

## March 2023 (PDF format attached)

### Latest News

#### **Pre Lambing Breakfast - Thank you**

Over 90 people of the Exmoor farming community enjoyed a pre lambing Breakfast at the Moorland Hall, Wheddon Cross on Sunday 26th February. A grand total of **£872.50** was raised and will be donated to The Farming Community Network for their ongoing work supporting farming families. A huge thank you to Shirley Julian, chief cook and her kitchen helpers Judith Fewings and Fonda Buckingham who provided us with the most delicious, cooked breakfast. Thank you to all the other helpers for their assistance in making the event such a success. We have been overwhelmed by the support given, a massive thank you to Mole Valley Farmers and John and Bridget Goscomb for providing the eggs and all the other donations that came in prior to the event. We look forward to returning on the west side of Exmoor later in the autumn.

#### **Exmoor Hill Farming Network Equipment Pool Survey – we need your help! Two minute survey**

EHFN are considering submitting an application to the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grant scheme in April 2023 to create a pool of equipment for use by EHFN members. To gauge interest in our application we are keen to receive constructive feedback from members as to what to include and how the scheme may be administered. We currently have an application being considered by the FiPL team which includes some smaller equipment such as EiD stick readers, soil samplers and a pipe layer. This survey would be to broaden out the scheme to include some larger, more expensive items that we think may be useful on farm to improve efficiency and productivity, as well as incorporating nature-friendly farming practices, but would be too expensive for individual businesses to invest in on their own. To date we have thought that a mobile cattle crush and sheep conveyor may be of use to assist animal management but are others would have further ideas. If successful, we would offer this equipment on a machinery pool basis to EHFN members. Please help us with our enquires and complete this short survey [.EHFN Equipment survey | SurveyPlanet](#) Please respond anonymously by **5pm on Thursday by 13th March**.

#### **Exmoor Curlew Project**

The Curlew is a species associated with Exmoor which has become lost from the landscape. It's a species that some people still can recall when checking their stock, knowing where all the breeding pairs nested year after year. Curlews can have breeding lives of over 30 years returning loyally year on year to the same breeding grounds and thereby developing a lasting relationship with the farmers they share their grassland and moorland habitats with. They are also a species with the potential to return to the Exmoor landscape enabling us to rehear its iconic 'cur-lee' breeding call from February to July. [About Curlews | Curlew Recovery Partnership](#)

The latest element of Defra's Environmental Land Management scheme, Landscape Recovery, has the potential to support a project to reconnect our Exmoor landscape with this lost bird and part of the cultural heritage of the moor. Landscape Recovery is designed to support the collaboration of farmers and landowners across areas of 500 – 5,000 ha to work together to deliver for habitats and species. The scheme involves a 2 year development phase which will undertake all the necessary consultations, feasibility studies and development to cost out the work needed to achieve the outcomes of the project. Landscape Recover works alongside schemes like Countryside Stewardship, filling the gaps in other schemes, and funding up to 100% of the costs. [Landscape Recovery: more information on how the scheme will work - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The opportunities of such as project include:

- Additional payments for farmers and landowners beyond existing Countryside Stewardship.
- Supporting farm businesses to continue to graze livestock.
- Development of a positive story for farming and nature
- Create new tourism opportunities.



- Support the management of moorland habitats.
- Manage and restore insect rich grasslands.
- Bring back a lost sound to the farmland of Exmoor.

The next application window is likely to fall during lambing time on Exmoor and it may be difficult to bring everyone together before an initial application needs to be submitted. We would like to hear from anyone who would be interested in participating in such a project developed in partnership with FWAG. If you are interested in being involved and consent to FWAG contacting you, please make contact with Kirsty ([admin@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:admin@ehfn.org.uk)) or call 01643 841455 to register your interest.




### Robert Deane 1964-2023

This week, the Exmoor Hill Farming Network Directors and I paid our respects to Robert Deane, who suddenly passed away on 3rd February 2023. Robert established Rural Focus Ltd in 2015 - an environmental consultancy firm across the South West and working in other areas of the UK. In 2017, he worked closely with the Exmoor Hill Farming Network, the Exmoor National Park Authority and others to produce Exmoor's Ambition: a document proposing a new approach to agricultural policy, which was nationally recognised. Robert became an integral part of our Network team in early 2018, providing strategic support to the steering group. After completing a governance review in 2019, he was instrumental in the Network's transition to a Community Interest Company in February 2020.

Chris Eveleigh, EHFN Director, said: "I feel very lucky to have had the privilege of knowing Robert through his work with the Exmoor Hill Farming

Network. His breadth of knowledge about farming, wildlife and economics was exceptional but, until I heard the eulogies given by his family and friends in the packed church in Payhembury, I hadn't realised the full extent of his talents and interests - from rowing and sailing to the village school and church choir. He seemed to have an instinctive feel for what was needed in any situation, and how to balance different opinions or ideas while allowing everyone to have a voice. Robert was instrumental in the success of the EHFN, and we will all miss his guidance as we take the Network forward.

Robert has been a huge support and mentor to me over the past 3 years, and he was held in high regard amongst the Directors. His extensive knowledge of the environment and business support, his ability to respond to the ongoing changes in agricultural policies and his wide range of contacts have been key to the Network's success. He has played a major part in fighting for hill farmers to survive and thrive and has brought people together from different perspectives. On a personal note, he has helped me immensely with my own development and will be sorely missed. We continue to send our prayers and thoughts to his wife Ceri, his daughters, Georgie and Hettie and families. **Katherine**



**ENERGY RESILIENCE: COULD RENEWABLE ENERGY HELP IN YOUR BUSINESS?**

**Tuesday 7th March 2023**  
**The Rest and Be Thankful Inn, Wheddon Cross**  
**6.45pm for 7pm carvery - 9pm**

Join the Exmoor Hill Farming Network and NFU Williton Branch members for an informative workshop looking at how you can mitigate the rising cost of energy within your business to include energy auditing and how to start the conversation around renewable energy.

*Guest Speakers:*  
**Steven Jackson**, NFU Energy  
**Darren Edwards**, Head of Sustainable Energy, Fisher German  
**Dean Kinsella**, Head of Planning, ENPA.  
**Members of EHFN** sharing their own experiences.

Booking essential for catering purposes by Thursday 2nd March  
[admin@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:admin@ehfn.org.uk) 01643 841 455

### Peer Support Group

### Forward Farming Group

New date **Tuesday 7th March**. Please register for catering purposes by **9am** on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March. Everyone welcome

## **Exmoor Women in Farming Group – Post Lambing Meeting ( save the date)**

**Date:** Tuesday 25th April 2023 **Venue:** Court Place Farm, Skilgate by kind permission of Mr and Mrs N Julian **Time:** 7pm -9pm. **Peer support contribution:** £5pp

Join us for a post lambing catch up with members of group where we will enjoy a cream tea and an opportunity to meet up with likeminded people.

## **Other Interest**



British Wool Marketing Board Shearing Courses on Exmoor

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023 ( 2 days) near Minehead

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023 ( 2 days) near Dulverton

Discount for YFC members, if booked before 31<sup>st</sup> March

Please register via the link: <https://www.britishwool.org.uk/book-online>



**Blackmoor Gate Sheep 300 Head , Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March , sale at 11am**

**Cutcombe Cattle Sale, Wednesday 8th March, Sale at 11am**

**534 Head** including a genuine herd dispersal sale from Mr and Mrs P Delbridge, Twitchen

**View the catalogues:** [Catalogues \(exmoorfarmers.co.uk\)](https://exmoorfarmers.co.uk)

**Farm Sale** Dispersal for the Executors of K Prouse and Mr E Prouse - **Friday 31st March 2023**, Sale at 4pm

BIRCH MEADOWS FARM, STOKE RIVERS, BARNSTAPLE, DEVON EX32 7LE

For further information visit: <https://exmoorfarmers.co.uk/farm-sales>



**Exmoor Rural  
Health Hub**

The **Health Hub** will be operating **8th March - 09:30 to 12:30** from their new portacabin site at the market (located opposite the wash out).

For more information please visit:

<https://www.erhh.co.uk/serviceupdates/dates-for-your-diary/>

## **Commercial Adverts**

**NEW\***

**Lambing /Calving help required near North Molton, Exmoor**

Experienced person required for lambing and calving , 350 ewes at the end of March.

Afternoons/ nights, driving licence essential and references. Please call or message 07990 590613 or 07767 695717.

**NEW\***

**Stockman seeks new opportunity.**

I am a keen individual, looking for a beef and sheep stockman opportunity on or around Exmoor. I am currently a Herdsman and have lots of cattle experience, less with sheep but my interest in sheep and my desire to learn would make up for it. I have a range of tractor driving experience, fencing and general farm work. Accommodation is required, my wife is a calf rearer/ relief milker and she would be happy to work alongside me if possible but not essential. For an informal chat please call : 07841 021173

**NEW\***

**Wanted - Farm, land & buildings or bare land to rent, buy or share-farm**, required by young farming family needing to relocate due to rented farm being sold.

Currently farming various very successful livestock enterprises including a top quality suckler herd, calf rearing unit and trading in store and breeding cattle. Very experienced and qualified in all aspects of livestock farming and agri-business, with very high standards and attention to detail. Own livestock, machinery, equipment and some capital available.

Anything considered including renting a farm or land, buying some land as well as a contract or share farming arrangement or a farm management position. Very willing to consider any other potential farming opportunity in the North Devon / greater Exmoor area, large or small. Excellent references available. For further information or for a fully confidential chat please call 07881 309168.

To book on any of the above events or for more information please contact Kirsty at [admin@ehfn.org.uk](mailto:admin@ehfn.org.uk) or 01643 841455.

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