Issue No. 10

FCN THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

Winter 2021

Here for *you*

COLLABORATION IS KEY AS WE PREPARE FOR THE CHANGES AHEAD

Jude McCann, FCN CEO

The last 18 months have been a time for reflection for many of us. Extended periods apart have reminded us all of the things that truly matter in our lives – such as family, friends and the networks we build around us. This year, perhaps more than ever before, we have seen more organisations and individuals reach out to FCN wanting to work with us or learn more about our charity. Despite restrictions on meeting others in-person, we've found there is growing awareness of FCN and the support our dedicated volunteers provide the farm community.

We are delighted that so many wish to engage with us, volunteer with us, fundraise for us and let others know about the many ways we can help those who are going through difficult times.

Seeing shows and other events finally going ahead again over the last few months has provided a much needed respite for our farmers, who face an uncertain future as they adapt to the changes ahead. During this period of agricultural transition, it is vital FCN and other charities and organisations work together to support everyone across agriculture. We are strongest when we work together, and as you will see in this edition of our newsletter, collaboration and connectivity is a running theme of our work. We hope you enjoy reading it.

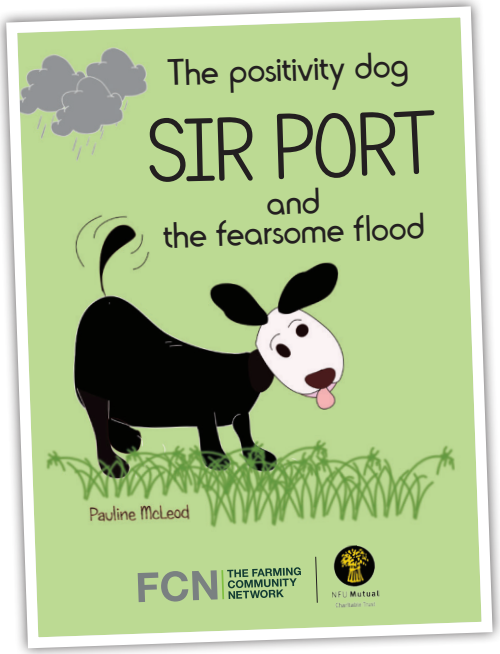
Jude McCann, FCN CEO

For the latest news about all things FCN, continue reading…

FCN FOUNDER CHRISTOPHER JONES CELEBRATES 80TH BIRTHDAY

On Thursday 15 July FCN's Founder and Honorary President Christopher Jones MBE celebrated his 80th birthday. Christopher founded FCN in 1995, as a joint venture between the Agricultural Christian Fellowship (ACF) and Germinate: The Arthur Rank Centre. Christopher was awarded his MBE in 2011 and has been married to his wife, Ita, for over 57 years. Christopher is pictured here with Jude and Ita, which was taken recently at West Haddon.

Christopher said: "I am proud to have founded such an important charity that continues to support many farming families to this day. We owe much to the many friends who helped create and develop FCN over the years, and our volunteers across England and Wales who continue to dedicate their time in support of FCN's mission."



FCN CHILDREN'S BOOK SUPPORTS RESILIENCE

A new children's story book developed by FCN and New Zealand author Pauline McLeod will help children in rural communities develop vital resilience skills and a positive attitude towards change.

Sir Port, which is supported by the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust, follows the adventures of the eponymous Sir Port, the beloved family dog, during a particularly heavy flood that causes havoc on the farm.

The book has been developed in response to changes across British agriculture – including transformative policy changes, the UK's withdrawal from the European Union and climate change – to help young children understand the stress uncertainty can cause families and help them develop a positive way of interpreting this.

Pauline said: "I hope readers take away a positive message from this book and develop resilience skills to help them manage change and weather the storms they may face personally."

You can access a digital copy of Sir Port here: fcn.org.uk/sir-port/

FCN SUPPORTING FARM BUSINESSES THROUGH THE JOURNEY AHEAD

A new book designed to help farmers plan ahead for the future has been developed by FCN with input from more than 40 different organisations and experts.

Through Q&As, articles, guidance and case studies, the publication, titled The Journey Ahead, contains a wide range of information sourced from industry experts around areas such as financial security, succession planning, diversification, retirement, mitigating TB, farm safety and wellbeing and more.

The publication's lead sponsors are the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust and NSF, with additional support from Westpoint Farm Vets and tax, accountancy and financial services experts Simpkins Edwards.

Its content has been adapted from FCN's recent 'Time to Plan' campaign, which saw FCN working with a range of organisations across agriculture to develop useful information to support farmers in planning ahead and managing change.

You can access a digital copy of The Journey Ahead here: fcn.org.uk/the-journey-ahead/

'WHO'S YOUR JULIE?' CAMPAIGN HELPS TO RECOGNISE SUPPORT NETWORKS

A new campaign launched by FCN encourages people across farming and agriculture to recognise the people in their lives that help to support them during difficult times by asking them one simple question: 'Who's Your Julie?'.

The 'Who's Your Julie?' campaign is inspired by FCN Ambassador and mental health advocate Charles Anyan, who has a close friend named Julie. Julie is someone he can always confide in - when he's feeling stressed, he is able to speak with Julie and discuss the issues or worries on his mind.

The campaign encourages people to think about their own 'Julies' and to recognise the support networks they have. And if someone doesn't have a 'Julie', the campaign encourages them to find one - either by talking to FCN, engaging with local support networks or by speaking with other people taking part in the campaign.

Watch a video of Charles talking about the campaign here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XslbQClAUm8

ED AND GWION'S QUEST TO CONQUER THE DRAGON

In September FCN Cymru volunteer Ed Bailey (right) and his friend Gwion (left) took on the Dragon's Back Race – one of the most gruelling races in the world – in memory of beloved family member Elizabeth Mackenzie.

Their involvement in the race received significant media attention in Wales. They managed to get to the end of day two - a magnificent achievement and Ed and Gwion should both be very proud of what they've accomplished.

Ed said: "I kept Elizabeth and her immediate family in my mind the whole way and thought of all those others that have bigger personal challenges than this race, with their own mountains to climb."

FCN AT THE GREAT YORKSHIRE SHOW - AND MANY OTHERS!

In July FCN's Yorkshire Group alongside staff had a strong presence at The Great Yorkshire Show. Our stand was close to our friends at The Addington Fund, and we appreciated the opportunity to speak with attendees about the different ways we support farming families. Our Patron, HRH The Prince of Wales, visited the FCN stand and it was fantastic talking to him about our work, of which he is very supportive.

FCN staff and volunteers have attended a wide range of other shows and events in recent months – too many to list - including Cereals, the Edenbridge & Oxted Agricultural Show, the Gransden Show, the FFF&B Ploughing Championships, Hexham and Darlington Mart, the Farm Business Innovation Show and many others.

FCN ENGAGING WITH STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

FCN has attended a wide range of colleges and universities over the last few months, including the Bicton College Freshers Fair, Duchy College in Cornwall and the Hartpury College WellFest event.

FCN also attended Harper Adams University's Freshers Fair, hearing from students about the issues most important to them and raising awareness of FCN. We spoke to over 100 students, who were eager to let their classmates, families, friends and co-workers know about FCN.

CLARKSON AND KALEB SHOW OFF SUPPORT FOR FCN

Jeremy Clarkson and Kaleb Cooper, stars of the popular series Clarkson's Farm, showed their support for FCN by modelling our squeezy stress cows at the British Farming Awards on 21 October. Jeremy was recently crowned Farming Champion of the Year 2021 by the National Farmers' Union, and has become a strong advocate for British farmers. It was great attending the event and seeing so many people across our industry recognised for their work.

FUNDRAISING FOR FCN

We are always very grateful for the incredible outpouring of support for FCN. Below are just a few of the fantastic fundraisers we have seen over the last few months. We greatly appreciate the efforts of everyone who raises awareness of FCN and fundraises for our charity, allowing us to continue providing vital support to everyone across agriculture.

THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE RAISES £5,000 FOR FCN

Many thanks to Lesley, Duncan and Vicky Ede who completed the Three Peaks Challenge in support of FCN. The Challenge involves climbing the three highest peaks of Scotland, England and Wales, often within 24 hours. The total walking distance is 23 miles (37km) and the total ascent is 3,064 metres (10,052ft). They were able to accomplish their goal of conquering this challenge in under 24 hours, raising over £5,000 for FCN in the process. Thanks so much to the whole family for their support as well as everyone who donated.

YNPA CHALLENGE 21 RAISES £3,000 FOR FCN

Members and supporters of the Young National Pig Association covered more than 1,500 miles during a June charity challenge, raising £3,000 for FCN. The YNPA Challenge 21 ran for three weeks from the start of June, with those taking part logging their miles covered by foot, bike or, in some cases, hoof. The initial targets to collectively cover 883 miles and raise £883 (representing the distance between the NPA 'Put British Pork on Your Fork' banners from the furthest north to south and east to west) were comfortably passed two weeks into the challenge, before a final push took the total mileage to 1,468. Many thanks to all who got involved!

BAGSHAWS 150 MILE BIKE RIDE RAISES OVER £8,000 FOR FCN AND RABI

To celebrate 150 years of Bagshaws LLP, Alastair Sneddon and a few companions embarked upon a 150 mile bike ride in support of FCN and RABI on 26 June. The route took them from Bakewell to Penistone, to Buxton, Leek, Penkridge, Uttoxeter, Ashbourne, finishing back in Bakewell. Incredibly, they raised £4,260 and this figure was matched by the Bagshaws Partnership, meaning a grand total of £8,520 went to FCN and RABI. We would like to thank Alastair, everyone who took part in the bike ride and Bagshaws for this generous support.

LONDON MARATHON RUNNERS SUPPORTING FCN

We were fortunate to have three people running the London Marathon this year in support of FCN.

Ian Oliver, Manager – Kentisbeare with P.D. Hook Hatcheries Ltd., donned his running shoes in-person for the Marathon. He said: "As we all know, farming can be a job of solitude a lot of the time and the last 18 months have been especially hard on many people. I have personally had family members who have experienced mental ill-health and understand the challenges that can come with farming. FCN helps out farmers and their families in so many ways. It is an honour to have had this opportunity to run the London Marathon in support of a charity that means so much to our industry."

Separately, supporters Ellie Brook and Marie Prebble ran the 'virtual' marathon, where they covered the same distance of the Marathon but in their local areas. Many thanks to everyone – you're all champions!

FCN SUPPORTING STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY

In recent months FCN has taken part in two schemes to help support young people in getting their first foot in the door of the world of work. We took on University of Leicester student Rhys Newland as a Digital Marketing Assistant via the Employ Autism scheme, coordinated by charity Ambitious About Autism. We've also taken on University of Northampton graduate Khadija Khatun as our Digital Marketing and Fundraising Assistant until March 2022 via the Government's Kickstart scheme - which provides funding to employers to create jobs for 16 to 24 year olds and helps them secure work. We are passionate about supporting young people and providing opportunities.

BRITAIN'S FITTEST FARMER FARMWELL AWARD WINNER – SCOTT DEWART

October saw the Britain's Fittest Farmer finals take place, where Erica Robison and James Arney were named Britain's Fittest Farmers 2021.

As part of the competition, Farmers Weekly also ran the FCN FarmWell Award for the second year in a row. As a charity partner for the event, the idea behind the FCN FarmWell Award is to recognise that mental health is just as important as physical health. Contestants are encouraged to submit short 2 minute videos about how they look after their own mental health and wellbeing on the farm. We had some fantastic entries this year, but a video by Scottish farmer Scott Dewart really stood out as a strong video with a positive message about finding a healthy farm-life balance and won him the coveted FCN FarmWell Award trophy. We will be following up with Scott about further ways he can work with and support FCN. **You can access his video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsU-2og_Gtg**

FCN TRAINING: RURAL+ AND FARMING HELP

FCN has been delivering training and awareness sessions to a wide range of organisations over the last few months. Training can be delivered online or in-person.

FCN's Rural+ training, developed with the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs and The DPJ Foundation, is being warmly welcomed by Young Farmers' Clubs and agricultural colleges. The training, which is funded by The Westminster Foundation, supports young people, helping them to understand stress and anxiety, manage personal mental wellbeing, learn how to talk about mental health, and to encourage them to seek support and support others.

As part of a DEFRA-funded project, FCN has also developed an awareness raising session with the other Farming Help charities to help support the farm community in building resilience, managing stress and planning for the future. The session has a number of practical exercises informed by anonymous cases presenting to FCN and encourages discussions.

If you would like to learn more about the training available, please contact FCN on training@fcn.org.uk.

NATIONAL REMEMBRANCE SERVICE RECOGNISES THOSE WHO HAVE DIED IN FARMING COMMUNITIES

Hope, unity and the need for people across agriculture to come together in support of one another as part of a community were highlighted during our Remembrance and Thanksgiving Service on Sunday 7 November at Ripon Cathedral, North Yorkshire.

The ecumenical service paid tribute to those who have died in our farm communities, with a particular focus on farm accidents, Covid-19, and those who have died by suicide. The Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley, Bishop of Ripon and FCN Trustee, led the service, which included hymns, readings and personal accounts of those being remembered. More than 400 people attended the service, both in-person and tuning into a livestream of it from home.

FCN AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

We're delighted to have announced in recent months our FCN Ambassadors – advocates for FCN across agriculture who help to raise awareness of the charity and support our work.

Our Ambassadors are
- Charles Anyan, farmer and mental health advocate
- Tim Bowie, The Orcid Partnership
- Claire Worden, Former National Chairman of the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs
- Gareth Wyn Jones, farmer and BBC presenter

Visit our website to find out more about our FCN Ambassadors: fcn.org.uk/meet-our-fcn-ambassadors

MEMORIAL TRACTOR RUN

A memorial tractor run in memory of farmer Matt Vanstone took place on 18 September in Winkleigh, Devon. FCN were the chosen charity, following support provided over the year since Matt's sad passing. He was a member of the local Young Farmers' Club and well known locally. 118 tractors attended and an estimated 200+ people drove or watched the day. This was an incredible turnout and a very moving event.

HOW TO SUPPORT FCN

"FCN's support has been a lifeline for me and my family"
- Susan, Farmer, Suffolk

Please help us to continue supporting everyone across agriculture. With British farming facing an uncertain future, FCN is here to help farmers and farming families through the changes ahead – but this will not be possible without your support. FCN relies solely on donations and grants in order to continue supporting our world-class farmers.

We are grateful for anyone who is able to support our work. There are a number of ways you can support FCN, such as:

- **Fundraising** – celebrations could include walks, bike rides, corporate sponsorship or any other ideas you may have. We welcome organisations supportive of our work to reach out to us with fundraising ideas.
- **Volunteering** – we welcome anyone passionate about helping the farming community to join as a volunteer. There are numerous volunteering roles available, including taking Helpline calls, handling casework, fundraising and publicity. More information is available at: fcn.org.uk/volunteering
- **Share your story** – FCN treats all cases confidentially, but we are grateful to anyone who is willing to talk about the support they have received from FCN. Please email Alex Phillimore, Marketing and Communications Manager, on alex@fcn.org.uk if you would like to share your story (details such as name and age will be anonymised).
- **Donate** – visit fcn.org.uk and click "Donate Online" in the top right hand corner, or send a cheque, made payable to "FCN" or "The Farming Community Network", to The Farming Community Network, Manor Farm, West Haddon, Northamptonshire, NN6 7AQ.

Alternatively you can scan this QR code to be taken directly to our donation page.

If you would like to discuss how you can support the work of FCN, call the FCN head office on 01788 510866 or email help@fcn.org.uk. The office is open 9-5 Monday - Friday.

FCN

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