pall Mall is a new high-quality sidelock side-by-side aimed at discerning sportsmen who require a hand-crafted shotgun made to their personal specification, but at less than half the cost of a traditional 'best' London sidelock. Designed to William Evans' blueprint and manufactured in consultation with the company's Spanish partner, Grulla Armas, the Pall Mall combines high-performance engineering from the highly respected European manufacturer with the finely tuned finishing processes applied by British craftsmen. Available in all calibres, it

represents exceptional value for a luxury grade product.

'The Connaught' commemorates William Evans historic connections with former loyal client, HRH The Duke of Connaught for whom the company made numerous bespoke sporting guns. Retailing from £7,800, when specified with a traditional square-body action and from £8,000 as a round-body design, it has recently been joined by the brand new Premium Connaught, which retails from £11,500.

Noted for its elegant lines, the St James over-and-under combines state-of-the-art engineering with the bespoke features and traditional finish that characterise all William Evans guns. At £10,000 + VAT

including a case, the St James provides an excellent opportunity to acquire a piece of William Evans history and ultimately a gun that will last for many years.

For big game shooting, the William Evans best double-barrelled sidelock rifle is recognised throughout the world as one of the finest of its kind, used by generations of sportsmen, including professional safari hunters, who have literally entrusted their lives to them. This type of rifle comes into its own when hunting dangerous game, where the ability to fire a second shot quickly can be vital.

William Evans also manufactures the highest quality bolt action rifles, which are made to order and usually built on original '98 or magnum Mauser actions, depending upon calibre, although other actions, such as Hartmann & Weiss, are also available.

At the 2015 CLA Game Fair William Evans launched its 'SL' sporting rifles, which are manufactured to its high specifications and standards by Danish firm Schultz & Larsen which, like William Evans, was founded in the 1880s. Based on the Ambassador model, regarded by many as the ultimate hunting rifle, the William Evans very competitively priced, the Grade 1, Grade 3 and Grade 5 retailing at £2450, £2850 and £3250 respectively.

William Evans shops also stock a wide range of shooting clothing and country attire for men, women and children, and for all shooting disciplines, including shooting coats, jackets, breeks, shirts, trousers, caps, shooting vests and much more. In addition to a well-developed range of its own-label clothing, William Evans also offer major brands such as Musto, Laksen, Beretta, Seeland and Really Wild. ●

William Evans shops are located at:

● 67a St James's Street, London SW1A 1PH
(Tel: 020 7493 0415)

● The Old Armoury, Bisley Camp,
Brookwood, Surrey, GU24 0NY
(Tel: 01483 486500)

www.williamevans.com

You will find a gun draw form within the pages of this magazine which offer the opportunity to win a pair of William Evans Connaught Premiums worth £23,000. Tickets are £25 each. The draw will take place on Tuesday 1st March 2016. Buy your tickets online at www.countryside-alliance.org



"THE CONNAUGHT COMMEMORATES WILLIAM EVANS HISTORIC CONNECTIONS WITH FORMER LOYAL CLIENT, HRH THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT FOR WHOM THE COMPANY MADE NUMEROUS BESPOKE SPORTING GUNS."



The Hunting Stock Market

For all your hunting needs and wishes....



www.huntingstockmarket.co.uk

First choice for quality hunting stocks (ties), hunting shirts, gloves, breeches, coats, waistcoats, hats and hat repairs, saddlery, whips, gifts and accessories.....

E-mail enquiries@huntingstockmarket.co.uk
Tel 01258 817533 Fax 01258 817137



Artisan
POSTBOXES & SIGNS
For inspiration browse
www.rockartisansigns.co.uk
or call 01327 351561 for a brochure
CAST METAL MADE TO LAST FROM OUR FOUNDRY



CLIVE REES & ASSOCIATES
SOLICITORS & CROWN COURT ADVOCATES

If you are summonsed for poaching, Hunting Act offences, Animal Welfare Act offences, Protection of Badgers offences Offences relating to "wild" cage birds and "wild" animals or if you want to appeal refusal of a shotgun or Firearm, or a wrong decision by a Magistrates' Court anywhere in England & Wales:
I am your man.

(Legal Aid may be available subject to means)



Clive Rees Lib., MH.

Ground Floor,
Metropole Chambers
Salubrious Passage
Swansea, SA1 3RT
Phone 01792 474201
or 07969 378750

Email:
clive@clivereessolicitor.com

Lexcel Quality Mark Accredited.
Authorised & Regulated by the
Solicitors Regulation Authority.



SCH
(SUPPLIES) LIMITED
MANUFACTURERS & SUPPLIERS
OF ESTATE & GARDEN MACHINERY

Contact us today for a free brochure full of British land machinery – Trailers, trolleys, carts, leaf sweepers and much more

Call 01473 328272
sales@schsupplies.co.uk
www.schsupplies.co.uk



DUNSTERHEAT

DUNSTER HEAT LTD. SPECIALIST WOOD BOILER SUPPLIERS SINCE 2001

Reduce your heating costs

and utilise your wood with a fixed guarantee for up to 20 years...



- Wood burning central heating & hot water systems
- RHI Grants available for Commercial & Domestic
- Easy to install and operate

01984 640 656 www.dunsterheat.co.uk

Biomass heating system installers and accredited suppliers of Vigas Boilers & Akvaterm Accumulators.



➔ **MORE EVENTS** Below are only a few of the big dates for 2016 – our website has more at www.countryside-alliance.org/competitions/

upcoming-events

The Countryside Alliance's 2016 events listing

➔ **SATURDAY 26 DECEMBER**
– **BOXING DAY**
Your photographs of hunt meets and shoots will be welcome – please email news@countryside-alliance.org



**CASTING
FOR
RECOVERY
IN 2016**

Casting for Recovery UK & Ireland is an outdoor programme for ladies who have, or have had, breast cancer. The programme, run by The Countryside Alliance Foundation, is unique in combining medical support and counselling with the beautiful sport of fly fishing. Applications are invited for ladies keen to attend the following retreats to be held in 2016. Up to 14 ladies can be accommodated on each free-of-charge retreat. Places are allocated by ballot and are subject to medical clearance.

- **April**
The Coniston Hotel & Country Estate, Coniston Cold, North Yorkshire
- **13 - 15 May**
Casting for Recovery retreat at Mount Falcon, Ballina, Co Mayo
- **22-24 July**
Kimbridge on the Test, Romsey, Hampshire
- **23-25 September**
Forbes of Kingennie, Broughty Ferry, Angus

Visit www.castingforrecovery.org.uk for more information and to apply.



■ 12-16 February

The British Shooting Show at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire <http://shootingshow.co.uk/>

■ 15-18 March

The Festival, Cheltenham, with the Gold Cup on Friday 18 March
#illbethere www.thefestival2016.co.uk

■ 4-8 May

Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials at Badminton House, Gloucestershire
www.badminton-horse.co.uk #MMBHT

■ 9 -11 June

The South of England Show at the showground, Ardingly, West Sussex. Includes hound shows. <http://seas.org.uk/event/south-of-england-show-2016>

■ 17-19 June

Royal Three Counties Show at the showground, Malvern, Worcestershire
www.threecounties.co.uk/threecounties

■ 23 June

The popular **Newmarket Countryside Race Day** on the July Course.
For more information contact william-burton@countryside-alliance.org



■ 23-26 June

Royal Highland Show at the showground at Ingliston, Edinburgh
<http://royalhighlandshow.org>

■ 1-3 July

The Scottish Game Fair at Scone, Perthshire www.scottishfair.com

■ 12-14 July

The Great Yorkshire Show at the showground, Harrogate, North Yorkshire. Includes hound shows. <http://greatyorkshireshow.co.uk>

■ 18-21 July

Royal Welsh Show, Builth Wells, Powys
www.rwas.wales/royal-welsh-show

■ 20 July

The Festival of Hunting, Peterborough
<http://festivalofhunting.com>

■ 4 August

The 126th Honiton Agricultural Show and hound show, Honiton, Devon
www.honitonshow.co.uk

■ 5-21 August

Rio de Janeiro will host the **Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games** and we have high hopes for our athletes, especially in equestrian and shooting disciplines. www.rio2016.com/en



■ 2-4 September

Chatsworth Game & Country Fair, Chatsworth House, Derbyshire
<http://www.chatsworth.org/attractions-and-events/events/event/chatsworth-country-fair>

■ 17-18 September

Midland Game Fair at Weston Park, Shropshire www.midlandgamefair.co.uk

The news in September that the CLA has stepped back from running its world renowned Game Fair caused shockwaves through the countryside. The 2016 show, scheduled to be held at Ragley Hall in Warwickshire, has been cancelled and the future of the fair itself is up in the air.

The news of the CLA's decision left many unsurprised, however. Several stand-holders and organisations have pulled out in recent years. In addition, the rising prices were a barrier to many hardworking families who felt the experience had just become too expensive. The CLA itself (see page 45) said it was an unsustainable event for them to run, and it seems obvious in a way that with the advent of online shopping, one of the main thrusts of the show had been undermined. In a changing time where online shopping is increasingly the norm, people have been finding it hard to justify the high cost of attending. While shopping was always an enjoyable part of the Game Fair it was not the whole story, and with other shows still running, visitors will still be able to enjoy hound parades, clay lessons, fly casting demonstrations, gundog scurries and much more.

The Countryside Alliance would like to thank the CLA Game Fair team for all the hard work they have put in over the years – this must have been a heartbreaking decision and not one taken lightly. However, it is unlikely that the show is over for good – let's see who steps up to take the Game Fair on and drive it into the future. *Editor*

DAVE HULL is a busy man, with two village shops to run and a key role in the shooting industry at beautiful Blanchland in Co Durham.

I started off on the grouse moors at the Newbiggin and Hunstanworth estate at Blanchland, a long time ago, as a beater, when I was in my teens. A few years on, and not far from there, was where I met my girlfriend, Louise, on the neighbouring Derwent reservoir. Both of us have been brought up with a strong sense of belonging to the countryside, and had that small village way of life instilled in us from our childhoods. We were both ready to get our own place. Neither of us wanted to live in a town, so we were lucky enough to find our first home in the village of Edmundbyers, next to the reservoir where we met, and where I was actively involved on the various grouse moors in the area.

As time went on I grew a passion for shooting and conservation, and I still like to work on all the local shoots to this day. My community involvement grew as we became long term residents, and I became the Chairman of the Blanchland and Hunstanworth show in a bid to keep this important and historical local event going and to save it from an ill fate. The area was suffering from a dwindling younger generation, as young people were moving away from the village to seek employment, and there weren't enough people to keep the committee active. Although smaller than previously, due to rising costs, this year's show was a real success.

Louise and I were well settled in the community and we didn't plan to move house, but who can refuse the opportunity to buy your own business? Just around the corner from our first home was where we bought our first shop together in 2010. It had been closed for over 10 years, but we knew we could make it work due to the tourism in the area. After much renovation and refitting of the



Dave Hull
on the moor

“As time went on I grew a passion for shooting and conservation, and I still like to work on all the local shoots to this day.”

property, which is now our home and business combined, we opened 'The Old Village Shop' in Edmundbyers in 2012. It's a rural location, and sparsely populated, but we knew we'd get additional support from 12th August, through to the end of the shooting season at the beginning of February, from all the nearby shooting estates. Tourism is our main source of income, the well managed countryside and fells attracting many people who also come to walk, either on long haul hikes, or taking the dog down to the reservoir for a stroll to enjoy the fantastic views in this area of outstanding natural beauty.

Having opened in 2012, we went on to become a success and were the runners up in the Countryside Alliance's Rural Oscars for the North East in 2013. Our success allowed us to further expand, and in 2014 we took on the village shop and post office in Blanchland, which had closed down due to lack of business during the three years that the Lord Crewe Arms Hotel was being renovated. In addition to having a shop again, we have ensured the continuation of the post office service for the village. Whenever the shop is open, so is the post office, and we now provide jobs for four local people as well as playing a big part in supporting the Guns and other guests who come and stay at the Lord Crewe. We are even on Facebook!

With our two busy businesses in Edmundbyers and Blanchland, I still manage to work on the fells on shoot days as a machine driver, ensuring people are looked after for the day. I couldn't imagine changing my way of life, or living anywhere different than where we live today. Hopefully we will be here for years to come. ●

One of the best ways of supporting our shooting communities is by eating more game – check our Game to Eat website for stockists and recipes. www.gametoeat.co.uk



MILLIES WOLFHEART



Proud to be made in
BRITAIN

Peak Performance (High Fat)

65% Duck, Turkey with Salmon

35% Fruits/Vegetables/Herbs/Botanicals

433.5 Kcal/100g

Endurance

50% Turkey with Duck

50% Fruits/Vegetables/Herbs/Botanicals

367 Kcal/100g

Ultima

60% Pork with Salmon and Beef

40% Fruits/Vegetables/Herbs/Botanicals

389 Kcal/100g

0800 612 4655 / 01535 280319

www.millieswolfheart.co.uk

Guns
Wanted
for Cash -
Part &
Welcome

IAN COLEY

GUNSHOP • SHOOTING SCHOOL
SPORTING AGENCY • COUNTRY CLOTHING



Gift
Vouchers
from
£10

01242 870391 www.IANCOLEY.co.uk Nr. Andoversford, Cheltenham, GL54 4AX



GUN SHOP

With around **1000 guns in stock** at any one time; the facility to **try before you buy on demo and S/H guns**, and a large selection of shooting accessories and **Country Clothing** - there really is something for everyone. Browse our guns online at www.iancoley.co.uk



SPORTING AGENCY

With a **record season** almost under our belt, there might just be **time to fit in another day before January 31st** if you're quick. Why not give us a call to see what **last minute opportunities** we have on offer.



SHOOTING SCHOOL

Specialist Game, Clay & Air Rifle tuition. Pay & Play practice for licence holders. **Beginners very welcome.**

Spain & Argentina offer viable extensions to the UK season and we have **very good value packages** on partridge and doves available in 2016.



Christmas Gift Vouchers

Available from **£10** or for any of our Air Rifle & Clay Shooting Packages for the perfect Christmas Gift.

We'd like to take this opportunity to **thank all our clients** and wish everyone a safe, happy festive season and New Year.

